

# LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Need to contact us? 925.377.0977

Delivered bi-weekly to all  
Lamorinda homes & businesses

**Free**

Volume 02; Issue 24

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Wednesday, February 4, 2009



Protesters gathered outside Saint Mary's Soda Center prior to scheduled lecture by '60s radical Bill Ayers

Photo Andy Scheck

## Ayers Lecture at SMC Leaves Audience Polarized

By Jennifer Wake

Tensions were high inside the Saint Mary's College Soda Center last week during a lecture from the college's guest speaker, former '60s radical, now professor Bill Ayers. The speech was punctuated by occasional outbursts from protesters, calling Ayers a murderer, countered by students shouting for disrupters to "Leave!" and "Go Away!"

Nearly 600 people came to see Ayers, who gained national attention during the recent presidential election, in which republican candidates referred to him as "a domestic terrorist" who "palled around" with Barack Obama. More than 150 people stood outside to protest the event, holding signs emblazoned with slogans such as "Shame, Shame, Shame!"

"We were pleased with the turnout," said Lafayette resident and co-founder of Flags for America, Jim Minder, who helped coordinate the protest. "We consider it a success since our primary goal all along was to make the community and alumni aware of who Saint Mary's was inviting onto their campus."

Prior to the event, Ayers, 64, explained that he had watched himself be turned into a "cartoon and a caricature" during the presidential election. A former leader

of the radical organization the Weather Underground, which was responsible for bombing several public buildings during the 1960s, Ayers went on to become a respected education professor at the University of Illinois. He is also the author of several books, and was named Citizen of the Year in Chicago in 1997.

Ayers' recent accolades, however, didn't change the viewpoints of many of those opposed to his past actions.

The chair of the Saint Mary's College Republican Club, Scott Cullinane, stayed outside during the lecture, stating he did not want to give Ayers "the honor or satisfaction of my presence."

Others sympathetic to the protesters, like Orinda resident Jim Boucher, believed in Ayers' right to speak. Boucher brought his daughter, Noel, (a senior at Miramonte) to the lecture to hear Ayers and see the protest. "I formed my own opinions, and I hope she'll form her own opinions," he said. "It was a great opportunity to give her a civics lesson in her own backyard."

Lafayette resident Gabriel Froymovich, however, said Ayers' lecture "was cogent, but rang hollow in the context of his past."

"Ayers orchestrated the murder of police and is

widely quoted as not regretting doing so, not ruling out repeating it and as wishing that he did more," he said. "How can he then talk about 'the incalculable value of every human being'? It was disrespectful to his victims."

While members of the Weather Underground have been tied to attacks that killed several people, Ayers has denied that the group was ever involved in killing or injuring another person during its six-year existence. Although a fugitive who lived underground during the 1970s, Ayers was never convicted of killing anyone.

Minder and many other protesters spent the day talking with students about the Weather Underground and Ayers' involvement. "I'm sad to say that it appeared that most of the students we engaged had already made up their minds, even though there is a lot of factual information out there on Google to refute their arguments," Minder said.

Saint Mary's sophomore Darryl Tom, who is studying kinesiology and hopes to become a PE teacher, said he didn't know much about Ayers' background. He simply came to hear about education reform. "Hopefully, there's going to be change, because the education system is not looking too good," he said.

... continued on page 7

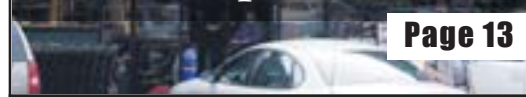
### LAMORINDA WEEKLY this week

#### Lamorindans Attend Inauguration '09



Page 5

#### DIABLO FOODS A local business features local products



Page 13

#### Happy Valentine's Day!

Page 17

Town News	2,3,4,6
Neighbors Win	2
Scandalous Solicitation?	3
The Impossible Dream	4
SMC Gets Creative	5
Nowicki Retires but Remains	6
Crime Reporting Goes On-line	7
Not to be Missed	8
Lamorinda Service Directory	8
Letters to the Editor	9
Lamorinda Seniors	10,11
Lamorinda Real Estate	12
Business	13
Schools	14,15
Dining	16
There's the Rub	17
In the Back Yard	18,19
Sports	20,21,22,23
Packed Pavilion	20
Classifieds	22
<b>HOW TO CONTACT US</b>	<b>22</b>
Love Lafayette	24

Advertising

LAFAYETTE • MORAGA • ORINDA

## ELENA HOOD

REAL ESTATE GROUP

(925)254-3030 WWW.ORINDA.COM

CALL ONE OF LAMORINDA'S MOST SUCCESSFUL TEAMS FOR ANY OF YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS!

### Stimulus Package: No Pork for Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini

The Contra Costa Transportation Agency (CCTA), during its Jan. 28 meeting, approved the list of infrastructure projects that have been prepared by its 22 jurisdictions to take advantage of a possible \$825 billion federal stimulus package.

If Contra Costa County gets the anticipated \$21 million, Orinda is slated to receive \$690,000, Moraga \$665,000 and Lafayette \$740,000. The three cities have all proposed roads rehabilitation projects that are dearly needed.

While Congress debates the passage of the stimulus bill, towns and cities have been working hard to ensure infrastructure projects are ready to go.

"While the final provisions may change," said Hisham Noemi, Engineering Manager for CCTA, "it appears that some of the funds will flow according to the Surface Transportation Program (STP) formula, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will therefore distribute the funds to each county in the Bay Area."

Projects need to be designed and ready to be bid on by the time the bill is approved, so all city engineers are doing their best to be ready by the Feb. 15 deadline.

"The amount [from the government] is an edu-

cated guess from what the general package would be," says Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin, who sits on CCTA board. "The decision was made to give each entity a base of \$400,000 and to divide the remainder between them according to the size of their population and infrastructure."

Tatzin believes that the decision created a fair balance between large and small jurisdictions. "One of the strong points of CCTA has been that the organization works to achieve broad support among participating jurisdictions for its actions. As a result, all jurisdictions feel they are recognized and few get exactly what they want," he said.

In preparation for this meeting, each of the towns and cities prepared a list of projects, with the priority of being able to put them to bid within three months, and the requirement of addressing only arterials and major collector roads (federal-aid eligible).

"Millions could be spent on our roads at this time," said Jill Mercurio, Moraga's Town Engineer, "but we were told that the projects would be considered only if we would be able to break ground within three months." Mercurio and her team spent two weekends getting the documents ready and Moraga was first to file its project.

... continued on page 12

Mailed to 24,600 homes and businesses in Lamorinda.

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

PSRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
AD-VANTAGE