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Wednesday, January 7, 2009



# Let's Dance at Rheem!

By Sophie Braccini

## Just Like Old Times:

### Big Band Will Overshadow Silver Screen for an Evening

Some of us remember, some of us don't, and some of us recall fondly that which we never lived. The worst of times can also be the best of times - put on hold the more trying events of the 30's and 40's and you have a generation's good old days, where the finest weekend evening's entertainment was to be found where ever the Big Band was swingin'. And on Friday, January 23, Moraga's Rheem Theatre is the place to be; at this winter's Big Band Ballroom Dance, featuring the Big Band of Rossmoor, all of Lamorinda is invited to come dancing!

Presented by the Generations in Jazz Foundation, the Big Band Dance has traditionally been largely a Lafayette and Rossmoor event. "We have held the dance at the

Veteran's Hall for the last three years," says Jay Lifson of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. "We wanted to try something different and get Lamorinda more involved."

Enter the art deco Rheem Theatre, which was built in 1955. One of the last "classic" theaters built in the Bay Area, the Rheem hosted live Big Bands and dances in years gone by. "We approached the Rheem Theatre and they were very interested," explained Lifson.

"It's a perfect venue for this event," says Theatre co-owner Tom Peterson. "When we rented the facility to the California Academy for Performing Arts for their dance performance I saw how well the staging works. For a Big Band it will be perfect. We already have

a large dancing floor, we will remove more seats and add tables; it will be pretty nice."

Maurice "Mo" Levich, Director of The Big Band of Rossmoor and one of the founders of Generations in Jazz, is looking forward to the performance. "As usual, we will be featuring students from Campolindo, Stanley and Acalanes," he says. "We always enjoy playing at a community event where all generations meet."

The Big Band of Rossmoor is an energetic Stage Big Band (a Stage band incorporates strings, clarinets and flutes to a classic Big Band) and young musicians are invited to share the stage with veteran professionals.

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this week

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## Women's Basketball Counts

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Photo Jordan Fong

Interest in women's collegiate basketball is up, but attendance remains a challenge nationwide. Here, the Lady Gaels prepare to play the Cal Bears on December 29th in the Haas Pavilion, which that night had fan-seats to spare.

**M**ake your ticket count for Saint Mary's College on January 24.

Watch the Lady Gaels battle defending West Coast Conference (WCC) champions, San Diego, and help SMC win this season's National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Pack the House attendance challenge. Tip off for what SMC calls Pack the Pavilion is 2pm.

Pack the House is the NCAA's second-year national effort to grow attendance for women's basketball.

... continued on page 19

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# Lamorinda Community


## Calendar, Notes, News

# Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, January 12	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, January 8	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, January 13	
Lafayette Finance Review Committee Report	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, January 13	
The City Council will hold a public workshop to review the work and recommendations of the committee	
Town of Lafayette: http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us Chamber of Commerce: http://www.lafayettechamber.org	





Lafayette Police Blotter will be back next time.



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### Finance Committee to Present Report

By Cathy Tyson

In an effort to have the most efficient budget possible and to address long term financial problems, the City Council appointed a dream team of experienced private sector business and finance volunteers to examine the City's budget and come up with recommendations to improve effectiveness. With four failed tax measures and potentially declining future revenue, the report could not have come at a better time.

Starting in April the Committee reviewed the results of the 1992 report by a prior Finance Review Committee, interviewed city-wide department heads, looked at

last year's audits, analyzed the effect of the Redevelopment Agency on finances and reviewed major capital projects. The City Council scheduled a public Workshop to discuss the report in detail with the Finance Review Committee on January 13 at the Lafayette Community Center.

Currently Lafayette has an \$18M unfunded backlog of road repairs and the lowest police staffing in Contra Costa County. In addition, there's a \$250,000 annual shortfall in revenue for downtown maintenance. Looking forward, future projections are not very encouraging, "two of the primary revenue sources - sales

and property tax - can be seriously and adversely affected by downturns in the economy," according to the report.

The six member committee went through the budget from soup to nuts looking for ways to reduce expenditures and enhance revenue. In doing so they, "assessed both the financial impact and the risk to the community. This analysis led to the options falling into one of four quadrants," ranging from Low Financial Impact / Low Risk to High Financial Impact / High Risk. Everything was on the table from eliminating the annual holiday party to diverting the Parking Fund balance to

road repair to reducing payroll.

On the whole they found, "The City has generally done a very good job of identifying and acting upon opportunities to manage the taxpayer's money with prudence and leveraging outside sources of revenue."

Bottom line, the Final Report had six specific recommendations. The first is to acquire what will soon be the old library site for city offices. Right now the city is renting office space at Desco Plaza. Launching a study to evaluate opportunities for a more cost effective Police Services structure is their second recom-

mendation. Thirdly, reclassify the Youth Diversion officer as a non-sworn position.

The balance of the recommendations include: Transfer the current balance in the Parking Fund to pavement management program; Fund future downtown maintenance with assessment districts; Increase revenue using one or more of these options: property transfer tax, increase sales tax, business license fee.

The City Council Finance Review Workshop will be held on January 13 at the Lafayette Community Center. To read the report in full go to [www.lovelafayette.org](http://www.lovelafayette.org).

### Wide Range of Options for Fitness at Lafayette Rec

By Cathy Tyson



Many options at the Lafayette Rec Center on St. Mary's Road

Plants getting a little tight? Maybe they didn't shrink in the dryer. For those of us who made a New Year's resolution to get healthier and/or slimmer, Lafayette Recreation Programs are just what the doctor ordered. From Jazzer-

ize to Weight Training for Women to Gentle Yoga for seniors, even Belly Dancing, there is something for everyone right in town.

"It just makes sense," said Jennifer Russell, Parks and Recreation Director refer-

ring to the Try Lafayette First campaign. "It's convenient, saving gas, saving money and most of the instructors are from Lamorinda."

She's not kidding, with reasonable prices and classes starting in January, this could be just the opportunity to actually keep at least one new years resolution.

Jazzercise instructor Nancy Goldner comments that her class is, "fun, extremely effective and covers everything in sixty minutes. It's friendly, non-competitive and lends itself to a wide range of ages and abilities." Goldner



Photos provided

ing calories while dancing? No experience necessary. It's not every day that you get to let out your inner Latina in Lafayette.

Addressing the scale directly is, What Works Weight Management, described in the class catalogue as, "Are you one of those people who say in frustration, 'I know HOW to lose weight, I just can't seem to DO it?'" Do you long to fit into the beautiful now too-small clothes in your closet? In this valuable four-week class you will learn tools that really work to help you lose weight in relation to your personal lifestyle, schedule and obstacles."

With a total of 199 classes, the breadth of offerings is unbeatable and obviously too numerous to name here. Here are just a few: pilates, tennis, roller hockey even "Quick and healthy meals from Costco and Trader Joe's." For more information, go to [www.lafayetterec.org](http://www.lafayetterec.org).

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**Big Band Ball Room Dance**



*with The Rossmoor Big Band*

**Friday, January 23, at the Art Deco Rheem Theatre in Moraga.**

Doors open at 6:30 pm and the dance runs from 7:00pm through 10:00pm.

**Tickets \$10 per person**

available at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Rheem Theatre in Moraga and Orinda Chamber of Commerce.

**Call 284-7404 for reservations** [www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org)

# Lamorinda Community

## Calendar, Notes, News

# Moraga

Shop **locally** whenever you can.

Only your support of our **local** businesses will keep them open!

- Calendar**
- City Council** 7:30pm  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School  
1010 Camino Pablo  
Wednesday, January 14
  - Planning Comm.** 7:30pm  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, January 20
  - Design Review** 7:30pm  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Monday, January 12
  - Park & Rec** 7:30pm  
Hacienda, Mosaic Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, January 20
  - Liaison** 8:00am  
Fire Station  
1280 Moraga Way  
Friday, January 9
- Town of Moraga online:  
<http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us>



**Minor drinking, 12/31/08** Officers went to Camino Pablo School on a report of kids partying loudly. A 17-year-old, who police recognized from other encounters, was contacted. When asked if he had been drinking, he replied in the negative. Our frequent flyer was also asked if he had any contraband with him, he admitted to having a can of beer in his backpack. Then he 'fessed up that he actually had been drinking. The young man was cited for 'minor in possession of alcohol.' His parents were contacted and the cops were kind enough to give him a lift home.

**Attempted commercial burglary, 12/30/08** Officers responded to an alarm from Longs Drugs, and during an exterior check discovered someone had forced open a door. Suspect(s) entered the building and forced open two interior doors to enter the pharmacy. Subject(s) left before officers arrived at just after midnight. It couldn't be determined if any drugs were taken at this time.

**Pre-New Year's bash, 12/28/08** At 5:45 in the morning an anonymous citizen reported a vehicle collision on Scofield Drive. Upon arrival officers noted a black Toyota Avalon crashed into a utility pole - both the driver and passenger airbags deployed, but occupants were mysteriously not there. The driver was eventually located in Orinda and admitted to the crash. Why would they flee the scene?

**Christmas Eve car burglary, 12/24/08** Looking for a pre-holiday workout, a woman parked and locked her car at the new 24-Hour Fitness on Rheem Boulevard at 8:30 in the morning. When she returned at 9:30, the passenger side window was smashed and her black suede jacket and leather purse were missing. Total estimated loss \$1,000.

## Retail in Moraga: Fighting to Stay Alive

By Sophie Braccini



Andrea Lucacher carries out a burrito from Mucho Wraps Photo Sophie Braccini

The holiday season has come and gone. Moraga's retail business owners are checking their cash registers to see if the seasonal shopping was enough to compensate for an otherwise morose 2008. The results? Businesses that offered essentials for seasonal celebrating did well, while those whose wares are perceived as being luxuries or dispensable continue to have a harder time.

At the UPS store, Javier Galdon noticed that people waited until the last minute to send their packages, but they finally did. "We had a good year," he says, "and we are confident for the new year."

Hallmark in the Moraga Center had a great December as well. Liz White, the store manager, explains, "We had a ginger bread house that was very popular," she says, "as well as many stocking stuffers such as the individual tissue pack with a Christmas theme."

For the same reason, The Beauty Source reports a good holiday season. "Business was as good as ever," says Julia Kubik, "we had a rush just before Christmas and sold a lot of stocking stuffers." She believes that people in Moraga understand the Shop Moraga First concept and she keeps a positive outlook for 2009.

Susan Marconi from Across the Way shares Kubik's opinion. "The holiday season was very good for us, we offered very serious discounts to our customers and they appreciated it." She is happy that a good December has helped her to meet her sales goal. She notes though that the goals for this year had been lowered from last year and that her good results came at the expense of her profit margin. "We will have to stay very creative to ride out these difficult times," she adds, "We are entering uncharted territory."

Vivien Hart at the Moraga Art Gallery reported solid sales during the holidays as well and so did Jorge Quintero, owner of the Rheem Pet Shoppe. "We sold out of all our small animals," he says, "on the other hand, people didn't buy as many gifts for their pets as they usually do." Overall his December figures were the same as last year, but he anticipates a soft beginning for 2009.

Businesses offering non-essential goods are suffering more. Two purveyors of flowers, St Mary's Flowers and Gifts and King Florist and Gifts, both had a difficult 2008 and a disappointing holiday season. "These are luxury items," explains St Mary's Flowers owner Sandra Meily, "we did okay in terms of Christmas centerpieces but our

season results were 20% less than last year." For 2008 she recorded a drop of 60% in her sales.

Arlene Kohn, owner of King Florist, is not doing too well either. "We were down about 40% in October," she said, "in December we made about 15% less than last year." She has had to lay off two part-time employees and works six days a week herself. Neither Meily nor Kohn have a very positive outlook on 2009. "We had a similar period ten years ago and we went through it, we will do it again," says Meily; to boost her numbers she's planning a huge sale on all her gifts items.

Nail salons are in the same boat. Hanna Nails reports a slow season while Karen Binh at Dynasty Nails admitted that the season was okay, but not super compared to previous years. "This is a New Year and what better way to be happier than by getting a pedicure/manicure," said the perky storeowner.

To fight the tough times some are turning to the community in creative ways. Patrick Vahey of Pennini's proposed an innovative campaign to the Moraga Education Foundation (MEF).

"I give a lot to all the groups in town," says Vahey, "but I do not always know what the return is on these donations." So he offered MEF 10% of all sales made between now and the end of the school year as long as patrons sign "MEF" on their bills. "I will have special days as well with the other groups, so we can support each other." Vahey reports an even year for Pennini's, but his higher-end restaurant, Michael's, has shown some decline.

That same phenomenon is seriously affecting other town favorites, such as Amoroma. "The holiday season was not that good," said Amoroma co-owner Michele Lavecchia, "we were down 10 to 15% down from last year, which was much better than the very bad October and November." Lavecchia is concerned that there won't be any improvement for months; in the meantime, he hasn't touch his prices at all, "not to scare customers away!"

Roos Pal at Terzetto Café doesn't want to raise her prices either. The hard-working woman has seen a decline in the number of evening diners, about 30%, but an increase at lunch and breakfast. "Our New Year's Eve dinner was very successful," she said, "it was our first time and we will certainly do it again." Pal is not one to give up anyway. She is always bustling with new ideas and keeps a very positive outlook on 2009. "It is going to be a very good year," she says, "we will develop new products such as our catering that worked so well over the holidays, or the Art and Wine evenings that we will schedule monthly."

Chain stores like Tuesday Morning and Home Goods could not comment because only their distant headquarters know the numbers. Longs Manager Mike Lawrence is more independent and he knows how his two stores are

doing. "We want to thank the community for its support," he says, "if our numbers are lower in December it is by less than 1%. For us, there hasn't been a recession."

Tom Peterson of the Rheem Theatre was a bit disappointed by

the season. "We'll see what happens," he said, "Jim (his partner) and I know our business and we will offer great entertainment to Lamorinda in 2009." Like all the businesses, he plans to try to keep Moraga fun and alive.

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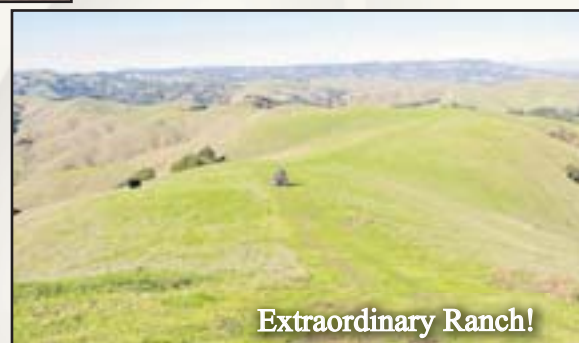
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- Jan 25: "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Christians, Part 2"
- Feb 1: "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Christians, Part 3"

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# Lamorinda Community

## Calendar, Notes, News

# Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, January 20	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, January 13	

**Planning Process Review Task Force Public Workshops**  
 Saturday, January 10, 2009, 9:00am to noon  
 Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way and  
 Wednesday, January 21, 2009, 7pm to 9pm  
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, Orinda City Hall  
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Town of Orinda:  
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 Chamber of Commerce:  
<http://www.orindachamber.org>  
 • local businesses  
 • upcoming events



**Senior booze burglar, 12/29/08** A 64-year-old Orinda resident tried to shoplift a 1.75 liter bottle of JB Scotch from Longs Drugs on Moraga Way in the middle of the afternoon. When confronted by store personnel, she took bottle out of her purse and fled toward Camino Pablo. At a traffic stop not far from the store, police held an in-field line up, where the older female suspect was positively identified – perhaps it was her red sweater, gray hair and glasses? Or was it because the store manager recognized her from a prior theft caught on surveillance camera where she absconded with two bottles of Gran Marnier?

**D.U.I., 12/27/08** A suspect collided with a parked car on Orchard Road at 2:30 in the morning. Bumper car boy smelled like alcohol, had slurred speech and an unsteady gait - an intoxication trifecta. The subject's car had five pounds of illegal fireworks and explosives in the trunk.

**Bad check, 12/26/08** A suspect walked into the Bank of American on Orinda Way and wanted to cash a check. A quick thinking teller determined the check was fake and the signature forged. The suspect was arrested and taken to Martinez for processing. Note to Santa – this guy is naughty, will some quality time in jail make him nicer?

**Robbery foiled, 12/24/08** An Oakland resident entered a Scenic Drive driveway in the middle of the night, but was confronted by residents, so he left. Homeowners wisely called the cops who found the suspect's vehicle three blocks from the driveway in question. Officers found, gasp! burglary tools in his car. Subject was arrested for possession of burglary tools.



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## Orinda Recruits for Committee and Commission Vacancies

By Andrea A. Firth



Orinda residents at a Planning Process Review meeting Photo Andrea A. Firth

With the start of the new year, Orinda's City Council will embark upon the annual recruitment process to fill vacancies on the various City Committees and Commissions that are staffed by volunteer residents. Orinda has approximately eighty community volunteers who serve as members on the fifteen active committees and commissions and couple of task forces that are winding down. "The residents of Orinda feel community participation is important—an essential element to a strong and open governing process. People here are very capable and very generous with their time, and the City greatly benefits from this," says Mayor Sue Severson.

The committees and commissions that function in Orinda serve in a variety of advisory roles including finance, planning, public safety, community services and aesthetics. In many ways the City's various committees and commissions are an extension of city operations. While they coordinate with the City Council and Staff, they conduct their reviews independently, and their role is typically to advise, not decide.

"There is a great deal of Staff and Council effort and time that goes into supporting our various committees," notes City Manager Janet Keeter. "However, given the limited budget that the City has to operate and provide services, it is

a wonderful gift of time and expertise that the residents give to the City. Many of the resident volunteers have backgrounds in finance (including budgeting and investing), planning, engineering, real estate, art, architecture, and the list goes on. Were it not for many of these individuals, the City would need to hire and pay for the expertise," she adds.

Severson concurs, "As a small City with a small budget, we could not afford to pay for the level of expertise and advice that we receive from the members of our committees, commissions, and task forces. The commitment to community volunteerism is one of Orinda's greatest strengths."

The work of many of these committees, commissions, and task forces requires a considerable investment of time and energy, and the issues that they are asked to tackle are not without the potential for controversy. "The individuals who join the committees take their appointments and the goals of their committees seriously," states Severson. As the Council representative on the recently disbanded Revenue Enhancement Task Force, she worked with the group to distill the voluminous amount of information generated into a nine-point plan for the public to review, which faced some criticism from members of the Moraga Orinda Fire District. "Our task was to look at all the options," explains Severson. "The task force did not pre-

select, couch or ignore any of the ideas that came forward. We did not eliminate anything, and it evolved into the nine-point plan that was presented. It was an amazing process," she adds.

The work of the Planning Process Review Task Force (PPRTF) is another prime example of resident volunteers tackling some tough issues and then working through the public review process. "The PPRTF members immersed themselves into learning and understanding the Planning Department's current opera-



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tions and means of processing residential and commercial plans and proposals. Armed with that information, and with some first hand experience, the members very methodically and intensely developed recommendations for improvement," explains Keeter. "We are now at a point in time where the PPRTF is vetting the recommendations through a public workshop process before submitting the final report to the Planning Commission and the City Council. This type of thorough analysis by the PPRTF, although it involved an immense amount of staff time, supplemented the City's ability and resources to conduct such a study," she adds.

The process of including resident volunteers aligns with

the practice of involving community members in local government, according to Keeter. The involvement not only educates residents in the City's functions and challenges, but also provides the City with different perspectives. "As a committee or commission member, a resident is taken on as a partner with the City," says Severson. "The City values their expertise and input. It's a collaborative process."

Applications for the current committee and commission openings in Orinda are available at the City website ([www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org)) and further information can be obtained from the City Clerk's office (email: [molsen@city-oforinda.org](mailto:molsen@city-oforinda.org); phone 253-4221).



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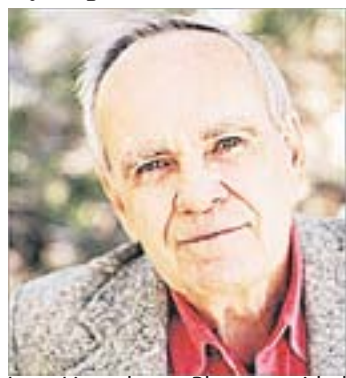
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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Has Our Country Finally Become Colorblind?

A Commonwealth Club Presentation

By Sophie Braccini



Leon Litwack Photo provided

As our nation prepares to inaugurate its first African-American President, some Americans wonder if our country can truly become colorblind. At its core, the story of America is the constant re-defining of the ideas most central to the Constitution: Liberty, freedom and equality. How will Obama's victory shape American history? How far have we come as a result of this past election, and how much farther do we still need to go? Three Bay Area professors will debate these questions on Thursday, January 15, at the Veterans Hall, 3780 Mount Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. The event is titled: **Problems with Progress: a Historical Perspective on the Presidency.**

"I don't think our country has evolved enough," says Leon Litwack, Pulitzer Prize Winner and Professor Emeritus of American

History at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB). "Racism is very much a part of our country, the election is an important step but we can't know yet if the symbolic impact of the election will be strong enough; we still have a long way to go." Litwack believes that something a black preacher in the 70's said about the impact of the civil right movement is still valid: "Everything has changed and nothing has changed," and that's where we are now," adds Litwack.

Litwack is the 1980 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for history for his book "Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery." He retired from UCB at the end of the spring 2007 semester. From 1964 to 2007, Litwack taught more than 30,000 at UCB. For much of that time, he taught the introductory course in post-Civil War American History, and was the Alexander F. and May T. Morrison Professor of American History. In addition to the Pulitzer Prize in History, he has received many honors in recognition of his distinguished and path-breaking scholarship, including the Francis Parkman Prize, the American Book Award, and election to the presidency of the Organization of American Historians. Litwack has also been an enormously popular and influential teacher. He was pro-

filed in Newsweek's 2006 edition of the "Giving Back Awards," having been nominated by one of his former students. He has received two distinguished teaching awards. Litwack was also presented with the Golden Apple Award for Outstanding Teaching in 2007 by the Associated Students of the University of California.

Richard Thompson Ford, the George E. Osborne Professor of Law at Stanford Law School, will present with Litwack. An expert on civil rights and anti-discrimination law, Richard Thompson Ford has distinguished himself as an insightful voice and compelling writer on questions of race and multiculturalism. His work has focused on the social and legal conflicts surrounding claims of discrimination, on the causes and effects of racial segregation, and on the use of territorial boundaries as instruments of social regulation. His book "THE RACE CARD: How Bluffing About Bias Makes Race Relations Worse," a sharp, tightly argued and delightfully contentious work, Richard Thompson Ford vivisectioned every sacred cow in "post-racist" America.

James Taylor, Associate Professor of Politics at the University of San Francisco, will be the third participant in the panel. Taylor is

the president-elect of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. His dissertation was on contemporary Black politics and political involvement as reflected in the Million Man March, in which he personally participated. Most recently, Professor Taylor contributed a chapter to Barbara McGraw and Jo Renee Formicola's Taking Religious Pluralism Seriously (Baylor, 2005). He has also written a chapter for the book, Religious Leaders and Faith-Based Politics (2002), and contributed an essay to the 2002 Report on Violence in San Francisco, published by the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, and focused in particular on the causes and impact of violence on communities of color. Taylor has served as a Task Force member for the "Slavery Disclosure Ordinance," sponsored by San Francisco County and City Supervisor Sophie Maxwell. He is working on a book titled "Sons of Thunder: Malcolm X, Louis Farrakhan & The Haunting of America."

The California Historical Society co-organized the evening. Tickets are \$12 for members, \$18 for non-members, \$7 for students. For tickets, visit commonwealth-club.org or call (415) 597-6705.

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## Lamorinda's Diverse Talents Help East Bay Deaf Children

By Sophie Braccini

Orinda's Jill Ellis is the Director of the Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (CEID), a Berkeley not-for-profit school servicing deaf and hard of hearing children from the East Bay. Last November she invited to the Center a team from Kaiser Oakland that had performed a treatment that changed the lives of many deaf patients: cochlear implant surgery.

The team included the Chief of Pediatric Otolaryngology Dr. Joshua Gottschall, Chief of Otolaryngology Dr. Raymond Hilsinger (an Orinda resident as well) and audiologist Linda Barton. The team usually sees a patient about three times, but when they visited CEID they had the opportunity to see the children one or two years after surgery and witness the

progress they have made.

A cochlear implant is a surgically implanted electronic device that provides a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard of hearing. Unlike hearing aids, the cochlear implant does not amplify sound, but works by directly stimulating any functioning auditory nerves inside the cochlea (the auditory portion of the

inner ear) with an electric field.

... continued on page 7

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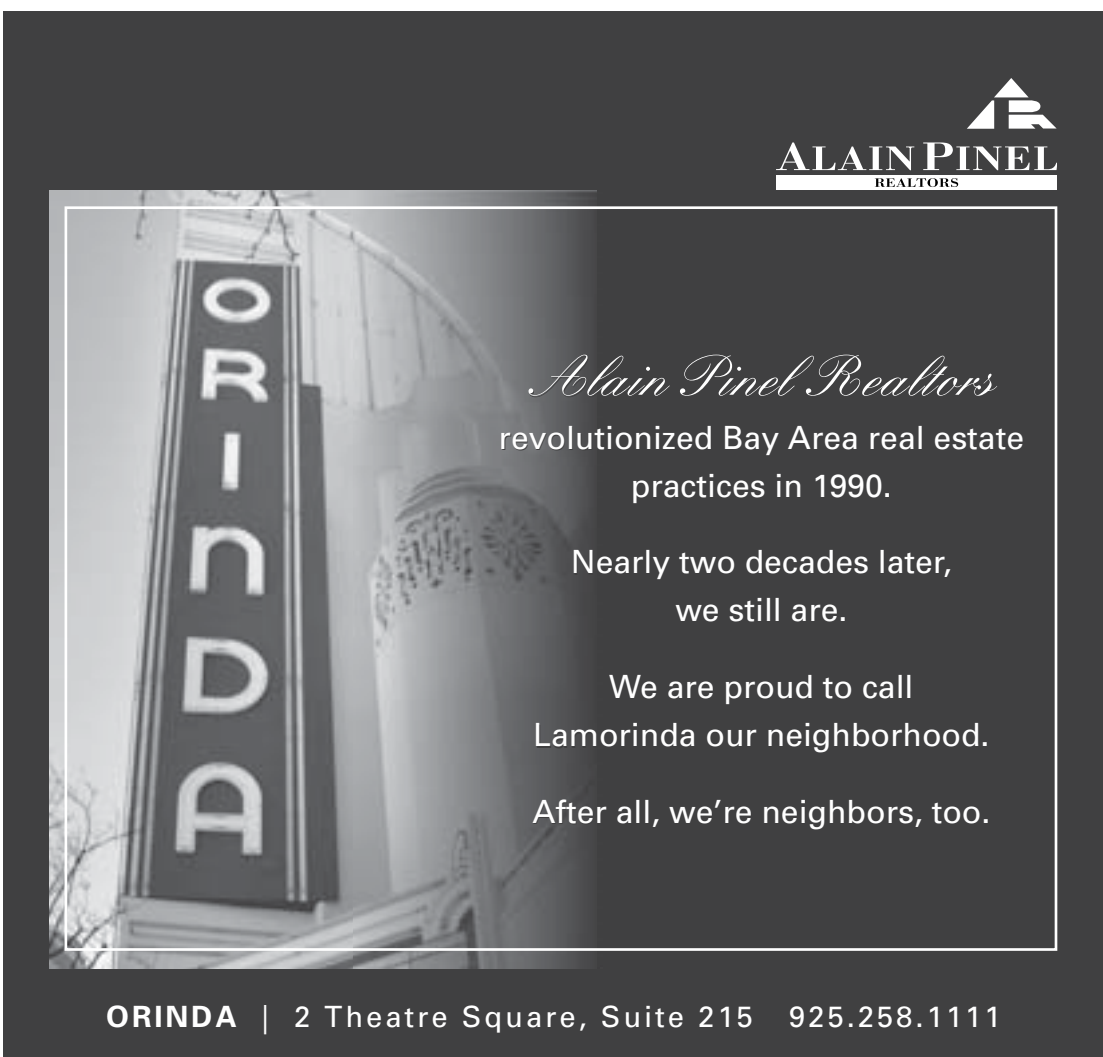
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# Letters to the Editor



Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for length or legal considerations.

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

Dear Editor,

I appreciated the community police reports as it keeps us aware and watchful. However please eliminate the "cutesy" comic remarks at the close of each item. It's not appropriate. Thank you.

B. Campbell  
Lafayette

Dear Editor,

Further to Ms. Pam Swarts' excellent clear letter in Dec 24, she is absolutely right on. Is Lafayette becoming a sister city to Chicago Illinois, where the Lafayette City council does not listen to "we the people", but instead worships Messrs. Holt & Bowie.

Mr. Holt went thru the process of the planning commission. Mr. Holt was sitting as a planning commissioner, and finally he realized the conflict of interest issue in hearing his own application. He excused himself, but took a seat in the auditorium, where he could keep "eye contact" with his fellow commissioners. Even thru this intimidation, the Planning commission voted the application down.

Now Mr. Holt is trying to circumvent this whole process. The City council has the planning commission to do the work whether to recommend or deny the application. They anonymously rejected.

Lafayette - among other - stands for nature, trees, beautiful hill-sides, and even the city logo - right behind the seated city council members - has a tree in in. Mr. Holts plan calls for cutting down some apx. 20 old red-wood trees. The un-employed former Berkeley tree sitters have been out and seen the trees. They are quite worried and ready to tree-sit. Do we really need this in Lafayette, to put extra burden on our 2 police officers on duty? Haven't we learned from the crosses, where a landowner was able to express a political point. Has the city

ever billed Louise for extra police overtime, when the worshippers come and have their candlelight vigils. Who pays for that? You and me. Do you ever think the city will bill an old pal Mr. Holt, if the tree sitters come? They stayed at UC Berkeley for almost 1 year. Please come out and see for yourself at Sierra Vista way and Session, as the proposed building lot is staked out. You will be horrified what political clout and money may be doing.

Above is only some of many serious other problems with this lot.

City Council - please remember, who elected you. We the People. Mr. Holt is only 1 vote.

Allan Houlberg  
Lafayette

## LAMORINDA Community

### Route 106 Spared For Campolindo Students

By Sophie Braccini

The Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA, also known as County Connection), in response to an outpouring of concern from parents in a large residential neighborhood of Moraga, has agreed to maintain some of the Route 106 bus line that had been scheduled to be cut due to budgetary concerns.

Sarah Roberts, who coordinated a petition campaign, is happy with the results of her grassroots efforts. "I am thrilled to be able to tell you that I received word from Al Dessayer, Moraga's Citizen Advisory Representative to the County Connection (CCCTA), that at the December 16th meeting the County Connection voted to approve the 'School Tripper' bus service we petitioned them about," wrote the Moraga mother in a recent email to parents.

Last November, County Connection announced that due to budgetary constraints they had to cut about 25% of their routes. The decision on what routes to cut was based solely on the number of passengers per day at each stop. That's how the part of Route 106 that serves Canyon Road and Camino Pablo Drive in Moraga was cut: it is used primarily by students going or coming from Campolindo and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate (JM) schools. That's not many passenger when you look at the whole day, but for some students the route is their only way to get to school.

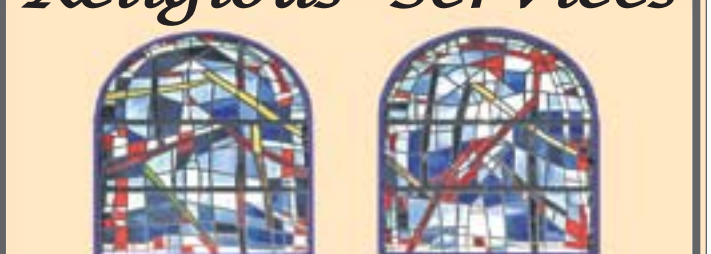
After learning about the proposed cuts, Roberts, who has children at both schools, started a campaign to encourage parents to petition the agency. The Campolindo High School Parents Club and Joaquin Moraga PTA supported her and sent emails to all parents asking them to participate in the campaign. "We could not have been able to get this word out without help from Diana Obrand, President of JM's PTA and Ann Oeth and Grace Panetta, Co-Presidents of the Campolindo Parents Club," acknowledges Roberts. "We all know these economic times are hard, and public agencies also need to make cuts to their services, but keeping the 'school tripper' routing of the 106 bus will keep

dozens of cars off the Moraga streets daily."

Dessayer confirmed that CCCTA will run one bus in the morning and one in the afternoon. "The service is maintained for Campolindo students," said Dessayer, who personally worked with CCCTA staff to make this happen. "As far as JM is concerned, the number of students was too small (to warrant service). I personally observed only two or three JM students taking the bus."

The service will remain unchanged until March 22nd, after that date the 'school tripper' schedule will be implemented. For further updates, go to the County Connection webpage at <http://www.cccta.org/index.html>

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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Too Sweets Says Goodbye

By Sophie Braccini



Marcy Wheeler in her Lafayette bakery

Photo provided

Emily Sabatte is quite distressed. For eight years now the Lafayette mom has been buying her daughters' birthday cakes at Too Sweets in Lafayette and now that the shop is closing, she doesn't know another local bakery that would offer the same quality and creative conceptions.

The bakery has been located at 3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd. for thirteen years. "We started our first business in Berkeley when we were very young," remembers Marcy Wheeler, the bakery's owner, "our first place was The Edible Express on College Avenue, and the first Too Sweets in Berkeley supplied the café on College."

"We have been customers of theirs since the Edible Express days," recalls Connie Chiba of Moraga. She used to take her toddlers there (they are now adults), "and we were so delighted when they moved to

Lafayette in the 90's."

Creating cakes was always Wheeler's forte. "Marcy created a most delicious and beautiful cake for the baptism of my first daughter," remembers Sabatte, "her decoration was delicate and dainty."

Wheeler's ability to create unique decorations was one of the Sabatte's favorite features. "Marcy always added something special and for my daughters the arrival of the pink box was the real beginning of the celebration."

When Wheeler's son reached 6th grade, the family moved to Lafayette. "It was a perfect solution for me," she explains, "I worked and lived here, the kids and their friends helped at the bakery during the holidays, it was part of our identity."

Now that her children are grown, Marcy says it's time to retire from the bakery. "When you're young you feel that you can do it

all," she says. But last year she hurt her shoulder transporting heavy trays and after she underwent surgery, she realized that something had to change.

Behind her Lafayette bakery, she's been renting a studio with the Lamorinda Arts Alliance where painters meet, work, interact and also offer art classes for adults.

"I felt we needed a place to work together, not only a location to sell," says Wheeler, "and this is why this studio came to life." She adds that if she didn't have her painting, leaving the bakery would have been much harder. "Art is my number one passion and I've had to make choices," confesses Wheeler.

Wheeler and her husband have sold Too Sweets' lease to a frozen yogurt business; she thinks that this is a hard time for high-end bakeries and it might be the right time for her to retire anyway. "People go to Safeway or Costco because it is cheaper," she acknowledges, "but by doing so they make choices that will kill the independent businesses that live in their community." She believes that a movement like "Try Lafayette First" is a great initiative to raise people's awareness about the importance of shopping locally.

Over the years, she created or modified hundreds of recipes. "I'd love to have the recipe for her pecan pie," says Chiba, "and her Boston cream cake, and her tarts which were so excellent."

Wheeler plans to create a

recipe book that will be available for purchase on blurb.com. She would like her customers to send her emails indicating what recipes they are most interested in; her email address is: marcy@marcy-wheeler.com.

*Lafayette Police Officers were regularly spotted having their morning oatmeal at Too Sweets. Wheeler says: "I know it sounds silly, but the recipe most people have asked for lately is for our oatmeal. Sometimes it is those little 'tricks' that make the difference!"*

### Too Sweets Oatmeal

Bring 2 cups water to a rolling boil. Add a pinch of salt and 1 cup Quaker Oats Old Fashioned Oatmeal.

Stir only briefly. Turn down heat to low.

Continue to cook 5 minutes, and then turn off heat and let sit for 3-5 more minutes.

Letting the water boil first and not over-agitating the cooking oatmeal helps keep the structure of the individual rolled oat. You just can't get that texture with instant, or if you beat it up with a spoon as it's cooking. Having the water already boiling before adding the oats helps set the shape. Brown sugar, raisins, cinnamon, cream...that's all up to your preference.

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## Lamorinda's Diverse Talents Help East Bay Deaf Children

... continued from page 5



(LtoR) Jill Ellis, Linda Barton, Ray Hilsinger, Joshua Gottschall, Carol Lettko holding child Sunnan Mushtaq, and Kim Burke-Giusti (teacher of the deaf) Photo courtesy of CEID

External components of the cochlear implant include a microphone, speech processor and an RF transmitter. The therapy that follows the surgery is the key to the success of the intervention.

"When children are implanted, they don't automatically make sense of these new sounds they are hearing," explains CEID

speech/language pathologist Carol Lettko of Orinda.

"Our philosophy at CEID is to use signs and spoken words simultaneously, so they are seeing and hearing at the same time."

Ideally, a child should be diagnosed at birth, a first hearing aid should be given at 3 months so the hearing nerves get stimulated, and for severely impaired

and deaf children the cochlear implant surgery can be performed as early as twelve months.

After the surgery, it takes them nine months to make sense of sounds and start producing sentences. "The signing bridges the gap," adds Lettko, "my job as a speech pathologist is to teach them language and I see the children four times a week in individual sessions." CEID provides toddler and pre-school programs as well where the children learn language through play and structured activities.

The Kaiser team usually never sees the children after the surgery. Gottschall commented that he meets the children prior to the surgery, on the day of surgery, and for a follow up appointment, "but to see these children almost one to two years later and to see the progress they are making is just amazing. It is really wonderful to see how the

children flourish after implantation, which in large part is due to the nurturing environment CEID provides."

The Kaiser team observed their young patients within their educational environment and during individual speech and auditory training sessions. "I really liked the way the CEID staff worked with the children within a group setting in the classroom and then during a one on one individual therapy session," said Hilsinger, "we really enjoyed our visit and were particularly impressed with the progress our patients have made."

The cochlear implant surgery is not a miracle cure and results vary depending on the children. Some can rejoin mainstream schools, others continue in specialized environments, every child is different and parents make that decision.

For more information go to www.CEID.org.

## Trombonist Steve Turre - An Exciting Night of Jazz

By Andrea A. Firth



Jazz trombonist Steve Turre Photo provided

Born and raised in Lafayette, Turre attended Lafayette Elementary School where he got his start on the trombone. He and his (also very musical) siblings took lessons at Campana Music and participated in the music programs at Stanley Intermediate School as well. A graduate of Acalanes High School, Turre often returns to the Bay Area to visit family, conduct classes for middle and high school students and to perform before devoted fans in the local jazz scene.

Turre has been a member of the Saturday Night Live Band since 1984, teaches at the Juilliard School, and maintains a full schedule of international touring. He has worked and played with such jazz greats as Ray Charles, Woody Shaw, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Tito Puente, Van Morrison, Horace Silver and Max Roach. His diverse musical style has also been influenced by the Latin, blues, Afro-Cuban and pop music worlds. Turre also uses self-designed conch shells to make music, an instrument that his ancestors in Mexico also played.

Tickets are \$25 for general admission; \$20 seniors (65+); \$12 Saint Mary's College faculty, staff and non-SMC students; and \$2 SMC

students. For more information or to purchase tickets, please call 925.631.4381 or go to www.stmarys-ca.edu and click on "Arts."

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**MUSIC & THEATER**

**The Committee for Lectures, Art and Music** at Saint Mary's College welcomes Steve Turre, the man widely considered this generation's finest trombonist, on Wed., Jan. 14th. The performance takes place in the college's Soda Activity Center; curtain time is 8 p.m. Tickets: \$25 general; \$20 seniors (65+); \$12 Saint Mary's College faculty, staff and non-SMC students; \$2 SMC students. For more information or to purchase tickets, please call 925.631.4381 or visit www.stmarys-ca.edu. See article page 7

**Audition now for the East Bay premier women's ensemble!** WomenSing is holding auditions in early January, and by appointment for experienced singers. Altos are particularly encouraged to audition, but all voice parts are welcome. Contact us by email at [audition@womensing.org](mailto:audition@womensing.org), call our voice mail 925.974.9169, or go to [www.womensing.org](http://www.womensing.org) for more info.

**ART**

**Bert Monroy, Master Artist Tribute VIII:** A Digital Artist Paints With Light January 17 – April 5. The Hearst Art Gallery of Saint Mary's College is pleased to present a major survey of the preeminent digital master Bert Monroy, a world-renowned Photoshop artist and teacher, known for pioneering and innovative digital painting technique. On Sun., Jan. 18, at 2 p.m., using software as his brush and canvas, Monroy will offer a public Photoshop demonstration in the Soda Activity Center, followed by a reception. The exhibition opens Saturday, Jan. 17, and continues through Sunday, Apr. 5, 2009. Public Hours: Wed - Sun, 11 a.m. - 4:30p.m. Admission: \$3; children 12 and under free; Gallery members free. 925.631.4379. [www.hearstart-gallery.org](http://www.hearstart-gallery.org)

**The Moraga Art Gallery kicks off the New Year** with a double feature exploring an uncommon theme: The Northern Lights in Moraga. The January 6-March 14 show will highlight artworks by local artists Vivien Hart and Nina Tyksinski. Vivien, who lives in Orinda, creates artful cabinetry knobs and pulls from fused glass, "functional art on a glass canvas."

Lafayette writer-turned-painter Nina Tyksinski is known in the gallery for her large abstracts in acrylic, her recent paintings seek to capture the phenomenon of the northern lights using watercolor while placing them in local surroundings, including the Chapel at Saint Mary's and Mount Diablo. The Moraga Art Gallery is a co-operative gallery of 20 artists in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center, 570 Center Street in Moraga ([MoragaArt-Gallery.com](http://MoragaArt-Gallery.com)). Open Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 pm, 925.376.5407. Artist Reception for the Northern Lights show will be January 10, from 3 to 5 PM.

**Illuminated Sculpture opens January 11** and runs through February 22 at the Bedford Gallery, Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. The exhibit will showcase sculptures using a variety of forms of illumination including gases, incandescent light and emerging mediums like laser, plasma, fiber optics and light-emitting diodes (LED). Opening Reception: Sunday, Jan 11, 3-5 pm. Meet this innovative group of light artists, enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres. Free for LCA members, Friends of the Bedford. General admission \$5.

**"Objects of Affection," the new show at the Lafayette Gallery,** 50 Lafayette Circle, opens on Jan. 13th and runs through March 7th, 2009. A festive public reception will be on Feb 6, 2009, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. The show coincides with Valentine's Day celebrations. The viewer is treated to multiple canvases offering a fine art gift for your object of affection. For this special show, gallery artists create 12"x12" canvases with their personal interpretation of affection in all its many guises. Gallery Hours: 11-5 pm Tue. - Sat. 50 Lafayette Circle, 925-284-2788.

**PERSPECTIVES**

**Green Rheem film night- "The Future of Food"** Jan. 8th 6 pm wine and appetizers and at 7pm the movie starts. The movie offers an in-depth investigation behind the unlabeled, patented, and genetically engineered foods that have quietly filled U.S. grocery store shelves for the past decade. Green Rheem is organized by Generation Green, Sustainable Moraga, Sustainable Lafayette, and Parents for a Safer Environment. Rheem Theater, 350 Park Street, Moraga (Rheem Shopping Center) Pre order Tickets for \$14: [www.sustainablelafayette.net/events/green-rheem.html](http://www.sustainablelafayette.net/events/green-rheem.html) or at the ticket office for \$17.

A special program, **"How Green is Your Footprint,"** will be presented by The Association of University Women on Tuesday, Jan 13 from 9:30 - 11:30 am. Special Guest Speakers will be Doug Grandt and Paul Valva who are with Al Gore's Climate Project. There will be valuable tips for those who run households, raise and train children, occasionally mind the grandchildren and have concerns about reducing our carbon footprint. Many tables will be set up with products and representatives who will show you how to go green and with exciting new green project ideas for the future. The public is welcome - do come and wear green. Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga.

**Yesterday and Today: The Church and Anti-Semitism,** Some Historical Perspectives is the title of the talk Professor Johan Snapper will give at the Friday Forum on January 9 in Fellowship Hall at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments served at 1 p.m. with the lectures at 1:30 p.m. Snapper observes that when dealing with the Holocaust we usually focus on the Nazis or on the Jews. "My presentation adds an important third partner, the Christian Church." A retired professor from UC Berkeley, Snapper has lectured on the Holocaust at many universities and conferences in Europe and the United States.

**Health Care For All - California, Contra Costa Chapter,** will be holding its first

monthly meeting of the year on Sun., Jan. 11 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Concord Police Station, 1350 Galindo Road, Concord. Health Care For All - California is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Californians have comprehensive, reliable and affordable health care through a single payer public system. Admission is free and all are invited to attend. For more information contact Pat Snyder at [patsnydr@aol.com](mailto:patsnydr@aol.com) or (925) 962-0379.

**The Commonwealth Club of California presents: Problems with Progress: A Historical Perspective on the Presidency.** Thursday, January 15 at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mount Diablo Blvd in Lafayette (6:00 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. program.) As the nation prepares to inaugurate the first African-American president, Americans wonder if our country can truly become colorblind. How will Obama's victory shape American history? Join a quintessential American historian as he unveils the pitfalls and triumphs this election has delivered upon the American psyche. Tickets are \$12 for members, \$18 for non-members, \$7 for students. For tickets, visit [commonwealthclub.org](http://commonwealthclub.org) or call (415) 597-6705. See article on page 7.

**The theme for the 2009 presidential inauguration** is "A New Birth of Freedom," commemorating the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The community's Martin Luther King Day observance will be held at the Civic Park Community Center Assembly Hall, 1365 Civic Drive from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, January 19. The event is co-sponsored by the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County, the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center, and the City of Walnut Creek.

**A community celebration to mark the historic inauguration of Barack Obama,** the first African-American U.S. President, will be held Jan. 20th 7:30 to 10:30 am, Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. The event, which will include a live TV feed of the inauguration ceremony in the Hofmann Theatre, will be from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. The event is free but seating is limited and registration is required. To register, go online to <http://www.walnut-creek.com/>.

**OTHER**

**Lamorinda Teen Center Meeting.** Parents and middle and high school students are encouraged to attend a meeting to discuss plans for the proposed Lamorinda Teen Center on Jan. 7, 7 p.m. at the Orinda Community Center in Room 7. Tom McCormick, City Council Member, Orinda resident, parent and local attorney, will unveil plans for a Teen Center with the mission to provide a permanent place for Lamorinda youth that promotes mentoring and learning, and offers recreational, entertainment and social options in a safe and healthy environment.

**Paying for college:** A free workshop on getting thousands of dollars for your child's college education will be hosted at the Orinda Community Center Garden Room located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda on January 15 from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. The speakers will be members of Bay College Planners and cover such topics as how to send your kids to the school of their dreams without going broke; how to triple your eligibility for aid; how to find scholarships and grants you've never even heard of. The seminars will last one hour. Admission is free but seating is limited by the size of the room, so please call 877-924-3726 to reserve your seats now or register on line at [www.baycollegeplanners.com](http://www.baycollegeplanners.com).

**Salsa Dance Classes at the Orinda Community Center,** Salsa dancing is fun, playful, healthy...and easy to learn. No partner required. No experience necessary. Drop-ins are always welcome! Monday evenings. 7pm beginners, 8pm

intermediate. Jan. 5-Feb. 23 6-week series: \$69/single, \$126/couple. Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way Register by calling 925-254-2445, or at your first class!

**Beachcomber Singles-Newcomers Potluck Dinner,** Davies room, Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, Lafayette on Sun., Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m. Bring a potluck dish and beverage to share and \$2. Remember your New Year's Resolution to get out and meet new (nice) people! Call Jerry for more info 510.799.2207.

**Big Band Ball Room Dance,** Friday, January 23 at the Art Deco Rheem Theatre in Moraga, 350 Rheem Blvd. Doors open at 6:30 pm and the dance runs from 7:00pm through 10:00pm. Students from Acalanes High, Campolindo High and Stanley will be featured with the Rossmoor Big Band and students are encouraged to attend the dance. Tickets are \$10.00 and may be purchased at the Rheem Theatre, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce or the Orinda Chamber of Commerce. Purchase your tickets in advance, as this event has sold out in the past. Space is limited. Call 925-284-7404 or visit [www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org) for information. See article on front page 1.

**Orinda author Sally Small will discuss and sign copies** of her new novel Two Sloughs. Thursday, January 15 at 4pm. Orinda Book, 276 Village Square, Orinda. 925-254-7606. [www.orinda-books.com](http://www.orinda-books.com)

**The Orinda Woman's Club** is currently welcoming applications for major beneficiaries of the funds of next year's Festival of Trees Event held in November each year. Applicants must conform to specific guidelines and the organization must benefit families, women and/or children. Demonstrate that the funds go directly to hands-on care. For details and to obtain an application form, please contact Adeline McClatchie, 925 254 1162 [adeline@mcclatchie.com](mailto:adeline@mcclatchie.com)

**Widowed Persons Support** will be offering a series of six GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS. Saturdays from 10 a.m. to Noon January 10, 17, 24, 31, February 7 and 14, 2009 and will be held in St. Stephen's Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. These meetings are led by trained Facilitators. There is no charge and no need to make a reservation, just walk in. For information call: 510-932-3448.

**The Peripheral Neuropathy Group** will meet on Fri., January 23 from 10 AM to 11:30 AM in the Las Trampas Room at Hillside Club House. This will be a get acquainted and sharing of experiences time. Peripheral Neuropathy is a little known ailment and there has been no cure found. It has been found that people can help each other by sharing their experiences with Peripheral Neuropathy. There is no cost. For questions of any kind please contact Nancy Ostrander at 930-9524 or Carolyn Cash at 254-8195.

**Lafayette Senior Services Events**

**RSVP (925) 284-5050**  
All events take place at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd. A minimum \$1 donation at the door would be appreciated.

**Wednesdays Jan 7, 14, 21 and 28th, 12:30-3:00pm**  
Enjoy afternoon Tea Dancing and light refreshments, and learn some great new dance moves. Professional dancers Karen and Michael will provide a dance lesson and live DJ services, playing your favorites and taking requests. Live Oak Room, \$2 fee covers refreshments.

**Thursdays Jan 8, Jan 22, Feb 12, 1:00-2:30pm**  
Embracing Aging with Story and Movement. Marlys Tobias, InterPlay leader and dancer. Ease, joy, and playfulness can be an integral part of your life. We will share our stories and discover the wisdom of our bodies through movement. All bodies and hearts welcome.

**Thursdays Jan 8th and Feb 12th 10:30 - noon.**  
Positive Living Forum presents eminent speakers and a wide range of topics that will stimulate and guide participants towards a more ideal and positive life experience. Drop-ins are welcome.

**Thursday Jan 22 from 10:30 - Noon**  
Dr. Elliot Wagner, OMD, LAc, Licensed Acupuncturist, Dr. Wagner will explain in clear, simple language how acupuncture works, how it helps to heal pain, and what health problems it effectively treats.

**Fridays, Jan 16th and 30th. 1 -2:30pm.**  
A creative writing workshop based on the themes of self-discovery, aging, and healing will be offered by Izabela Filipiak, international lecturer and writer. Participants will create both semi-autobiographical and fictionalized narratives seeking inspiration from Leonora Carrington's deep, funny, and imaginative novel, The Hearing Trumpet, and other literary masterpieces as well as their own life experiences.

**Friday, Jan 23, 11:30am - 12:30pm**  
Come learn how to improve your balance and stop worrying about falling. Losing your balance is usually simply due to poor muscle strength, especially in your ankles. Learn exercises to improve your balance and feel confident walking on any surface. There is no charge. Please call (925)284-5050 to register.

**Tuesday, Feb 10, 1-2:30pm**  
Mollie Fujioka will relate what it was like to be traumatically uprooted by order of the United States government to live under harsh conditions at the infamous Tule Lake internment camp in California during WWII. She will cover not only what life was like during those childhood formative years - she graduated from high school there! - but also how she and her family have managed not only to survive but to thrive.

**Friday Feb 20, 1:30 - 2:30pm**  
Afternoon Piano Jazz Cafe at the Community Center Featuring Members of the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society on. The music varies from show tunes and jazz standards to original compositions. There is no charge, but, a small donation would be appreciated. Light refreshments are offered. Call Lafayette Senior Services at 284-5050 to let us know you are coming.

**Monday Jan 26, 1:30 - 2:30pm**  
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, call 284-5050. Drop-ins welcome.

*Lafayette Senior Services Commission meets on the 4th Thursday at 3:30 - 5:30: PM at the Lafayette Senior Services Center. Interested citizens may view meeting agendas at the City of Lafayette office or at [www.ci.lafayette.ca.us](http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us).*

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# LAMORINDA Seniors

## Let's Dance at Rheem!

... continued from page 1



The King Sisters' opening night at the Rheem Theater in the mid 50's Photo Don Bradley, provided by Rheem Theatre

Frank Como, a Rossmoor resident who was the top arranger for Lionel Hampton for twenty years in New York City, writes for the band and arranges pieces so that each musician, including the youngest, shines on stage. The enthusiasm and fun the students have playing with their elders creates the unique sound of the Rossmoor group.

"We are very excited to be part of this fun event," says Edy Schwartz, President of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, "the Band is amazing and their music always gets people dancing all night long."

The event is co-spon-

sored by the City of Lafayette, the Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda Chambers of Commerce, Lafayette and Moraga Recreation Departments,

Companion Care and Diablo Rapid Print. The Big Band of Rossmoor is sponsored by Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage.

**What:** Big Band Ball Room Dance  
**Who:** The Big Band of Rossmoor and the communities of Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga and Rossmoor  
**When:** Friday, January 23, 2009, 7:00-10:00 (doors open at 6:30)  
**Where:** The Rheem Theatre, located off Rheem Blvd at 350 Park Street (Rheem Center) in Moraga  
**Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at:**  
 The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, 100 Lafayette Circle #103;  
 The Orinda Chamber of Commerce, 26 Orinda Way;  
 The Moraga Chamber of Commerce, by email to Edy Schwartz, edy321@comcast.net;  
 The Rheem Theatre, 350 Park St.  
 Purchase your tickets in advance, as this event has sold out in the past and space is limited. Call 925-284-7404 or visit [www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org) for more information.

## Happiness - The Search For ?

By Jeanne Dowell

Webster's dictionary defines happiness as "pleasurable/satisfaction, a state of well being and contentment."

There is a ground swell of the need for happiness in our lives; a void that makes us aware something is missing.

"Laughter Yoga" classes are growing in popularity. There are more comedy movies, new comedians on the rise, and a new theme park in El Cerrito started by Richard Track, who wanted to preserve the fun things of the past with a museum dedicated to "happy fun things to do" with the original "laughing Sal" from San Francisco Playland at the beach.

On opening my mail, I found a brochure "Happiness and its Causes - An Exploration of Human Happiness in San Francisco at the Westin Hotel. The DMV holds comedy drivers classes for negligent drivers. There is also a website called the "Happiness Project."

What is happiness? Is it

possible? What holds us back from it? How to find happiness in the midst of suffering and sadness? What is the role of introspection? How to bring happiness to others?

Introspection techniques such as meditation, and combined with Yoga have been found to help in overcoming depression and anxiety. Kindness and compassion can aid us into a happy state of being. Happiness can be a learned behavior. Abraham Lincoln once said "most of us are about as happy as we make our minds to be." Lincoln had suffered bouts of severe depression and anxiety for years.

Last summer I took part of June, July and August off to mentally "catch up" and attended a wonderful Yoga and meditation retreat, went hiking with friends in the high Sierras and had enjoyable times with my grandchildren, my house, garden, pets and realized I needed this reconnection with nature and family to preserve my

sense of well being. I plan to continue this program I discovered that worked for me.

- Spend more quality time with my family and grandchildren
- Spend more time in nature
- "I won't cry because it is over - but smile because it happened"
- Enjoy the process
- Do it now
- Stay present
- Live with compassion and kindness

Happiness is an attitude and a process we can all learn, but it must be practiced continually to make it work.

Jeanne Dowell is a certified Yoga instructor with an emphasis on the Iyengar-Anusara method. She has taught at Moraga's Hacienda de las Flores for over 30 years and currently teaches through the Moraga and Orinda Parks and Recreation Departments among other venues. She recently founded, with her daughter, an eco-friendly line of clothing and accessories, [www.thegreenbuddha.net](http://www.thegreenbuddha.net). She believes in practicing the Attitude of Gratitude.

## Moraga Movers Elect New Board

Submitted by George Fisher

The Moraga Movers wound up their banner year with their Christmas luncheon at St. Mary's College on Monday, December 15. The Soda Center was a beautifully decorated setting for the 130 Movers in attendance. Entertainment was provided by a surprise visit from the SIRpremes, the au-

gust barbershoppers from SIR Branch 171 and the NOTEables, the 25-member mixed chorus from the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church.

The 2009 Executive Board was elected by acclamation: Pat Jensen, Recording Secretary; Marcia Fisherkeller, Corresponding

Secretary; Phil Arth, Vice President; George Fisher, President, and Bob Foxall, Treasurer.

Membership applications are available at the Moraga Parks office, La Sala, on the Town of Moraga web site (click on Departments, then Community Links), or by calling the office at 376-6622.

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# business briefs

## UPS Store Expands – to Barcelona, 480 Moraga Rd Ste I, Moraga, 376-4480

Javier Galdon, owner of the Moraga Center UPS Store, will move to Spain this month or next. There he will open his second UPS Store. "This kind of business is still developing over there," he noticed during his last trip there, "it's the right time for me to move back to the old country." In the meantime, his wife will stay in Moraga to manage the local store. Maybe Lamorindans will get a good price on their shipment the next time they visit Barcelona?



Javier Galdon in his Moraga UPS Store Photo Sophie Braccini

## Take One Video Moves One Mile East, 284-3140

The Take One Video store that used to be located near Handlebar Toys moved over the holidays about 1 mile East to 3400 Mt Diablo Blvd, across from Jack in the Box. The store hours are 10 a.m. to 10 pm on Saturday, noon to 8 p.m. on Sunday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the week.

## Rheem Theater Offers Great Mid-week Deal, 350 Park St, Moraga - 376-0885

You don't have to be a kid or catch a matinee to get a great bargain on new movies. Tom Peterson has announced that tickets for all shows will be discounted at \$6 each Monday-Thursday starting January 6th.

## Coping Strategies in Difficult Business Times

Business owners in Lamorinda are preparing their businesses for a hibernation period. Strategies vary, but most are centered on cost cutting, either in terms of hours (and labor) or inventory. In Lafayette, Contra Costa Stationers at 3643 Mt Diablo Blvd has been cutting back on their inventory to reduce cost. "People aren't shopping right now," says store owner Chris Lane, "and putting my money on the shelf will just put me out of business." Lane keeps the basics in his store and customers special order other items that he gets within a day or so. Lane has cut down his hours of operation a bit as well. He has been in business for sixteen years and doesn't plan to retire any time soon.

The Rheem Valley Pet Shoppe in Moraga has applied the same strategy and cut its inventory on big items by 15%. Jorge Quintero, the owner, now closes the store on Sundays to reduce his labor cost. Quintero himself works 6 1/2 days a week. Having another store in Lafayette allows him flexibility in his cost rationalization, hopefully without losing any customers.

The owner of Moraga Hardware decided to close the store for a few days to cut costs. Owner Bill Snider had reduced staff to the minimum, working 75 hours a week himself, and he reduced his inventory some months ago. Snider may cut his early hours and further reduce staff to stay in business. All his variable expenses are being revisited and he plans to start discussions with his landlord and his suppliers.

Others are trying the same tactic, but the suppliers are hurting too: King Florist's Arlene Kohn has seen many growers going out of business and Quintero never got the rent reduction he asked from the owner of the building that harbors his Lafayette store. Susan Marconi from Across the Way believes that suppliers will have to invent new ways of doing business if they don't want to lose all of their retailers.

## The Alameda Small Business Development Center offers free classes to business owners.

- In Oakland:**  
 e-commerce & Web Marketing Seminar in Oakland on Tuesday, January 27, 2009 from 2 to 5pm  
 Buying or Selling A/Your Business Seminar in Oakland on Thursday, January 29, 2009 from 2 to 5pm  
**In San Ramon:**  
 Accessing Capital for Small Businesses and Start-up Companies in San Ramon on Wednesday, February 4, 2009 from 9am to 12pm  
 For a complete list of classes go to [www.eastbaysbdc.org](http://www.eastbaysbdc.org).

## News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

- Lafayette Chamber of Commerce**  
 2009 Predictions by Chamber CEO Jay Lifson: "None of us are sure what 2009 will look like for our local businesses or residents, but we want you to know that the Chamber will be here for you. Be sure that you are making the most of our services. And we can promise you that we will have an aggressive Shop Lafayette program in 2009. Let's all join together and get through these rough times."  
 • Wednesday, January 12 at Noon, Green Committee in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.  
 • Wednesday, January 14 at 5:30 p.m. Chamber Mixer at Urban Suburban, 3328 Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
 • Thursday, January 15 at 8:30 a.m. Entrepreneur's Club in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.
- Moraga Chamber of Commerce**  
 • Chamber Mixer, Friday January 30th starting with coffee at 7:30 a.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores.
- Orinda Chamber of Commerce**  
 • Mayor's Luncheon, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009, Noon to 1:30 p.m. The Orinda Rotary Club and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce will host the Mayor's Luncheon. This event will introduce our new Mayor, Sue Severson, who will be giving the State of the City Address. The event will take place in the Orinda Community Center, 28 Orinda Way. The cost per person is \$20.00. Purchase your admission online by going to the Chamber's web site: [orindachamber.org/events.php](http://orindachamber.org/events.php)

## LW Staff Celebrates Milestone and Its Editor

Edited by Jennifer Wake



Lamorinda Weekly Editor Lee Borrowman with her son Shayan and daughter Ava Photo Andy Scheck

This week's paper is Lamorinda Weekly's 50th issue and 1,000th page published – a milestone, certainly. It is also the 1,000th page edited – an achievement that did not come without much sacrifice and at the hand of a talented individual we in "the biz" call Editor.

Our editor's name? Lee Borrowman.

Without Lee, (as well as the Schecks, of course), the paper you read every other week would likely look much different, or quite simply, may not even exist. Near the paper's inception, Lee made sure to guide us in the right direction when it came to content and overall vision, would stay up into the wee hours of the night making final edits before going to press, and would even write the majority of the stories as we built up our staff – all while continuing her full-time job.

Lee encompasses what every great editor should: she is magnanimous, patient, knowledgeable, and is a great writer. A superhero, in some respects, at least to us staffers.

Staff writer Andrea Firth describes Lee as someone who is "never afraid to tackle the tough story."

"She remains cognizant of the value of the news content and steers clear of stories that aim only to shock. She is exceedingly fair and won't let a story slide without both sides being told," Firth says.

"While she is adventurous and loves stories that make us laugh, she is sensitive to the fact that we live in the community that we report on and write about, and she deftly helps us to strike the right balance."

Never applying a heavy hand and always ready with her sense of humor, Lee has kept the Lamorinda Weekly team of writers a happy bunch.

"She knows how to charmingly elicit the writer to produce the best story possible," says staff writer Cathy Tyson. "I recently received this e-mail commenting on a story I was working on with a colleague:

"Not complaining, would throw myself in front of a speeding Humvee for either of you, but this really needs clarification!"

She was right - it did, so I pawned off the adjustment on my colleague."

Sophie Braccini, a "non-native English speaker," says she gave Lee a lot of editorial work.

"Lee claims that now it takes her only a few minutes to review my prose, but if I have indeed improved, I owe it to her patience and guidance," Braccini says. "Lee exhibits the mane of a lion but remains a soft spoken diplomat. Of course there have been challenging moments, like when she refused an editorial I had written: 'We do not publish our opinions,' she said. "Our paper stays neutral and that's what people like about it." . . . And there are all those wacky article

ideas I come up with."

"She is sometimes a hard sale, but is always open-minded and ready to encourage and improve on ideas as they are thrown around," explains Braccini. "She empowers and inspires us to give our best. Every other week, Lee spends days, including the weekend to review, improve and put together, with Andy and Wendy Scheck, the Lamorinda Weekly."

"Dealing with deadlines, juggling her kids' school schedules to attend editorial meetings, and giving up every other weekend to work late into the night is not everyone's idea of a good time," Tyson adds. "But despite the challenges, she remains ever steadfast in what is appropriate for the paper and deciphering the occasional gray area between news, opinion and advertising."

Writer Jean Follmer finds it particularly rewarding to hear the many positive comments about the paper each week, and is grateful to Lee for bringing the paper this far.

"She is so reliable, responsive, helpful, and honest. I know it wouldn't have been possible to reach this milestone so easily without Lee at the wheel," she says. "She is tremendously valued by all of us and her efforts are clearly paying off."

From all of us at Lamorinda Weekly, the photographers, the reporters, the interns and everyone in between, we thank you, Lee. You are truly the best.

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**MORAGA**

SCHOOL CALENDAR

School Governing Board Meetings
Acalanes Union
High School District
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, Jan. 14 at 7:30
Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 7:30

Lafayette School District
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Monday, Jan. 12 at 7:00
Effective 02/11/09, regular board
meetings will move to Wednesdays

Moraga School District
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 7:30

Orinda Union School District
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, Jan. 12 at 4:00

Rheem Going Green

By T.R. Audley



Rheem students pack-up plastic bags
Photo provided

Rheem Elementary School is being recognized for their efforts to "go green." Over the past year, students, teachers, parents and administrators have more than met the challenge to do better for the environment.

most bags collected. Being the overall winner meant that they took home the first prize pot of \$3,000. Rheem's effort, however, added up even before the winner was decided.

Before plastic, however, a bigger waste concern on campus is paper. So by communicating with parents through e-newsletters and a school phone messenger system, Rheem cuts paper waste each week.

in each classroom at back to school night so that teachers can send class announcements electronically.

In addition to work on campus, Rheem is leaning on parents for recycling education at home. The school asks parents to elevate commonplace blue recycling bin by talking about its importance with their kids.

For Rheem's efforts, the CCC Waste Authority has recognized the school as well. Since 2002, Rheem students and staff have been dubbed exemplary "Waste busters" by the Authority for their understanding and practice of recycling.

Bess Inzeo, a teacher at Rheem, was instrumental in designing the field trip. "We are very proud of Ms. Inzeo's work on this project," says Frank.

Rheem's "greening" work continues this year as a new school garden takes shape. Planting and harvesting are planned for spring 2009.

Lamorinda Schools

Acalanes' New Director of Instrumental Music Receives Award

By Jean Follmer

Acalanes High School's new Director of Instrumental Music, Norman Dea, was awarded the Bandworld Legion of Honor Award from the John Philip Sousa Foundation last month.

ucators Association (CMEA) Outstanding Band Director in 2004, the CMEA Bay Area Outstanding Music Educator in 2005 and the California Band Directors Association (CBDA) Citation of Excellence in 2006.

Co-Founder of the Contra Costa County High School Honor Band and he currently serves on the Advisory Board for Cazadero Music Camp.



Mr. Dea is very active in promoting music education in our schools and currently services as the President-elect of CMEA.

Dea replaced Rick Meyer as the Director of Instrumental Music at Acalanes this year. Prior to leading the band program at Acalanes, Dea spent his entire 25-year career in a similar capacity at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek.

Ask Doctor Harold: ADHD - What is it, really?

By Dr. Harold Jules Hoyle, Ph.D.

I was recently at a holiday party where the grandparent of a local child said to me, "We didn't have all this ADD stuff when I was a kid."

doing in here?" (I am sure it happened to you at least once this holiday season.)

a tremendous amount of new distribution models like patches and time-release capsules. Psychological treatment includes individual and family counseling, behavior modification, and direct instruction at the point of performance.

Once a psychological disorder makes its way into our pop culture, a lot of misinformation can happen. So here is a crash course on the recent research on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

So this is not a disorder of the perceiving type of attention. These kids see what other kids see and know what other kids know.

What can you do to help? First of all, if you think your kid has an issue get professional opinions, just like you would if the check engine light goes on in your car.

ADHD (it was called ADD until 1987) is a serious psychological disorder for those that have it and their families.

So what do you do about it? ADHD needs to be diagnosed by a licensed medical professional and not a teacher or aunt or grandparent.

I worked with a child with ADHD who stopped doing her homework because even when she did get it done, she lost it, forgot to turn it in, or turned it in to the wrong teacher.

At its core, ADHD is a disorder of the executive functioning parts of the brain: the brain's personal assistant. In small children their motor area of their brain develops early and the personal assistant in their brain develops more slowly.

So what do you do about it? ADHD needs to be diagnosed by a licensed medical professional and not a teacher or aunt or grandparent. Start with your pediatrician and go from there.

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

techmommy logo and advertisement for computer help services, including a 10% off coupon.

Deadlines Approaching, Free workshop reveals 7 ways to slash college costs

Orinda - A free workshop is being held for the parents of high school freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors who will be college bound.

students are eligible for. The class will include such topics as how to double or triple your eligibility for free grant money.

will be held at the Orinda Community Center Garden Room located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda starting at 6:30pm and concluding at 7:30pm.

Advertisement for St. Perpetua School, featuring a logo, photos of children, and details about an open house and tours.



For the third year in a row, the Children's Chorus from The Meher Schools in Lafayette delighted holiday shoppers with two spirited concerts at Broadway Plaza in downtown Walnut Creek.

Photo submitted by Ellen Evans

Acalanes High School • Bentley School • Burton Valley • Camino Pablo Campolindo • Contra Costa Jewish Day School • Del Rey Donald L. Rheem • Glorietta • Happy Valley • Joaquin Moraga

# Lamorinda Schools

Lafayette Elementary • Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Academy Orinda Intermediate • Saklan Valley School • Sleepy Hollow Springhill • Stanley Middle • St. Perpetua School • Wagner Ranch

## Paying for College in Hard Economic Times

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

The economic downturn is adding stress to what is already an anxious time for seniors applying to college. Since stress often leads to procrastination, I urge you to move quickly and meet all financial aid deadlines. Most aid is distributed on a first come first serve basis, so early is better. Let's start with some basics.

Financial aid is any grant, scholarship, loan, or paid employment offered to help you meet college expenses. Financial aid is provided by various sources such as federal and state agencies, colleges, foundations and corporations. Grants are funds that are not repaid; loans must be repaid. Student loan interest rates and repayment terms vary by program. Employment (work-study) is based on an hourly rate for work performed. A Financial Aid Package is a combination of different types of aid combined to meet your financial need.

**Know the forms. FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid.** The federal government uses it to determine eligibility for financial aid (including grants, scholarships, work-study, loans, etc.). All colleges require this form, and it is best to file the FAFSA online.

To start the financial aid process and file online you must get a PIN which allows you to sign electronically. You will need two PIN numbers (one for you and one for your parent/guardian). Apply for a

PIN at www.pin.ed.gov. Save these pin numbers as you will need them each year you are in college to apply for financial aid. Next, complete a FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Parents and students should try to complete their income taxes and file a FAFSA as close as possible to February 1. If this is impossible, use estimated income to complete the FAFSA. You will need to update these estimates with actual income once your tax returns are completed.

Be certain to answer all questions and list the colleges you are considering. You should have already filed applications to these schools. However, do not wait until you receive responses regarding admission, or all available aid may be gone. "Financial Aid Award Letters" are only sent to admitted students.

Be sure to save a copy of your FAFSA. After you submit it, you will be given a confirmation number. Save this as well. Watch for your SAR (Student Aid Report) to arrive a few weeks later. Review the SAR and make corrections and updates if needed.

The California priority deadline is March 2. The deadlines for your state or schools may be different and you may be required to complete additional forms (for example, Cal Grant GPA Verification form for California students). Make sure to check deadlines for specific colleges you are applying to in addition to noting state deadlines.

CSS (College Scholarship Service) PROFILE is a financial aid form that some private colleges require. PROFILE asks additional questions in order to get a more detailed picture of family finances. Students register online for the PROFILE service, then a customized PROFILE form is completed online and submitted to a central processor. The financial information is then sent to colleges listed in your account. Register for PROFILE online at www.collegeboard.com as soon as you know what schools you will apply to. After registering for PROFILE, you will receive a personalized PROFILE form to submit online, usually by February 1st.

Note: Some colleges require additional forms. Consult each college's instructions to verify the forms required and deadlines.

A few thoughts are important to bear in mind for the Class of 2009.

Many private school application deadlines are in mid-January, so it is too early to say how the tough financial climate will affect where students apply, what aid will be offered and where students will ultimately choose to enroll.

Public colleges face a state budget crisis and private institutions face declines in income from endowments and reduced research funding. As a result, many counselors report that students are applying to more schools than usual and having

more public schools in the mix. This is a sound strategy.

Undoubtedly, most families will review offers of admission, financial aid packages and their own resources with great care. Families with more economic strife, such as job loss, will likely turn to public schools; this includes community colleges located closer to home.

Continue to assess colleges on the basis of fit—how well the academic and social climate matches your interests and needs. This investment will shape your future for many years to come. Shopping for a bargain at the expense of fit may be more costly in the long run.

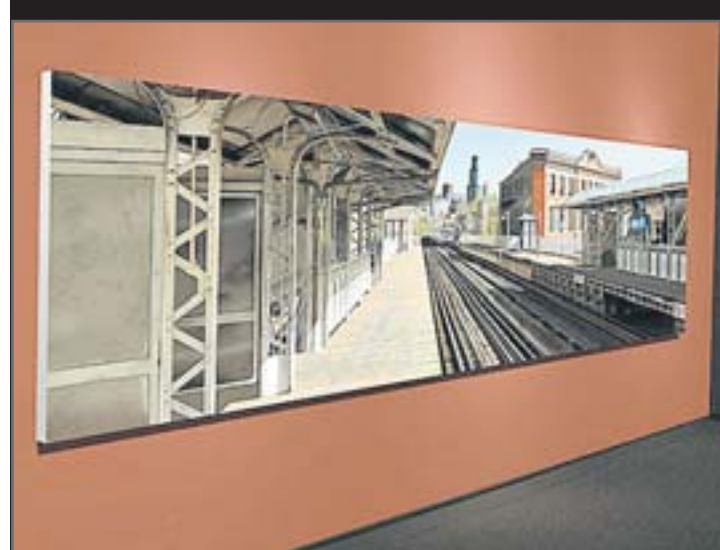
On a positive note, this is a great time to get educated about financial aid. Financial aid should never be an afterthought. As you become more acquainted with the process, you will be better positioned to take advantage of the aid that is available. As the economy improves, this will prove to be an asset that helps you better manage the costs of your college education.

Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is a certified college advisor who lives and works in Lafayette. Dr. LaScala draws on 20 years of higher education experience to help guide and support the college admissions process for students and their families. She has 3 children—one a graduate of Cal Poly (San Luis Obispo), one a sophomore at MIT and the youngest, a junior in high school. Contact Dr. LaScala at (925) 891-4491 or elizabeth@doingcollege.com.

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## PTA Starts New Year with Two Bangs

By Jean Follmer  
Education Advocacy Day is Coming Up

The 29th annual Education Advocacy bus trip to Sacramento is scheduled to take place Wednesday, February 18, 2009. The event is sponsored by the San Ramon Valley, Las Trampas Creek, Livermore Valley and Alameda Parent Teacher Association Councils. The Acalanes, Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda School Districts are all represented by the Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs and each school has its own Council Member. Over 200 people boarded buses to attend the event in 2008. Given the current budget crisis, the Council is hopeful that even more people will make the trip to Sacramento this year.

"The point is we wanted to make this trip a bit more educational to get more involved in advocacy and to build more of a camaraderie," said Council Member Karen Guthrie. The Las Trampas Creek Council says, "It's an effective way to send a powerful message to our lawmakers. You'll experience briefings with legisla-

tive experts and meet with our local legislators and school leaders." The cost of the trip is \$65 and includes transportation and lunch. Attendees will hear moderated discussions on the state budget and education reform basics and have the opportunity to participate in breakout sessions with Superintendents and School Board members.

At press time, Las Trampas Creek Council Co-Chair Sarah Butler said the presence of Assembly Members Joan Buchanan and Sandré Swanson and Senators Mark DeSaulnier and Lori Hancock were already confirmed. The registration form is available at the Las Trampas PTA website at www.lastrampaspta.org/Legislation.html.

### Letter Writing Campaign - There is Still Time

The Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs plans to hand deliver thousands of letters to the legislators in Sacramento late this week and early next week. Before the winter break, parents in the Lamorinda community schools were strongly encouraged to visit

the Las Trampas website at www.lastrampaspta.org/dec08\_letters.html to download, print and sign letters to the California legislators regarding the proposed mid-year budget cuts.

Some Council Members printed and passed them out in the carpool lines since families were focused on the pending break. "The holidays is what's putting a kink in this," said Council Member Karen Guthrie. The Council said it's not too late to turn them in before the delivery dates. The letters urge the legislators "to look at a more balanced approach to dealing with the budget deficit, including additional revenues such as reinstating the Vehicle License Fee," and stress that the proposed \$2.5 billion mid-year cut to education is unacceptable and will be nearly impossible for the districts to digest. Letters can be turned into district offices or faxed directly to the legislators. Fax numbers are included in the letters.

The Council delivered over 7,000 letters to California legislators in 2007.

Download "Your" story from [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)

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Celebration of Girl Scout Troop 2742 and Gold Award Ceremony was held on Sunday, December 21, 2008 at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. Members attending the celebration, (from left to right): Emma Sarconi, Shannon Pegnim, Valerie Lew, Caroline Godfrey, Melissa Wilcox, Gina Rieser, Alexandra Kuller and Laura Terril. Not pictured: Mackenzie Gerring, Kristen Phillips and Bridget Rochios.

Photo submitted

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**POISONOUS PLANTS**

Mona S. Miller, DVM



Easter Lily istockphoto.com

Indoor holiday plants and winter/spring seasonal bulb planting can sometimes pose health threats to our dogs and cats.

In some instances, a diagnosis is easy, when the pet has been observed to chew on or ingest part of the plant, or there is obvious plant material in vomitus, or the plant pot has been disrupted. Factors that help determine what measures your veterinarian would take include the type of plant ingested, when it was eaten and what the current signs of illness are. Your vet might recommend inducing vomiting and giving a toxin-binding agent, such as activated charcoal, to decrease absorption. Other therapy is supportive care for the symptoms, usually involving fluids, stomach protectants and anti-nausea medication.

Most of the winter holiday plants cause simple gastrointestinal irritation, resulting in drooling, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. These plants in-

clude poinsettia, holly, mistletoe and most winter-planted bulbs (tulip, daffodil, iris and amaryllis). Just a note about poinsettia – while it definitely can cause illness, the toxic effects have generally been overstated.

Mushroom ingestion and toxicity is one of the most common plant poisons seen in dogs. Different species of wild mushrooms cause different symptoms; most common is the toxic effect on the liver by Amanita species. Signs include drooling, vomit and diarrhea, and occasionally neurologic weakness. This can be a very serious problem that can cause death. Treatment is aggressive supportive care with hospitalization, intravenous fluids, anti-nausea and anti-oxidant medication, and liver and kidney blood-work monitoring. The sooner treatment is started, the better the chances for full recovery. Mushroom ingestion is considered an emergency.

A plant toxicity found in cats only (interesting that it

doesn't affect dogs) is lily-induced kidney failure. The leaves and blooms of Easter, tiger, day and other Asiatic hybrid lilies are the causative plants. This is also very serious, as for mushroom toxicity, and can certainly cause death. Symptoms include vomiting (within 1-24 hours after ingestion, with progressive depression, inappetance and weakness. Kidney failure will start to occur within 12-36 hours. This is potentially treatable, with aggressive hospitalization, intravenous fluids and other support. The prognosis for recovery is poor if treatment is started more than 18 hours after ingestion. Note: if you are sending flowers to a friend who has a cat, it might be wise to ask the florist to eliminate any lilies from the bouquet.

Two excellent on-line resources regarding poisonous plants (and other animal care information) are Veterinary-Partner.com and ASPCA.org. As with any issue relating to your pet's medical care, it is best to call your veterinarian when questions arise about what your dog or cat may have eaten.

Dr. Mona S. Miller lives in Lafayette with her 4 year old son, yellow Labrador Retriever and grey cat. She has worked at Four Seasons Animal Hospital in Lafayette since moving here in 2001. She attended Cal as an undergrad, and received her DVM from U.C. Davis. She can be reached at Four Seasons, 938-7700, or by email to MonaSDVM@aol.com.

**• In the Back Y**

**DIGGING DEEP WITH CYNTHIA BRIAN-S**

**"There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge; both poverty and riches are the offspring of thought."**

*Napoleon Hill*



Cynthia Brian

The sun was shining brightly and the jonquils were blooming that January winter day so many years ago when my brothers, sisters, and I awoke to find strands of gleaming jewelry strung everywhere on the bushes and vines around the house. Barefoot, we ran outside, not believing our eyes. They had come. The Kings had arrived.

The holiday was "Twelfth Night" or "Three Wise Kings," celebrated on January 6, which is exactly twelve days after Christmas. The celebration was created to honor the Magi, who followed the Star of Bethlehem to visit Baby Jesus over two thousand years ago. Because we are Swiss-Italian and lived in the country, Mom and Dad always told us it was easier for the Three Wise Kings to park their camels outside our house than a house in the city. We had no reason not to believe them.

We loved Three Wise Kings Day because the Magi made us feel special. No one else in our school seemed to receive a nightfall visitation from these Middle Eastern monarchs. And though legend proclaims the Three Kings brought Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we were very pleased to receive a piece of fruit, a bit of candy, and about twenty-five cents in coins from them each year.

But this year was different. They had actually brought us jewels and riches beyond our wildest dreams. I vividly remember the sensation of utter delight when we spotted the shimmering trinkets hanging from the trees! I will never forget the utter thrill of knowing that our landscape was adorned with valuable ornaments from a land far far away.

"We're rich, we're rich!" My siblings shouted. Although we loved the fruit the Magi left us, seeing the glimmering baubles adorning our very own vines was quite magnificent. To solidify the illusion, we found camels' hoof prints and a good amount of camel dung scattered throughout the garden! To top

it all off, a note was attached to one of the bushes. The note was an announcement that it had been a great year for the Magi, so they had decided to share their wealth with us!

We couldn't wait to go to school to tell our teachers and all our friends about these extraordinary gifts. Surely others had experienced their delights! But no one else had.

In fact, our ingenious parents had created the illusion solely for us with used costume jewelry from a Goodwill store, and horse manure from our very own barn. My dad had brought out the horses to make the hoof prints, and naturally, we just knew they were camel prints. The nuns at school recall our wide-eyed awe when we retold the tale, and chose to keep our parents' secret. When we told the other children, we were met with disappointed looks. To our dismay, none of them had encountered such riches on the branches of their trees. We immediately shared our booty.

January, the month of winter sleep, offers gardeners the opportunity to dream, to plan, and to imagine. There is not much work to be done in our yards, but we can still begin to chart the days ahead so that we'll be able to share the bounty from our efforts. Curl up with a cup of tea brewed from your home grown Meyer lemon and spearmint, grab your favorite seed catalogues or garden books, and discover new water conserving cultivars for the year. Plan patio hardscapes incorporating rocks, bricks, and cobbles instead of flower beds. Prune a few budding branches from your peach or crab apple tree, put them in a vase and watch their blossoms unfurl. For a scent filled room of sweetness, cut a bouquet of narcissus to place by your bedside for a deeper tranquil rest. For kindness to our fine-feathered friends, design a "Bird Branch" on a deciduous tree or an old stump, hanging feeders and nests for those cold winter nights.

January offers us the chance for a new beginning. To your list of resolutions, include spending more time in nature drinking in the beauty all around us. Decide to compost, recycle, collect rainwater for watering, and grow your own organic vegetables, herbs, and fruits. Exercise your body, mind, and soul by digging deep. As our portfolios dwindle, we can be grateful for what we already have. Being connected with the earth reminds us that despite the turbulent economy, it is up to us to survive and thrive.

Follow your star. My wish for you is to shine in 2009. May you receive the magical gifts of the Magi every day-the love of family and friends, health for your children, the warmth of the home, the peace of the garden, and work you love. These are the true shimmering jewels of the season.

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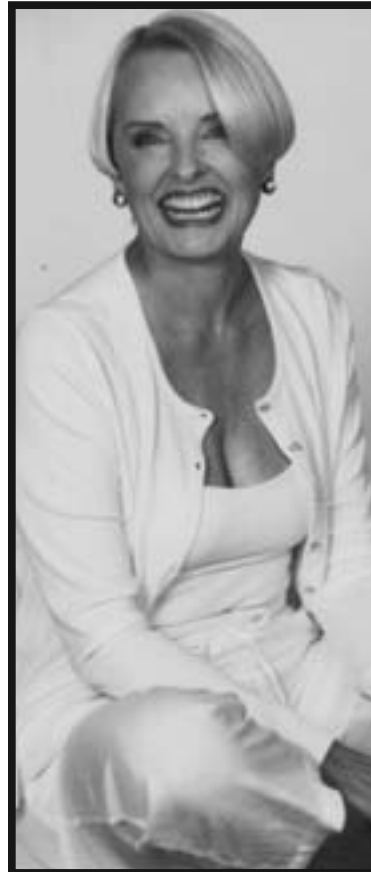
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## Cynthia's Digging Deep Gardening Guide for January

"One of the tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon - instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today." Dale Carnegie

Wet and cold, that is what the month of January brings to mind. Although it may be gray and dismal outside, we still have a few errands in our gardens. The dormant season is nearing its end, but freezes and frost can still do damage. Give your houseplants a treat and take them outside for a shower. Plan for spring by looking through mail order catalogs. And don't forget to prune to encourage spring growth.

- CARE for the potted plants you received as gifts of the holiday. Remove wrapping to allow for good drainage. Trim spent blossoms, water and fertilize regularly.
- LIVING Christmas tree, need to be moved outdoors. Keep them in a large container or transplant into your landscape remembering to determine the placement carefully as they will grow into very large trees.
- BARE ROOT roses are readily available in garden centers now. Soak in water for a day before planting. Make sure to cut off broken roots. Plant the bud union 3 inches above the ground. It is best to buy your roses at your favorite local nursery for better quality while establishing valuable relationships.
- PLANT all bare root fruit trees, perennials, berries and vines. They cost less and will adapt quickly to their new home.
- PRUNE your beds of roses now to ensure healthy bigger blooms. Remove any diseased parts which would infect the new growth and do not put in the compost pile.
- SHARE rose canes with friends and neighbors. By dipping the stems into a growth solution, you can grow new rose bushes at no cost to you. Experiment. It's fun to share.
- MULCH your beds with three inches of organic matter to protect from freezes, provide better drainage while amending the soil.
- DECIDUOUS fruit trees, bushes, flowering shrubs, and cane berries need pruning now. Make sure you are not cutting off the buds for the new fruit.
- SPRAY your second application of a dormant spray to kill the many overwintering insects and diseases after you have pruned.
- BRIGHTEN your landscape by planting primroses, snapdragon, stock, sweet peas, violas, cineraria and pansies which bring exciting color to the grey landscape. Add shimmer to home environment your home by planting in pots for the porch.
- CUT budding branches from fruit trees to place in a vase to watch the petals open. Add a few drops of bleach to the water to prolong the blooms. A few sprigs of narcissus provide perfume an entire room.
- PROTECT LAWNS Rake leaves and litter to prevent grass from smothering.
- FEED the birds! With winter rains and cold, the birds need human help to maintain their body weight.
- TRANSPLANT all those plants and shrubs that you want moved somewhere else safely.
- REPAIR irrigation systems and add drip to your spring schedule.
- REST. Winter is the time of hibernation and sleep. Just as our plants go dormant, we need to give ourselves a break to rejuvenate.

Our gardens can probably expect another season of drought so use the downtime of January to prepare. **Happy New Year!**

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**Garden Club Meetings**

Bonnie Brusseau from Orchard Nursery will speak on "Pruning Simplified for Roses and Fruit Trees." Moraga Garden Club on Thursday, January 15, 9:30 am at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. For membership call Pat 925-376-4675.

Gary Bogue, author and columnist will speak about wildlife and the environment at the Montelindo Garden Club Meeting on Friday, January 16th, 9:30am at the Orinda Community Church, #10 Irwin Way in Orinda. Speaker at 10:30. The free meeting welcomes guests. www.montelindogarden.com or email montelindogarden@aol.com.

Please submit events to:  
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## Local Couples Find Unique Ways to Make Encore Weddings Special

By Jennifer Wake



Newlyweds Svend Ryge and Karen Lennox enjoy a moment together at their garden reception  
Photo Lynds Photography

With nearly 60 percent of men and more than 40 percent of women remarrying, second marriages – or encore weddings – have become more common, offering couples a unique opportunity to celebrate their commitment to each other and to their new blended families.

In 1980, Lafayette natives Natalie and Chris Lane barely knew each other at Stanley Middle School, and after graduating from Acalanes High School, they didn't meet again until 20 years later at a high school reunion committee meeting.

"Several months after the reunion, Chris asked me to have dinner with him," Natalie said. "We ate at a local restaurant, talked without those uncomfortable pauses and had a wonderful evening."

Just over two months later, Chris asked Natalie to marry him.

(She said yes.) They were married one year ago on New Year's Eve at the Veteran's Memorial Building in Lafayette.

With two sons and one daughter from prior marriages, they thought about trying to incorporate their children into the event, and did so in very minor ways, but Natalie says they wanted to keep it simple.

"As hard as it is, we tried not to fall into the mindset that we need to have all the things that go into the traditional wedding ceremony," Natalie says. "We began to realize that the 'wedding of our dreams' didn't have anything to do with the color of the napkins. It was all about us being able to profess our love and commitment for each other."

According to "I Do Take Two.com" – a second wedding online resource – more couples venturing down the aisle for an encore wedding are creating their own tra-

# Love, Lamorinda Style

ditions, substituting the throwing of the bouquet or garter belt for a special toast, or exchanging personalized vows. "You can create your own tradition, with all of your children walking beside you and your groom and standing with you at the altar," the Web site notes. "You're bound only by your imagination."

When Karen Lennox and Svend Ryge got married at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church last August, they created a theme for the celebration: "Families Intertwining."

Their children from previous marriages (two each), as well as siblings and best friends, lit the church candles, ushered guests, sang, read scripture, and stood up to declare their support for the new family unit.

"During the ceremony we showed a five minute slide show set to music that presented our individual families growing up and our new family intertwined," Karen says. "We received many comments that it was a touching and wonderful ceremony."

Much like the Lanes, Karen and Svend wanted to invite as many people as could they could. Two-hundred attended Karen and Svend's wedding, and the challenge then became finding parking for 100 cars on their street for their backyard garden reception.

"It worked out well. We also needed to have most of the food passed on trays due to a limited seating area," Karen says.

According to I Do Take Two, most encore wedding challenges include deciding on the guest list, sticking to a budget, and finding ways to include children from a previous marriage in the celebration.

Fortunately, Chris and Natalie say they could see that their three children were blended long before the official ceremony occurred. "We made conscious effort on a regular basis to treat them all equally and respect their feelings about the change."

So what's their advice for encore wedding couples? "Laugh . . . a lot!"

As with Karen and Svend, the Lanes say the ceremony was simply a meeting place where they could show everyone at once how happy they were and how confident and relaxed they were about joining not only their lives, but their children's lives and their immediate families as well.

"What made our marriage so special," says Natalie, "was the fact that we both knew without any doubt that we had finally found a person with whom we could each respect and accept for the person they are."



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Families intertwined: Svend Ryge, Karen Lennox, and their respective children are all smiles at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church ceremony  
Photo Lynds Photography



Newlyweds Chris and Natalie Lane share a quiet moment together  
Photo Lisa Duncan

Thank you to  
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# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### Saint Mary's Big Men Secure Shamrock Classic Championship

By Kevin D. Shallat



Senior Diamon Simpson shoots over San Jose defenders on the way to winning the first game of December's Shamrock Classic. (See related article) Simpson made Saint Mary's history in the January 2 game against CSU Bakersfield when he became the school's all-time leading rebounder with a defensive board at 7:21 following a missed 3-pointed by CSU Bakersfield's Bryan Emanuel. With that 917th rebound, Simpson surpassed Tom Meschery's school record 916 rebounds mark, which stood since the end of the 1960-61 season. Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's men's basketball team locked up the Shamrock Classic basketball tournament by beating the San Jose State Spartans and Morgan State Bears in Saint Mary's annual tournament in Moraga.

The Gaels survived a slow start against San Jose State on Saturday, December 27, to put them in the championship game against Morgan State on Sunday. Saint Mary's beat the Spartans, 87-78. In Sunday's championship game the Gaels were able to get back to form from the opening tip-off, coasting to a 76-60 win over the Bears.

The story out of the Shamrock

Classic tournament this year is undoubtedly the Saint Mary's big men, most notably 6'7 forward, Diamon Simpson. The dominant senior has jumped out of the gates with authority this year.

With Simpson, it's not just about rebounds. He is averaging a double-double in his swan song season for the Gaels, as he continues to fill up the stat sheet. In Saturday's game Simpson finished with 20 points, 13 rebounds, five blocks, and four steals.

In Sunday's game he was three blocks shy of a triple-double. Simpson finished with 16 points, 10 rebounds, and seven blocks, while

gaming MVP honors for the tournament.

Former Cal coach and current coach of Morgan State, Todd Bozeman, stated after the game that Simpson has all the tools of a great player, and that if he developed a jump shot, he could play at the NBA level.

Thankfully for the Saint Mary's fans, the game against Morgan State never felt too close, despite a few lead changes in the first half. Ian O'Leary scored all seven of his points in the first half of the championship game to help the Gaels jump out to a 48-37 halftime lead.

Freshman Clint "Silky" Steindl continues to impress for the Gaels, as he routinely knocks down long range 3-pointers with ease. He is very active without the ball, and his quick feet are giving him the space he needs to knock down his

shot. Steindl hit both of his three-point attempts and finished with eight points in 17 minutes against Morgan State.

Omar Samhan and Simpson are passing the ball successfully down low to each other, which is opening up shots down low and out on the perimeter.

"He (Samhan) was smart enough today to see the weak side. His vision has gotten just ridiculous because he sees the floor now," said Simpson.

Samhan's 21 points was a team high against San Jose State, and his three assists and three blocks helped wrap up the 76-60 win over Morgan State to help retain the Shamrock Classic title.

Notable: The Golden State Warriors General Manager Chris Mullin attended both games of the tournament.



Patrick Mills goes for a lay-up, 2 of the 13 points he scored in the Gaels' final Shamrock Classic game, a 76-60 win over Morgan State that earned the Gaels the tournament title. Photo Tod Fierner

### Patrick Mills (#13) Does it All



Photo Robin Schoettler Fox

College basketball star, Olympian, and... mopping instructor? During the San Jose State game on December 27, Patrick Mills takes a moment during a fourth-quarter time-out for one-on-one mopping instruction, teaching Saint Mary's ball boy Kyle Nichols, a Moraga 3rd grader, how to press down hard enough to get the job done

### Diamon Simpson is Youth Role Model

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Participants in the 2nd Diamon Center Night, sitting in the choice court-level student section, wait for Saint Mary's to take the court against San Jose State. Photo Robin Schoettler Fox

With Saint Mary's students on winter break, the court-level student section morphed into Diamon Center for the first night of the Gaels' Shamrock Tournament on December 27. It was jammed with Diamon Simpson fans, many from Simpson's hometown of Hayward who were at the Gaels' McKeon Pavilion for the first time, all participants in the second of three Diamon Center Nights scheduled this season.

Each Diamon Center Night brings upwards of 300 Hayward youth and others to Moraga to see Simpson play, most having heard him speak at prior visits to their schools.

Conceived by former SMC baseball player Chris Major, Diamon Center Nights are co-sponsored by Saint Mary's College (SMC) and Hayward Youth Academy (HYA), a non-profit that offers youth programs, educational services and parenting support. Major is President and Chief Executive Officer of HYA.

Diamon Center Night is a chance, said Major, for the kids to see what Saint Mary's - the college, not just the McKeon Pavilion - is like, to consider it an option in their lives. The event includes a pre-game rally, the game, and a chance to meet Simpson post-game.

About seeking corporate and individual sponsors to cover ticket costs, Major said that Lafayette-res-

ident Ben Mangels made the biggest impact by sponsoring all three Diamon Center Nights.

At Major's invitation, this 2nd Diamon Center Night had a Lamorinda slant - nearly 100 kids and parents from St. Perpetua in Lafayette participated, including Coach Robert McKendall's 5th grade CYO team that scrimmaged with Major's St. Bede (Hayward) CYO team during half-time (see related photo story). The Lafayette attendees purchased tickets, but at discounted rates.

At the pre-game rally, Major summarized Simpson's story: Diamon wasn't a flashy player, didn't get much notoriety. He was middle-of-the-pack, but always a hard worker. And that had earned impressive college career stats:

"He's going to be number one in (SMC) history in rebounds, he'll be number one in jump shots, he'll be number two in fields, and he'll probably be number 3 or 4 in points scored. That's how great this young man is. But the most important thing about Diamon that I have really learned from him was that he's gotten better every single year that he endeavored to play the sport."

Then Major delivered the Diamon Center Night punch line: "For all you young people here, whether in sport, in the classroom, and in your work life, he sets a real model."

The third Diamon Center Night is Thursday, February 5.

### Local Youth Play at SMC's McKeon Pavilion

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Photo Tod Fierner

Ryan Cardiff, a St. Perpetua (St. P's) 5th grade CYO basketball player, reaches around the St. Bede (Hayward) defenders John Mondina (#4) and Hunter Schied (#9) to pass the ball in a goodwill rematch of last year's Diocese of Oakland 4th grade championship game. The scrimmage, played in a packed McKeon Pavilion during SMC's first Shamrock Classic game (December 27), was one of several activities coordinated by Diamon Center Nights youth event organizer and St. Bede coach, Chris Major. The St. Bede players are wearing Major's Hayward Youth Academy jerseys. St. P's, coached by Robert McKendall, won the original championship game by a single shot. The scrimmage? That was just for fun.

Half-time youth team scrimmages are popular entertainment at McKeon Pavilion, but they're more often available during women's basketball games.

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# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### DFAL Boys Basketball Gets Under Way

By Conrad Bassett

The three Lamorinda boys varsity basketball teams have been traveling far and wide through California, each hoping that their pre-season schedules would prepare them for the upcoming Diablo Foothill Athletic League (DFAL) competition.

All three teams enter DFAL competition with winning pre-season records.

The Acalanes Dons went 7-4. They lost three of their first five games but followed with wins in five of the last six games. They lost to powerful De La Salle as well as Kennedy (Richmond) but defeated several other North Coast foes, including Piner, Rancho Cotate, and San Rafael. Corey Collins, Steve Maze, and David Masi have contributed to a balanced Don attack.

Miramonte played in two tournaments, finishing in second place in both the Wine Valley Classic in Napa and the Sand Dune Invitational in San Francisco. The Matadors won four of their last five games, featuring Chris Hatfield and Eric Obeysekere as leading scorers in most of the games. They have also faced strong competition, being edged 77-74 by perennially strong St. Mary's (Berkeley) as well as Chico (63-59) but beating Amador Valley and Terra Linda.

The Campolindo Cougars

played in three tournaments, winning two out of three games in each one on their way to an 8-5 record. They played well in the Mission Prep Christmas Classic in San Luis Obispo, beating St. Joseph's and host Mission Prep handily after losing to Fremont (Los Angeles).

Campolindo also had the opportunity to battle defending state champion Campbell Hall and stayed close for three periods until losing 72-54. Junior Kellen Ito has led the team in scoring, rebounding and blocks, while senior Chris Dyer has been consistent with several steals and assists.

Acalanes has not played any teams that Miramonte or Campolindo played during pre-season. Both Campolindo and Miramonte played Skyline (Oakland). The Cougars beat Skyline (Oakland) in overtime but Skyline edged out Miramonte.

All of the other schools in the revamped DFAL had winning non-league seasons with one exception - newcomer Dougherty Valley.

The DFAL season opened on January 6 with Campo traveling to Miramonte and Acalanes traveling to Las Lomas. Results were not available at press time. Check our Varsity Calendar for upcoming home games.

### Women's Basketball Counts

... continued from page 1



Coach John Brewster huddles with his 6th grade St. P CYO team just prior to their half-time scrimmage in the Gaels' McKeon Pavilion during the January 4th game against the Pacific Tigers. "I want you to score, to not be afraid to shoot," he said. Photo Robin Schoettler Fox

Last year, almost two-thirds of Division I NCAA membership - 198 institutions - participated, attracting more than 592,000 fans across the Pack the House games, with 96 institutions breaking single-attendance records and five programs recording their first-ever sell-out game.

While you're at McKeon Pavilion, look around. See all those young girls? Those may be the faces of the future of women's basketball.

At least, says John Brewster, who took his 6th grade CYO team to Sunday's game against the University of the Pacific, "They can dream."

Brewster has coached twenty five basketball teams, everything from CYO to high school, about half of which have been girls' teams.

Just going to women's collegiate games helps make big things seem possible for girls, says Brewster: "Girls learn not to give up, not to think that it's just a game for boys."

Believing in the dream is easier for girls who know SMC scholarship freshman Katie Batlin was the star of last year's North Coast

Section Division III champs, Miramonte High School.

Or that Assistant Coach Tracy Morris Johnston is the Campolindo graduate who became a star Saint Mary's player and remains the school's all-time leading scorer with 1,807 points.

At its best, women's collegiate basketball is exciting and fun to watch. But it's different than the men's game. Don't come expecting dunks, says Brewster. The women's game is more pure, more focused on fundamentals, team play.

Competition though is tough. Sunday's game against Pacific was a nail-biter, coming down to a foul shot with 3 seconds left in the game, SMC taking the win, 71-70.

According to the NCAA, women's collegiate basketball trends are good: "In terms of interest, participation, skill level and excitement, all the indicators are pointing up."

But attendance remains a challenge nationwide. At Saint Mary's, thanks in part to Patrick Mills' near celebrity status, men's basketball games often sell-out the

Gaels' 3500-seat McKeon Pavilion.

For women's games, the school typically closes the upstairs, leaving 1500 court-level seats for fans, most of which go unused.

Coach Paul Thomas works off-court to build interest. There are bi-weekly fan breakfasts, community presentations, and now a once-a-month local radio broadcast.

Meanwhile, Staci Hamaguchi, Director of Athletic Promotions for SMC since 2007, brainstormed ways to draw in more students, alumni and community fans.

Half-time scrimmages attract families; so do youth team days. There's Kids Work McKeon, a new program aimed at giving boys and girls a peek at game-day operations. Now eyes are on that January

24th afternoon game.

Last year, Saint Mary's Pack the Pavilion game registered season-high attendance figures, but Portland won the contest for the WCC.

"This year we want to break (attendance) records of the last five or six years," says Hamaguchi. "We're piling everything on, making it big."

And that starts with the level of play - San Diego is tough competition. Go for it, the coaches told Hamaguchi.

"If we bring our 'A' game, it's going to be a great game," Hamaguchi recalls the coaches saying.

"If we come out with a victory, it's going to be exciting. If we don't, they'll see that we played hard the whole time."



St. Mary's Sierra Chambers (10) blocks Devaneil Hampton (20) of Cal from driving to the basket. Photo Jordan Fong

### Local Lacrosse Players Battle in Breast Cancer Tourney

Submitted by Evangeline Walsh



Photo Evangeline Walsh

Former Lamorinda Lacrosse Club coach Pat Takahashi refereed the December 2008 inaugural Battle versus Breast Cancer Lacrosse Tournament, with several of Takahashi's former local players participating. Takahashi was the first Lamorinda Lacrosse Club coach when the program expanded to include 6th-8th grade girls in 2003; these former players are now in high school. Organized by California High School head varsity lacrosse coach Scott Corso, the

tournament used a 7-player versus 7-player format. Eight teams competed, with over 100 girls donating their \$30 entrance fees. Referees and coaches donated time. All profits went to the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Pictured (left to right): Emilia Harband (Acalanes), Erin Walsh (Miramonte), Pat Takahashi, Alex Seclow (Miramonte), Rachel Ozer (Campolindo), Devin Frazer (Acalanes) and Brooke Winslow (Acalanes).



### SMC Gaels Home Games

<b>Fri, Jan 9</b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>
Men's Basketball	Santa Clara Moraga (McKeon Pavilion)
<b>Sat, Jan 10</b>	<b>2:00 PM</b>
Women's Basketball	San Francisco Moraga
<b>Sun Jan 11</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Men's Basketball	San Francisco SF (War Memorial Gym)
<b>Thurs, Jan 15</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>
Men's Basketball	Loyola Marymount Moraga (McKeon Pavilion)
<b>Fri, Jan 16</b>	<b>All Day</b>
Women's Tennis	Cal Winter Invitational at Berkeley
<b>Sat, Jan 17</b>	<b>All Day</b>

Women's Tennis	Cal Winter Invitational at Berkeley
<b>Sat, Jan 17</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>
Men's Basketball	Pepperdine Moraga (McKeon Pavilion)
<b>Sun, Jan 18</b>	<b>All Day</b>
Women's Tennis	Cal Winter Invitational at Berkeley
<b>Mon, Jan 19</b>	<b>All Day</b>
Men's Tennis	Cal Winter Invitational at Berkeley
<b>Sat, Jan 24</b>	<b>2:00 PM</b>
Women's Basketball	San Diego Moraga
<b>Thu, Jan 29</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Women's Basketball	Gonzaga * Moraga

### LMYA Spring Sign-ups go Online

Submitted by Gint Federas

L MYA online registration for spring sports runs from January 10 - 20. Please go to [www.lmyasports.com](http://www.lmyasports.com) for updates and to register for the following sports:

- Tee-ball**, co-ed (kindergarten)
  - Soft baseball**, separate girls and boys divisions (1st grade)
  - Baseball**, boys (2nd/3rd grade)
  - Softball**, girls (2nd/3rd grade, 4th/5th grade, 6th/7th/8th grade)
  - Volleyball**, girls (5th-8th grade)
  - Volleyball**, boys (5th/6th grade boys play in 6th grade girls' division. 2 boys per team, maximum)
  - Soccer camp** (boys, 3rd-8th grade)
  - High Hoops Basketball** (high school)
- Fees vary by program. Most programs are \$185, except Kindergarten - 1st grade tee-ball and baseball, which are \$140. There are registration discounts for coaches and other volunteers.

### Varsity Home Game Calendar ••• High School Varsity @ Home •••

<b>Wednesday, January 7</b>	Miramonte @ Acalanes, 5:30pm	<b>Wednesday, January 14</b>	Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 5:30pm
Girls Soccer	Boys Basketball	Girls Soccer	Boys Basketball
Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 6:15pm	Miramaonte @ Acalanes, 7pm	Acalanes @ Campolindo, 6:15pm	Las Lomas @ Campolindo, 7pm
Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer	Boys Soccer:	Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 7pm
Las Lomas @ Miramonte, 6:15pm	Dublin @ Acalanes, 6:15pm	Campolindo @ Acalanes, 2pm	Girls Soccer
Dublin @ Campolindo, 6:15pm	<b>Saturday, January 10</b>	<b>Friday, January 16</b>	Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 6:15pm
<b>Friday, January 9</b>	Boys Soccer:	Girls Basketball	Boys Soccer
Girls Basketball	San Ramon Valley @ Acalanes, 5pm	Las Lomas @ Campolindo, 5:30pm	Campolindo @ Miramonte, 6:15pm

Patricia Battersby, Ashley Battersby, Joan Cleveland, Joan Eggers, Joan Evans, Linda Friedman, Marianne Greene, Pamela Halloran, Dexter Honens II, Debbie Johnston, Hal Kaufman

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Saturday, January 10, 9AM - 12 Noon  
Library Auditorium at 26 Orinda Way, Orinda  
**WORKSHOP II**  
Wednesday, January 21, 7PM - 9PM  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, City Hall, 22 Orinda  
You are invited to attend a workshop on revitalization of downtown Orinda and on the rules and process for residential development. At the workshop you will hear presentations on draft recommendations to revitalize downtown Orinda and on the residential development regulations and review process and have an opportunity to provide input. To view the draft reports please visit the City's website at: [www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org)

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