

Independent, locally owned and operated!

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Need to contact us? 925.377.0977

Delivered bi-weekly to all Lamorinda homes & businesses

Free

Volume 02; Issue 23

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Wednesday, January 21, 2009



The Return of the Suburban Chicken

By Sophie Braccini

LAMORINDA WEEKLY
this week

The Scoop on School Parcel Taxes

Page 5

Mysterious California

Page 7

Miramonte DFAL Basketball Starts Strong

Page 17

Town News	2,3,4
Peddler Permits Pending	2
More Traffic Calming in Moraga	3
Teen Center to Become a Reality	4
Studying Permaculture at SMC	5
Dog Owners Antsy	6
HOW TO CONTACT US	6
Letters to the Editor	8
New on Restaurant Row: Knox	9
Lamorinda Real Estate	10
Business	11
Schools	12,13
"Sister to Sister" Coming Up	13
Not to be Missed	14-15
NEW Lamorinda Service Directory	14
Lamorinda Dining	16
Sports	17,18,19
SMC Tix Tips	18
Classifieds	18
Shop Moraga	20

Lamorinda has a long tradition of ranching and raising farm animals. One of them is the proud chicken, that great provider of eggs, chicken manure and ultimately, in some cases, chicken soup. After falling out of favor due to land subdivision and the growing popularity of canned chicken broth, the chicken is coming back strong on the wings of sustainable living, recycling and most of all eating local, home grown food. Eating eggs freshly laid in your own back yard is about the only way of getting garden-grown animal protein, short of trapping a flock of turkeys or a herd of wild pigs wandering by (this is NOT recommended).

However, we are not all equal when it comes to getting fresh "home-grown" eggs and local codes regulate the raising of poultry in our three communities.

In Lafayette and Moraga chickens are classified as livestock, meaning that the land requirements are the same as for those owning a cow. The prerequisite is a property of at least 40,000 square feet (almost an acre), while Orinda requires only half that space because lucky Orindan chickens fall into the same category as other small animals such as rabbits and minks.

However, Gallus Domesticus lovers are not stopped by regulation and our investigation has revealed a large underground chicken society. They are ordinary citizens from all avenues of life, usually families with children who decided to raise hens for the eggs and educational purpose. Many didn't even know about existing regulations when they acquired their feathered friends. "My neighbors have parrots or

dogs, we didn't think that chickens would be any different," said one of them. The difference dates back to a time when chickens were raised for meat and sometimes slaughtered on site. "Now," the chicken owners argue, "we have them just for the eggs and when they do not produce any more we keep them as pets."

In Moraga, part of this illicit group of chicken owners is now hoping to "get out of the coop;" petitions are starting to circulate to modify regulations, and studies are being conducted. Last October, a resident who appreciates the usefulness of chickens but does not own any sent a letter to the Town Council requesting it put on its agenda a revision of the chicken ordinance.

The stock-pot is starting to boil and action will certainly ensue.

In 1918, Michael & Louisa Larch paid ten \$100 gold coins for their 3-acre farm according to title documents. As the farm business expanded, Michael sold his eggs and meat in east Oakland by taking his horse-drawn wagon over the winding back roads to the 35th Avenue area of Oakland.

Today the owners of Larkfield farm, the Fadelli family, own more than 1 acre of the original Larch property on Larch Avenue and they continue to raise chickens. "They are wonderful pets," says Teri Fadelli, mother of 4 children and proud owner of 3 chickens, "they are very easy to care for once they are established."

Jackie Mann, who lives on 40 acres in Lafayette, says exactly the same thing. "We can go on vacation for a few days and all we need is for someone to collect the eggs our 8 hens lay every day."

... continued on page 9

Advertising

Just listed in Happy Valley!

1050 Upper Happy Valley Road, Lafayette

5 Bedrooms 1 1/2 Baths 3,579 Square Feet .5 Acre Gorgeous Private Level Yard & Pool

A Great Entertainer! Fabulous remodeled home in a beautiful, half-acre creek-side setting. Walls of glass in all the living areas open out to the large level and private yard plus redesigned pool and spa with waterfall. It's the perfect home for great entertaining and indoor/outdoor living. Offered at \$ 1,888,000.

Patricia & Ashley Battersby
925-253-2526
pb@patriciabattersby.com
ashley@patriciabattersby.com

patriciabattersby.com

Lamorinda Schools Face Significant Funding Reductions

Districts Plan for Personnel and Program Cuts

By Andrea A. Firth

It was a beautiful seventy-degree day without a cloud was in the sky as the superintendents and finance directors from each of Lamorinda's four school districts headed north to Sacramento last week to receive an update on the Governor's proposed budget. However, the atmosphere inside the budget workshop, which was packed with school administrators from across the State, was anything but sunny. "Gloom," stated Orinda Union School District (OUSD) Superintendent Dr. Joe Jaconette as he described the mood in the room to the OUSD Board of Trustees later that same day. "There was not anything good described there at all," he added.

Last year at this time, Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) Superintendent Jim Negri described the Governor's proposal to cut \$4 billion from the State's school funds the most devastating budget proposal since Proposition 13 passed. But like a recurring nightmare that has gotten a whole lot scarier, Lamorinda school administrators are again faced with receiving dra-

matically reduced State revenue limit funding that is significantly worse in magnitude. The proposed budget means a 16% reduction in revenue limit funds, so schools in California are faced with educating with 84 cents on the dollar, according to Negri

And things may get worse before they get better. "You can't bank on this budget proposal being the worst case scenario," Jaconette told his Board. "Things may get worse by the May re-

vised, and we definitely won't get a windfall from the State," he added.

Many school leaders are skeptical of some of the revenue enhancements included in the Governor's proposal such as the securitization of the State lottery, which represents \$5 billion of the plan, and the State's ability to secure loans, another \$6 billion piece of the proposal.

... continued on page 9

Mailed to 24,600 homes and businesses in Lamorinda.

return to: Lamorinda Weekly • P.O. Box 6133 • Moraga, CA 94570

PRSR STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID AD-VANTAGE