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Wednesday, January 21, 2009



## The Return of the Suburban Chicken

By Sophie Braccini


**LAMORINDA WEEKLY**  
this week

**The Scoop on School Parcel Taxes**



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**Mysterious California**



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**Miramonte DFAL Basketball Starts Strong**



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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 chickens 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

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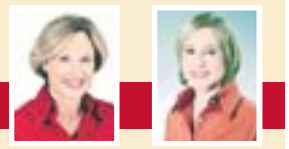
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## Lamorinda Schools Face Significant Funding Reductions

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

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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 26	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, January 22	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, January 27	
City of Lafayette: <a href="http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us">http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us</a>	
Chamber of Commerce: <a href="http://www.lafayettechamber.org">http://www.lafayettechamber.org</a>	

**Lamorinda Teen Center General Meeting**  
Wednesday,  
February 11th, 7:00 pm  
Orinda Community Center  
(see story on page 4)



**Traffic Stop Produces Revealing Warrant, 1/1/09** Lafayette Police pulled the suspect over on Oakhill at Mt. Diablo Boulevard for a routine traffic stop. Unfortunately, the suspect was driving without a license. When the officer ran the suspect's name, it turned out she had an outstanding warrant in Orange County for prostitution/criminal intent. Perhaps Orange County should be known for more than just its "conservatism."

**Driving Under the Influence, 1/2/09** A concerned Lafayette husband called police when his wife drove away from their home in an intoxicated condition. Police successfully located her vehicle near the corner of Happy Valley Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard. The woman was arrested, brought to the Lafayette Police Station and released to her husband. Most importantly, she is safe.

**Missing Fuses, No Electricity and a Hole in the Wall, 1/5/09** The owner of a Lafayette company called police when he discovered unknown suspects had removed fuses, disconnected the electricity and punched a hole in the office wall at his business. The suspects also cut the wire to the motion sensor inside the office. The owner told police he had released three employees within the last month and all had access codes to the gate and knowledge of the interior office. No actual entry was made to the building.

**Suspicious Phonebooks and Mary Jane, 1/8/09** An alert citizen called Lafayette Police when he noticed a suspicious person driving around and delivering phonebooks in his neighborhood. He told the police that phonebooks had already been delivered to his neighborhood the week before. The responding officer approached the suspicious phonebook deliverer's vehicle and noticed the odor of marijuana coming from the car. The suspect agreed to allow the officer to search the vehicle. The officer found 4 hand-rolled cigarettes containing a green leafy substance in a cigarette box on the passenger seat. The suspect was cited, arrested and released at the scene and the vehicle was towed. It is not known what happened to the phonebooks. It is possible that the suspect walked to the Shell Station to get something to eat.



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### Finance Workshop Reality Check: Expenses are up, revenue is down

**By Cathy Tyson**  
"Cost savings alone are not sufficient to meet all the City's needs," said Dan Deitrick, Chairperson of the Finance Review Committee addressing a City Council Public Workshop. Dietrick is a member independent committee that had been meeting since April to go through the city budget looking for expenditure and revenue trends and to make recommendations.

The evening kicked off with Dietrick presenting a recap of the challenges facing the city: \$18M of unfunded road repair, steeply increasing police services costs, a gap in downtown maintenance expense and four failed tax measures.

After months of analyzing information, the Committee made a number of recommendations. First on the list was that it's better to own than rent the city offices. Acquiring and redeveloping what will soon be the vacant original library building would save approximately \$50,000 per year in rent. Investigate opportunities for a more cost effective police force; a 10% reduction in cost would save \$400,000 per year. Reclassify the Youth Diversion Officer to a non-sworn position could produce a \$100,000 annual savings.

Other recommendations include: transferring the current balance in the Parking fund to the pavement management program, fund future downtown maintenance with assessment districts, and finally increase revenue using one or more of the following – property transfer tax, increase the sales tax, institute a business license fee.

The Council heard a substantial amount of public com-

ment on these suggestions. Seniors stepped forward to lobby for the original library to become a senior center. Police Chief Hubbard clarified that the Youth Diversion Officer is responsible for a number of tasks that require a sworn officer. For example if a non-sworn Youth Diversion Officer were tasked with investigation work, the department would have to contract that out at \$95 per hour, quickly eating up any cost savings.

Gabriel Froymovich, a member of the Lafayette Taxpayers' Association (LTA), had this input, "The LTA applauds the LFRC's thorough report. We would urge the City Council to strongly consider and approve most of the suggested budget cuts before considering new and burdensome taxes in today's depressed economy."

Finally late in the night, after much spirited discussion the Council adopted the following recommendations, to be overseen by the City Manager:

- Launch a study to evaluate opportunities for a most cost effective Police Services structure
- Fund additional parking through the RDA or assessment districts, use surplus parking revenue to fund downtown maintenance until an alternate source of funding is identified
- Fund future downtown maintenance with assessment districts
- Ask residents to increase revenue using one or more of the following to fund infrastructure repair, public safety and downtown vitality – property transfer tax, sales tax, business license fee, parcel tax
- Develop a communications plan for the City

### City Permit Necessary to Peddle

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Patty Battersby and Traci Reilly surrounded by her boys  
Photo Cathy Tyson

Around the end of February, any solicitor knocking on Lafayette doors must display a permit issued by the City of Lafayette along with valid photo identification. Boy and Girl Scouts, along with neighborhood kids with school fundraising projects are exempted, as are religious canvassers.

Traci Reilly got the ball rolling on the permit ordinance two and a half years ago. "This was really a group effort by neighbors and citizens who got involved and made it happen." Looking back however, and having kids at Lafayette Elementary School when she joined the Crime Prevention Committee, "this was my number one priority." This was in the aftermath of the travelling magazine salesman who recently plead guilty to the murder and rape of Elizabeth Vuori, an elderly Lafayette resident.

To qualify for the permit, a background check will be made – if the applicant has any felonies or certain categories of misdemeanors including any-

thing involving theft, violence, drugs or acts of a trespassing nature and the recently added "anything of a sexual nature," the permit will be denied.

Police Chief Hubbard explains, "We didn't want a lengthy list of the many specific crimes, so we used broad language," to encompass the myriad of reasons why a permit might be denied.

In addition, police will check to see if the applicant has any outstanding in-state or out-of-state warrants, or if the subject is on probation. Police will also check with the County as well as the California Department of Motor Vehicles and out of state motor vehicle departments.

Currently Lafayette is covered by chapter 56-4 of the Contra Costa County Code. When this Ordinance becomes enacted solicitors must comply with Chapter 4-4 of the Lafayette Municipal Code entitled, "Peddlers, Solicitors and Canvassers" instead of the County rules.

Over the course of many meetings, a number of citizens have come forward to express their opinion that all soliciting should be illegal. However, according to City Attorney Mala Subramanian that is unconstitutional.

Concerned citizens were happy with the outcome. "I support what the Committee has come up with," said Michael Olsen. "It's a black and white issue in my neighborhood. Selling door to door is just a thing of the past." Patty Battersby of the Happy Valley Improvement Association noted, "I support the new stricter ordinance. We do not want strangers coming into our neighborhoods."

The draft ordinance will come back for a second reading at the next City council meeting; thirty days after that it becomes law.

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# Lamorinda Community

- Calendar**
- Town Council 7:30pm**  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School  
1010 Camino Pablo  
Wednesday, January 28
  - Planning Comm. 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, February 2
  - Design Review 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Monday, January 26
  - Park & Rec 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, Mosaic Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, February 17
  - Liaison 8:00am**  
Fire Station  
1280 Moraga Way  
Friday, February 13
  - Town of Moraga online:**  
<http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us>
  - Chamber of Commerce:**  
<http://www.moragachamber.org>

**Lamorinda Teen Center General Meeting**  
Wednesday,  
February 11th, 7:00 pm  
Orinda Community Center  
(see story on page 4)



**Stupid bike thief, 1/11/09** A young man reported his white custom BMX bicycle stolen while he was shopping at Safeway. Oddly enough, not long after the call came in, a suspect that matched the thief's description was seen riding a white custom BMX bike on Moraga Way. Man on bike was detained by police.

**Bank account theft, 1/11/09** A Russell Drive resident checked her Bank of America account electronically and discovered that \$35,000 had been withdrawn without her permission. Bank customer service personnel told her that her account had been accessed by a banking center in Williamsburg, Virginia. A fraud claim is being filed. Perhaps there's a little bit of truth in the state motto "Sic Semper Tyrannis" Latin for Thus Always to Tyrants.

**Truck stolen, 1/13/09** A Miramonte Drive resident who was out of town between January first and the thirteenth returned home to find her red 1988 Toyota pick-up stolen from her carport, California license plate number 3K39288. A tough way to start the new year.

**Manicurist drama, 1/14/09** Officers responded to a disconnected 911 call coming from a Moraga Road nail shop, and found the owner in a highly agitated state. The proprietor was crying and appeared to be hyperventilating as a result of a negative inspection by an administrative agency. EMT's arrived and advised owner to be seen by emergency room staff, she declined and agreed to have an employee drive her to the hospital if her condition worsened.

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# Moraga

## Larch Residents Prepare to Calm Traffic

By Sophie Braccini



A-frame on Larch advertises the public meeting on January 27th  
Photo Sophie Braccini

Residents on Moraga's Larch Avenue have been active for years, lobbying to keep their residential street safe. But it has been hard to maintain the 25 mph restriction on this street that runs parallel to Camino Pablo and features long straight stretches, as well as some serious slopes. The raised crosswalks on Camino Pablo diverted additional traffic onto the favorite street for students walking from and to the nearby elementary and middle schools. As a result, residents are proposing a new traffic calming plan and are inviting the community to a public meeting on January 27th.

The group that calls itself the Larch Avenue Traffic Team surveyed 350 homes at the end of 2007 to identify problems as well as possible solutions. The results showed that speeding was the #1 concern of all the residents, the volume of motor vehicles being the second. The team identified wide support for stop signs and increased neighborhood signage.

Robin Felix, one of the members of the Larch team, presented the plan at the last Traffic Calming Advisory Committee (TSAC) meeting on January 7th. The proposal includes the installation of two new stop signs: one at the crossing of Dickenson and Larch (at this time only Dickenson has a stop sign) and one at the crossing of Shuey and Larch. Pedestrian walkways could be added.

## A Roundabout on St. Mary's Road?

By Sophie Braccini

Bluffs residents came in number as Moraga's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) met on Jan 7th to hear the first presentation of a calming traffic plan proposed by the Town's traffic consultant Fehr and Peers, for the intersections of St Mary's Road at Rheem Blvd. and Bollinger Canyon. The hope of Public Works Director Jill Mercurio is to get a plan approved in time to qualify for funds from the anticipated federal stimulus package and solve traffic difficulties at two of the worst intersections in town.

The report focused primarily on the solutions proposed for the Rheem/St Mary's intersection, and declared the Rheem/Bollinger crossing to be Class A (good quality of service). Bluffs resident Frank Comprelli challenged this conclusion. "When you look at the intersection of St Mary's Road and Bollinger Canyon, traffic flow figures are not enough," he said, "The Bollinger Canyon Road-St. Mary's Road intersection is essentially a single chokepoint through which 153 homes must currently pass to access anywhere or anything in Moraga - shopping, banks, schools, parks, libraries, etc. - or other communities. There is no other choice - it is not a matter of preference." Comprelli said the main issue is not the average time spent waiting to enter traffic

The traffic-calming guide adopted by TSAC in September of 2008 describes the approval procedure. The plan proposed for Larch appears to be a "type 2" as defined in the guide. This level of change requires that the group secure the approval of 75% of the homeowners abutting a proposed change, and a 70% approval of homeowners within 300 feet. At this time the Larch team is organizing to get these endorsements.

"We will go door-to-door, after the public meeting, to gather signatures," stated Felix, "our only concern is reaching some owners who are not living in Moraga, one of them residing out of the country."

TSAC members recommended that the cost for the signage be included in the document that homeowners are asked to sign, as it is they who will be responsible for the cost of the signs' implementation. The price tag was estimated at about \$500 per stop sign and \$200 per crosswalk.

The approval procedure calls for a public meeting to be held and advertised with visible signage on A-frames in the neighborhood of the changes. This meeting will take place on January 27th at the Hacienda de las Flores at 7 p.m. TSAC should make a decision to approve the plan or not during its March meeting after it receives the petition. The plan will then move to the Town Council for final okay, via consent agenda. This procedure allows for fast decision-making without discussion; a single vote may be taken for the approval of all the items placed together on the consent agenda.

The Larch Avenue plan is the first real life test of the efficiency of the new TSAC and its Traffic Calming Guide. If all goes according to plan, it will save the Council a lot of time and possibly some headaches. At its last meeting, the Council appointed Howard Harpham to be the Council's liaison to TSAC; he will keep his colleagues informed of the committee's progress.

traveling along St. Mary's Rd., but the safety of doing so.

Other Bluffs residents concurred, reminding the committee that a proposal has been submitted to the Town to construct an additional 126 homes in Bollinger Valley, the resultant 279 homes representing 2957 auto trips to and from Bollinger Canyon every day through the chokepoint. "I agree with the consultant that the intersection is of category A," said Comprelli, "but that's for about 20 hours a day; during 4 hours it deserves an F."

When the question of the pedestrians was raised, residents were even more concerned about safety. "Pedestrian safety at the intersection of Bollinger Canyon Road and St. Mary's Road, as well as along Bollinger Canyon Road leading to the intersection, ranges from pathetic to non-existent. The juxtaposition of the words 'pedestrian' and 'safety' in this context is a true oxymoron," explained Comprelli.

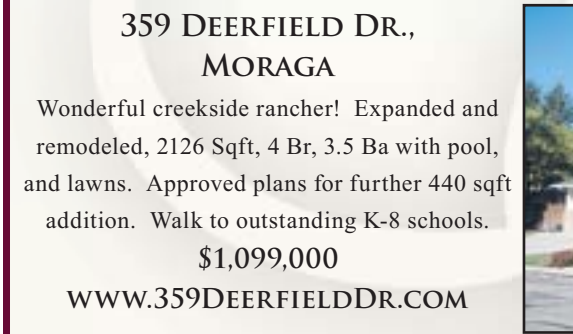
The report proposed several possible solutions, from the least expensive, creating pockets to facilitate left turns, to stop signs, to roundabouts without stop signs. The ultimate option would divert the end of Bollinger Canyon as it is now, to end at the crossing with Rheem.

... continued on page 6

## GREAT HOMES FOR THE SPRING MARKET!

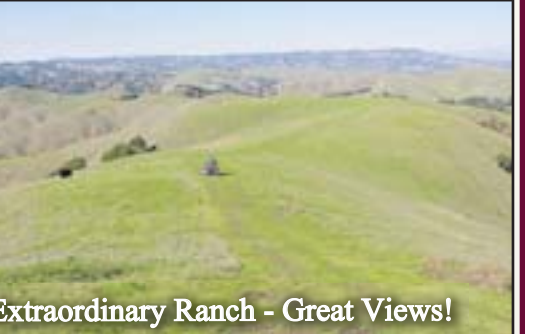
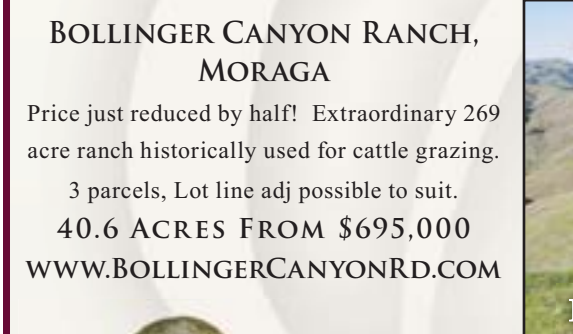


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- Dinner Dances at the Hacienda
- Dad/Daughter (2/20) & Mom/Son (3/20)
- New Year's resolution?
- Moraga Treeline Triathlon 4/25
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# Lamorinda Community

## Calendar, Notes, News

# Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, February 3	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Friday, January 13	
Mayor's Com. Liaison	8:30am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, February 2	
City of Orinda: <a href="http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us">http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us</a> Chamber of Commerce: <a href="http://www.orindachamber.org">http://www.orindachamber.org</a> • local businesses • upcoming events	

**Lamorinda Teen Center General Meeting**  
Wednesday,  
February 11th, 7:00 pm  
Orinda Community Center  
(see story on right)



**Toadstools swiped, 1/06/09** Sometime between January fifth and sixth, that frequent culprit, "unknown suspect," removed two decorative toadstools from the front yard of an El Nido Ranch Road resident. Be on the lookout for a pair of three foot high 'shrooms with green, red and white lights. Estimated value \$220.

**Parked while drunk, 1/06/09** A Calvin Drive resident was found parked in her driveway, engine running, asleep at the wheel. After being awakened by police, she was asked to perform field sobriety tests, which she did poorly on. She was taken to Martinez and booked for drunk driving.

**Robbery at gunpoint, 1/06/09** A young man was leaving BART and walking to his car, parked near the Casa Orinda around 7:00 in the evening. A man brandishing a handgun approached him and demanded his cell phone, iPod, wallet and car keys. According to Chief French, the suspected robber spied electronic gadgetry of the victim while on the train and followed him.

**Neighbor spat, between 06/08 and 1/12/09** A Barbara Road resident thinks his neighbor is responsible for vandalism to his car due to a parking dispute. There have been incidents of egging, spitting, and pouring unknown liquids on his Chevy S-10 truck. The damage from the latest incident is estimated to be \$100.



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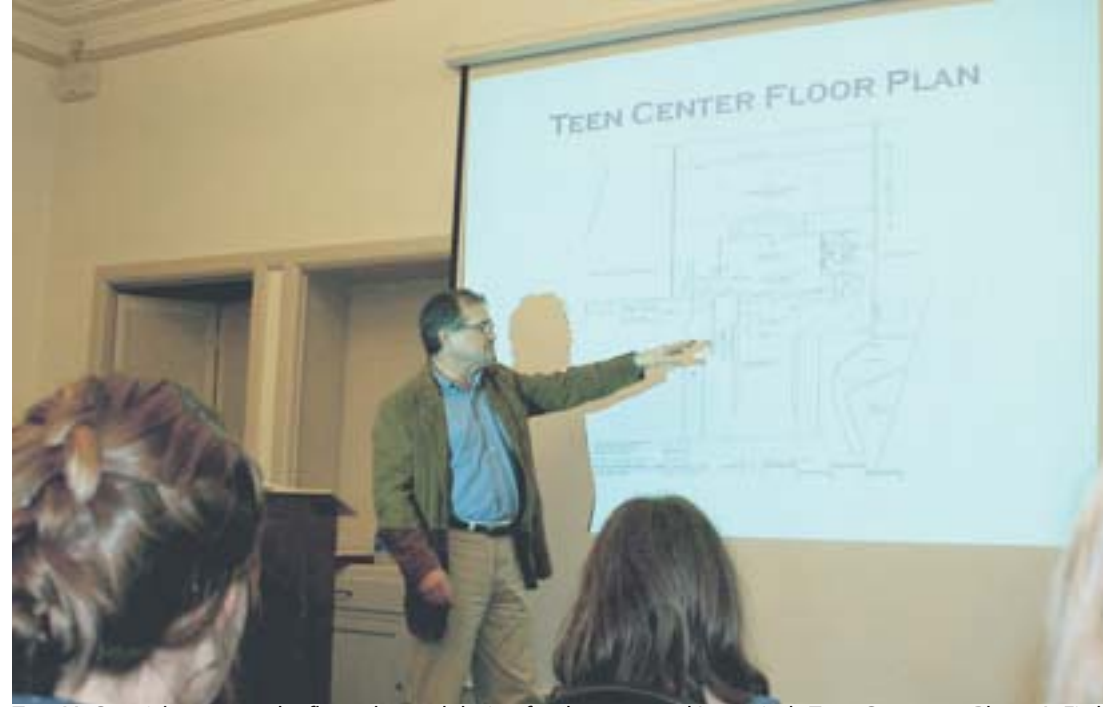
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## Lamorinda Teen Center Plans in The Works

By Andrea A. Firth



Tom McCormick presents the floor plan and design for the proposed Lamorinda Teen Center Photo A. Firth

Over sixty interested residents, parents, and teens recently piled into a crowded meeting room at the Orinda Community Center to listen as Orinda-based attorney Tom McCormick presented plans for the Lamorinda Teen Center. Described as a center that will be primarily operated by the youth of the community, a point that was repeatedly emphasized throughout the meeting, the center will provide teens with recreational and social options in a safe and healthy environment. "This will be a good opportunity for adults to work with teens and provide teens with the exposure to how a business is operated," stated McCormick.

Several area teens, who have been involved in the planning of the project, addressed the group confirming the fact that there are not many places for young people to go in Lamorinda and not much to do once they get there. With the closure of the bowling alley in Moraga and the theater in Lafayette, evening entertainment in a public setting has been confined to the movie theaters in Orinda and Moraga. The skate park in Moraga has filled a niche but shuts down when it gets dark. The lackluster reputation of the area amongst teens has led to the hometown monikers of Borinda and Boraga and left area youth with a strong

desire for someplace nearby to go with friends. "We really just want a place to hang out with our friends," said one teen representative from the Orinda Teen Advisory Council.

In addition to serving as a place to meet with friends informally or as part of a study group, organizers plan for the teen center to include a small stage for bands to perform, pool and ping pong tables, and a food and beverage service. Teens involved with the creation and management of the center will get first-hand experience with how to operate a business, according to McCormick. There will be six teenagers, two from each community, who will serve on the 13-member Board of the teen center. "The development and operation of the center will be structured so that the kids' voices are not overshadowed. The teens will come up with the ideas and work with a facilitator to distill the ideas for presentation to the larger Board," he explained.

McCormick, currently Orinda's Vice Mayor and a father of four including a Miramonte freshman and a seventh-grader at

OIS who were both involved in the planning process for the proposed center, has already secured the 1,500 square-foot basement space of Europa, a family-owned restaurant about one block from the Orinda Theater, as a site for the teen center. Local architects Rick Kattenburg and George Miers have developed a design for the unfinished space, and local building contractor Tom Stevens has agreed to do the work at cost.

As they progress to the next step in the process, the first business lesson Lamorinda teens may be exposed to is how to raise money for a not-for-profit organization in tough economic times. The building and initial operational costs for the teen center are estimated to be \$500,000. While the concept of raising a half a million dollars may seem daunting to some noted McCormick, he was encouraged to find the teens involved were not overwhelmed by the amount or task at hand. The next meeting general meeting for the teen center will be held on February 11th at 7:00 pm in the Community Center; everyone interested in welcome.

## Lamorinda Garden Clubs Join Forces

By Andrea A. Firth

Gardening has always been a group activity in Orinda. Two hundred and fifty (250!) Orindans are members of three main garden clubs in the City: The Montelindo Garden Club, the Orinda Garden Club, and the Junior Garden Club of Orinda. Recently, the three garden clubs joined forces, pooling their resources and collective expertise to beautify the median strip on Camino Pablo that extends north from the BART station. The impetus for the joint venture was both fortuitous and mysterious.

In September of 2007, the Orinda Parks and Recreation Foundation received an anonymous grant of \$3,000 that was to be provided equally to the three garden clubs with the caveat that the monies be used for a City beautification project designed and implemented by the three groups together. It is not unusual for the Foundation to receive an anonymous grant, according to Parks and Recreation Director Todd Skinner, however the requirement that the project be coordinated among the three groups added a new twist.

Lani Shepp, current President of the Montelindo Garden Club, noted that although many of Orinda's garden club members have lived in the area for a long time, they did not all know each other. However, their com-

mon interest in gardening made working together come naturally. The three clubs met monthly for over a year to make the median strip landscaping a reality.

"They all came together for the project, and we are really pleased with the result," states Skinner. "This has created one of the longest landscaped medians in the City, and was definitely one that needed the most help," he adds noting that the median has taken a beating from both the elements and stray cars over the years.

Each of the garden clubs currently maintains a common garden space in Orinda. The Orinda Garden Club manages the triangular garden spot by Camino Sobrante and Orinda Way; The Orinda Junior Garden Club keeps the circular garden by Theater Square blooming throughout the year; and the Montelindo Garden Club preserves the minipark garden. More joint gardening projects throughout the City could be a possibility, according to Shepp.

"The shared project was a constructive and productive experience for the members of Orinda's garden clubs," notes Shepp, and she anticipates that the groups may continue to work together on projects to beautify the common areas of the Orinda.



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# Life in LAMORINDA

## School Parcel Tax—a Perpetual Bandaid

By Andrea A. firth

Once considered a temporary measure to address the State's public education funding shortfalls, the parcel tax has become an integral piece of the school budgeting pie according to many school administrators, parents, and residents in Lamorinda. "It was hoped that it would be an interim fix to address the school funding crisis [following the passage of Proposition 13]," states Sue Severson, who served on the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) Governing Board from 1994 through 2002. However, as the State's budget crises and cuts have cycled repeatedly over the years, she has supported multiple parcel tax measures in Orinda. "By 2002, it became clear that there was a consistent need for local school funding and control of those monies," she adds.

The parcel tax fix is not without detractors. Some complain that the flat rate tax places an unfair burden on small property owners, seniors, and others on fixed incomes. And, some just do not like to see any more tax increases for local schools or otherwise.

Each of the four public school districts that serve Lamorinda has a

parcel tax in place. The inclusion or exclusion of an escalator clause, sunset provision, or senior exemption make it so no two parcel taxes are exactly the same. However, the bar for passage of any school parcel tax is set high requiring 2/3 or 66.7% voter approval, so raising or renewing the parcel tax is never guaranteed.

**OUSD.** The OUSD has placed \$124 parcel tax measure on the upcoming March 3rd special election ballot. The measure includes no sunset provision and the senior exemption is restricted to low-income seniors. If passed, the tax will be an add-on to the existing parcel tax, which passed in 2003 with 75% of voters in support, and result in a total school parcel tax contribution of \$509 per parcel.

Parcel tax measures and fundraising through the Educational Foundation and parents clubs are the only mechanisms left to create a revenue stream to meet the budget requirements in the face of the State funding deficit according to Riki Sorenson, President of the OUSD Board of Trustees. "We are just trying to stay even with what we should receive from the State," states Sorenson. OUSD Superin-

tendent Dr. Joe Jaconette concurs, noting that local financial support is the only way the District can manage through the fluctuations of the State funding process and continue to deliver a high quality education program.

Some critics of the proposed parcel tax point to the pending \$25 million deal with Pulte Developers for the District's Pine Grove property and question the need for additional money. The money from the Pine Grove deal, as mandated by the State, can only be used for capital improvements, maintenance, and facility needs according to Sorenson and may not be used for ongoing expenses such as teachers' salaries. A recent report identified \$90 million in facilities and maintenance needs across the OUSD schools.

**AUHSD.** Acalanes High School District (AUHSD) may be next in line to place a parcel tax measure on the ballot for voter approval. AUHSD's current \$189 per parcel tax is scheduled to expire in June of 2011, and the Governing Board and others have raised the issue of renewing the parcel tax sooner, even as early as June of this year. The current tax generates an-

nual revenue of \$6.7 million and includes a senior exemption without income requirement. The amount of the proposed parcel tax has not been determined and will be discussed at upcoming meetings of the Governing Board.

**LAFSD.** Measure J—the Lafayette School district parcel tax—was passed with 73% voter support in November of 2007. The \$313 per parcel tax includes a 3% annual increase and sunsets in 2014. The senior exemption is available to senior citizens who are 65 years or older and who own and occupy a home in Lafayette as a principal residence.

**MSD.** Moraga School District's \$325 per parcel tax was passed in March of 2004 squeaking by with 66.8% of voters in favor. Unlike the previous parcel tax, the current MSD parcel tax includes no sunset clause. "The District went for a 'permanent' parcel tax because stability in funding sources was a high priority," notes Superintendent Rick Schafer. "The committee recognized that the proposed parcel tax was for maintaining current programs, not adding new programs or enhancements—accordingly, stability was critical," he adds.

## SMC Students Study Ways to Close Sustainability Loop

By Jennifer Wake



SMC adjunct professor Kristen Sbrogna (kneeling) shows students natural water flows behind the Saint Mary's College Legacy Garden Photo Jennifer Wake

It wasn't your typical class at Saint Mary's College last week, with students trekking through thick brush and menacing stalks of poison oak on a muddy hillside facing North Claeys Hall.

The focus of their quest? Water.

As part of their Jan Term course, "An Introduction to Permaculture," students studied the nearby creek bed and the topography of the hillside to identify natural water flows and to incorporate them into the design of a sustainable water source for the fledgling garden located behind the dorm.

Permaculture – a land use and community building movement – has a central theme of developing ecological landscapes that produce food. Other components include designing energy-efficient buildings, and focusing on waste water treatment, recycling, and land stewardship that mimic patterns found in nature.

"We are seeing an increasing need to conserve resources in our communities and across the world," says SMC adjunct professor Kristen Sbrogna, who is teaching the Jan Term course. "Permaculture responds to climate change, food and water security, and affordable energy with simple and small-scale measures people or communities can implement right away. By doing so, we can improve our collective quality of life."

Sustainability efforts are nothing new to Lamorinda residents, who have taken steps to become more eco-friendly in recent years.

... continued on page 7

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## Dog Owners Antsy Over Animal Control Action

By Sophie Braccini



Signs at Rancho Laguna Park

Photos Sophie Braccini

It's a dog's life for dog owners in Moraga. No dog parks, no authorized area to let your pooch run off all that energy and reconnect with furry friends, nowhere but two places: Rancho Laguna Park in Moraga before 9 am and 1 hour before dusk and on Donald Drive along Mulholland Ridge. So when Contra Costa County Animal Services came to Rancho Laguna and ticketed dog owners at 3:50 p.m. on a recent afternoon, some became distressed. On January 14th a large number of dog owners attended the Town Council meeting to express their concerns.

phone with her walker; Luis Toledo, a 24-year resident of Moraga stated that he got a ticket from Animal Control and couldn't understand why the officers wouldn't listen to his explanations.

There might be some reasons for that. As you enter Rancho Laguna, the first prominent large white sign that can be seen reads "Dogs MUST be on leash and under control at all times 9 a.m. to 7 p.m." Further away in the bushes a brown sign reads, "Pets must be on leash and under control after 9 a.m. with the exception of being off leash 1 hour before dusk during standard time and after 7 p.m. during daylight savings time."

Therefore, dog owners interpreted the text as, "I can have my dog unleashed one hour before

dusk," while CCCAS seems to interpret it as no dog unleashed between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. (at press time CCAS had not return our calls requesting clarification).

"The problem is that the old text is fuzzy," says Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram, "when Animal Control gets to a Park they apply their rule, which is no animal off leash. If municipalities want something else they need to have a very clear rule."

The Council asked that the matter be resolved and Ingram said the topic was going to be heard by the Parks and Recreation Commission at its January meeting on the 20th. "We should have a simple and straight forward rule like "dogs can be off leash before 9 a.m. and after 4 p.m.," suggests the Director.

## ANTI-FREEZE OR COOLANT??

Ask Jeff



Jeff Joyce

*Aren't all coolants the same? Signed, Baffled in Berkeley*

Dear Baffled:

Always consult your owners manual for recommended fluids your car uses. Modern cars can require vehicle specific fluids that should never be substituted for. There are green coolants, red, yellow and orange coolants currently used in cars. Mixing types is not recommended. If not sure, top off with plain tap water until the proper coolant is identified. Never drive when coolant is low, as serious engine damage may occur.

Dear Jeff:

*According to the temperature gauge in my car, it always reads cool. That must mean my cooling system is just fine, right?*

*Signed, Joe Cool in Concord*

Dear Mr. Cool:

First, never assume your gauges are 100% accurate. Actually, an engine that runs too cool is not necessarily a good thing. Most modern day engines require a minimum temperature of 195 degrees for engine management sensors to function properly as well as heater perform-

ance. Annual cooling system maintenance can prevent costly engine repairs and will insure your car will perform properly year-round. Be sure to use a trusted facility to service your car.

Dear Jeff:

*The heater in my car is not getting very warm lately during these cold mornings. Any advise on what I should do?*

*Signed, Chilly in Orinda*

Dear Chilly:

The heating system on most cars is a function of your cooling system. The heater relies on warm coolant from your engine to produce the heated air that comes through your ventilation system. A faulty/sticky thermostat could be the problem. Always have an annual cooling system check-up either in the fall or spring to insure all components are functioning properly and replace the thermostat during routine maintenance. Jeff Joyce has been the Manager of Express Oil Change & Tire Center since 2004. He can be reached at 925-254-8989 or jjoyce@orindamotors.com

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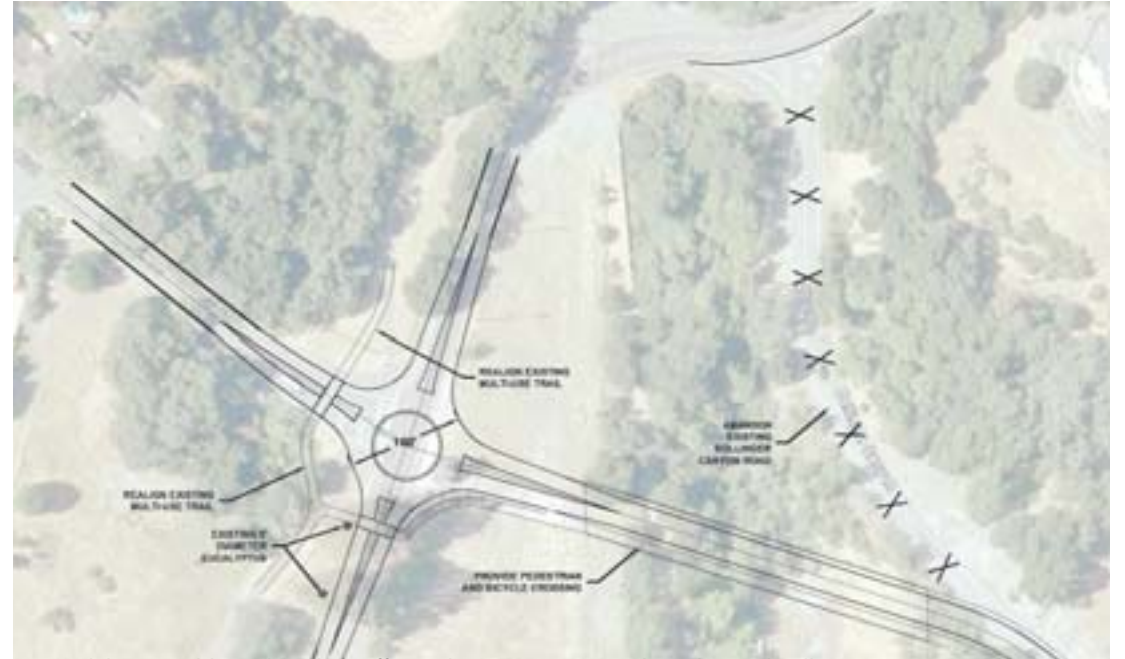
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## A Roundabout on St. Mary's Road?

... continued from page 3



A roundabout could regulate the traffic at Rheem, St Mary's and a redirected Bollinger

Picture courtesy of Fehr and Peers and the Town of Moraga

This solution, which is the most expensive, would imply the building of a bridge over a creek on St Mary's College property; and this was the only option that completely satisfied the Bluffs residents. However, both cost and the need for a long review process preclude that option, at least in the short term. A roundabout that would involve Rheem Boulevard and St Mary's Road may be the first step.

The members of TSAC, led by Chair Barbara Simpson, had

many questions for Mercurio as it attempted to gage the cost of each solution. "If a stimulus package is on its way, you must have a whole list of projects," added Simpson, "it needs to be prioritized." Other members of the committee had questions regarding the security of roundabouts, since they are not common in this area. Members of the committee agreed to drive/walk each intersection before the next meeting and asked Interim Chief of Police Robert Priebe to give them

the latest incident figures.

At their next meeting in February, TSAC will receive and review the answers to its questions and make a recommendation to the Council, which is the deciding body. Mercurio believes that it is still possible to get the project ready to be granted money under a stimulus package, "it will depend on who will be required to approve the plan along the way," she said, "but I'm confident I could get the project ready for endorsement."

## Building in Open Space in Moraga Proves Thorny

By Sophie Braccini

At its meeting on January 14th the Moraga Town Council sent the planned Hetfield development project back to the Planning Commission for further environmental study.

The battle of experts between the developer and the neighborhood association that formed to fight the project, created enough of a doubt in the mind of Council Members that they applied the principle of precaution and asked for the Planning Commission to determine the scope of a process that will reexamine the geotechnical data, the adequacy of the project with the General Plan, and its respect of the slope limitations set in the Moraga Open Space Ordinance.

New Mayor Dave Trotter grabbed the helm with both hands at this first meeting of the new Council and imposed a structured and orderly style, keeping everyone within their allocated time.

The crowd was fairly large at the meeting. One person spoke in favor of the property owner and seventeen spoke against. Many comments from residents pertained to the beauty and uniqueness of the space proposed for development. The property is a hill with a creek, many trees, a trail, and abundant wild life. Several cited the Los En-

cinis project, just on the other side of the hill, that has been graded and left barren and dusty, without any development, despite the fact that the Town approved its development.

The experts who presented on behalf of the parties presented compelling arguments. One pivotal moment was when Laurel Collins, principal geomorphologist at Watershed Sciences in Berkeley, speaking for the appellants, demonstrated the existence of a fault on the Hetfield property that had been ignored by the applicants. "They used a 1980 map," she said, "this fault was identified in 1986 and is on maps since then."

Another crucial moment came when an upper Hetfield resident took the stand to share the catastrophic state of her house that is severely impacted by movements on the hill behind it. As she talked, the audience fell completely silent, and each one was reminded of the unpredictability of the soil conditions and landslides in this area. Council member Howard Harpham, who referred to a personal flood incident in his home, reinforced the general feeling of risk linked to the issue.

The Town's consultant for the project, Mitch Wolfe, gave a compelling defense of the developer, ex-

plaining the studies that had been made and the practices used were adequate and commonly used. To the question of how to address the issue of the fault uncovered by Mrs. Collins, he explained that this could be addressed with sub-drainage. His assertiveness won over Council Member Michael Metcalf, who declared being persuaded by him.

Council Member Ken Chew, who has always defended open space protection, questioned the appropriateness of the project itself, its compliance with Moraga General Plan and MOSO 1986. He stated that he believes that the property owner just seeks the Town's approval in order to resell the land and he was concerned that Hetfield would suffer the same fate as Los Encinos.

After hearing all the testimony the Council, supported by Town attorney Michelle Kenyon, decided to request further study. "Based on the evidence presented here tonight, there is a fair argument under CEQA that this project would have a significant environmental impact," said the Mayor. Council Member Karen Mendonca made the motion to send to project back to the Planning Commission for a focused Environmental Impact Report; the motion was adopted unanimously.

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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Mysterious California: Book Discussion Series

By Sophie Braccini



Kirk Russell Photo courtesy of the author



Nadia Gordon Photo courtesy of the author



Nina Revoyr Photo courtesy of the author



Laurie King Photo courtesy of the author

Mystery books attract readers of all ages. The excitement of a well written mystery novel, the mind puzzle and the often colorful characters create a cocktail that's hard to resist. Lamorinda mystery fans are invited to step up to the bar; the Moraga library will offer the "Mysterious California book discussion series." The four month long program will feature 4 California authors who have set their mysteries in the Golden State.

The program starts on January 29th with the screening of a documentary introducing the writers and their work. The movie will be presented at both 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.; it invites readers on a visual journey through the California landscapes of the four crime novels and on an exploration of universal themes: the love of land, the importance of knowing personal and social history, the desire for truth and justice, and the power of place to inspire story.

"The four mysteries chosen for this program represent a cross-section of crime fiction spawned by California's locales," says librarian Nancy Herrera, who is coordinating the program in Moraga, "the writers and novels in the new program cover a large terrain geographically, historically, and culturally."

The first featured author is a San Francisco favorite, Laurie King, and her selected mystery is "The Art of Detection."

Next up is Kirk Russell, author of "Shell Games," a mystery staged along the

Northern Coast of California. "My novel, Shell Games, that's part of the library program is set largely along the north coast with an abalone poaching angle," says Russell, "I knew I wanted to write the land into the story and when I heard about Fish and Game's undercover team the idea of writing a fictional patrol lieutenant running that unit seemed a perfect fit." Russell grew up in Orinda and spent a lot of time outdoors. His other two novels also revolve around poaching plots; one is set in the Sierras and the other in the delta.

The third author featured at the library is Nina Revoyr, Southern California author for her novel "Southland." The Japanese-American author pictures love and murder in the 40, 60 and 90's in this riveting L.A. tale. The last author is Nadia Gordon, who situates her mystery "Sharpshooter" in the Napa Valley.

"We are not sure yet that all the authors will be able to come to our book discussions," says Herrera, "they will be featured the 3rd Thursday of the month, starting on February 19th with The Art of Detection." As with the introductory movie, the discussions will be held twice, in the afternoon at 1 p.m., and in the evening at 7 p.m.

Both Kirk Russell and Nadia Gordon confirmed that they would be coming for their book discussion. The library has already ordered many copies of the first novel and they will be available shortly.

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## SMC Students Study Ways to Close Sustainability Loop

... continued from page 5

These include changing light bulbs to CFLs, switching to tank-less water heaters, buying hybrid vehicles, and participating in city-wide composting efforts.

Lafayette resident Bart Carr and his family began traditional composting and worm composting at his home, while Jodie Howe started buying her family's produce through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, where families pay local farmers up front for each season's vegetables, which are boxed in bulk and delivered locally to be separated by participants. Many other Lamorinda residents have started their own vegetable gardens and are planting fruit trees instead of ornamentals.

"The simplest thing people can do is to start growing their own food, even if it's just one thing: a fruit tree, lettuce, tomatoes, something," Sbrogna says. "When a number of people in a community are growing food then it's easy to start a neighborhood home-grown foodshare program or collaborative. You can't get much more local than raspberries from your own yard or eggs from your neighbor's chickens."

The goal is to create a closed-loop system.

"This concept seems so cutting edge, yet every traditional culture and native people have been growing food forever," Sbrogna added. "People are so divorced from their food. The permaculture concept takes this most basic need and gives people this power."

Moraga resident Deva Rajan gave the students a tour of the Moraga Community Gardens, which has been providing a bounty for local residents for years. Bill Durkin of Sustain-

able Moraga plans to give students a tour of the Orinda City offices and the Moraga Barn (both of which are "green" certified by the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Green Building Rating System).

Sbrogna's goal is for the students to develop their own understanding of permaculture as it relates to their immediate lives and surroundings. By applying the principles of permaculture to resource management on local and global levels, Sbrogna hopes students will envision new design possibilities for their dorms, communities and cities.

"Permaculture works to mimic patterns and designs found in nature rather than work against it," Sbrogna says.

For example, with proper design placement of shade plants or placement of windows to bring in sunlight during the winter months, homes would not need as much energy to heat or cool during peak seasons. Sbrogna says most Americans work against nature, and thus find themselves scrambling for resources.

It makes no sense that our driveways and rain gutters divert water, and then we import water into our homes," she says.

Some simple permaculture concepts can be utilized, explained Sbrogna. Add a greywater system (which collects wastewater from bathtubs, shower drains, sinks, washing machines, and dishwashers) to homes or substitute a green lawn with edible plants, a garden, or native fauna.

"America is somewhat lawn obsessed," she says. "It would be great if people could change what we consider to be beautiful."

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

Dear Editor,

I look forward to the Lamorinda Weekly, especially the Police Blotter sections. In this week's Weekly I saw a letter to the editor that requests downplaying of the 'cutesy' reports. I, however, disagree and love the 'cutesiness' to the section and don't think it inappropriate at all. Most of these reports are misdemeanors and minor felony offenses. So please keep them coming and keep them humorous. Thanks!

Sincerely,  
D. Brennan, Moraga

Dear Editor,

I would suggest that B. Campbell, who wrote condemning "the cutesy comic remarks at the close of each item" in your community police reports and requested they be eliminated, lighten up a bit. These are most usually not reports on the high crimes of the likes of an Al Capone or a Charles Manson, but most frequently concern young people apprehended during something really stupid.

Sherrill Grogan  
Orinda



Dear Editor,

The current debates in Sacramento lack definition of State priorities in favor of justifying budget proposals. In our communities public education is a top priority, a value shared among all Californians, as reflected in poll after poll. The proposed 5+ billion in education funding cuts will have crippling long-term effects on our kids. California's success and economic power has been fueled by creativity and intellectual curiosity, supported and nurtured by our public schools and universities. Now is the time to restore the funding those institutions require to ensure a bright and healthy future.

The Las Trampas Creek Council of PTA's represents 27 K-12 schools in six districts from Contra Costa County. Frustrated over the current budget stalemate, the group launched a letter writing campaign directed at the governor and state legislators. On January 8, 2009, representing The Las Trampas Legislation Team, Michelle Leighton, Pamela West, and Dana Fillingger delivered over 11,000 letters advocating adequate education funding to Sacramento state legislators. The Legislation Team plans to continue writing letters, visiting legislators and putting whatever pressure they can on Sacramento until results are achieved. I hope that you can run this article on behalf of the over 500,000 constituents in the six school districts represented.

Thank you,

Pamela West  
Governing Board, Orinda Union School District

To the Editor:

There will be a new Orinda school tax on a March 3 Orinda special election ballot. This new tax will raise the existing Orinda school parcel tax to \$509 per year. These taxes have no sunset or ending; they will go on forever, regardless of additional school income from State or Federal grants.

The proposed tax is not fair. Residents who own a modest, small home will pay the same tax as those living in a palatial 5-million-dollar mansion.

The claimed "senior exemption" from this tax is a sham. Only 1% of Orinda households will qualify for this exemption. Why won't the proponents of the tax tell us who will qualify for the so-called "senior exemption"?

50% of our County property taxes go to the schools. The Orinda School District is expecting a 25-million-dollar payment for school land sold for the Pine Grove development. According to the 2008-2009 Orinda School District budget, Orinda teachers average \$75,855 per year per teacher. Medical and dental benefits are covered up to \$916 per month per teacher. Teachers have tenure or job security, and their pensions increase each year after retirement. Corporation employees enjoy neither of these benefits. In a time of severe recession, the worst since the Great Depression, we cannot afford more taxes. Orindans are losing their jobs, their businesses are closing, mortgages are being foreclosed and returns on investments are collapsing. This is not the time for new taxes.

Proponents of the new parcel tax claim the high value of Orinda homes is due solely to Orinda's schools. If this were true, San Francisco would have low home values, since its schools are poor. Actually, San Francisco home values are high. Orinda home values result from having no polluting industry, spacious lots, beautiful hills and closeness to the inner Bay Area.

To avoid waste of our tax dollars in a time of severe recession, please join me in voting NO on Measure B.

Clyde Vaughn  
Orinda

Editor:

St. Mary's College has invited William Ayers to lecture students about, "Trudging Toward Freedom" on January 28 at the Soda

Center. The link between his qualifications and this lecture seem dubious to me, but that is not for me to judge.

I do know that Ayers is a dangerous person to have instructing, lecturing or in any way influencing people in an educational (or other) setting. St. Mary's, in the event description, has mentioned his "controversial background." His background is felonious, not controversial.

As a leader of the "guerilla organization" known as "The Weathermen," Ayers was instrumental in pushing them to spread "world communism" and "smash monogamy" through violence, with spectacular bombings that injured and killed Americans. The Weathermen, in the Port Huron statement which includes the previous quoted language, indicated that they viewed themselves as a domestic revolution affiliated with foreign movements that were killing American soldiers.

Ayers has told the New York Times that he does not regret using bombs and, in fact, feels he did not do enough. After being arrested, he has decided to spread his war on democracy, capitalism and peaceful discourse through lectures instead of bombs. St. Mary's should not give him that podium.

Mr. Ayers is dangerous and wholly unqualified to lecture about freedom. He can enjoy the benefits of the freedom this country provides him, but that does not mean that St. Mary's should provide him a vehicle with which to tear it down.

James Minder  
Lafayette

Dear Editor:

I have followed with interest the Lot 66 controversy. This old real estate lawyer has a few comments:

Under NO circumstances can the city take all or a part of an easement without the owners' consent or an Eminent Domain action. The easements, owned by over 20 uphill neighbors, are over all of Lot 66, according to the various deeds, and is the uphill owners only access to their property.

As one somewhat familiar with the Sessions/Petar/Northridge development, everyone involved believed Lot 66 (all of it) was subject to the easements and could not be developed -- otherwise Petar would have developed it.

Civil engineers have opined that the Holt proposal would further compromise the present minimal standards for the intersection of Sessions Road and Sierra Vista. That intersection should be improved, not degraded, as proposed.

Title companies should be notified because they have insured that all "uphill" owners have an easement across all of Lot 66.

The city attorney is just dead wrong if she says (as reported) that the city can grant a right to build on the easement (except the trail easement that the city owns). It should be noted that the county has said the lot is "unbuildable."

To my knowledge, no planning agency -- city or county -- has ever tried to grant the right to develop over someone else's property...and an easement is an interest in property.

In my career, I have been involved with literally hundreds of land use applications. Never have I seen such a strong advocacy by staff for an applicant's position.

As a long-term booster of, and contributor to, our great city, I am embarrassed by the incompetent manner this has been handled. I guess if you have served your country for 25 years and your city for a like period (as Holt says he has), you are entitled to some special privileges.

Regards,  
Ned Robinson  
Lafayette

To the Editor:

In October, we moved from Orinda to Walnut Creek, selling our Orinda home as the economy was plunging dramatically on a daily basis (ed note: Marian Nielsen still works at Orinda Books). The family that bought our house did so expressly because they wanted to be in the Orinda School District. We congratulated ourselves that the modest contributions over the years that we had made to the Orinda Educational Foundation had been a good investment as Orinda's excellent school system had been the updraft that helped our home sale in trying times.

We had lived in Orinda for forty years. Its schools were a principal reason we chose to live in Orinda and our three children all benefited from their years in the Orinda Union and Acalanes School Districts.

I hope Orindans, when they vote on the March parcel tax, will consider the important role that Orinda's excellent schools play in supporting the property value of homes in Orinda and in attracting the new young families that will continue to make Orinda the vibrant community that we have all loved.

Marian and Bob Nielsen

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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Knox – A New Addition to Restaurant Row

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Gary Singh and Jay Singh, Managers of Knox Photo Cathy Tyson

"I totally believe if you serve good food at a reasonable price, people will come in," said Gary Singh, Manager of Knox, located in that space that used to house Per Tutti on Mount Diablo Boulevard. Officially open since December, it's clear that the kitchen has mastered the art of Italian comfort food, with equally attentive service.

It's a bit of a family affair, Gary Singh and brother-in-law Jay Singh share managing duties and Gary's daughter is the hostess. In

the kitchen is Italian chef Francesco Torre, from the Piedmont region of the country - the northwest side of the boot. Friendly, professional servers round out the staff. "We treat the employees like they're family," says Singh.

Starting this week, Knox is promoting their brand new \$3, \$4, \$5 Happy Hour, with beer on tap for \$3, well drinks \$4 and wine \$5. There will also be a small bar menu featuring \$3, \$4 and \$5 appetizers. Singh explains, "We want people

to come in, give it a try, and come back for a meal."

Lunch and dinner menus are divided into antipasti, insalate, primi e zuppe, secondi and dessert, along with an extensive wine list and full bar.

On a recent Saturday night, the place was packed with hungry patrons creating a fairly loud buzz filling the intimate room. Chef Torre puts an innovative spin on Italian classics as well as many dishes Lamorindans may not be familiar with, like boned leg of lamb stuffed with frittata served with broccolini rabe.

Our party of four started with butter lettuce, black olive, oven dried cherry tomatoes, and taleggio cheese salad, and the little jam lettuce salad with pecorino cheese, walnuts and crispy prosciutto. Choice of a handful of salad dressings is served on the side. An order of mussels in a rich candied garlic broth and an interesting take on a trio of bruschette one each topped with roasted bell peppers, tomato and a basil eggplant mousse are two of the four starters offered. Thumbs up all the way around, salads crisp and fresh, mussels perfectly prepared, although the

non-pitted olives were a distraction.

On the whole everything was quite good, although there were some minor bumps in the road. Celery root soup, something you don't see every day, was luscious, rich and creamy. Cod in parchment could have used a bit more seasoning. A delicious menu highlight was the server-recommended Tagliatelle al Sugo Toscano, or tagliatelle pasta made in-house with Tuscan style meat sauce.

Desserts were a mix of old and new, along with classics like Pannecotta, chocolate and espresso cake served with candied blood oranges, a table favorite was pear cooked in red wine and spices served in cinnamon custard. The unique deconstructed Tiramisu, was a very original interpretation, like nothing we had seen before.

"Give it a go, you won't be disappointed," said diner Andy Firth. Knox is open every day for lunch and dinner from 11:00 a.m., 3576 Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

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## Lamorinda Schools Face Significant Funding Reductions

... continued from page 1

The Governor's idea to allow schools to cut the school year down to 175 days from 180 days has raised more than eyebrows in the Lamorinda school community. Longtime OUSD Board of Trustees member Pat Rudebusch seemed incredulous of the option. "The United States already has one of the shortest school years as compared to other developed nations," she stated. "We are looking at some potentially drastic changes to how we educate our youth, and it's not for the better." Negri of AUHSD questioned the legality of the option as presented by the Governor. In addition, administrators acknowledged that the reduced work schedule, and consequently reduced pay, for both teachers and classified employees would have to be negotiated through their bargaining units.

According to Negri, AUHSD will weather the proposed midyear cuts due to \$2 million in undesignated funds that the District was able to save through a spending and hiring freeze. However, the financial picture for the 2009-2010

school year looks much less balanced with the District projecting a \$5.2 million deficit. The AUHSD Board has begun to hold budget study sessions to identify potential cuts including the elimination of class size reduction and reducing counseling, library, and healthcare services. The possibility of taking an increased parcel tax measure to the voters is also on the table.

In the Lafayette School District, Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill said the district is expecting a \$940,000 mid-year budget cut. "We believe we have the capacity to handle that," said Brill. This will, however, result in a \$220,000 structural deficit for the district. "We will be spending more dollars than we're bringing in and can't sustain that," said Brill. The district expects the deficit will rise to around \$600,000. "We are in some uncharted territories," he added.

"All the low hanging fruit is gone. Now we're looking at people," stated Moraga School District Superintendent Rick Schafer, who estimates that his district is facing a

million dollar plus shortfall through the end of this school year and the next. Having already moved to freeze all spending except that which is "mission critical," he has also developed a cut list that includes elimination of personnel and programs.

OUSD also expects to be short a million dollars in operating funds secondary to the State financial crisis. The OUSD Board has begun to examine the budget and to review a list of potential budget reductions, which includes possible cuts to class size reduction, art and music instruction, and math and literary specialists.

All of the school districts expect to lean heavily on the monies raised by their educational foundations, parent clubs and PTAs to help them manage through the budget morass. "One of our great challenges in talking about programs and reducing or eliminating them to achieve savings relates to the fact that the parents clubs and the Educational Foundation underwrite many of them," states OUSD

Board President Riki Sorenson. "So any action would require agreement with those stakeholders and deferral of money back to the school district to keep other programs alive."

As mandated by the State, schools must announce lay-off notices by March 13th.

Jean Follmer contributed to this article.

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## The Return of the Suburban Chicken

...continued from page 1

Both women emphasize the need for a covered fenced area where the chickens will be protected from the numerous local predators, raccoons, foxes, eagles, coyotes and even rats.

People who have chickens on smaller lots do it for the same reasons and share the same enthusiasm. "Chickens are very sociable animals," said "Mark" who raises 3 chickens on 1/3 of an acre, "our son built a chicken coop according to instructions we found on a web site and the chickens roost there every night." The rest of the time, the chickens roam the 10 X 4 feet enclosure they have built for them. They too eat the eggs, give the kitchen scraps to the chickens and put the manure in their compost pile.

"I collect the manure a few times a month," said Teri Fadelli. She is so happy to live on a property that used to be a chicken farm, "everything I plant here thrives," she says.

Michelle Chan of 4H warns about a few things that people need to watch for when raising chickens. "You need to keep the animals' water clean and fresh," she says, "make sure you put wire under the coop, and not only chicken wire, something sturdy otherwise raccoons can go through it." She recommends plenty of room for chickens to dig and take a dust-bath.

Chan is not particularly concerned with diseases, "chickens are like any other pets, they need to be watched and if one gets sick it needs to be taken care of." 4H

teaches children to care for the animals and also participates in shows and exhibitions. Chan sees chickens as wonderful pets and a great opportunity for children to experience the cycle of food.

Sustainable Lafayette co-founder Steve Richard is a supporter of chickens as well. "This is a great way to create your own food," says Richard, who has been playing with the idea of getting chickens himself but has not taken that step yet, "farming has a long history in Lamorinda and with the rising interest in eating locally grown food it seems that the number of people interested in chickens

is increasing."

Interest in chickens is growing in the media as well, with a site like urbanchicken.net, or the recent ABC 7 (KGO) television news story that featured Moraga's former Mayor Lynda Deschambault, who was forced to remove her chickens from her property, or "The New Coop de Ville" article in the Newsweek of November 24th featuring urban raised chickens in cities such as New York, South Portland, Ann Arbor and Ft. Collins.

What comes first, the chicken or the ordinance? In Lamorinda, the story is a handful just beginning.

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### Real Estate in 2009 – What's in Store for the New Year?

By Val Cook-Watkins



Val Cook-Watkins, Manager of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage's Orinda office, provides the above tips. A 30-year real estate veteran, Watkins oversees a talented team of 78 real estate professionals in the East Bay. Her offices are located at 5 Moraga Way and 2 Theatre Square, Suite 211, in Orinda. She can be reached at 925-253-4600 or by e-mail at vcookwatkins@cbtnorcal.com.

2008 was a year of ups and downs for the Lamorinda real estate market. Because of the desirability and strong fundamentals of our market, we certainly fared better than many other parts of the Bay Area, the state and the nation. But we certainly weren't immune from the challenges facing the nation's struggling economy.

So, the question on the minds of many is what's in store for 2009? Much of the real estate prognosis is dependent on the state of the financial system in general and real estate finance situation, in particular. The fact is, we really can't find solid traction until the financial markets stabilize. Many experts are predicting that once the fiscal stimulus package and aggressive action by the Federal Reserve kick in, the economy is likely to improve.

The California Association of Realtors has forecasted that the median home price in

most areas will decline slightly next year while sales of existing homes will continue the rise as buyers take advantage of more attractive pricing. Statewide, the organization is predicting a 6 percent price decline compared to last year, but a 12.5 percent increase in sales. Many leading economists believe we will remain in recession through the first half of the year, and then begin a gradual recovery in the second half.

So what does all this mean for the local housing market? I'm cautiously optimistic that a rebound in the local market could happen this year. There are several reasons why I say that:

- **Dropping Interest Rates** – Interest rates are falling to their lowest levels in perhaps 50 years. Mortgage rates have dropped into the 4-5 percent range in many parts of the country, which will likely spur increased home sales.

- **Improving Affordability** – Because of lower prices and interest rates, more people can afford a home. CAR reports that 53 percent of the state's households can afford to buy an entry level home in California, up from 24 percent a year ago.

- **Government Intervention and Job Creation** – The government is currently looking at a number of options including tax benefits, home ownership credits, subsidies or interest rate stabilization, to spur the housing market. President-elect Obama's economic team is developing an economic recovery plan with an ultimate goal of creating at least 2.5 million jobs.

- **Slowing of Distressed Properties** – CAR expects sales of distressed properties to peak in early 2009, which would help stabilize the overall market and home prices. Federal and state action to mitigate foreclosures should help more homeowners avoid losing their homes and prevent more fire-sale prices on the market.

- **Advantages of Lamorinda** – The fundamentals of the Lamorinda market are solid: great schools including higher education, a strong sense of community, beautiful weather, outstanding quality of life, close proximity to San Francisco, excellent public transportation, access to many cultural opportunities, and some very well priced homes!

If you are considering buying a home, now may very well be the time to get into the market while mortgage rates are low and prices affordable. And if you are considering selling, more so than ever you need a qualified Realtor® who can assist you in marketing your home.

### Lamorinda Home Sales continued



<b>LAFAYETTE</b>	Last reported: 9
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$290,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,250,000
<b>MORAGA</b>	Last reported: 1
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$1,250,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,250,000
<b>ORINDA</b>	Last reported: 4
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$664,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,500,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

- LAFAYETTE**
- 3392 East Terrace, \$710,000, 4 Bdrms, 2168 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 12-12-08
  - 5 Gable Lane, \$290,000, 12-15-08
  - 1 Harper Court, \$550,000, 2 Bdrms, 1091 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 12-12-08
  - 1550 Huston Road, \$525,000, 2 Bdrms, 1168 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 12-12-08
  - 119 Marsha Place, \$829,000, 3 Bdrms, 1432 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 12-19-08
  - 939 Mountain View Drive, \$500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1488 SqFt, 1942 YrBlt, 12-23-08
  - 3370 Reliez Highland Road, \$936,000, 3 Bdrms, 1681 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 12-19-08
  - 651 St. Marys Road, \$1,190,000, 5 Bdrms, 3015 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 12-12-08
  - 1217 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3813 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 12-24-08
- MORAGA**
- 11 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 2730 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 12-23-08
- ORINDA**
- 151 Alice Lane, \$1,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 3142 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 12-23-08
  - 2 Evergreen Drive, \$664,500, 4 Bdrms, 1964 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 12-12-08
  - 108 Oak Road, \$1,474,000, 3 Bdrms, 3377 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 12-18-08
  - 19 Spring Road, \$950,000, 4 Bdrms, 2327 SqFt, 1991 YrBlt, 12-12-08

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### Green and Greener: Eco-balancing Your Life

By Dave Rochlin and Katy Foreman

**Dave:** I was making the holiday party rounds right after our last column ran, and quite a few people commented on my self-described "lazy environmentalist" tag. Apparently, it really resonated. Several friends said "hey...that's me too!" Most of us WANT to do the right thing, but why does it have to be so hard to do?

**Katy:** Assuming it's hard is the first problem. There are about a thousand easy tips that you can try, and see if they work for you.

**Dave:** Such as?

**Katy:** How about using a power strip to fully turn off your TV and game systems, or turning off the heater and opening your windows when it's 73 in January!

**Dave:** Okay, I'll concede that point, but have you ever tried to use the County Connection bus to Bart? Also, a lot of us have to schlep kids around. And I am sure you noticed that I stopped biking to work along the Lafayette trail about the time the thermometer started hitting 40. Sometimes you just need to drive. Where do you draw the line?

**Katy:** We all draw the line differently. And that's fine - the key is to just keep trying new things and finding ways to conserve that work for you. For example, when I finally got into a groove of bringing my canvas bags and reusing my produce bags at the grocery store, I found I preferred it. They are more comfortable to carry, and the people at Whole Foods are always thanking me for doing it. I like it MORE than using new bags each time. But it took trying it a few times for that to happen.

**Dave:** Yeah...I get the guilt of watching everyone else in Trader Joe's load up their canvas. I do have to say, at TJ's (at least in

Lafayette) they pack those paper bags tight. Sometimes I think they just want to make you squirm for using paper in the first place.

I am not against trying new things, and constant improvement is a good thing. But even you haven't gotten your emissions down to zero.

**Katy:** No one is going to get to zero anytime soon. I try to avoid that all-or-nothing thinking; it sabotages me every time (and is why most diets fail, right?). So my approach is to keep trying to reduce in all the ways I can, see what sticks, and use carbon offsets for the rest.

Offsetting lets you support greenhouse gas reducing projects around the world while retaining some flexibility in your own life. They're crucial to fighting global warming in the short-term, while efficiencies and renewable energy are still in development.

**Dave:** It's a good solution for airline travel in particular. You and I both fly fairly often, and places like Hawaii seems to be "Lamorinda West" during spring break. All that flying is pretty tough on the planet, but I don't see Toyota making any hybrid airplanes.

**Katy:** I'm pretty sure you don't see Toyota making airplanes at all.

**Dave:** So we need to find another way to make up for all that carbon that jet engines release on our behalf. Offsetting has been practiced at a national level for a while in Europe and other places where they have set voluntary emissions targets. The way it works is that by supporting things like forests or energy efficiency projects elsewhere, you make up for what you 'have to' emit at home. But I am sure many people reading this would ask "why

should I as an individual do it?"

**Katy:** Well...I hate it when people spill their drinks on BART or leave their dog's waste on the trail. The degradation of common spaces and resources affect all of us, and we all need to do our part to care for and preserve them. Climate change is this same concept on a much larger scale. We all have to take responsibility for our impact on it.

**Dave:** My pet peeve is people who leave dirty towels lying on the floor in the locker room at the gym ....I guess the earth is the biggest locker room of them all.

**Katy:** I wouldn't call it a locker room yet, but we're headed for a hot and stinky future if we don't take action.

**Dave:** Well I hope it's not too late! Anyway...I love the idea that when I fly, drive, or even just watch a movie, I can still make that activity 'carbon neutral'. And yes, I know that I need to reduce first.

**Katy:** You're learning. For our readers, if you want to see what sort of offsets are out there, our website (www.ClimatePath.org) has a variety of projects listed. You can also calculate your footprint from flying, driving, and your home, and learn more about conservation and offsetting for yourself.

Katy Foreman is a committed environmentalist who lives in Lafayette, and Dave Rochlin is a lazy environmentalist who lives in Moraga. Together they operate ClimatePath, a website helping individuals and businesses reduce their carbon footprints by offsetting and conserving in the ways that are right for them. ClimatePath is on the web at [www.climatepath.org](http://www.climatepath.org)

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# business briefs

## Supreme Tutors Open Shop in Orinda

**1 Orinda Way, Orinda, 918-2882, www.supremetutors.com**  
On January 10th, Supreme Tutors founder Albert Lee cut the ribbon of the Smartlounge, the first brick and mortar location for his growing tutoring service. A Cal graduate, the young man started tutoring students from 6th-12th grade five years ago and recruited fellow graduate students along the way as demand grew through word of mouth. "We have high standards for ourselves and our students," says Lee, "we expect students to focus and work on assignments. Lee hopes that Smartlounge will be used as an alternative to going to students' homes, and "since it is located right next to the Orinda BART station, it makes it convenient for tutors who would like to take public transit," adds Lee. Subjects currently available are math at all levels, chemistry, physics, statistics, biology, economics, history, English, foreign languages and writing. The group is developing SAT prep classes as well. The rates are \$65 for individual sessions and \$35 for groups.



Albert Lee cuts the red ribbon of the new home for his Supreme Tutors, Smartlounge in Orinda  
Photo Sophie Braccini

## New Restaurant to Replace a Lafayette Favorite:

### Goodbye, Gigi – Hello, Artisan, 1005 Brown Ave., Lafayette

Gigi, a sophisticated and high-end restaurant that opened about two years ago in Lafayette, is closing the doors of the cottage on Brown Ave. for financial reasons. Jeff Amber, the young chef who had created there his first personal venture, had met previously with success and praises running successful places such as Moose's and XYZ in San Francisco as well as the three Chow's. The spot will be taken over in mid February by another Bay Area favorite chef, John Marquez of San Francisco's Fringale. Fringale has a reputation as a reasonably priced French bistro offering Basque-inspired cuisine. The new restaurant will be called "Artisan."

## Bellingham Painting Moves to Moraga, 247-0092

After 22 years of business in San Francisco, Mark Bellingham has moved with his family to Moraga and is looking forward to providing painting services at a fair price to Lamorinda residents. Bellingham provides the following services: Interior and exterior painting, Waterproofing, Wood deck cleaning and restoration, Water damage repair, Light carpentry. The company paints entire buildings but can be hired to do just a room, a wall or a ceiling. Bellingham prides himself in providing highly personalized service, he is a working owner and maintains control of the job to insure quality work.

## "Try Lafayette First" Update:

The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce promised to give out \$1000 worth of gift cards and prizes to one lucky Lafayette resident who pledged to Try Lafayette First for their holiday shopping. As it turned out, merchants were so excited about participating in the program and thanking their customers that they donated \$2000 worth of gift cards. "We got so many gifts from our merchants that we will probably be able to draw another winner," says Chamber CEO Jay Lifson. The first "Try Lafayette First" campaign was a winner as well for the 100 or so merchants who participated in the campaign. "I got 14 new clients who came just because of the campaign," said Antony Ruiz of Fast Frame. Handle Bar Toys believes that it's thanks to the campaign that they had the best Christmas season ever. "This drive was just a first step," said Lifson, "and we are working on other ways to get more business to our local merchants, as well as training them to be better business persons and improve the Lafayette shopping experience." One of these next steps will be working with "Yelp," an online referral business service.



Fast Frame's Anthony Ruiz is pleased with the results of Shop Lafayette First  
Photo Andy Scheck

## News from the Three Chamber of Commerce

### Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

- Tom Courtright, Orchard Nursery, 2009 Business Person of the Year, will be honored at the Installation & State of the City Dinner on Friday January 30, 2009, starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa. Tom bought Orchard Nursery in 1971. He was Lafayette's Citizen of the Year in 1989. "Tom has not only managed a very successful business in Lafayette," says Jay Lifson the Chamber's CEO, "he has been given his time, money and energy to help make Lafayette a place where people want to live, work and shop." Call 925-284-7404 for reservations. Registration forms are available on the chamber website www.lafayettechamber.org.

### Moraga Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber Mixer, Friday January 30th starting with coffee at 7:30 a.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores. This meeting will feature Stu Carty, Regional Development Director of Constant Contact, an email marketing program, who will come to speak to Chamber members. The Chamber wants to help its member get through this tough economic time and a good marketing plan helps. Carty will speak to how email marketing can help you reach more people with your message, create email campaigns that get results, get your emails opened and read and more. Carty will speak twice, once at the chamber regular meeting on January 30th and once at a workshop in mid February. At the workshop in February Carty is going to focus on getting started with Constant Contact. He will give specific (product) training. Each lecture will cover different information.

### Orinda Chamber of commerce

- Wednesday - Jan. 28, 2009 Noon to 1:30 p.m. Mayor's Luncheon. The Orinda Rotary Club & the Orinda Chamber of Commerce will host the Mayor's Luncheon. This event will introduce Orinda 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

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com) or call our office at 925-377-0977.

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## Growing Your Business in a Tough Economy

By Sophie Braccini



Jackie Lopey  
Photo courtesy of Spin Decorating

Jackie Lopey is the owner of Spin Decorating, has been a marketing executive for seventeen years and is a crusader for her fellow small business owners. With the support of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, she designed a free workshop for business owners titled "Growing Your Business in a Tough Economy." A group of eight business owners met once a month for three months and built a hands-on marketing strategy, each tailored to his or her own company.

Lopey believes that a support group is very useful for small business owners. "When you have your own business you have to do everything yourself and marketing is one of the tasks that might fall into the cracks," explains Lopey. The workshop utilized the book "Word of Mouth Marketing," by Andy Seronovitz, with hands-on case studies. The participants were a diverse group, including David Selvig Construction, White Song US-China Marketing and Rob the Realtor.

The first meeting was dedicated to identifying each business' Unique Purchase Appeal, or UPA. A UPA is the exclusive characteristics that will set any business apart from its competition. An effective UPA is the first communication tool; it has to be credible, quantifiable and sustainable over time. "To say 'Simply the best quality' doesn't work," explained Lopey, "you are not proving anything in your sentence." On the other hand say-

ing something like "10% off for every day late" is measurable.

In order to define their own UPA, Lopey had participants call their customers and ask them three simple questions: 1) Why do you do business with us? 2) What do you like best about what we do? and 3) What things don't you like about our competitors?

David Selvig found the exercise of calling his customers very useful. "We found why they chose us, they valued the attention we pay to details, our honesty, our respect for their budget and our friendliness," he said. Selvig wanted his UPA to include "customer service, reliability, honesty." Lopey recommended adding a guarantee or a third party endorsement to make it more credible, "quantifying your UPA is very important, it has to be independently verifiable," she insisted.

Once the UPAs were finely tuned, the group focused on how to get the word out about their businesses. Lopey recommended the first step, to form a mental image of their typical customer, "you need to know the demographic elements (age, income...), the psychographics (attitude, life style...) and the needs and wants of your targeted customers," she said, "then decide on the type of campaign that will be adapted to them and most cost effective."

Song White found this advice very useful. "Before, I focused more on doing/delivering my translation work (English-Chinese) than communicating with my customers," says the Chinese-American business woman, "the importance of understanding the customers is obvious, but how to understand them is another thing. Jackie and other members at the workshop shared different ways of how-to's that were very helpful."

As a case study, the group brainstormed how to use the tradition of Holiday Appreciation Gifts to further their businesses. "If you decide to send your customers a gift at the end of the year, be sure to

send a message that will be supporting your UPA," advised Lopey. She recommended that each advertising or marketing campaign have a financial goal attached to it and that business owners track the results. She also presented some word of mouth marketing tactics with which each participant was encouraged to experiment before the next session.

When she came back for the last session on December 17th Tamara Selvig talked about the "Try Lafayette First" campaign that she and her husband had decided to participate in as a word of mouth marketing tactic. Rob the Realtor had started experimenting with a blog, giving free advice to customers, and others mentioned donating supplies to Habitat for Humanity.

The bulk of the meeting was spent defining the elements of a marketing plan for 2009. "You can picture your marketing plan as a funnel," said Lopey, "at the top is the larger market and at the exit are your customers. The funnel represent the sales cycle, it's a machine unique to each business that needs to be tweaked all the time." The machine can be as simple as this: how many people do you need to talk to have one lead, then how many leads do you need to sign one client? Tracking is the key to fine-tuning the funnel.

To conclude, each participant developed a marketing plan for 2009. First they defined a sales and revenue goal, then they quantified how they were going to reach that goal (marketing, PR, advertising, sales) and established a time and dollar budget associated with meeting those goals.

The participants said the workshop changed their vision and motivation to create and monitor their marketing plan, and thanked Lopey for her efforts. "I enjoy positive actions and working with the group," said Lopey, "I believe that if you help other people it will come back to you, not necessarily directly but it does come back."

## Correction to issue date 01/07/09, "Toot Sweets Says Goodbye:"

Marcy Wheeler's correct email address is [marcy@marcywheeler.com](mailto:marcy@marcywheeler.com) and her first Berkeley business was Edible Complex (not Edible Express).

## Addendum to issue date 12/24/08, "Lamorinda Restaurants to Ring in the New Year:"

Roos Pal of Terzetto's in Moraga was surprised to learn from our article that her restaurant was under "relatively new ownership," as she has been the owner for seven years. Time being relative, contributing writer Linda U. Foley has been a Lamorindan for significantly longer than that. We did not intend to cause alarm - rest assured that Terzetto's remains under Pal's competent care.

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### SCHOOL CALENDAR

**School Governing Board Meetings**  
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 High School District  
 Board Room AUHSD Office  
 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 7:30  
 Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 7:30  
 Monday, Feb. 9 at 6:00 -  
 Budget Study Session

**Lafayette School District**  
 LAFSD Office  
 3477 School Street, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 7:00  
**Moraga School District**  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
 School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 7:30

**Orinda Union School District**  
 OUSD Office  
 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
 Tuesday, Feb. 3 at 10:00 -  
 Budget Study Session  
 Monday, Feb. 9 at 4:00  
 Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting



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## Troop 224 Recognizes Four New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Leslie de Boer



New Eagle Scouts (L-R): Spencer Sheehan, Sam Ziser, Greg Cameron and Chris Wichmann

On January 4, four young men from Boy Scout Troop 224 in Lafayette were recognized for their achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouting. The Eagle Court was held at the Veterans Memorial

building in Lafayette and was attended by roughly 200 Scouts, family members and guests.

Greg Cameron graduated from Acalanes High School in 2008 and is now attending Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash-

ington. His parents are Sandy and Mark Cameron of Lafayette.

Spencer Sheehan is a senior at Las Lomas High School. His parents are Michele and Bob Sheehan of Walnut Creek.

Chris Wichmann graduated from Acalanes High School in 2008 and is now attending U.C. Santa Cruz. His parents are Leslie de Boer and Ron Wichmann of Lafayette.

Sam is a senior at De La Salle High School. His parents are Marie and George Ziser of Orinda.

Robert Lyman is Scoutmaster of Troop 224, which meets at Happy Valley School and runs the annual Christmas Tree lot across from the Veterans Memorial. Former Scoutmasters Kyle Blocker and Steve Zusman also spoke at the event.

## John Lennon

### Educational Tour Bus Visits Stanley Middle

By Jean Follmer



Liyana wows the crowd at Stanley Middle School

Photo Jean Follmer

When Alan Plutzik, President of the Warren W. Eukel Trust, asked Stanley Middle School Band Director Bob Athayde to find a venue for "Liyana" to perform, Athayde booked them immediately. The renowned group from Zimbabwe was only available for two performances so Athayde also managed to book them with fellow Band Director Randy Porter at Westlake Middle School in Oakland.

Liyana's music has been classified as Afro-fusion and sometimes as World-fusion or Global-music. In other words, Liyana blends many musical genres including gospel, reggae and traditional Zimbabwean music. The lead singer, Prudence

Mabhena's native tongues are Shona and Ndebele. The group performs in those languages as well as in English, Dutch, German, Hebrew and Spanish.

While at Stanley, the group performed a moving rendition of "We are the World." Liyana hails from the King George VI School for the Disabled in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The group is comprised of 8 musicians who range in age from 17-23. Each of the members was born with a significant physical handicap; many of them are in wheelchairs. In Zimbabwe, handicaps are viewed as a form of witchcraft or evil. "Music has truly changed our lives," says Mabhena.

Liyana was on tour with

the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus. According to the organization, "The John Lennon Educational Tour Bus is a non-profit state-of-the-art mobile Pro Audio and HD video recording facility that provides hands-on experiences for students of all ages."

Although Liyana has toured internationally, 2009 represents the first US tour for Liyana. When Athayde asked one of the band members if he liked the United States, he replied "America is 20,000 times better than I thought. I get bacon every morning in the hotels." "I just found those kids from Liyana were just joyful. We all need to see kids in wheelchairs trying to make something happen," said Athayde.

The Tour began with a performance with the Inspiration Gospel Ensemble at the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in Fort Green, Brooklyn in New York. They have made many stops on both coasts, including performances in Los Angeles for both Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the Inauguration of President Obama. The final performance will be at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. The PG Family Foundation, led by Jonathan Plutzik, served as Liyana's Executive Producer for the Tour. For more information, visit [www.lennonbus.org](http://www.lennonbus.org) or <http://liyanatour.com/>.

# Lamorinda Schools

## Lafayette School District Considers Transfer Policies

By Jean Follmer

The Lafayette School District Governing Board discussed its current policies on both inter-district and Allen Bill transfers in a recent study session. The District policy only allows for inter-district transfers for children of Lafayette School District employees. There are currently 15 students in the Lafayette School District who have transferred in from other districts. The District policy does not allow for employment-related Allen Bill transfers. The California Allen Bill, as cited in California Education Code Section 48204(b), enables students to transfer from one district to another based on "parental employment in lieu of residency in district of attendance." The District used to accept Allen Bill transfers, but did away with them in the late 1990s as a result of overcrowding. Board Member Shayne Silva was on the Board when that decision was made. "We were bulging at the seams and just plain ran out of space. We had over 900 (students) at Burton Valley and 1,300 at Stanley," said Silva.

While Districts do receive approximately \$5,800 per student from the State of California, it does not receive parcel or bond taxes for those transfer students. This also contributed to the decision to do away with Allen Bill transfers. "We had just passed a parcel tax and kids were transferring in that weren't paying (the tax)," said Silva. As a

result, there was some bad sentiment amongst some of the Lafayette parents. Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill said a neighboring district that currently allows Allen Bill transfers lets the parents of incoming transfer students know how much resident student families are paying in parcel taxes and bonds. Brill said that district has a high level of transfer families that are willing to match the amount.

Brill said Acalanes currently accepts Allen Bill transfer students of Lafayette School District employees and the Lafayette District does not reciprocate. Brill said he "feels an obligation to serve kids of Acalanes employees and kids of school (site) daycare workers." The Board discussed the possibility of "tiering" the Allen Bill requests as some districts do. But, in a subsequent Board Meeting, Brill said he'd learned that they can't tier Allen Bills; it's essentially all or nothing.

The District has not made any decisions and any changes to current policies will likely be dependent upon the outcome of the budget cuts. "We wouldn't be considering Allen Bills if we weren't financially pressed," said Board Clerk Ann Appert.

By comparison, the Moraga School District revised its inter-district transfer policy in 2008. "Our policy allows inter-district transfers if there is space available. Our first

priority is to keep sufficient opening to serve the children of residents. For 08/09, our classes are very full and we did not accept transfers. Accepting transfers could require us to add additional classes," said Moraga Superintendent Rick Shafer. When inter-district transfers are considered, preference is divided into 5 categories of priority: 1. children of Moraga School District employees, 2. children of Acalanes High School District employees, 3. children whose parent(s) are employed full-time by St. Mary's College, the Town of Moraga or the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department, 4. children of parents employed full-time within the attendance boundaries of the Moraga School District and 5. children whose grandparent is a Moraga resident.

Jerry Bucci, Director of Business Services at the Orinda Union School District said, "We do review all requests for inter-district transfers every year. We do try to accommodate employees. We consider as many others as we can." Bucci said the number of inter-district transfer students fluctuates from year to year. He noted they have 123 inter-district transfer students as of October, 2008. Bucci said the District is not considering any changes to its inter-district transfer or Allen Bill transfer policies at this time.

## In Other News...



Lafayette's new School Board, pictured from left to right are: Board Member Stephenie Teichman, Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill, Board Clerk Ann Appert, New Board Member Art Kapoor, Board Member Shayne Silva and Board President Teresa Gerringer  
 Photo by Jean Follmer



Celebrating its third year, the Orinda Christmas Tree Lot donated \$2,500 of its proceeds to the Educational Foundation of Orinda. The Tree Lot is run by EFO Board Member Mike Kang (pictured front left).  
 Photo by Terry Riggins



The OIS Lego Robotics Club's "Mission Possible" team recently competed at the San Ramon Qualifying Competition. Pictured from left to right are Trevor Wallace, Muneesvuren Jothi, John Mack, Nicholas Yan. OIS Math Teacher Yvonne Anast is the team advisor.  
 Photo by Sui Mei Yan

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# Lamorinda Schools

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

## Celebrating Sisterhood in a Middle School Jungle

By Sarah Mohamed  
(Campolindo Class of 2010, 2009 Sister-to-Sister Facilitator)



Sister-to-Sister Photo Sophie Braccini

Saturday, March 7th will mark the 10th anniversary of the American Association of University Women's annual Sister to Sister Summit. The Summit is a one-day conference run by high school girls for middle school girls from JM, OIS, Stanley, and

WCI and the emphasis is to celebrate being a girl. It includes games, discussion groups, motivational speakers, crafts, and food. This year's Summit is jungle-themed and will be held at Orinda Intermediate School. Middle school presents

trying experiences for many developing pre-teens and people often rush to AAUW coordinators to ask for the underlying message of the Summit. One needs to look no further than the attendees themselves. When asked what she thought the impor-

tance of a Summit for girls was, JM 8th grader Mina Lucacher explained, "Having a group of people to talk to takes the day-to-day pressure away." Lucacher added that girl-talk is important "because it's not good to bottle things up." Lucacher has participated in the summit twice, as has fellow JM 8th grader Sarah Vaughan. Vaughan gave her thoughts on having a summit for girls: "I think maybe it's because girls have always had a harder time; I mean boys just have to put on sweats and a t-shirt and they can leave the house—with girls, there's a lot more stress and having a Summit helps because it's nice to get guidance and hear what everybody else's problems are."

When signing up for the Summit, girls are asked to specify the discussion groups they would most like to participate in. Some of the topics include relationships, body image, cliques, bullying, peer pressure and families. It may seem like a large feat to get a

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bunch of reserved middle-schoolers together and ask them to delve into their personal lives. However, the young women feel better able to express themselves since it is a girls-only event. "You put me into a room with a bunch of boys and ask me to talk about my feelings and I won't say a word. Having just girls present helps communication. The high school girls help move things along. If parents were running the Summit, I'd probably fall asleep, you know? We get the same from teachers every day," said Vaughn.

As the registration period opens up, facilitators will be visiting the middle schools to tell girls about the Summit and to provide

brochures. Often, the girls worry that buddies will not be attending with them, but Lucacher made it clear that friendships can be made at the Summit: "I met a few people that I stayed in touch with through text and email." After all, who says that a few games, some slices of pizza, and a profound discussion of body image can't bring any two 12 year olds together?

The 2009 Sister-to-Sister Summit will be held on Saturday March 7th from 9:30-3:30. The Cost is \$30 and includes lunch and a t-shirt. Registration deadline is February 28th. For questions regarding registration, call (925) 942-0102. For more information visit [www.aauwoml.org](http://www.aauwoml.org).

## Ask Doctor Harold: Are Our Kids Depressed?

By Dr. Harold Jules Hoyle, Ph.D.

Coming out of Pete's in Lafayette last week, a mother stopped me and thanked me for my column on ADHD. We had a short conversation during which she said, "You know, I think a lot of our Lamorinda kids are depressed." So here is your quick rundown on kids/teens and depression.

Depression is a rough disorder for us Americans. The pull-yourself-up-by-your-own-boot-straps culture is hard on those who are not always happy. It is almost un-American to say you are depressed. A quick Google search came up with 8,740,000 hits for positive thinking techniques. Amazon had 17,111 books with "Positive Thinking" in the subject or title. So in a culture obsessed with positive thinking, what do we know about kids who suffer from negative thoughts?

The US Department of Health and Human Services publishes rates as high as 1 in 8 adolescents suffering from depression. It is real and serious; it is not something people make up. Suicide and self-destructive behavior are the main dangers. If you think there is something serious with your son or daughter get it checked out by your pediatrician and then a mental health professional.

Secondly, depression is not just one thing. There are several "symptom areas" that include negative mood, negative thoughts, difficulty concentrating, restlessness, sleep problems, physical symptoms, loss of energy, self-destructive or aggressive thoughts, and aggressive or noncompliant behavior. When a child has enough of these and is overwhelmed then a diagnosis of depressive disorder can be made.

Depression manifests differently in youth than in adults. Most adults who are depressed have depressive symptoms (depressed mood). Many children and teens act out more when depressed. Imagine an adult at a holiday gathering getting bad news, they may get quiet, avoid the fun, want to go home early; they will shut down. A young person in that same situation might start screaming, arguing, acting irritated; they are more likely to act out.

The cause of depression falls into our usual three categories of physical, social, and psychological. Research indicates genetics, brain chemistry, levels of neurotransmitters, and metabolic functioning are all involved in depression.

When I was in Fiji last year and told people I worked

with children who were depressed, they didn't understand. How could a kid be depressed? The social lives of our youth are difficult. Children have to negotiate the dangerous world of making friends, dealing with groups at school, and knowing how to get social positives. Breaking the code of the social groups in today's schools is much more difficult than it used to be.

Psychologically kids are dealing with deciding who they are going to be. Kids often feel isolated and under enormous pressure. Teens are trying to figure out how to separate from their parents in a safe and secure way. They are dealing with relationships, drugs and alcohol, and sexuality. No wonder they don't want to take out the trash. The world has increased in its complexity without a whole lot of training for them on how to do get it all done.

So what are you likely to see and what can you do?

The depressed kids and teens I work with in the Lamorinda area are dealing with a lot of pressures. Younger kids have to deal with complicated social networks that can be exclusive and difficult to figure out. Older kids are dealing with incredible amounts of

school pressure on top of the previous mentioned issues. I had a kid tell me he was going to have to live in a bad neighborhood because he got a 0 on his math test which would drop his grade and that would "mess" with the college he wanted to get into. That math test held a lot more power than it should have. These pressures can hit teens hard. Kids/teens I work with describe it as feeling as if there is something wrong all the time but not knowing what it is.

One of the most valuable activities we can do with our kids is to pay attention. Pay attention to mood, thoughts, and activities. Remember, a psychological disorder happens when people get to the point of being overwhelmed. If we can help kids avoid becoming overwhelmed we are one step closer to being helpful. Be involved in their lives and make sure they take the time they need to do the activities that bring them energy. Maybe it is snow boarding, or a sandwich at Morucci's, or a trip to The Jungle with their friends. In any case, put yourself in their shoes and think of some things that you could do with or for them that would help relieve the Lamorinda pressure.

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## Kindergarten Registration Starts Soon!

If your child was born on or before December 2, 2004, get ready for Kindergarten Registration Day! Kindergarten registration will take place at your neighborhood school on the dates and times listed below. You will need to bring several documents with you, including your child's birth certificate or passport, proof of residence, emergency contact information (your child's doctor and dentist) and a complete immunization record. You may also need your child's Social Security Number and a Report of Health Examination for School Entry Form. Check the school district websites for specific requirements. If you are not sure at which school you should register your child, please call the district office.

### Lafayette School District

Registration dates are Tuesday, January 27th and Wednesday, January 28th at:  
Lafayette Elementary, 950 Moraga Rd, 9:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-2:30pm (School office: 927-3570)  
Burton Valley, 561 Merriewood Dr, 9:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-2:30pm (School office: 927-3550)  
Happy Valley, 3855 Happy Valley Rd, 9:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-2:30pm (School office: 927-3560)  
and Tuesday, February 3 and Wednesday, February 4 at:  
Springhill, 3301 Springhill Rd, 9:00am-11:00am (School office: 927-3580)  
District Website: <http://www.lafsd.k12.ca.us/>  
District Phone: 927-3500

### Moraga School District

Registration dates are Thursday, March 5th and Friday, March 6th:  
Camino Pablo, 1111 Camino Pablo, 9:00am-11:45am and 1:15pm-3:00pm (School office: 376-4435)  
Los Perales, 22 Wakefield Dr, 9:00am-2:00pm (School office: 631-0105)  
Donald Rheem, 90 Laird Dr, 9:00am-2:00pm (School office: 376-4441)  
District Website: <http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us/>  
District Phone: 376-5943

### Orinda Union School District

Registration dates are Monday, February 2nd thru Thursday, February 5th:  
Del Rey, 25 El Camino Moraga, 9:00am-1:00pm (School office: 258-3099)  
Glorietta, 15 Martha Rd, 9:00am-1:00pm (School office: 254-8770)  
Sleepy Hollow, 20 Washington Ln., 9:00am-1:00pm (School office: 254-8711)  
Wagner Ranch, 350 Camino Pablo, 9:00am-1:00pm (School office: 258-0016)  
District Website: <http://orindaschools.org/ousd/site/default.asp>  
District Phone: 254-4901

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## Not to be missed

### Rumpelstiltskin is My Name!— Children's Theater at SMC

By Andrea A. Firth



Andrew Galindo plays Rumpelstiltskin in the SMC Jan Term Children's production Photo A. Firth

A greedy king, a fair maiden in a locked room, a strange man with a spinning wheel, and the allure of gold are the perfect ingredients for a good children's story and the key elements of the classic fairy tale *Rumpelstiltskin*. First told by the Brothers Grimm in the early 1800s, the Saint Mary's College (SMC) Performing Arts Department will present a stage adaptation of this well-read fable on Wednesday, January 28th at 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, January 29th at 4:00 p.m. in the LeFevre Theater on campus.

The barely two-page story has been adapted into an hour-long performance by SMC Professor and Theater Technical Director Michael Cook. The students en-

rolled in Cook's *Children's Theater* January Term course create the entire production and performance. Cook is in his 17th year of teaching the *Children's Theater* Jan term course, which is a favorite of both Performing Arts majors and students new to the stage. Over 45,000 area youth have seen an SMC Children's production over Cook's close to two decade run.

The character of Rumpelstiltskin will be played by freshman sensation Andrew Galindo (who will also star in SMC's upcoming production of *Sweeney Todd*). Suitable for children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, tickets to *Rumpelstiltskin* are \$8 and may be reserved by calling (925) 631-4381.

## Library Foundation Sponsors Cultural Celebration

By Cathy Tyson

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation is helping ring in the Year of the Ox via a two-week Asian Arts and Culture Celebration, entitled, "East Meets West."

Many free family-friendly events starting on January 27th are scheduled, including a Pajamarama story hour featuring Chinese ribbon dance by WenLan Ng's Folk Dance School, a ping pong demonstration at Acalanes with Yau-Man of Survivor fame competing with Kent Leung a

National Senior Olympic champion, and Chinese cooking with TV chef, Shirley Fong-Torres. Additional events include exploring Chinese arts – calligraphy and origami, story hour with a special Chinese dragon craft, and a martial arts demonstration by Yu's Martial Arts School in Lafayette at Stanley Intermediate School.

The big finale of the celebration will be a benefit fashion show of unique Asian inspired clothing designs from Victor EastWest, Xiao and Orange

## Not to be missed

### MUSIC & THEATER

**The Fantasticks**, music by Harvey Schmidt with lyrics and book by Tom Jones, runs Jan 23- Feb 15 on the Main Stage (P.A.C.) at Diablo Valley College. Friday and Saturday Nights @ 8pm and Sunday Matinees at 2:30pm. Special senior, student and group pricing is available. Tickets can be purchased by calling (925) 687-4445, or emailing our Box Office at MFulk@dvc.edu. DVC, 321 Golf Club Road in Pleasant Hill.

**Young People's Symphony Orchestra Winter 2009** Concerto Concert Music Director David Ramadanoff celebrates his 20th season as Music Director/Conductor. Program will include Gershwin's Cuban Overture, Hindemith's Symphonic Metamorphoses as well as Concertos by Bartók, Weber, and Lalo performed by Dylan Mattingly (age 17), Annie Sandholtz (17), Violin, Madison Greenstone (16), Clarinet. Feb 7, 8:00 pm and Feb 8, 2:00 pm, Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. Tickets: FREE on Sunday. Saturday: \$15 general; \$12 seniors and students. For more information, call 510-849-YPSO, via email at ypsomusic@yahoo.com, or go to www.ypsomusic.net.

**Lafayette Town Hall Theatre presents "Rabbit Hole,"** the bittersweet 2007 Pulitzer Prize-winning play by David Lindsay-Abaire. In the story, Becca and Howie Corbett have everything a family could want until a life-shattering accident turns their world upside down and leaves the couple drifting perilously apart. Rabbit Hole charts their search for comfort in the darkest of places and for a path that will lead them back into the light of day February 5 – March 7. Contact the Town Hall Theatre Company Box Office for exact dates and times. For Tickets: 925-283-1557. Rating – PG-13. Town Hall Theatre Company, 3535 School Street at Moraga Road in Lafayette.

**Contra Costa County 4-H Drama** production presents "Winnie the Pooh" at the Dean Leshler Center for the Performing Arts in Walnut Creek on Saturday, Feb 14 at 2:15pm and 7:45pm and Sunday, Feb 15 at 2:15pm.

### ART



**Bert Monroy, Master Artist Tribute VIII:** A Digital Artist Paints With Light through 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. The exhibition opens Saturday, Jan. 17, and continues through Sunday, Apr. 5, 2009. Public Hours: Wed - Sun, 11 am - 4:30pm Admission: \$3; children 12 and under free; Gallery members free. 925.631.4379. www.hearstartgallery.org

**Drawing and Paintings of adult students** of instructor Dorothy Cutright Davis at the Moraga Library through Sat. Jan 31st. The exhibit is a chance to see the variety of work from very classic drawings to more interpretive, small and large, some of which will be for sale. Moraga Library, 500 St. Mary's Rd Moraga (925) 376-685

The Moraga Art Gallery presents



Nina Tyksinski

**"The Northern Lights"** in Moraga through March 14th. The 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's 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

## Not to be missed

Center Street in Moraga (MoragaArtGallery.com). Open Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 pm. 925.376.5407.

**"Objects of Affection,"** the new show at the Lafayette Gallery, 50 Lafayette Circle, runs through March 7th, 2009. A festive public reception will be held 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 Tuesday – Saturday, 50 Lafayette Circle, 925-284-2788.

**Illuminated Sculpture runs through February 22** at the Bedford Gallery, Leshler 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). Captured inert gases (e.g. neon, argon, helium) can yield a wide range of colors from vivid purple to sky blue to intense yellow. Opening Reception: Sunday, Jan 11, 3:00-5:00 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.

**The Martinez Gallery** will be showing recent works by artists of the Martinez Arts Association from January 21 through March 20. Paintings, drawings, photography, sculpture, jewelry, ceramics, and fabric work by local artists are on display at the mARTinez GALLERY in the historic Sharkey Building at 630 Court Street in downtown Martinez.

**The Art Connection**, well known for their watercolor and mixed media installations of abstracted landscapes and experimental artwork on paper and canvas is showing their new work at the Lindsay Dirx Brown Art Gallery in San Ramon. Marianne Brown, a local painter and teacher in Moraga, as well as Pat Dewes, international workshop instructor and author, has influenced the group. Four award-winning California artists make up The Art Connection: Angela Cheng, Ann Marie King Hauser, Pamela Howett and Mary Claire Stotler. Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd. San Ramon, CA. The reception is Sunday, Feb. 8, 3:00 to 5:00PM.

### Crab Feeds



**Crab Feed & Dance – Saturday, Feb 7, 6:00 – 11:00 PM.** Bring your appetites & dancing shoes. Music provided by popular DJ. Dinner & dance \$35; dance only \$10. For info and reservations call (925) 672-6799. Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga.

**9th Annual Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley Crab Feed** on Saturday, Feb 14th. Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga, 6:00pm: No Host Cocktails. 7:00PM – Dinner – Music – Dancing – Silent Auction: Merchandise, Services & Attractions, Crab Pot – Go home with a lot of cash! Tickets \$45.00 per person. \$10 corkage fee. Proceeds benefit local charities. For tickets see any member of Moraga Valley Kiwanis, or Call Paul Ratto 925 899-9536.

**Soroptimist International Crab Feed and Silent Auction** --6:00pm on Saturday, February 7 at Oakwood Athletic Club-Lower Court 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette. Dinner to include crab, pasta, salad, bread, ice cream and coffee. Beer, wine and soft drinks will be available for sale. Proceeds to benefit Soroptimist International of 24-680, a non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. \$35.00 per person. Reservations needed. No ticket sales at the door. 925-688-1480, http://www.soroptimist24-680.org.

### Lectures

**Thursday, January 22 at 7:30 pm.** Lafayette resident Laura Shumaker, introduces us to her son Matthew in *A Regular Guy: Growing Up with Autism*, a beautiful memoir about the struggles, the triumphs and the unconditional love behind learning to live with an autistic child. Light refreshments served. Sponsored by the Friends of the Lafayette Library. For more information, please call 925.283.3872 or visit eclub.org. Lafayette Library, 952 Moraga Road, 925-283-3872.

**Book Signings at Orinda Books:** Saturday, January 31 at 1pm, Inez Hollander will discuss and sign copies of her memoir, *Silenced Voices: Uncovering a Family's Colonial History in Indonesia*. Saturday, February 21 at 3pm, Yiyun Li will discuss and sign copies of her new novel, *The Vagrants*. Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, Orinda. 925-254-7606, www.orindabooks.com.

**Saint Mary's Kalmanovitz School of Education** resumes its Distinguished Speaker Series on January 24, from 8:30 am - 1:00pm. National Teacher of the Year, Michael Geisen, will be the featured speaker. For further information, contact Lydia Wiley at lwiley@stmarys-ca.edu or (925) 631-8124.

**California Institute for Biodiversity (CIB) offers speaker series:** On Thursday, February 5th from 6:30 to 8:30 at the Moraga Library, CIB will present "Finding Connections in Nature-The Sierra Nevada and the State of California" with presenter John Muir ("Jack") Laws. For six years, Jack Laws backpacked the Sierra Nevada to research and illustrate *The Laws Guide to the Sierra Nevada*. Come learn why the state of the Sierra Nevada is important to ALL Californians, especially in this time of changing climate! Moraga Library, 1660 School St, 631-2481. For more info about CIB: www.calalive.org

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# Not to be missed



**The Commonwealth Club presents...** Tom Campbell: Budgeting the Bailout for California and the Country" on Wednesday, February 11th at the Bentley School in Lafayette. The economic crisis leaves many people wondering if the United States and, specifically, California, will be poised to lead the world in the 21st century. What kinds of opportunities arise out of dire economic times? Will California be the place to do business in the 21st century? What needs to be done to ensure its success? Campbell breaks down the economic imperatives of the state and nation. The Bentley School, Lafayette (1000 Upper Happy Valley Road, Lafayette) Time: 6 pm check-in, 6:30 pm program Cost: \$12 members, \$18 non-members, \$7 students (with valid ID) Reservations: visit www.commonwealthclub.org or call 415 597 6705.

**Holistic Self-Care for the Family Caregiver:** A Lecture and Practice Workshop. This event will introduce holistic self-care philosophy and interactive modalities for family members in a caregiving role as a means of gaining and sustaining mind-body-spirit wellbeing. Sunday, February 15th, 12:30pm till 4:00pm. Concord Senior Center. \$20 if registering before January 15 or \$25 if after January 15, 2009 deadline Cost includes lecture, two workshops and a healthy buffet. To Register On-Line: www.ccjcc.org/millman and click on special events, or contact the Millman Respite Center at 925.938.7800 ext. 257 for more information.

**Creative Writing Reading Series at St. Mary's College** - Dana Johnson-Wednesday, February 18, 2009, 7:30 pm at the Soda Activity Center. A native of Los Angeles, Dana Johnson worked as a magazine editor before completing her M.F.A. at Indiana University. She is now an assistant professor at the University of Southern California, where she teaches creative writing and literature. She is the author of the short story collection Break Any Woman Down, winner of the Flannery O'Connor Award for short fiction in 2001. Her latest book, co-written by Allison Umminger under the pen name Grace Grant, is Eye to Eye.

**Dr. Mark Zier, noted bible scholar,** will present the Lenten study at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Orinda, Wednesday evenings, February 25-April 8. Soup supper starting at 6:30 pm; program at 7:15. Dr. Zier has presented papers on the Glossa Ordinaria, standard commentary on the Bible from the 12th to the 17th centuries, at seminars in Paris and Lyon, France; in Florence and Todi, Italy; and in San Francisco and Kalamazoo, in the United States.

## Kids & Parents

**Keeping Up with our Kids - Parenting the Net Generation.** Join Jason Brand, who specializes in helping families build positive relationships with technology for an informative evening. The event will be held at the library of Joaquin Moraga Middle School on Wednesday, January 28, 2009, 7:00-8:30pm. This event is free.

**Beading Workshop;** Beginning beading workshop for ages 12 and up. Limited attendance. Register at Moraga Library or at 376-6852. Thursday, Jan 22, 3:00 pm

**SAT Practice Test. Presented by KAPLAN Test Prep.** SAT includes essay and three math sections. Saturday, Jan 31, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Moraga Library, 500 St. Mary's Rd Moraga (925) 376-685.

**Acalanes Parent Ed Presents:** Drive Smart, Stay Safe. The California Highway Patrol offers this free class at Acalanes on Tuesday, February 24th, 6:00-8:00 pm, Cafeteria. This program, sponsored by the CHP, is for parents and teens to attend together. It is designed to reduce the number of teenage injuries and deaths resulting from motor vehicle collisions. Space is limited, to register for the class, please sign up at: http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted/html/pehighschool.htm Class # 056214. Or email: LGSENDME@SBC-GLOBAL.NET

**Healthy Bodies, Healthy Mind in High School, College, and Beyond:** Helping Your Teen Thrive With Positive Self Image, Tuesday, March 3rd, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, Acalanes Theatre, no fee. Topics Include: Parent Influence Weight as a Cultural Obsession, Sexuality/Social Life--How self image affects decisions, eating and exercise. What happens when they leave home? Sponsored by Acalanes Parent Ed, for more information email lgsendme@sbcbglobal.net.

**PTA Parenting Book Club Current Selections** -Available at the Lafayette Book Store, on line, or Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School parents may also check them out from the parenting section of the school library!

**Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives,** by John Palfrey & Urs Gasser. "Energetic, expert, and forward-looking, the authors serve as envoys between the generations." Washington Post.

**MUSIC FOR ALL OCCASIONS**

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(510) 287-2540  
www.with-a-twist-music.com michael@with-a-twist-music.com

**Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myth of Boyhood,** by William Pollack. The author of this book will be speaking at Seven Hills School in Walnut Creek on Thursday, February 5th from 6:45 PM - 8:30 Real Boys unmasks the hidden sadness and loneliness experienced by so many of our sons, including those who are doing "just fine." All teachers and parents of boys will benefit from reading this thought-provoking work from a respected expert in the field.

**Children's Events at the Moraga Library**-500 St. Mary's Rd. 376-685  
Storytime: Stories and crafts for children three to seven. Tuesdays through March 17, 4:00-4:30 pm  
Lapsit: Stories, songs and bounces for baby and caregiver. Wednesdays through March 18, 10:00-10:20 am  
Toddler-time: Stories, rhymes and fun. Ages 2 to 3-1/2 with adult participation. Wednesdays through March 18, 10:45-11:15 am  
"Reading Circus with 'Boswick' the Clown" Former Ringling Brothers, & Barnum & Bailey clown presents an interactive show for all ages. Saturday Jan 31, 3:00 pm to 3:45 pm

## Lunar New Year Events

**Ring in the Year of the Ox- Chinese New Year Celebration** at the Cabot Space and Science Center. Saturday, January 24 (11am- 4pm). Crafts and traditional Chinese New Year activities for kids. Activities are FREE with General Admission. Box Office (510) 336-7373, Online tickets www.chabot.space.org.

**On Sunday, January 25 at 4 pm, the Eng Family and the Orinda Library** present a special event to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The ABADA' - Capoeira Performance Troupe of San Francisco performs a unique Afro-Brazilian melding of martial art, dance and music. This program is free and it is appropriate for families, although children under six might find it long. It takes place in the auditorium of the Orinda Library, which is at 26 Orinda Way. Space is limited so tickets will be handed out one hour before the program begins. Seating is first-come, first-served.

**Kids into Speaking Mandarin,** a new language instruction studio in Lafayette, is having an open house to celebrate the Chinese new year! Come celebrate the Year of the Ox with music, story-telling, games, and refreshments. Monday, January 26th, 3:00 - 5:00pm, 3400 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 11, Lafayette. (925) 962-9800.

## Other

**Contra Costa Midrasha** announces a benefit for its program for Jewish teens. The event takes place at Congregation B'nai Tikvah in Walnut Creek at 25 Hillcroft Way, and features a talk with John Rothmann, speeches from its students and a gourmet appetizer and dessert reception. Tickets for the February 22, 2009 event are \$36 for seniors and students, and \$45 for adults. Tickets are available online and by phone. www.ccmidrasha.org or 925/944-4701.

**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 for information. See article on front page.

**BOOKSALE - Friends of the Orinda Library** monthly booksale will be Thursday, Feb. 5, 10 am - 1 pm in the Bookshop and the Sorting Room of the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. The sale includes bargains in just-like-new books and collector's books for adults and a big selection of books for children from toddlers to teenagers. (Bookshop will remain open until 6 pm) 254-1358.

**Salsa Dance classes in Orinda!** Classes start this week. NO PARTNER REQUIRED, and no experience necessary! Get a FREE class coupon at: www.SalsawithTomaj.com. Drop-in, or take a serie.

Mondays, 7:00-8:00 Beginners, 8:00-9:00 Intermediates. Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. To register, or for more information, call 925-254-3459 or 925-254-2445.

**Orinda "Heart of the Home" Kitchen Tour** is scheduled Wednesday, February 11, from 9:30 am-12:30 pm. Tour six beautiful, remodeled kitchens and enjoy some Valentine cheer. Raffle prizes to make the heart swoon, too! An arrangement by Ron Morgan of Loot, cooking classes, paintings by Allison McCrady, a night of Puccini from an opera singer to grace your party are among the offerings. Buy tickets through Miramonte's Web Store or from several outlets: Orinda Books, Lazy K, McDonnell Nursery, Entourage and Allison McCrady Gallery. Tour Hotline: 925 235-7232.

**A Real Estate Seminar will be presented** by Loretta Barra and Ed Tracey who are both Realtors with Coldwell Banker in Orinda, on Tuesday, Feb. 10th at 6:30pm at the Veterans Memorial Building at 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. Information will be shared about today's market and a lender will also be on hand to help sort out some of the ins and outs of buying and selling in today's market. A light dinner will be served. Please call for a reservation as seating is limited (925)253-4642 or Email Homes@LorettaBarra.com

## Clubs/Meetings:

**The Moraga Women's Society** will meet on Monday, January 26 at 9:30 am at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street in Moraga. SUN columnist, Harriet Ainsworth will be speaking about her experiences as a Wave. Visitors are always welcome. Contact President, Roberta Klaproth, 376-0708.

**The Auxiliary for the Child Abuse Prevention Council** of Contra Costa County will hold its 5th annual It Shouldn't Hurt to be a Child Benefit Luncheon at Round Hill Country Club in Alamo on Thursday, February 19, 2009 from 10:30am until 2:00pm. Tickets for the luncheon are \$65 per person with all proceeds from the auction and raffle going directly to the Child Abuse Prevention Council and their programs such as Newborn Connections and the Baby Bag Project. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Carol Carillo, at 925-798-0546. To learn more about joining the Auxiliary visit their website at www.capc-coco.org.

**Montelindo Garden Club Meeting and Speaker,** Friday, February 20, Orinda Community Church, #10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Meeting at 9:30, Speaker at 10:30. Danville resident, Kirsten Yanker-Hansen, a well-known Bay Area landscape designer, will speak about winter gardens. The meeting is free and welcomes guests. www.montelindogarden.com email: montelindogarden@aol.com

**Mt. Diablo Business Women Networking Dinner,** 5:45 - 8:30 PM; February 12, 2009. Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette; \$37 member, \$44 guest, register early, please no walk-ins. Dr. Mundeir of Surat Naturopathic will enlighten the meeting attendees with information on using natural methods to help alleviate symptoms associated with PMS and Menopause. Please join this dynamic group of women for a great evening! Tickets are \$37 for members and \$44 for guests. For info contact: www.mtdiablobusinesswomen.org.

**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.

**Widowed Person's Support Group** On Monday, January 26 at 7:00 pm, share a social time - meet some new folks to get better acquainted, and enjoy an entertaining program on the subject of Happiness. This will be in the Lafayette/ Orinda Presbyterian Church on Knox Drive, in Lafayette. Reservations are not required. For information regarding these events, directions, and reservation for the luncheon please call (925)932-3448.

GO TO: www.glorietta2009auction.cmarket.com

January 21st - February 18th

Casablanca Online Glorietta School Auction

**Widowed Persons Support** will be offering a series of GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS. Saturdays from 10 am to Noon, January 24, 31, February 7 and 14 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 Friday, 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.

**The Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County** will hold its monthly meeting in the Ball Auditorium at John Muir Medical Center-Walnut Creek Campus, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek on Monday, February 9 from 7-9 pm. Kyle Sullivan, CO, will discuss WalkAide, an adaptive electrical stimulation device for drop foot. After his talk, attendees will break up into three coping groups: stroke survivors without aphasia, stroke survivors with aphasia, and caregivers of stroke survivors, each group led by a trained professional. For more information, contact Ann Dzuna at 925-376-6218. Meetings are free and open to the public.

**Women's Business Connection of Lamorinda** is a dynamic leads group

that inspires their members to grow their businesses through networking, referrals and education. For more info call: 925-210-9296 or www.wbclamorinda.com.

**The Moraga Lions Club,** a member of Lions International (the largest community service club, located in over 178 countries), seeks volunteers to participate and assist the blind and do local community service. Call the Moraga Lions Club 376-2538.

**Diablo Star Chapter #214,** Order of the Eastern Star. Eastern Star is a social order comprised of both women and men. The stated purposes of the organization are: Charitable, Educational, and Fraternal. For membership information please contact Karen Seaborn at (925) 689-0995.

**Job's Daughter's International** - Bethel No. 218 Orinda This organization is for young ladies (min 10yrs old). The girls develop confidence, good character, life-long friendships, moral and spiritual values, and leadership abilities. Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Orinda Masonic Center located at 9 Altarinda Rd, Orinda. Contact Nicki Wandesforde, Bethel Guardian at (925) 283-7176 or email nickichef@comcast.net.

Please submit events to:  
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

# ASIAN ARTS AND CULTURE CELEBRATION

PRESENTED BY Lafayette library and learning center foundation

JAN MONDAY 26

7-8:30 PM ACALANES SMALL GYM **PING PONG** DEMONSTRATION WITH SURVIVOR FINALIST YAU-MAN & CHAMPION PLAYER KENT LEUNG OF CONCORD TABLE TENNIS CLUB TEST YOUR SKILLS AGAINST THE BEST

TUESDAY 27

7-8:00 PM LAFAYETTE LIBRARY **PAJAMARAMA** CHILDREN'S CHINESE RIBBON DANCE BY WENLANG'S FOLK DANCE SCHOOL AGES 3+

THURSDAY 29

7-9:00 PM LAFAYETTE LIBRARY **AUTHOR and TV CHEF** SHIRLEY FONG-TORRES, THE WOMAN WHO ATE CHINATOWN, SPEAKS ON THE SIGHTS, SOUNDS, SMELLS AND STORIES OF CHINESE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

SATURDAY 31

11 AM-1 PM LAFAYETTE LIBRARY **CHINESE ARTS HANDS ON** DEMONSTRATIONS & PARTICIPATION • CALLIGRAPHY, BRUSH PAINTING, ORIGAMI • FOOD AS ART: GORDON XIAO, OWNER OF ARK RESTAURANT, ALAMEDA • TEA CEREMONY BY THE AMERICAN TEA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

FEB MONDAY 2

11:15 AM LAFAYETTE LIBRARY **STORYTIME DRAGON DAY** CHILDREN'S CRAFTS WITH GLORIA GEE OF DIABLO VALLEY CHINESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

TUESDAY 3

7:30-8:30 PM STANLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL MULTIPURPOSE ROOM **YU'S MARTIAL ARTS** SCHOOL DEMONSTRATIONS BY YELLOW, ORANGE, BROWN & BLACK BELT STUDENTS AND MASTER

east meets west

09

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Dining Dining Dining Dining

Not Your Usual Ham & Eggs

By Susie Iventosch

One chilly evening in December, I had an early dinner with a friend at Chow in Lafayette before heading to the Leshner Center to see "A Christmas Carol." To feel cozier, we sat near the fireplace, and as usual at this particular establishment, I ordered a Cobb salad - not necessarily comfort food, but nevertheless, delicious.

My friend ordered a fried egg sandwich, which is something I would probably never have ordered - off any menu, anywhere - in a hundred lifetimes. I was not at all disappointed with my choice, until her meal arrived and she offered me a bite. Oh my goodness ... this was no ordinary egg sandwich! This one was grilled with gruyere cheese, country ham, sliced tomato and a rosemary-Dijon aioli, and it was fabulous! Though the

restaurant didn't give me the exact recipe, they did divulge all the ingredients that make it so tasty and I've created a rosemary-Dijon aioli by trial and error.

Many aioli recipes call for an enormous quantity of oil, but this one calls for a reduced ratio of oil to other ingredients. And, because many folks are not comfortable using raw eggs, I tried making the aioli by heating the egg yolks and lemon juice together to 160 degrees, which food safety sources say is hot enough to kill any harmful bacteria.

Timrin Chew, a certified oncology nutritionist from Lafayette, said the chances of getting salmonella from eggs is slim, but "it's always good to err on the side of precaution, so the idea of cooking the egg to 160 degrees is a good one."

In an effort to keep the

eggs from scrambling, I mixed the egg yolks with the lemon juice before heating. The egg mixture started to get thick, but I kept whisking to keep it more liquid. The mixture attains 160 degrees rapidly, so keep a watchful eye on the process.

After cooling, use the egg-lemon mixture in the recipe just as if they were completely raw. The sauce isn't quite as pretty, but it's safe!

On another note, it might be a good idea to save this dish for special occasions. It's clear to see, this one is a big cholesterol offender! Still, don't let it deter you from trying it once or twice ... the yummy flavor is worth going off the diet every once in a while. And, if you don't feel like cooking, head down to Chow and order this sandwich with a draft beer, or a glass of their fresh-pressed apple juice.

Grilled Gruyere Egg Sandwich with Rosemary Dijon Aioli

(Serves 4)

- 8 slices of bread (your favorite, whole wheat, sour dough, etc.)
4 slices country ham (I used honey maple ham)
1 large tomato, sliced into 8 slices
1/2 cup Gruyere cheese, grated
4 eggs, cooked over easy
1 recipe Rosemary Dijon aioli (recipe below)

To assemble sandwich, spread rosemary-Dijon aioli on two slices of bread. On four of those slices, place one slice of ham, 2 slices of tomato, 2 tablespoons of grated gruyere, and one egg on top. Cover with second slice of bread. Grill or cook in sauté pan until cheese melts. Serve hot with extra aioli sauce.

Rosemary Dijon aioli

- 1 clove garlic, minced
2 egg yolks
2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, finely minced
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil (the better the oil, the better the sauce!)
Dash Tabasco

Whisk eggs yolks and lemon juice together in a small saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat until mixture just reaches 160 degrees on a cooking thermometer. Remove from heat immediately, stir and cool. Add garlic, mustard, rosemary, salt and pepper and place mixture in the bowl of a food processor or blender. With the motor running, slowly add oil in a steady stream and process until thick. Refrigerate until ready to use.

\*Egg Safety Center

http://www.eggsafety.org/f\_a\_q.htm#8

What is an adequate temperature to cook an egg?

Egg white coagulates between 144 and 149°F, egg yolk coagulates between 149 and 158°F and whole eggs between 144 and 158°F. Plain whole eggs without added ingredients are pasteurized but not cooked by bringing them to 140°F and maintaining that temperature for 3 and 1/2 minutes. According to the FDA Food Code, eggs for immediate consumption can be cooked to 145°F for 15 seconds.

If the eggs are to be used in a recipe with other food items, dilute the eggs with liquid or other ingredients, such as milk, or sugar (at least 1/4 cup liquid or sugar per egg as in custard) and cook the egg mixture to 160°F, which will destroy harmful bacteria in a few seconds. Adequate cooking brings eggs and other foods to a temperature high enough to destroy bacteria that might be present.



Photo Susie Iventosch

These recipe is available on our web site. Go to: www.lamorindaweekly.com Susie can be reached at suziven@gmail.com

Terzetto presents: Art & Music The Art of Mariann Mortensen from the Moraga Art Gallery Saturday January 31st 5:30 to 8:30 pm Live Band: "Friends of Old Pappy"

Free Entree Special Get a free entree with the purchase of another entree of equal or greater value. (Maximum value is \$8.95 lunch & \$14.95 dinner.) Petar's Restaurant is located in the heart of Lafayette at 32 Lafayette Circle.

CHEESE STEAK Buy ONE King of Philly and the second King of Philly is \$3.00 off Dine in or Take Out! CAUTION: MAY BE HABIT FORMING The Cheese Steak Shop 3455 Mt Diablo Blvd. Lafayette • 925-283-1234

Glass Design By Mariann Mortensen TERZETTO CUISINE 1419 Moraga Way, Moraga Shopping Center 925-376-3832 - www.terzettocuisine.com Mon: 7am - 2pm; Tues-Sun: 7am - 8:30pm

LAMORINDA's Restaurants - updated November 26, 2008. Table listing various restaurants with their addresses and phone numbers.

The Lamorinda Weekly (LW) Restaurant Guide is not paid advertising; our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. We hope that we have included all Lamorinda restaurants on this page, except those that told us they did not wish to be listed. LW is not liable for errors or omissions. In the event that we have inadvertently printed misinformation or excluded a restaurant please let us know (info@lamorindaweekly.com) so that we may correct our list for the next issue.





# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### Miramonte DFAL Basketball Starts Strong

By Conrad Bassett



Mats' Anthony Pignelli drives past Cougar Kellen Ito on way to Mats' first DFAL win  
Photo Jordan Fong

The 2009 Diablo Foothill Athletic League basketball season started out strong at Miramonte High School, where both the Matador boys' and girls' teams edged local rival Campolindo teams before a packed house.

In the early game, the Lady Mats overcame several Campolindo runs and hung on to win 60 to 56 while the Miramonte boys also won by four, 52-48, in a defensive struggle.

The Miramonte teams wore their black away uniforms in honor of their former coach, Darrell Hirashima, who passed away on December 19. He had led the girls' team to several outstanding seasons, including an NCS Division 3 championship last year. The standing room only crowd honored Coach Hirashima with a moment of silence prior to the beginning of the game.

The Lady Cougars came out strong and led the game after the first period by a score of 19-16. The 2nd period was a streaky one as Miramonte pulled to a nine point lead before Campolindo went on a 14-0 run to lead at halftime, 32-28.

The Lady Mats went to work in the 3rd period. Led by Chelsey Christensen's six points, Miramonte took the lead for good, outscoring Campo 17-8. In the final period, the Mats held off several Campo rallies with the Cougars only getting as close as 47-46 with just over six minutes remaining.

Christensen and Stephanie Golden each finished with 12 points to lead Miramonte. Christensen also had 12 rebounds and Golden added eight. Kelly Thomas led Campo with 15 points.

The game was the DFAL head coach debut for Lady Mats' James

one period. They expanded the lead to eight at the half before Campo whittled down the lead.

Led by tenacious defense from seniors Chris Dyer and Miles Macy, Campo cut the lead to 36-31 after three periods, and closed the lead to two a couple of times during the last quarter before clutch free throw shooting from Spenser McDonald and Eric Obeysekere ended the suspense.

Macy was fouled with less than four seconds to go while shooting a three point attempt and hit the first two free throws to cut the lead to 50-48.

Macy then intentionally missed the third free throw but Mats' Obeysekere came up with the rebound, drew a foul and nailed the final two free throws for the 52-48 win.

Obeysekere had 16 points to go with 15 rebounds. He made 12 of 16 free throws. Davis Louie added ten points for Miramonte. Dyer led Campo with 13 points, nine rebounds, and five assists.

Since the opener, both the Miramonte and Campolindo boys' teams have won all their DFAL league games.

The Mats are now 4-0 and atop the DFAL, having beaten Acalanes, Dublin, and Dougherty Valley handily. The Cougars are in 2nd at 2-1, crushing Dougherty Valley and coming out strong against Las Lomas last week. Acalanes is in fifth place with a 1-2 DFAL record, having thus far beaten Alhambra but lost to Miramonte and Las Lomas.

As for the girls' DFAL records, Miramonte is now 3-1, while Campolindo and Acalanes are tied, each with a 2-1 DFAL record reflecting respective losses to Miramonte.

League play resumes on Friday night when Miramonte travels to Las Lomas, Campo plays at Dublin, and Acalanes faces Dougherty Valley in a home game.

Kizziee. It was also the first time Kizziee coached the Mats against rival Campolindo where his daughter, Taylor, is a freshman on the varsity squad. Taylor scored five points for the Cougars in what was her own DFAL debut.

Last season, Coach Kizziee helped coach the Campo boys' team to the NCS Division III championship. Previously, he'd been involved in the Lady Cougar basketball program.

The boys' game was also a tough battle. Miramonte, who had not beaten Campolindo since 2003, was on a mission to end the streak.

The taller Mats went inside early and opened up a 14-7 lead after



Mats' Lauren Kimble shoots over Taylor Kizziee in the DFAL league opener  
Photo Jordan Fong

### Mats Win in Dons' Gym



Lady Mats beat Acalanes, 49-43, on Friday, January 9. Here, Miramonte's Christine Miller, a junior 5'8" guard, goes for a lay-up, 2 of the 11 points she scored that evening.

The boys' game that followed was back and forth, and tied, 54-54, at the start of the fourth quarter. The Mats stepped it up, knocking in 8 free throws in the final two minutes of play to secure the win, 70-61, and record their second DFAL win.

Kristine Miller (23) of Miramonte going up for a layup against Acalanes Friday night  
Photo Jordan Fong

### Rival Fans Show New Spirit Style



Photos Jordan Fong



At Miramonte's DFAL league opener on Friday, January 6, the Mats packed the student section in their signature green, but with a new twist -- festive hats and pep rally pompons some fans wore as wigs.

Meanwhile, Campo football players arrived for the game in Miles "Got Milk?" Macy t-shirts, spoofing Cougar starting point guard Macy, a milk-drinking senior who played wide receiver for Campo's football team. By halftime, though, most of the "Got Milk?" shirts were off, replaced with the time-honored Cougar student fan fashion -- a favorite basketball jersey.

Three days later, on January 9, Acalanes hosted the Mats for the Don's first home DFAL game, but conflicting athletic events, including the Mats' football banquet, meant most Miramonte student fans were M.I.A. and missed seeing their Lafayette rival's first-ever "white out" bleacher section as well as the debut of the Don's drum line.

"The '6th Man' never dies," said Acalanes senior Christian Talavera, after the game, referring to the t-shirts traditionally worn by Acalanes fans. But, he explained, Acalanes' student leadership wanted to pump up the school spirit this year by trying something new for the first Lamorinda DFAL match-up.

The drum line? That, says Acalanes senior Kat Lau, a drum line member who is also in Acalanes leadership, is hopefully for keeps.

### Acalanes Hosts 10th Annual Girls' Basketball Shootout on Jan 24

Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte are just three of the top East Bay girls' basketball teams that will play in the 10th annual Acalanes Shootout on Saturday, Jan. 24. There will be seven games, with the first at 10:30 a.m. and the last starting at 8 p.m., in a showcase for some of the best teams and players in the area, including Cal signee DeNesha Stallworth who plays for Pinole Valley.

Acalanes, coached by Corrie Mizusawa (who played in the Shootout when she was with the Dons), will play at 8 p.m. against Moreau Catholic of Hayward; Campolindo will open the event at 10:30 a.m. against University of San Francisco High; and Miramonte will take on Amador Valley at 3:30 p.m.

Says Campolindo's coach, Clay Kallam: "The highlight game

will be at 5 p.m. when Stallworth, a 6-3 post who's averaging close to 30 points a game, will lead Pinole Valley against St. Mary's of Berkeley."

The other games are Piedmont vs. Berkeley at noon, Dublin vs. El Camino of Sacramento at 1:30 and Deer Valley of Antioch vs. St. Patrick St. Vincent of Vallejo at 6:30 p.m.

Admission is \$8 for adults and \$5 for kids.

## Should your family follow you to Cal?



Of course. Every time they need an eye exam. The University of California Eye Center is an integral part of the top-rated UC School of Optometry, and we're here to offer you complete vision care for your kids, for you, and for your parents. We're also the ones to see for Lasik® surgery and contact lenses. (Our Eyewear Center has all the big names in frames!) We take most insurance plans, and major credit cards. When it comes to your eyes, go blue!



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# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### Acalanes Wins, Campo Plays without Okamitsu

By Guy Dotan



Acalanes' senior Peter Jernigan prepares to pass the ball during game against Campo Photo Doug Kohen



Campolindo's Nick Dobon controls a pass while on-field defender Nick Manning approaches Photo Doug Kohen

Acalanes boys' varsity soccer team beat last year's NCS champs Campolindo on January 14, when the Dons' Peter Jernigan, a senior, dribbled past Cougar defensive line and then scored on Noel Raine, the Campolindo goalie, for a breakaway goal late in the second half. Final score was 1-0, Acalanes.

Cougars' starting defender was unable to play, having received two yellow cards during the Cougar's previous game against Alhambra, on January 9th, tripping the NCS two red-card season ejection rule.

Okamitsu had received his first red card of the season on December 10th, in a game against Miramonte.

Previously, receiving two yellow cards in one game resulted in a "soft" red and suspension from the

next game. Yellow card math, though, has changed. Under the current season rules, two yellows in one game now equal a regulation red card.

Unless at least one of his yellow cards is successfully appealed, Okamitsu may be out for the season.

As of Friday, when the Cougars faced off against archrival Miramonte, Okamitsu was still out of play. This time though, the Cougars won, 2-0.

### Campo Freshman Wins Modern Pentathlon



Photos submitted by Dana Chase

Daelyn Chase, a freshman at Campolindo High School, won the International Youth A (for ages 17-18) Modern Pentathlon Competition, competing for the United States in Palm Springs on Jan 3.

Modern Pentathlon is a competition where athletes compete in fencing, swimming, running, shooting (air pistols), and horseback stadium jumping during the course of a single day.

The Palm Springs event was the first competition sanctioned by the UIPM (Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne) that included the new combined run and shoot format. Competitors represented the USA, Canada, Panama, and Great Britain.

In addition to winning the Youth-A division, Daelyn was also the overall winner of the Junior competition (ages 19-21) and had the highest points of the women overall.

Even though Daelyn is a young competitor she's had an early advantage because she has been riding horses since she was 7 years old.

"Good jumper equitation is essential for Modern Pentathlon," says Daelyn's mother, Dana Chase, who shares her daughter's love of horses. "Because athletes have only 20 minutes to warm up and figure out their randomly chosen horse, they must have an exceptional riding and equitation foundation to be able to successfully clear 3'6"-3'9" jumps on a horse they have never ridden before."

Jumping isn't part of the sport at the younger levels. Many Modern Pentathlon athletes, explained Chase, do not begin to train for riding until they are at least 16. Daelyn competes up in age division whenever she can in order to be able to ride and jump.

As a member of Briones Valley Pony Club, Daelyn participated in Tetrathlon competitions (which include running, swimming, shooting, and show jumping). Her success in Tetrathlon paved the way for invitations to Pentathlon training and competitions. During her short tenure as a pentathlete, she has successfully competed across the United States, Canada, Ireland, Egypt, and Switzerland.

Daelyn's goal is to qualify for the 2010 Youth Olympic Games held in Singapore, although its modern pentathlon competition will not include riding since the event is for 14 to 17 year olds.



Daelyn Chase



Lady Cougar Aly McDonald races Acalanes defender Cammie Goodman during Wednesday's tied home game, 2-2 Photo Doug Kohen

VARSITY HOME GAME Calendar		High School Varsity @ Home	
<b>Friday, January 23</b>	Boys Basketball Dublin @ Acalanes, 7pm	Alhambra @ Miramonte, 7pm	Boys Soccer Ygnaccio @ Acalanes, 6:15pm
<b>Girls Basketball</b>	Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 5:30pm	Alhambra @ Acalanes, 6:15pm	Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 6:15pm
<b>Boys Basketball</b>	Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 7pm	Dublin @ Miramonte, 6:15pm	
<b>Saturday, January 24</b>	Girls Basketball -- Acalanes Shootout All games @ Acalanes	<b>Monday, February 2</b>	Girls Basketball Alhambra @ Campolindo, 6pm
Campolindo v. Univ SF High, 10:30am	Miramonte @ Acalanes, 6:15pm	Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 7pm	Dublin @ Acalanes, 6pm
Miamonte v. Amador Valley, 3:30pm	Miramonte @ Campolindo, 7pm	Miramonte @ Campolindo, 7pm	<b>Friday, February 6</b>
Acalanes v. Moreau Catholic, 8pm	<b>Thursday, January 29</b>	Boys Basketball Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 5:30 pm	Girls Basketball Dublin @ Miramonte, 7pm
Girls Soccer Concord @ Acalanes, 3:30pm	Wrestling Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 6pm	Mirraonte @ Campolindo, 5:30pm	Boys Basketball Dublin @ Miramonte, 5:30pm
<b>Tuesday, January 27</b>	<b>Friday, January 30</b>	<b>Wednesday, February 4</b>	Girls Soccer Las Lomas @ Miramonte, 6:15pm
Girls Basketball Dublin @ Acalanes, 5:30pm	Girls Basketball Acalanes @ Campolindo, 5:30	Girls Basketball Acalanes @ Miramonte, 7pm	
	Alhambra @ Miramonte, 5:30	Boys Basketball Acalanes @ Campolindo, 7pm	
	Boys Basketball Acalanes @ Campolindo, 7pm	Boys Basketball Acalanes @ Miramonte, 5:30pm	

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1st row (left to right): Patricia Battersby, Ann H. Ward, Joan Cleveland, Marianne Greene, Sue Olsen, Joan Evans, April Matthews, Lara Olsen Williamson, Debbie Johnston, Tara Rochlin, Ann Sharf, Joan Eggers 2nd row (left to right): Dexter Honens II, I. Bruce Maxon, Ben Olsen, Sue Layng, Linda Friedman, Ashley Battersby, Karen Murphy, Charles Levine, Loretta Mullins, Margot Kaufman, Clark Thompson, Lynda Snell, Dan Weil, Margaret Weil Zucker, Hal Kaufman, Art Lehman, Pamela Halloran, Steve Smith, Ignacio Vega Not pictured: Kurt Piper, Judy Schoenrock and Jeff Snell

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View of Moraga from Rocky Ridge above Saint Mary's College, 1-9-09 Photo Andy Scheck

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