

Letters to the Editor Continued

ORINDA MEASURE B

Editor:

As a 31-year resident and proud Orinda teacher, I'm saddened by the misleading letters from Richard Colman and Clyde Vaughn that, through their clever use of exaggerations and misrepresentations, serve only to plant seeds of doubt.

Mr. Colman's latest is of particular interest because he at once calls for no new taxes to support education, while at the same time suggesting that teachers should get paid \$100,000 a year. Interesting to ponder; but totally unrelated to the issue our schools face today.

Measure B is needed, not because teachers should be paid more, but because the very quality of our academic programs is at risk. Measure B is about optimizing student learning through small class size, providing literacy and math support, and keeping programs such as foreign language, music, and physical education alive. As for Mr. Colman's call for accountability, I urge him to take a look at the many accountability measures our school districts have established. On every measure, Orinda performs at the very top – and, even in this rarified atmosphere, continues to make gains.

Measure B is a sound investment in the Orinda schools that have proven time and again that they are accountable and achieve results.

Gail Ronneberg
Orinda

Dear Editor:

The Feb 4th edition had a letter concerning Measure B criticizing Clyde Vaughn opposing every measure aimed to better our community...etc. Essentially blaming Prop 13 for the lack of funds for the schools. It is not Prop 13 that is to blame but the allocation of funds. If all the signers of the letter care to help the schools, why don't they donate the difference to EOF between what they are paying in property taxes now with what they would have paid without the Prop 13 cap...probably 3 or 4 more times as much and it is a tax deductible contribution too! A \$500,000 dollar home purchased today (if you can find one in Orinda) would have a \$5000 property tax bill (disregard the additional costs of bonds, etc) but without Prop 13, it would probably have been \$15,000 or more.

Walt Bateman
Moraga

Editor:

Orinda School Parcel Tax Should Be Rewritten Measure B Parcel Tax information documents are misleading. Measure B should be defeated and rewritten with full

In Case of Emergency, Dial ???

... continued from page 1



Lafayette Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Russell had signage installed at the Community Center last week advising people of the number to call from a cell phone in the event of an emergency
Photo Andy Schreck

As you know, in a medical emergency, lost minutes can be critical. This is why we urge all local citizens to program their cell phones to call the local number; it speeds up response. I would also urge readers to program cell phones with local agency numbers where they work or visit regularly, if out of the area."

Depending on where you are, the central CHP dispatch office that is reached by calling 911 from a cell phone is in either San Ramon or Vallejo, both of which receive a high volume of emergency calls and callers may experience difficulty reaching a dispatcher. If you do dial 911 from a cell phone, you must provide the dispatcher with your location.

The one exception to this advice, according to Contra Costa County Sheriff's spokesman Jimmy Lee, is if you are calling in an emergency from a cell phone while on the freeway: "In that case, 911 is the correct number, because it's the CHP that responds to incidents on the freeways."

After that, the consensus begins to break down.

Lafayette Police Chief Mike Hubbard says if you must use a cell phone, "The correct number for the Lafayette Police Department would be (925) 284-5010. An alternate number would be (925) 646-2441."

Bill French, Orinda's Chief of Police, concurs with Hubbard: "The best number from a land line is 911 and from a cell phone it is (925) 284-5010."

Moraga's Priebe said in a written statement: "This past week quite a bit of interest has been raised regarding cell phone use to emergency services. The preferred number to use, as given to me today (02/09/09) from our dispatch center is 925-228-8282. I have always encouraged citizens to use our local 925-284-5010 number instead of the 9-1-1. From now on, I will advise everyone to program their cell phones to use the above preferred number (228-8282)."

But Jimmy Lee of the Sheriff's Dept, which handles police dispatch for all three communities, says, "The problem with those two numbers (284-5010 and 228-8282) is that they are single lines (no rollover if the line is busy). The best number to call is 925-646-2441." Although this number is not officially designated as a priority line, Lee advises, "That is a direct dispatch number which will always be answered."

The Contra Costa County Fire District (CCCFD) also recommends calling 911 from a land line in an emergency. If there is no land line available, CCCFD recommends calling its

disclosure of tax specifics in the Voter Information Pamphlet. The Tax should have an ending date so the tax does not go on forever, and be fair for Orinda seniors.

I have spoken with seniors who mistakenly believe age alone exempts seniors from the proposed Orinda Schools Parcel tax. Unfortunately, the senior exemption requirements are so stringent approximately only 60 Orinda seniors will qualify.

To qualify for the exemption homeowners must have an income of less than \$43,050. The School District gets this figure by using the median income of homeowners from areas outside Orinda. It is only fair the School District use the higher median income of Orinda so more Orinda seniors would qualify for the exemption. Since Orinda homeowners will pay the tax, the School District should use the median income of Orinda.

The School District documents submitted for the Voter Information Pamphlet do not disclose the \$43,050 figure, and that the School District is using the median income of homeowners from areas outside Orinda.

The School District does not give voters full disclosure in the Voter Pamphlet. This tax goes on forever without an ending date, and is unfair to seniors.

Janet Maiorana
Orinda

Dear Friends and fellow Orindians,

Orinda schools are in serious need of additional funds to maintain the outstanding school system that we have grown accustomed to for so many decades. Low class size and focus on literature and math have always been the primary focus of the Orinda schools and it is imperative that this service to Orinda children be perpetuated.

The loss of State Funds have prompted the need for Measure B that will replace a significant portion of these lost funds. The parcel tax of \$124 per parcel is a small price to pay to afford the special local schools that so many of us in Orinda have either directly or indirectly benefited from.

Please vote yes on Measure B and be proud that you have personally contributed to maintain the best public schools in California.

Sincerely,

Peter and Darlene Hattersley
Orinda

Correction to Letter to the Editor regarding Orinda Measure B (issue date 02/04/09) from Sue Severson et al: The names of co-signers Penny and Ian Baird were included in error, as they did not give advance permission for their names to appear on the letter.

dispatch center directly for a fire or medical emergency if you only have a cell phone. That number is 925-933-1313.

But wait, there's more.

"That number (933-1313) will work from a cell phone for a fire or medical emergency," says the Moraga Orinda Fire District's Fire Marshall Mike Mentink. However, Mentink was clear and firm in stating his opinion that just as everyone should use 911 from a land line, "Citizens should be given one and only one number to dial (from a cell phone) for any type of emergency. If someone calls the Sheriff's dispatch center, the first question they are asked is, 'What is the nature of your emergency?' If it's a fire or medical emergency the caller is immediately transferred to the County Fire dispatcher; it's seamless."

But what should that one number be?

"I think we may need to work on that," concludes Mentink.

(Editor's note: After spending several days trying to track down a single best number to call from a cell phone in case of an emergency, we are inclined to agree with Mentink; Lamorinda's emergency responders should discuss this and present the public with one emergency priority number that rolls over when busy and will always be answered. We will let you know when and if that happens.)

Many of us have multiple entries in our cell phone contact lists, which are often automatically alphabetized. Hence this suggestion from Moraga's Richard Olsen, a former Fire Commissioner: "I have put 'aaa' in front of my 'Moraga Fire Emerg.' and 'Moraga Police Emerg.' entries, in order to make sure those are the first numbers that appear whenever I pull up my cell phone's Directory (perhaps there's an alternative way to prioritize the listings, but I haven't yet discovered it.)"



Photo credit omission in our February 4th issue.
Public Forum: "A sense of community was palpable on the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 20, in the Europa Hofbrau restaurant on Moraga Way, Orinda."
The photo was provided by Rick Konlon of Lightpath Photography, Orinda

Two Great Happy Valley Properties!

Majestic Retreat! Nature's beauty and breathtaking serenity showcase this 1.26 acre estate. Towering redwoods and oaks, streams, bridges, pathways, expansive lawns, and beautiful landscaping create a wonderful venue for fine California living and entertaining. Offered at \$2,495,000

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

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



patriciabattersby.com



computer technical support
repairs • training • websites

925.283.5666

Nerd4Rent.com

3503 Mt Diablo Blvd. Ste 4,
Lafayette



**Free Computer
Tune-Up Fridays**

Just bring your computer in on Friday and we'll perform a comprehensive 11 point tune-up and system optimization at no charge

**schedule your appointment!
call (925) 283-5666**

Hurry offer expires March 30, 2009

Limit 1 per household or business, max 5 per week.

**5A has never had such
great discounts....
\$15 gets you into Any
Size Unit!***



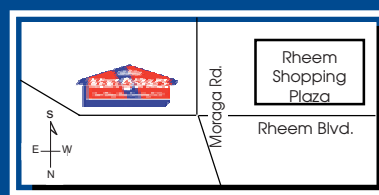
**Use our FREE Truck to help you
move in!**

*\$15 move in on new rentals only. Exp. 2/28/09 ask Mgr. for details. Ask about our "Free Truck" or rental truck rebate.



925-631-7000
455 Moraga Road Suite F
www.5Aspace.com

MORAGA



1 Las Vegas Road, Orinda Irresistible Ranch Style Home with Walls of Glass



April Matthews
Village Associates Real Estate
93 Moraga Way, #103
Orinda
925-254-0505

Wonderful curb appeal is just the beginning of the delightful assets belonging to this home. You will enjoy over 2,000 sq ft of light-filled rooms, a terrific yard and a Country Club location. There is a charming kitchen with an adjacent family room. The bedroom wing offers 3 generous rooms, 2 with hardwood floors. The master suite has a bonus room that is perfect for a home office, nursery, or an additional walk-in closet. The hall bath is updated and there is a bonus 1/2 bath in the laundry room off of the family room and next to the garage. The front yard has level lawn and many trees which provide privacy. The back yard has a large patio, easily accessed from the home and a terraced yard complete with a play structure. 1 Las Vegas Road is easy to live in right now and also offers you a great opportunity to enlarge/remodel and not be the most expensive house on the block. Minutes to Highway 24, BART, Lake Cascade and the Lafayette Reservoir. The school bus for Sleepy Hollow Elementary school stops at the bottom of the driveway and the buses for OIS and Miramonte are within walking distance. Simply a wonderful home and location for you and your loved ones to enjoy now and for many years to come. \$880,000.!



www.villageassociates.com • www.dreamhomelamorinda.com