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Volume 03 Issue 8

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Wednesday, June 24, 2009



Photo Rick Konlon, LightPath Photography

Orinda's Volunteer Band Keeps on Marching

By Andrea A. Firth

While there may not be 76 trombones at the lead with 110 coronets close at hand (remember Professor Harold Hill's fictitious band in *The Music Man*), Orinda resident and jazz trumpeter Mo Levich expects over 100 musicians to participate in the Orinda Volunteer Marching Band in the upcoming July 4th parade, and he is hoping to have even more.

"Anyone with an instrument is welcome to play at any level of musicianship," says an enthusiastic Levich, who has played in the July 4th

marching band since its inception 26 years ago. "If you can play one note, that is a note we did not have before," he adds.

The volunteer band is the brainchild of former Orinda Mayor Bobbi Landers who was determined to have a marching band as part of the city's original July 4th parade back in 1983. Faced with the dilemma that schools no longer had marching bands due to the funding cuts associated with the passage of Proposition 13, the "never-say never" Landers was forced to look elsewhere. She just

said 'we're gonna start one,' explains Levich, and so the Orinda Volunteer Marching Band was born.

Musicians as young as eight to as young as 88 join the march each Independence Day playing patriotic favorites on a range of instruments including trumpets, saxophones, trombones, tubas, and drums. The band's repertoire includes the John Phillips Sousa classic *Stars and Stripes Forever* and the anthems from each of the armed forces.

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The Parental Shift: When parents can no longer live independently

By Jennifer Wake



Jim Burris traded his bike for an electric scooter
 Photo Wendy Scheck

One of the most difficult times in a child's life can be when a parent can no longer care for themselves. Not only are adult children faced with the task of finding care for elderly parents, handling finances, and dealing with existing housing, but they must start an awkward conversation that can shift the parent/child role.

Anne Rosenthal, a geriatric care manager at Eldercare Services, says to try to frame your discussions in a caring way, underscoring your concern for a parent, mentioning a problem you have noticed, and how your discussion is a way for you to gain peace of mind and to keep your parent safe.

Often adult children are alerted that there might be a problem when small changes start happening.

... continued on page 10

Where Are They Now?

By Sophie Braccini

You read about their first steps in the Lamorinda Weekly. You may already be one of their customers. How are the new businesses that opened in Lamorinda over the last two and a half years doing? Research by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests that most failures of American start-ups occur in the first two years of their existence; across sectors, one third disappear during that period. Thanks to Lamorinda residents and the 'shop local' campaigns, Try Lafayette First, Shop Moraga First and Shop Orinda, most of our new businesses have survived their infancy.

One of the most comprehensive commercial developments of recent years is the Lafayette Mercantile on Mount Diablo Boule-

vard. Craig Semmelmeier, Founder and Principal of Main Street Property Services, has been instrumental in finding appropriate tenants. "We have one space remaining unrented because we are looking for a very specific business to put there," says Semmelmeier. "Cortese Investment (the developer) is holding on to its strategy to have a bakery-café there, to create the right mix of businesses." Semmelmeier, who is now negotiating with an un-named 'perfect match,' is following the performance of the Mercantile's businesses.

"Individual store sales are confidential," says Semmelmeier, but his point of view is that they are doing well considering the economic circumstances.

... continued on page 13

Moraga Native, MOFD Firefighter ...

By Lucy Amaral



Chris Davies, a Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) firefighter didn't plan on being a hero. He just wanted to make it to the CPR class he was scheduled to teach. The fates, however, had a different idea on the morning of April 4.

Walking out of his house in Concord a little after 6 a.m., Davies heard a distinctive crackling noise, ...
 Read on page 7

Little League Teams Battle for Championship

Submitted by Todd Bequette



The Angels pitchers continued their post season dominance as they gave up only 2 hits and struck out 13 to earn the right to represent Lafayette Little League in the District 4 Tournament of Champions. The Angels jumped out to a 2-0 lead on a single by Tommy Nimura, a double by Max Flower and a two-out double to the fence by Brian Stone.
 Read on page 23

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Lafayette

Lamorinda Community

Lafayette

Calendar

City Council 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Monday, July 13

Planning Comm. 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, July 2

Design Review 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Tuesday, July 7

Senior Services 3:00pm
Community Center, Alder Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, July 23

City of Lafayette:
<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.lafayettechamber.org>



Trek on a trip, 6/4/09 An unknown suspect entered a locked garage and took a Trek bike. The owner reported that upon going to the garage to put away some items after a 4 day trip, he noticed the bike was missing. No signs of forced entry. The bike was outfitted for triathlon racing and was valued at \$3500. Perfect bike for a fast getaway – no other bikes were taken from the garage.

Not my keys, 6/4/09 A Lafayette resident reported finding a set of keys in her mailbox attached to a blue "polka dogs" key chain with one Toyota car key and one "Ace" house key. Maybe found by a helpful passerby who thought they belonged to her? The resident did not recognize the keys so she gave them to the police for safe keeping.

Stolen Bike, 6/4/09 A bike managed to remove its lock and roll away from in front of Longs Drugs at 3623 Mt. Diablo Blvd. It probably had help, but there are no suspects. Estimated loss, \$1000.

Check goes for a ride, 6/11/09 An elderly Lafayette resident reported a stolen check in the amount \$10,887. The check was in an envelope sitting on the back seat of his vehicle as he visited the Lafayette Library, Ace Hardware and Safeway on his way to the bank. While in the Safeway parking lot, he could not find the envelope. The check had already been endorsed by his wife, but not by him. Unfortunately for the check snatcher, the victim contacted the bank and stopped payment.

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City Sued by Property Owner

By Cathy Tyson

"It must be perfectly clear that this matter is not going away," said attorney David Bowie about the struggle to build on a very constrained lot at the corner of Sessions Road and Sierra Vista Way (in the February 18, 2008 edition of the Lamorinda Weekly.) Now he has filed a lawsuit against the City of Lafayette on behalf of his client, former Planning Commissioner Dick Holt, Managing Member of Lamorinda Properties LLC, after the final denial of his building application.

Just last month Bowie filed documents suing the City of Lafayette for a Writ of Mandamus and Complaint for Declaratory Relief and for Damages. For readers not familiar with a Writ of Mandamus, according to Wikipedia – it may be a command to do an administrative action or not to take a particular action, and it is supplemented by legal rights. In a nutshell, the court can overrule the City's decision, but the City can appeal.

At issue is the house that Holt would like to build on Lot 66 at the corner of Sessions Road and Sierra Vista Way. The steep, narrow lot is bisected by Sessions Road – the only access out for all uphill resi-

dents. An informal coalition of neighbors has been very vocal about their opposition to developing this lot from the beginning.

In February of this year the City Council denied with prejudice Lamorinda Properties' application for a Hillside Development Permit and for a Variance. Their reasoning was threefold: the Council decided that granting both would be a special privilege, and that protected trees would have to be removed to build on the only area suitable for construction, and finally that the 2,639 square foot proposed building is "deemed incompatible with surrounding features and other development within the Sierra Vista Way neighborhood," states the Complaint.

Concerns regarding unclear easements on the property have plagued this application from the start. City attorney Mala Subramanian decided that the easement issue was a private matter between the neighbors and Holt. Uphill neighbors assert they have a deeded property easement over under around and through the subject property that render it undevelopable.

"By completely disregarding the existence of the easements,

which are clearly documented in all our deeds, we believe the City Attorney made a grave error in her judgment in directing the City officials in the manner she did. If we look for the root cause of the situation that led to the current law suit, it is this error in the City Attorney's decision that clearly conflicted with the physical reality of the lot," said uphill neighbor Lakshman Watawala in a letter to the Mayor. "I am unsure as to what the neighbors can or should do with respect to the lawsuit to safeguard our rights on the lot. Again, we hope the City will aggressively defend the decisions made by the Planning Commission and the City Council."

In the Complaint, Bowie claims, "The City has abused its discretion and acted in excess of its authority with respect to the denial of the Lamorinda's Application for Hillside Development Permit and Variance. The actions of the City have deprived Lamorinda of fundamental vested rights and the City's decision is contrary to the weight of the evidence presented."

As of press time, City Attorney Subramanian had no comment. A response from Lafayette is expected before the July 5 filing deadline.

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Lafayette Considers Green Building Ordinance

By Cathy Tyson

If the Planning Commission and City Council adopt the suggestions of the Environmental Task Force on a proposed Green Building Ordinance, future remodelers and home builders will have to abide by certain "Build it Green" guidelines. For example, a new single family residence must get a minimum of 50 points on the green point scale. In categories ranging from site, foundation, landscaping, building envelope, insulation, HVAC, appliances and more – each green measure is assigned a point value, based on its benefits. Points can be given on the choice of a particular kind of toilet or using renewable flooring. Remodeling projects that are less than 500 square feet must submit a GreenPoint Existing home checklist with plans.

This is part of the City of Lafayette Environmental Strategy that was adopted in November of 2006. "One of the tasks for the Environmental Task Force is to initiate the development of City guidelines and incentives for sustainable building practices and a green building ordinance," notes a staff report on the matter prepared by Senior Planner Greg Wolff.

In a recent presentation by the Environmental Task Force to the Design Review Commission, the Draft Green Building Ordinance Proposal was uniformly well received. "You don't have to bend over back-

wards to reach the 50 point level. There's a large menu of choices, pick what you like," said Commissioner Tom Lee. "It does seem pretty reasonable, our office has been using these processes pretty consistently," said Vice Chair Andre Ptaszynski.

The goal here is to encourage homeowners to explore design and material alternatives, and to be smart options from the beginning of a project. According to Environmental Task Force member Tom Chastain, "It's about fundamentally good architecture. My own sense is that it starts to make people much more aware of the choices they're making." He also feels there should be adjustment for house size, the larger the footprint of the house the greater the responsibility of the owner.

While the program is not punitive, there will be costs associated with becoming Green-Rated. The proposed fee is \$400 for a single family residence plus a GreenRaters verification fee; considerably cheaper than becoming LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified.

The timing couldn't be better, since California Code of Regulations Title 24 which regulates building efficiency standards will become stricter in August of this year. The Draft Green Building Ordinance Proposal still has a few hoops to jump through before it's enacted.

Route #25 Seeks Riders

By Jonathan Seclow

The Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) now offers County Connection bus service straight through downtown Lafayette. The new route 25 starts from the Lafayette BART station and travels down Mt. Diablo Boulevard until it gets to Pleasant Hill Road. From there it takes Highway 24 to the Walnut Creek BART station.

The hour-long loop starts at 7:30 AM and runs until 6:30 PM. It leaves the Walnut Creek BART station on the hour and the Lafayette station on the half-hour.

According to Leah Greenblatt, Lafayette's Transportation Planner, the primary function of the new route is to help employees on Lafayette's east side commute to work.

"Before this route, it was very difficult for people who worked in east Lafayette to get to work on public transportation," Greenblatt said. "We frequently get calls from employers in that part of town asking how their employees can get to work on public transportation or where their employees can park for free. Now

those workers don't need to drive to work."

Greenblatt also encourages residents who might otherwise drive on the same route to consider the bus as a way to save money and to help the environment.

While the route serves an important purpose, it has yet to see many riders. Greenblatt said that it often takes time for residents and commuters to become aware of a new route.

"The city wants to see it utilized. We want to promote it," she said.

Jay Lifson, the CEO of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce stressed the need for more riders. According to him, the route is up for review in December, at which point the CCCTA will decide whether or not to continue the service.

"If ridership doesn't increase by the end of the year, the route is in danger of being cancelled," said Lifson.

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Moraga

Lamorinda Community

Calendar	
Town Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo Wednesday, July 8	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, July 6	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, July 13	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive Tuesday, July 21	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way Friday, July 10	
Town of Moraga online: http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us Chamber of Commerce: http://www.moragachamber.org	



Driving on a suspended license, 6/14/09 A Dodge Caravan was pulled over at Canyon Road near Country Club Drive because the rear brake light was broken. Although the 21-year-old driver said she had a valid license, a routine check revealed it was suspended. To make matters worse, she was not able to produce proof of insurance. A 59-year-old passenger in the car would have been able to drive them home, but alas his license was also suspended. The car was towed and they were released at the scene to walk home.

Car Vandalism, 6/12/09 A Rimer Drive resident told Moraga officers that his daughter's Volkswagen Cabriolet was parked in front of their home when someone threw stepping stone brick at the car causing about \$1200 worth of damage.

Paintballed, 6/12/09 A Courter Lane residence was struck by paintballs. Four had hit the garage and six splatted on the side of the daughter's car. The person reporting the incident reported hearing rattling noises at about 1:30 a.m. Out late painting the town? Probably not appreciated.

Alleged teacher threat, 6/11/09 Police were dispatched to Campolindo High School on a report of threats made by a student's parent to one of her teachers. The teacher in question told officers there had been an ongoing issue with a student's mother concerning her daughter's grades - she really, really wanted her daughter to get an "A." Parent was contacted at home by the cops and denied threatening the teacher. Even though I have a student at Campo, it was not yours truly.

Budget 2009/2010 Moraga Plans to Stay within its Means

By Sophie Braccini

With a \$900,000 reduction in expenses, reduced costs for employee benefits and cuts in non-essential elements, Moraga anticipates keeping its 2009/2010 budget in the black. Two budget meetings held on June 8th and 10th allowed the Council to make strategic choices on the budget presented by Town Manager Mike Segrest and staff.

Segrest is confident that the town will be able to sustain its base operations in the years to come, maintaining a very modest program of services to the community. However, asset replacement and infrastructure maintenance are grossly under-funded, and have been for years.

"The projected 2009/2010 income is \$6.4 million for \$5.8 million in expenses, thus a projected \$533,724 surplus, prior to state takeaways and one time item expenses," said Finance

Director Joan Streit. Staff presented the Town's 2009/2010 projected budget separating ongoing expenses (above the line) and expense that are either discretionary or non-recurring (below the line). "This way of presenting the town budget allows staff to plan for maintaining the base of services that the residents expect," said Segrest, "and lets the Council make the political decisions that are its prerogative."

During one budget meeting, Moraga resident Dale Walwark wondered how the Town is now supposed to be in the black for all eternity while previous years' financial projections had portrayed a town that was heading for disaster. "I am suspicious of under the line activity," he said, "Voters need to understand what the true situation is."

... continued on page 6

Moraga's Housing Element Planning Commission raises important questions for future development in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

On June 15 the Moraga Planning Commission reviewed a draft of the housing element that identifies future needs for the community. The Town Council is scheduled to discuss the draft, and the Commission's recommendations, at its June 24th meeting (see our website for updates, <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>.)

Each jurisdiction in California is assigned, by the State, an objective in terms of number and type of housing that it wants to see developed. Towns that do not plan to meet that obligation could be at risk of losing their Measure C one-quarter cent sales tax revenue (about \$250,000 for Moraga, per year). Moraga's share consists of planning for 307 units between 2007 and 2014 (84 very low income, 64 low income, 97 moderate income and 62 above moderate income housing units.)

The consulting firm Baird and Driskell Community Plan-

ning was hired by the town to draft a plan that would meet those obligations. According to the document, two key elements characterize housing in Moraga: The town has one the lowest growth rates of housing development in the county, and the cost of housing in Moraga is significantly higher than the county's average. There are nearly 5,800 housing units in Moraga, and only 86 new units were built between 1999 and 2006.

The Specific Plan that the town has been working on for years should accommodate the state's housing needs requirement and beyond, once the municipal code is modified to allow a higher housing density than is presently permitted. However, the consultants highlighted some town specific impediments that could compromise the realization of the projects.

... continued on page 7

Moraga Revenue Enhancement Committee Studies Neighbors' Proposals

By Sophie Braccini

With only a few months to find new sources of revenue for the town, Moraga's Revenue Enhancement Committee decided not to reinvent the wheel. At its June 15 meeting, the committee reviewed the recommendations considered by Lafayette and Orinda during their revenue enhancement discussions.

"There were a lot of very interesting proposals and a great deal of overlap between the two reports," said Committee Chair Dick Olsen.

After approving the appointment of two new members, Doctor Zhan Li and Fred Schroeder, the committee debated the appropriateness for Moraga of the actions recommended in Lafayette and Orinda. Many of the recommended measures have to do with additional tax revenue for the town that would not be susceptible to state grab.

One of the most lucrative is a utility user tax that many cities in the Bay Area impose on their residents. For example Piedmont charges 7.5% on phone, utility and gas bills. The tax produces about \$1 million for a population just above 10,000.

Lafayette's committee recommended the institution of a property transfer tax. One condition to levy such a tax is for the community to become a charter city. In its report, Lafayette estimated that a 1.3% tax on sold properties would generate \$3 to \$4 million in revenue.

A business license tax was also proposed in Lafayette's report. Neither Moraga nor Lafayette has such a tax, although it is widely used by other municipalities. In Moraga, with more than 500 businesses registered, it could produce a sizeable income.

Committee vice-chair Tom Westhoff, who has substantial experience with municipal bonds, commented on Moraga's potential bond rating when the issue was raised. "Moraga has no rating at this time," said Westhoff, "Lafayette is rated AAA. Depending on the type of bond, Moraga would probably get a very good rating because we have no high delinquency."

Three sub-committees will consider which actions could be recommended for Moraga. The committee will also look at grants and corporate sponsorship. "We will investigate all the possibility including sales of town property, or a general obligation (GO) bond for the infrastructure," said Olsen. The Town Council will make the final decision after the committee submits its report in November.

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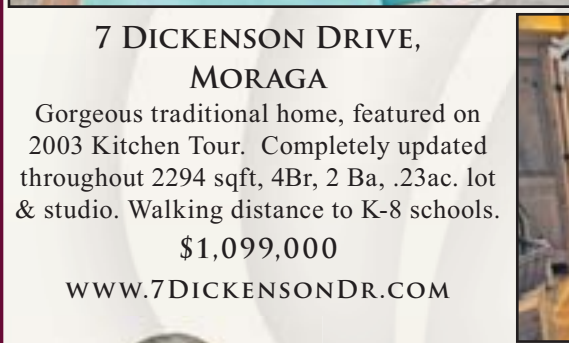
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REVERB (youth).....7pm
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Calendar

City Council 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, July 7

Planning Comm. 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, July 14

Parks & Recreation Comm. 7pm
Orinda Community Center Room 7
28 Orinda Way
Monday, July 8

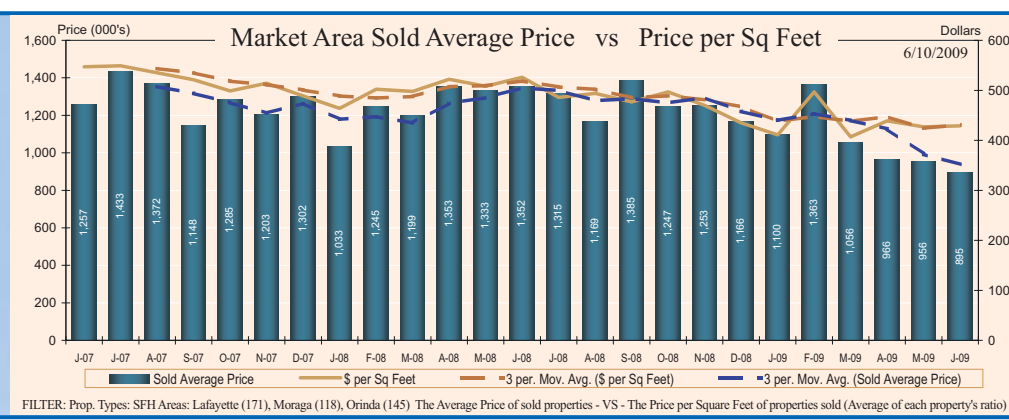
Mayor's Com. Liaison 8:30am
Community Room at City Hall
22 Orinda Way
Monday, July 6

City of Orinda:
<http://www.cityoforinda.org>
• all meeting notes
• calendar updates

Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.orindachamber.org>
• local businesses
• upcoming events



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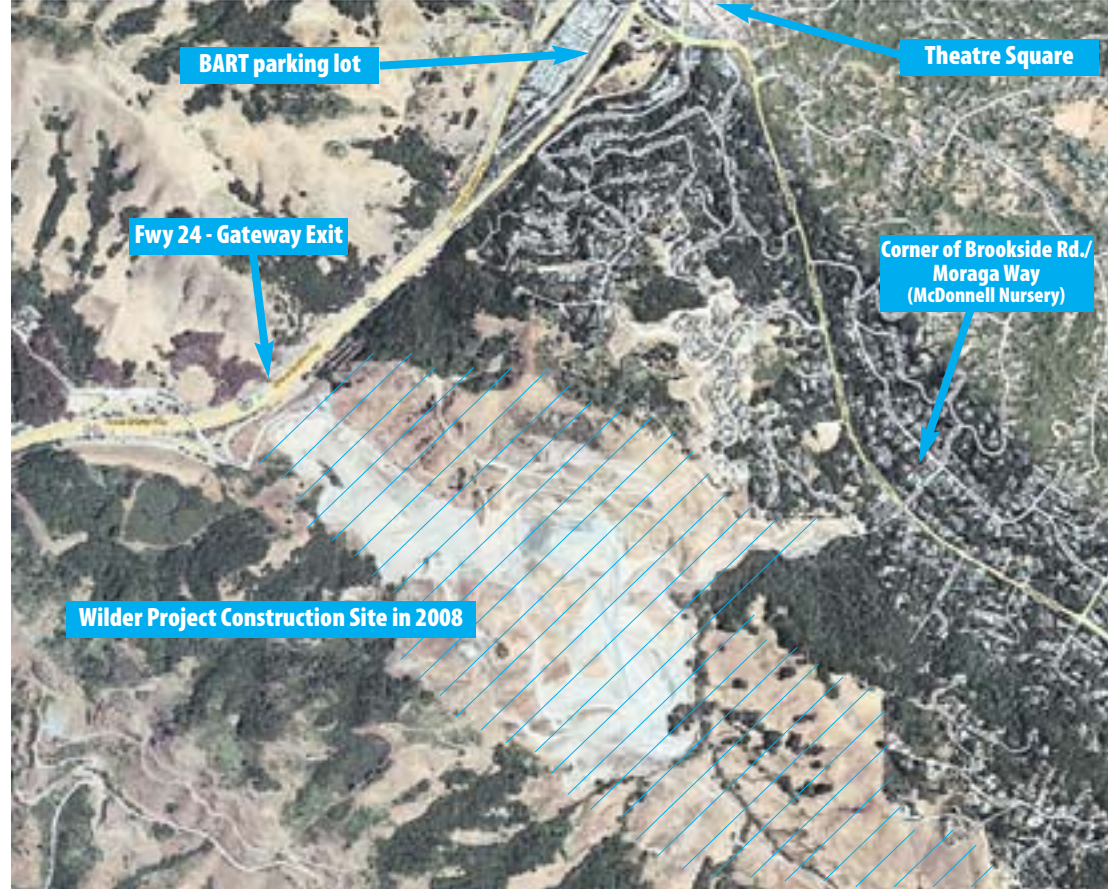
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Wilder Project Status: TBD

By Andrea A. Firth



Satellite photo by Google online maps <http://maps.google.com/>

Although the outcome of OG Property Owner LLC's plans to develop the Gateway Valley in Orinda into a residential community of 245 luxury homes remains unknown, people on all sides of the project seem invested in working things out.

"This case is unique because the developer has stayed engaged with the project and is actively working to refinance,"

stated James Baron, the court-appointed Receiver who took possession and control of the OG property, better known as Wilder, in late April.

Baron and other parties involved with the Wilder project addressed the Orinda City Council last Tuesday evening as the Council received an update on the City's agreement for the Wilder project. Council Member

Steve Glazer recused himself from the discussion as he regularly does in matters related to Wilder due a financial relationship that he maintains with one of the partners involved in the development.

City counsel Fran Layton reported that the property owners are negotiating with the lender, Merrill Lynch, to buy out the \$180 million loan associated with



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the project. Although a tentative drop-dead date for the loan buy-out agreement to be executed had been set for Friday, June 19th, extending the timeline for reaching an agreement seemed possible. And as of Friday, there appeared to be no change in the status of the project. "OG remains in good faith negotiations with Merrill Lynch to purchase the note," stated Jason Keadjian, the spokesperson for OG Property, late Friday afternoon.

In addition to the mortgage note on the property held by Merrill Lynch (now Bank of America), contractors have filed approximately \$20 million in liens for work that has already been completed at the site.

"Given the complexity, size, and scope of the project, I would not be surprised if this bumped along for a while," stated Baron, adding that it was unlikely that there would be a bankruptcy filing in the case.

Baron reported that over the past two and half months he

has addressed weed abatement, water, mosquito and security issues on the property along with handling payment for some of the outstanding expenses. Layton confirmed that the bulk of the monies owed to the city of Orinda by the developer have been reimbursed, and Baron confirmed that any recent charges would also be covered.

Baron noted that all of the involved parties including the lender, the developer, and the city staff and officials have worked collaboratively to move toward a positive a resolution. "I think a negotiated solution is the best outcome for this project," he stated.

At the conclusion of the public hearing on the issue, Vice Mayor Tom McCormick requested that the Council receive an update on the status of the project negotiations directly from representatives of Merrill Lynch and Farrallon Capital Management, LLC, a principal investor in the property, at the next Council meeting on July 7th.

ORINDA POLICE

Receiving Stolen Property, 6/15/09 A 17-year-old and three of his teenage pals went for a ride in a stolen Nissan Sentra and were pulled over at Fish Ranch Road. The driver confessed to having seen the empty car stopped with the engine running in front of a liquor store in Concord. He then proceeded to take it and drove to nearby friends' homes to ask if they'd like to go for a ride, later deciding they'd like to take in the view from the Berkeley hills. Because he was a minor, the driver was cited and released to the custody of his surely less than pleased mom at the Orinda Police Department.

Possession of ammunition, 6/12/09 A suspect from El Sobrante was pulled over at Camino Pablo and Bear Creek Road at 3:45 in the morning with shot gun ammunition in the car. While this is perfectly legal for non-felons to do, this particular driver was on probation and that's a definite no-no.

Contraband found, 6/11/09 A young man driving a '96 Cadillac De Ville was pulled over at the corner of Ivy Drive and Moraga Way shortly after midnight for speeding. Officers found not one, but two things that got our driver in trouble - a 40 ounce can of Mickey's Malt liquor and less than an ounce of marijuana. Perhaps that's why it's called Minor in Possession.

Residential burglary, 6/10/09 At some point during the night, an unknown suspect (seems like he/she makes an appearance in every edition) entered a Rheem Boulevard construction site and took construction tools and equipment valued at approximately \$7,150.

Walk in the Art at Theatre Square



Orinda artist, Allison McCrady (on R) is pictured with Lafayette artists Pam Wright (center) and Margaret Lucas-Hill alongside Lucas-Hill's art exhibited at the first annual 'Walk in the Art' held in Theater Square on June 20th. Over 300 people came to view and purchase the artworks of 20 area artists. Photo A. Firth

Orinda Bridges Budget Gap

By Jonathan Seclow

The Orinda City Council convened on Wednesday, June 17, to discuss the proposed budget for the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years. The primary focus of the meeting was bridging the \$373,145 shortfall in the city's general fund. The shortfall is primarily due to a drop-off in property tax revenue. Property taxes are the largest single source of revenue for the city.

Property tax revenues increase at an average of 6.5% a year. However, due to the economic downturn, there have been far fewer transactions involving property in the past year. Furthermore, property values

are no longer climbing at the rates of the past few years. A report commissioned by the city to analyze home sales in Orinda projected an increase of merely 1.6%, even lower than the Council's conservative estimate of 2.0%.

"[The] projection was a real wake-up call. We would not have thought that the increase would be any less than 2.0%," said Janet Keeter, Orinda City Manager.

Following the discussion of the budget shortfall, Keeter and Beverli Marshall, the Director of Administration and Financial Services, outlined the steps that the city is taking to bridge the gap in the budget.

In their solution to the budget shortfall, the primary sources of savings come from furlough days and eliminating cost-of-living adjustments to the salaries of city personnel. The city plans for 6 furlough days in 2010 and 10 furlough days in 2011.

"We have found \$500,000 to cut from our budget for the next two years and we still may need to find another \$500,000 if the state has their way," said Mayor Sue Severson.

One confounding factor in the council's attempt to finalize the budget is the constantly changing state budget. Legislators in Sacramento have yet to

finalize their budget and changes that they make could dramatically alter Orinda's final budget.

"The state budget is so fluid that we need to just take a snapshot at one point in time and just work with those numbers," Keeter said.

Keeter's primary concern with the state budget is with what she called "state take-aways." There are certain funds that have been promised to the city that may not be delivered. For example, the state has promised the city infrastructure funds under Proposition 42. There is talk at the capitol about putting those funds on hold due to fiscal emergency.

Another area of concern for Keeter is the threat of losing eight percent of property tax revenue to the state. State legislators are exploring the possibility of taking eight percent of the property tax revenues from local governments to help offset their large budget deficit. For Orinda, this would mean about \$500,000 from their operating revenue of \$11 million.

"If we were to lose that 8% to the state it would be detrimental to the budget," Keeter said.

The Council was scheduled to review and approve the budget on Tuesday, June 23, after press time.

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Life in LAMORINDA

New Community Gardens Get Ready to Bloom in Lafayette and Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



Father George, ready to start work at Saint John Orthodox Church
Photo Sophie Braccini

Father George of Saint John the Evangelist Orthodox Church in Orinda has a dream; growing organic vegetables that could be given to the less fortunate of the Bay Area. Janet Thomas and the Eat Local Lafayette group have another dream; open a garden in Lafayette for community members to come and share in the abundance of the land. Both dreams are now taking shape; it just took a few little miracles and a lot of passion.

Fr. George designed his project with the help of many volunteers including Christopher Shein, who has been a Permaculture designer and gardener in the East Bay

since 1993, and an instructor at Mills College. Permaculture is derived from the words permanent and agriculture; it's a method that creates sustainable agriculture that matches local ecosystems. The group put together a budget that was approved by the church at 501 Moraga Way.

"We are now ready to start bringing amendments and building the fence," said Fr. George. "We will be able to start our first summer crop in July." All the vegetables grown in the garden will be distributed to those in need.

"We have two distribution centers -- a service that houses families who are homeless where we have volunteers, and another house in Berkeley for homeless men that we have a standing relation with," explained Orinda resident Dale Dallas, who has volunteered to be the garden project manager.

The Eat Local Lafayette group includes about 20 Lafayette residents, some currently involved with Lafayette's Environmental Task Force, some part of the community group Sustainable Lafayette and some just interested in local food issues. "The group is exploring the establishment of a community garden somewhere convenient within Lafayette where community members would be able to learn about sustainable gardening and share in the creation of a space where they could grow food," says Janet Thomas, who has been part of this effort since the beginning in 2008.

The group has met with Lafayette's Planning Department and determined what space in Lafayette might be available for use. "City staff has been very supportive," said Thomas. "Ann Merideth, the Community Development Director, who staffs the Environmental Task Force, follows our progress and Niroop Srivatsa, the Planning & Building Services Manager, has helped us identify sites that could be appropriate."

One of the sites is located in front of the pumping plant across from the reservoir on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. "This site belongs to EBMUD and the agency has graciously offered the town to use it for free," says Thomas. This site has many positive attributes such as its central location, "some of us are excited at the prospect of transforming the Old Tunnel Road site into a garden," adds Thomas, "it's close to a creek and contains many native plants." However the soil appears to need considerable improvement. Transforming it into a garden will require amendments and/or construction of raised beds.

Another site under review is located in Burton Valley and the main hurdle there is its off-center location. Where ever they end up, garden planners would like the patch to be semi-permanent. The group is aware as well of the financial challenges which come with providing water, electricity, fencing and garden beds and storage buildings for such a project, and is prepared to write

grant proposals once a site is chosen and plans are drawn.

The same issues had to be overcome by the Orinda group. According to Fr. George, the dedication and generosity of about 10 early volunteers and the help of the church was invaluable. So far the group has raised half of its budget and is accepting donations in any denomination. "The cost of water is of concern," said the Father, "so we will be studying the possibility of digging a well that would guarantee our water independence."

A patch will be set-aside in the Orinda garden for the preschoolers who come daily so they can grow their own crops. "I've had parents approaching me asking if their teens could be involved in a community service project here, from growing the food to providing it to those in need," adds Fr. George.

"For those who are so inclined, gardening is an opportunity to integrate their love of God and the Creation with their spiritual practice," said Fr. George, and for those who are not so inclined, it's great fun."

Both groups welcome new volunteers. For the Lafayette garden, community members interested in participating in this project or have ideas for sites can email localfood@sustainable-lafayette.net. For the garden at Orinda St John Church contact Dale Dallas at daled7@comcast.net.

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email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570
 Dear Editor,
 State Senator DeSaulnier has the typical politician's view of how to solve the budget mess. He says our problems are "systemic" pointing to the "robust" initiative system and the constitutionally required 2/3 super majority to pass budget items in the legislature. To correct this, he has called for a constitutional convention to remove all legal impediments to greater spending and even greater taxes. The problem is not lack of revenue, it is excessive spending. California needs less spending, lower taxes and less regulation to attract more business to establish here and stem the flow of business locating elsewhere. The Senator is a member of one of the largest groups of irresponsible incompetents ever assembled anywhere: the California legislature.
 Allan Hoskins, Lafayette
 PS: The voters passed Proposition 1A in 2004, with a majority of 83.6%, to prevent just such a grab as the Governor is suggesting. Politicians BEWARE!
 Dear Editor
 The 6/10/09 Lamorinda Weekly had a recap of state Senator DeSaulnier's meeting with the Orinda City Council regarding California's budget deficit. Senator DeSaulnier identified the state's "robust" initiative system and the need for a super majority vote to pass the budget as elements that impact the legislature's ability to manage the state's finances effectively. Politicians complain that California cannot raise taxes as easily as they would like. They condemn the constitutional requirement that tax increases be approved by two-thirds of state legislators. They bemoan Prop 13, which caps the rate at which they can raise our annual property taxes. Most California politicians would like to pass measures to delete our few existing taxpayer protections. Senator DeSaulnier has been in state government for years, first as an assemblyman, and then a Senator. While on his watch government spending spiraled out of control, and California is close to bankruptcy facing a \$24.3 billion budget deficit. It is easier to blame something or someone for government mismanagement instead of taking responsibility for one's actions. California used to have a good roads, infrastructure, and schools on one-half of today's tax levels. Now Politicians want to borrow, spend and tax. This policy has created a state with record high levels of deficits, spending, and taxes resulting in poor roads, infrastructure, and schools. When will politicians of today learn that government cannot spend its way out of debt or recession? Our representatives should be encouraged not to bow to the desires of special interest groups.
 Janet Maiorana
 Orinda

Budget 2009/2010 Moraga Plans to Stay within its Means

... continued from page 3
 Segrest replied that even if the Council authorized all of the one time or under the line items, the budget should stay positive.
 "We have been able to reduce our expense by more than \$900,000," explained Joan Streit, "we have kept our PERS (retirement and health benefits) rate stable when some towns have seen it multiplied by three, we will not fund a 13th police officer, we have consolidated other administrative positions and reduced staff, we have changed the way we manage our health care plan, and we are not contributing to the asset replacement fund."
 According to Segrest, another element in Moraga's favor is its historical frugality. "During the boom years some cities engaged in new programs and expenses; Moraga never did. We are not taking on social, traffic or large recreation programs," said Segrest.
 "That's the benefit of minimal government," commented Council Member Mike Metcalf.
 At the June 9 meeting, the Council decided on the list of the one-time items that had been proposed by staff. As a rule, the Council approved projects that could be funded by the General Fund or the Asset Replacement fund, but refused all projects that could only be financed by the money the Town received from the developer of the Palos Colorados project (see side bar).
 Capital projects improvements scheduled for next year are mostly funded by grants and sometimes the Town struggles to find required matching funds. Coming up are the repaving of Moraga Road, the construction of a side walk on Corliss, the installation of an ADA-compliant elevator at 329 Rheem (the Town offices), and upgrades at the Hacienda and the library, including an ADA-compliant door.
 Asset replacement and infrastructure maintenance remain largely under-funded. "Previous Councils made that same decision and it will take us years to improve the quality of service on our roads, plan for the maintenance of our drain system and completely fund our asset replacements," said Segrest, adding that this can only be done if the Town can find new sources of revenue. That's a task imparted to the new Revenue Enhancement Committee; a very large ball in their court.
The Ins and Outs of Moraga's Budget
In:
 • Pay off a \$90,000 loan with Bank of the West that was for the purchase and seismic upgrades to the Rheem building that houses the Town offices.
 • \$55,000 for maintenance of sports fields that belong to the school district; the Council is seeking a marginal cost analysis from the district.
 • Study of salary equity among staff for \$25,000. Half this budget cycle, half the next. Council Member Karen Mendonca said she was concerned with employee morale and Council Member Howard Harpham estimated that internal as well as external inequities could impair the ability of Town Manager Mike Segrest to effectively manage.
 • Renewal of Moraga's participation in the Senior Spirit Van program (\$5000), and on a proposal by Mayor Dave Trotter to cut the Council's own travel budget by half, add an additional contribution of \$4,000 to this senior transportation service. That increase will bring Moraga's participation close to 20% of the cost of the service, the percentage of trips that are used by Moragans.
Out:
 • \$75,000 study for a new community center/gym; the Council declared it necessary, but at a later date when town finances show a higher surplus above base-line.
 • \$55,000 feasibility study to move the Town's corporation yard from the Hacienda de las Flores.
 • \$75,000 proposed expense by Publics Work Director Jill Mercurio to fund wells and pumps at the Hacienda and in the public parks in order not to use potable water to irrigate the town's lawns. "We have heard that water costs could increase dramatically in the coming years," said Mercurio. The return on investment of such a project was estimated at about five years.
 S. Braccini

Public Forum JOIN IT

I recently moved to Moraga from Oakland. I used casual carpooling for 12 years in Oakland both as a driver and a passenger. I gave or received hundreds of rides over the years, and I never had an unpleasant experience. My experience has not been as good since my move. Perhaps casual carpooling is a more recent phenomenon in Lamorinda and people are unaware of the well established etiquette used by carpoolers. Please understand that these are not my guidelines; the following do's and don'ts are adhered to by all experienced drivers and carpool riders:
 The driver, of course, is expected to drive safely and cautiously. The driver is expected to provide a relatively clean car interior such that, for example, the riders do not later find cat hair on their coats. It is courteous of the driver to keep the car relatively clutter-free so that the riders have space for purses and briefcases. Drivers typically keep radio volume low and usually tuned to NPR.
 Passengers should buckle up immediately. Please assume that food and drink are not allowed in the driver's car. Having said that, most drivers will not care if a passenger brings a cup of coffee if the car has cup holders. After "good morning" pleasantries are exchanged, conversation is generally kept to a minimum unless initiated by the driver. Remember that rush hour driving in the East Bay can be difficult, and the driver may not want to engage in chit chat. A rider who is a smoker should think twice about getting into a car if he or she has just had a cigarette or is wearing clothes that smell of smoke. Similarly, anyone who wears fragrance should wait until arriving at your workplace to apply it.
 The standard drop off location in San Francisco is at Fremont and Howard. Typically, however, the driver will announce his or her destination and allow a passenger to ride further down Howard or into the Financial District. While it is true that casual carpooling is mutually beneficial - the driver can get into the HOV lane, the passengers get a free ride, and the environment is slightly spared - it is nonetheless also true that the driver is doing the work and paying for the gas, car insurance and wear and tear on his or her automobile. Thus, the driver should not be treated as a chauffeur.
 Finally, here is the big one: Cell phones should not be used! I recently picked up a passenger who was on her phone when she got into my car. Traffic was particularly horrific that rainy day, and I was about to ask her to end the call. She then told her caller that she had to get off the phone because she had "a conference call in a minute or two." I thought it was a polite way of ringing off and never imagined that she was serious. I was wrong. She was an active participant in a conference call which lasted throughout the trip, and she refused to end the call even when asked. The other passenger and I were stunned at her obnoxiousness. She was still talking when she got out of the car.
 Carpooling is a wonderful concept. I encourage anyone interested to give it a try.
 As far as I know, there have never been any significant untoward incidents throughout the history of East Bay carpooling. However, courtesy and common sense make the system work all the better.
 Robyn Schanzenbach
 Moraga
If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.



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LAMORINDA Community

Famous Author Enchants Sweet Thursdays Crowd

By Cathy Tyson



From left Maria Hjelm, Friends of Lafayette Library Board Member and Chief Producer, Sweet Thursday event series, Dave Simpson, Proprietor, Lafayette Book Store and co-sponsor with Friends of Lafayette Library of Sweet Thursdays, Lisa See and Casey Sasner, Friends of Lafayette Library Board Member and Deputy Producer Photo Cathy Tyson

“Hello literary lovers of Lafayette” said Past President and Board Member of Friends of the Lafayette Library, Linda Peterson, welcoming a roomful of fans to a rare Friday appearance of “literary rock star” Lisa See, author of the new book *Shanghai Girls*.

Like all Sweet Thursdays events, Friends of the Lafayette Library and the Lafayette Book Store co-sponsored the production. For an astounding seventy years the “Friends” have been supporting the library; this was no exception, 20% of books sale proceeds go to the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Lafayette Book Store is proud of its many community partnerships and was twice voted the East Bay’s best indie bookstore. At Sweet Thursdays events, book lovers can get the story behind the story from a famous author, snag an autographed copy and donate to the library, not a bad deal.

“Sweet Thursdays attendees have a great eye and ear for talent. When we had Lisa See after the publication of *Snowflower and the Secret Fan*, our audience members enjoyed her perceptive observations

about friendships between women and what one culture and era can learn from another. She’s continued to grow and blossom as a writer, and we were so grateful to have a coveted spot on her *Shanghai Girls* book tour. She’s a gifted storyteller and someone who’s willing to share the backstory of whatever she’s writing,” said Peterson.

With three novels, one book of non-fiction, three mysteries and numerous articles under her tiny belt, Ms. See has spent her career writing about relationships. It was apparent that many audience members were familiar with recent best sellers *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* and *Peony in Love*, both are book club favorites. “I know a lot about love and hate, husbands and wives...because I’ve experienced them myself,” said See about the old saw, write about what you know.

“This book is the closest to my heart,” said See. “Feeling a loss of the people and places we lose from our lives is at the heart of *Shanghai Girls*.” Sisters Pearl and May are the fictional main characters who leave Shanghai in 1937 for

arranged marriages in Los Angeles.

“The sibling relationship is the longest we will have in our lifetimes. A sister is the person who should stand by you, support you, and love you no matter what. And yet your sister also knows exactly where to drive the knife to hurt you the most.” See had the audience in stitches with many of her observations, for example, “Sisters are for life – I don’t know if that’s a good thing or a life sentence.”

Using colorful anecdotes to review the plot, history, and amazing amount of research behind her latest book, this once self-described “pathetically shy” young woman proceeded to charm the predominantly female audience gathered in the Stanley school gymnasium.

Sweet Thursday events will continue throughout the summer. On June 18 at 7:30 p.m. in the Lafayette Library Sophia Raday will discuss her book, *Love in Condition Yellow: A Memoir of an Unlikely Marriage*. On July 2, also at 7:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Library first time novelist Tanya Egan Gibson will discuss *How to Buy a Love for Reading*.

Moraga Native, MOFD Firefighter Receives Award for Saving Family

By Lucy Amaral



Chris Davies at Station 41

Photo Andy Schreck

Chris Davies, a Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) firefighter didn’t plan on being a hero. He just wanted to make it to the CPR class he was scheduled to teach. The fates, however, had a different idea on the morning of April 4.

Walking out of his house in Concord a little after 6 a.m., Davies heard a distinctive crackling noise, searched out the sound and saw that his neighbor’s home was on fire. “I ran down to the end of the drive and expected to see the family standing outside but nobody was there. I saw the cars in driveway and, on a Saturday morning, I knew they were home,” said Davies.

Davies said his training automatically kicked in and made a quick evaluation of the situation.

After calling the local fire department to give them a ‘report on conditions,’ Davis knocked on the door, trying to alert the residents. With no response and determining that there was no immediate threat of the building collapsing, Davies pushed open the door and began yelling. “The house was full of smoke and the fire was coming in through the walls,” said Davies. “I saw the husband coming down the hall, and at that point he knew the house was on fire.”

Davies carried the family’s young son out of the burning house while the husband made sure his wife got out. Davies then reentered the house and got the family’s two dogs out of the building. Once the family was safely outside and the

fire department was on scene, Davies left to make it to his scheduled CPR training class. “I had some smoke inhalation, but other than that I’m fine,” Davies said.

Davies, 25, has been with the MOFD for six years and according to his mother, Joan, this Moraga native always wanted to be a firefighter. “We have friends and family that were firefighters and that’s all Chris wanted to be,” she said. “Chris was determined. He persevered and worked hard to become one.”

The Fire District found out about the rescue in a roundabout way. A brief mention of the event by Davies to a coworker at a barbecue worked its way up the chain of command, finally reaching his Battalion Chief, Stephen Healy. “I found out from another Battalion Chief, who was quick to point out that Chris left once he rescued those people because he didn’t want the attention,” Healy said.

A bit of attention came his way, anyway. At an award ceremony held on June 17, Davies was presented with a resolution recognizing his heroism as well as a plaque honoring his work. “Chris is a great example of what firefighters are like,” said Healy. “He did what any firefighter would do - helped someone in need, regardless of the risk.”

MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki echoed Healy’s sentiments. “We are extremely proud of Chris,” he said. “His immediate and bold actions exemplify what we have come to expect from all of our firefighters.”

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Moraga’s Housing Element

... continued from page 3

Planning Commission raises important questions for future development in Moraga

“Some of the Town’s zoning and other planning requirements may reduce the feasibility of affordable multifamily housing development,” wrote the consultants in their report. Some of the specifics are that the zoning regulations that allow multifamily housing need the approval of a conditional use permit, and that the design review process may delay and/or result in expensive modifications to housing projects. Most of the Planning Commissioners agreed that streamlining the planning process should be studied.

The rules that govern the approval of secondary units in Moraga were criticized as well. This type of unit could be considered moderate or even low income housing, and it could help the town meet its obligations if more were built.

Former Planning Commissioner Alan Sayles took the stand as part of the public comment process, “This ordinance (regulating the building of secondary units) is a complete failure,” said Sayles, it could be fixed, just make it a design review requirement.”

Sayles added that there are probably secondary units built before the incorporation of the town and an opportunity should be given to legalize their construction. Planning Chair Margaret Goglia proposed an amnesty for those units, a period of time during which people who may have constructed such units without approval could get them registered. The Commission unanimously agreed that changing the rules for secondary units was a necessity.

In its desire to see things ma-

terialize in town, the Planning Commission also said that if “green standards” were recommended for construction, the plan should only advocate affordable options. In an additional effort to refrain from imposing too many constraints on developers, the Commission also suggested that senior housing include only the minimum require-

ments for Universal design (a standard that strives to create housing environments that are usable and effective for everyone, including the elderly and people with disabilities).

Once the Town Council approves the draft, it will be sent to the State for review before coming back to the town for final consideration.

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Ask Jeff



Jeff Joyce

Well it looks like summer is finally here and the travel season is in full bloom. As gas prices are slowly inching their way up again, it’s time to consider all those elements that can affect fuel economy besides using a bit less throttle. Tire pressures, wheel alignments, routine maintenance inspections and being sure to keep up with the manufacturer’s service recommendations are just a sample of easy measures to follow.

Dear Jeff:
We’re about to take a trip to the Grand Canyon and I’m sure it’s going to be hot. What can I do to help prevent an overheating problem?
Signed, Hot under the collar in Hercules

Dear Hot:
Never neglect cooling system service. Most manufactures schedule a system coolant exchange every 2 years or every 30,000 miles. Always remember to replace your thermostat when performing cooling system services. Unfortunately there is no factory recommendations for thermostats, but It’s better to be safe than sorry.

Dear Jeff:
During warm weather on the freeway, my car seems to use more gas when I leave my air conditioner off and drive with

my windows down. I thought running my A/C would use more gas when it’s on. How could this be so?
Signed, Uncool in Union City

Dear Uncool:
It’s actually aerodynamics working against you. You’re creating more drag with the windows down when traveling on the freeway, so the result is more fuel usage. It’s recommended to leave the A/C off in town and roll the windows down. When traveling at higher speeds leave the windows up and use the A/C and enjoy the ride. You’ll save gas and arrive calm, cool and collected.

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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Life in LAMORINDA

Energy Conservation Help for Low-Income Residents

By Cathy Tyson

Rare is the day when residents can get something for nothing, but Contra Costa County has an on-going weatherization program that is the lucky recipient of additional federal stimulus funds that will more than triple its usual \$1.2 million dollar budget to \$4.3 million.

The program is designed to reduce household energy use and associated costs in the homes of low-income people by installing energy efficiency improvements like replacing refrigerators that are at least ten years old or installing ceiling fans to cut down on air conditioning, in addition replacing broken window glass, installing weather stripping, replacing furnace filters and more is available.

According to Michael Angelo Silva, Chief, Property

Conservation with Contra Costa County, "All of that money needs to be spent by September of 2011." He noted that there is no current backlog of requests. For residents who qualify, right now is a good time to start saving on energy bills. To get started, all it takes is a phone call to the number listed below.

Eligibility criteria are based on maximum household income, ranging from a gross yearly income of \$29,172 for a single person to \$56,101 for a family of four, adjusting upward for bigger families. Even seniors who now live in a million dollar house, but only receive Social Security as income would qualify as well as a renter in an apartment building. As funding increases, those income limits may be adjusted upward to allow more



courtesy of www.fypower.com

participants access to the program said Silva.

After filing out a simple application, providing proof of gross income, providing a PG & E bill and documenting citizenship, residents throughout the county can qualify. Emergency items like a water heater or furnace replacement can be completed in approximately 48 hours.

Obviously the County will be hiring more workers to meet increased demand, one of the many goals of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, better known as an economic stimulus package.

The Obama administration recently announced plans to invest \$3.2 billion in energy efficiency and conservation projects as part of the stimulus package. Over half of that amount, \$1.9 billion will go to cities and counties throughout the U.S. according to the California Energy Commission. California has been allocated \$49.6 million. The goal is to, "Assist cities and counties in implementing projects and programs to reduce total energy use, reduce fossil fuel emis-

sions and improve energy efficiency," according to the California Energy Commission.

There is help available for even non-low-income California residents; the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 contains various energy tax incentives to encourage conservation. Tax credits of up to \$1,500 for installing energy-efficient windows, including skylights and storm windows, and for replacing older air conditioners, furnaces or water heaters are available.

For more information on the low-income programs call (925) 335-1116 or check out their website www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.asp?nid=282. For more general information on the energy component of the economic stimulus package - go to www.energy.ca.gov/recovery/ or www.fypower.org for lots of relevant information from Flex Your Power on rebates, services, and energy efficient appliances.

MOFD Passes

2009/10 Preliminary Budget

By Lucy Amaral

At its June 17 meeting, the Moraga Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Board of Directors passed the 2009-2010 preliminary General and Special Revenue Fund Budget.

As tax revenue is stagnate and fixed costs have continued to rise, the approximately \$19 million preliminary budget was approved with the knowledge that cuts will need to be made before the final budget is approved. According to MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki, the district could run a deficit of nearly \$900,000 if cutbacks are not made. Now it's a matter of what to cut and where.

Chief Nowicki was instructed by the Board to prepare various budget scenarios to counteract the budget revenue shortfall. "We will dissect the entire budget to see where the least amount of adverse affect in our operational abilities comes from," said Nowicki. "We would need to look at staffing models, and possibly the potential for suspending certain response capabilities (such as not up-staffing on red flag days)."

One area of which Nowicki is keenly protective is keeping stations open. "I would, as fire chief, do everything in my power to keep every fire station open," he said.

The already lean budget has another threat at the door with the possible suspension of Prop

1A (2004), which would then allow the state to borrow property tax revenue from local governments and special districts (such as MOFD) to offset the state's deficit. If that suspension is approved, MOFD could lose another eight percent of its property tax revenue, which equates to about \$1.2 million dollars. The money would be considered a loan, to be paid back by the state within three years.

"If Prop 1A (2004) is suspended, we would try to absorb that in our reserve," said Nowicki. "Because it is borrowed money, we have the expectation that we would be paid back in a timely fashion within the next three years, as promised."

Several letters have been sent to Governor Schwarzenegger by Nowicki on behalf of the Board and the District indicating their displeasure with the decision to suspend Prop 1A (2004). At this board meeting, Nowicki presented the board with a formal resolution which would be sent to the governor stating that MOFD would experience severe fiscal hardship if the State borrows local property tax revenue and the board strongly opposes any proposal to borrow or seize any additional local funds.

Nowicki said that the final 2009-2010 MOFD budget will be submitted to the Board for approval no later than September, 2009.

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Lamorinda Clerks Collaborate



Pictured from L to R Lamorinda's City/Town Clerks Michele Olsen (Orinda), Joanne Robbins (Lafayette), and Marty McInturf (Moraga). Olsen and Robbins recently partnered to host a meeting of the Northern California City Clerks Association at the Veteran's Memorial Building in Lafayette. Olsen, Robbins, and now McInturf, who recently became Town Clerk in Moraga, meet regularly to share information and ideas to help manage their respective city and town civic activities.
Photo Andrea A. Firth

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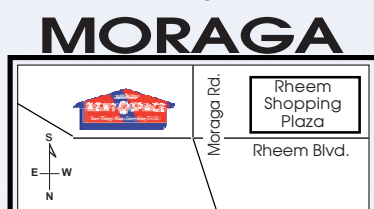
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Cool Facts About Cats

By Mona Miller, DVM



Mona's cat, Ivan (16 months old), rescued last June

Photo Mona Miller

There are 41 known species of cats, all descended from the same ancestor. A group of cats can be called a clowder, clutter or kindle. In medieval Britain, kittens were also called catlings. They are truly unique creatures, from physiologic to behavioral oddities. Cats have been worshipped as gods and are worthy of our respect and admiration, to which anyone who is a cat lover can attest!

Purring is one characteristic of cats that is a bit of a mystery and actually can occur in other animals as well. How cats purr has not yet been figured out, in part because there is no specific anatomic feature that seems responsible. Thus it is supposed that voice box vibrations

are responsible. All cats purr at the same frequency range, of 25 Hertz, which is the same vibration frequency that is considered beneficial to healing. All cats can purr but members of the genus Panthera can purr only while exhaling (these are also the only cats who roar: lion, tiger, jaguar and leopard). Other animals that can also purr are raccoons, rabbits, squirrels, ring-tailed lemurs, guinea pigs in heat, and elephants and gorillas while eating.

While dogs have excelled at developing their sense of smell, cats have excellent hearing. A cat can hear 1.6 octaves above that of a human, and 1 octave above that of a dog. There are 62 individual muscles in the ear to allow for direc-

tional hearing, and each ear can move independently of the other. Compared to humans, cats see much better at night but worse during the day. They discriminate horizontal patterns well, but not vertical. While their color vision is poorer than humans, cats can see 25 times more shades of gray than can humans.

Cats are true carnivores and can subsist on meat protein and fat. Cats lack one of two proteins necessary for detecting sweetness as a taste. The other protein is present but the relevant taste buds are inactive. This is thought to be a mutation allowing cats to adapt fully to a carnivorous diet, ignoring plants that generally have a higher sugar content than meat.

Not all cats respond to the euphoric effects of catnip—about 20% of cats are missing the necessary gene.

Whiskers are important for navigation and sensation. Cats have four rows on each upper lip, and can move the upper two rows independently of the lower two rows. Whiskers may detect small shifts in air currents, allowing a cat to know it is near an object without actually seeing it. Whiskers give information about the size of a tunnel, and can form a basket shape around the cat's muzzle to precisely detect location of prey. One special note to my friends with well-fed

cats: if your cat's body girth is wider than the length of whiskers, tip to tip, it's time to see your vet to discuss a diet!



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



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Orinda's Volunteer Band Keeps on Marching

... continued from page 1



Colleen Mc Cormick (brunette clarinetist)

Photo provided

Blowing the whistle and setting the step as bandleader this year will be Lamorinda musician Tom Carter.

Colleen McCormick, a clarinetist, first marched with the band 15 years ago. 'I was eight months pregnant with my son,' recalls Colleen, who was joined by her alto saxophone playing husband John. 'We met playing in Cal's marching band, so we were excited to have the chance to play in a community band,' recalls Colleen, who lives in Lafayette and will soon open Lamorinda Music, a music store and lesson center on Lafayette Circle. 'It's become a family tradition,' she adds. The McCormick's two teenagers, Emily and Scott, have also played in the Volunteer Marching Band for several years.

"The marching band members come from across Lamorinda and all over," states Levich who, as one of the band's major recruiters, invites anyone who wants to play to participate. "The whole community is invited," he adds. "We have a ball."

If You Want to Play on 7/4—the Essentials

On Parade Day: Meet at 9 a.m. just east of Casa Orinda to get organized and practice marching. The parade starts at 10 a.m.

The Uniform: Wear dark blue shorts or pants, a white shirt, and sunglasses (to conceal the identity of bad notes). Hats will be provided.

The Music: If you want to practice in advance (not required but often helpful), pick up the song book at Lamorinda Music, 81 Lafayette Circle, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, or call 385-0963.

Drummers: If you play drums, contact Mo Levich at 284-0961 to reserve drums. Supply is limited.

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COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Three-Quarter Century Club Celebrates

Submitted by Thomas Black, Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary



Thomas Deahl and wife Aileen pose with plaque honoring them as the Longest-Married Couple. He is 94 years of age; she, 90. They have lived in Orinda since 1957. At right is emcee John Fazel
Photo Thomas Black

Members of the Three-Quarter Century Club were honored on June 10 at the Orinda Community Church, which hosted the annual luncheon saluting residents of Orinda who are at least 75 years of age.

This year's celebration marked the tenth anniversary of the increasingly popular event, again co-sponsored by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary (LSR), Prudential California Realty and the church. Over 100 guests attending this festive

event, according to perennial emcee John Fazel, a charter member of LSR and local Prudential California realtor. Fazel takes over as President of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary on July 1.

Said Fazel, "It's tremendously heart-warming to see the smiles on the faces of our honored guests, (some of whom) otherwise see little public recognition for what they've done."

Entertainment came in the form of tales of yore spun by

McAvoy Layne, known to many as "The Ghost of Mark Twain." He has performed as Twain's professional "reincarnation" for more than two decades. Layne is a local boy, belonging to the Miramonte High School Class of '61. When not impersonating Mark Twain -- a la Hal Holbrook -- Layne hangs his hat in Incline Village, Nev. During the summer, he also pilots a tourist pleasure boat that plies the waters of Lake Tahoe daily.

As in years past, special awards were presented to individuals with notable life attainment. Crowned "King" as the senior-most man was Thomas Deahl, aged 94. He and his wife Aileen, 90, have lived in Orinda since 1957.

Named "Queen" for the third consecutive year was Helen Vurek, 99. She has been an Orinda resident for 70 years.

"Baby of the Year" went to Eartha Newsong, a seven-year Orinda resident who turned 75 last January and is very active in the Orinda senior community.

Other special awards were for the couple married the longest -- the Deahls -- and the shortest -- Bobbie Dodson Nielsen and Fred Nielsen, married less than a year.



"Baby of the Year" award went to Eartha Newsong, who turned 75 last January. She has resided in Orinda for seven years
Photo Thomas Black

Moraga Junior Women's Club

Submitted by Jacqueline Welch



MJWC garden tour chairs Kana Ryan and Dustie Robeson present \$32,200 in support of the UCSF Children's Hospital Child Life Services' Music Program to Manager Michael Towne and Associate Director of Development Brenda Larabee at Terzetto Cuisine Restaurant
Photo Jacqueline Welch

The Moraga Junior Women's Club presented \$47,600 in charitable contributions throughout the past year. The Juniors raise money through various events including their annual "Through the Garden Gate" tour of six Lamorinda gardens and the community egg hunt hosted at the Moraga Commons.

Partial list of the 2009 MJWC beneficiaries
UCSF Children's Hospital Child Life Services' Music Program (Major Beneficiary)

This program provides music lessons and performances to pediatric patients receiving both short and long-term care in the hospital. These services lessen patients' stress, anxiety, depression, and physical pain during their stay.

Moraga Education Foundation
MEF supports programs in Moraga schools. It raises funds to preserve and enhance educational opportunities for Moraga public school students in kindergarten through twelfth grade through a broad-based community effort.

Meals On Wheels
Meals On Wheels delivers nutritious balanced meals to homebound seniors, thus alleviating food insecurity and loneliness experienced by seniors who want to stay in their own home but cannot shop or prepare meals for themselves.

Room to Read
Room to Read is dedicated to promoting and enabling global education. They partner with local communities throughout the developing world to provide educa-

tional opportunities by establishing libraries, creating local language children's literature, constructing schools, and providing education.

Bearskin Meadow Diabetes Camp

Resident camp for children, teens and families affected by diabetes where campers learn the skills necessary to live long, healthy and successful lives with diabetes.

Thank you to everyone who aided the efforts of the Moraga Juniors this year. Your generous donations, participation, and support are the cornerstone of our charity drives. Currently, MJWC is looking for gardens, sponsors and advertisers for the 2010 garden tour. For more information on the Moraga Juniors, including how to join or how you can help, visit www.moragajuniors.org.

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Lamorinda Home Sales continued

City	Last reported:	Lowest Amount	Highest Amount
LAFAYETTE	7	\$580,000	\$1,377,500
MORAGA	8	\$480,000	\$1,675,000
ORINDA	9	\$765,000	\$1,800,000

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

954 Acalanes Road, \$580,000, 3 Bdrms, 1878 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 5-21-09
3695 Boyer Circle, \$810,000, 3 Bdrms, 1959 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-19-09
3182 Lucas Drive, \$1,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 2346 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-22-09
497 McBride Drive, \$1,145,000, 4 Bdrms, 1950 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 5-20-09
598 Michael Lane, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1358 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-28-09
066 North Thompson Road, \$1,180,000, 3 Bdrms, 2790 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 5-28-09
3531 Old Mountain View Drive, \$1,377,500, 4 Bdrms, 3581 SqFt, 2001 YrBlt, 5-19-09

MORAGA

1997 Ascot Drive #4, \$503,000, 3 Bdrms, 1728 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 5-21-09
228 Calle La Montana, \$930,000, 3 Bdrms, 1809 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 5-21-09
1951 Joseph Drive, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 1965 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 5-20-09
157 Miramonte Drive, \$480,000, 3 Bdrms, 1742 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 5-21-09
705 Moraga Road, \$965,000, 4 Bdrms, 3475 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 5-28-09
86 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,675,000, 4 Bdrms, 3401 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 5-19-09
16 Williams Drive, \$990,000, 3 Bdrms, 2283 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 5-27-09
19 Williams Drive, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2557 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 5-19-09

ORINDA

155 Amber Valley Drive, \$985,000, 3 Bdrms, 2506 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 5-20-09
1 Buena Vista, \$765,000, 3 Bdrms, 1504 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 5-28-09
154 Camino Sobrante, \$785,000, 4 Bdrms, 2130 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 5-18-09
6 Donald Drive, \$1,068,000, 4 Bdrms, 2253 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 5-26-09
14 Fern Way, \$879,000, 4 Bdrms, 1876 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 5-22-09
193 Holly Lane, \$850,000, 4 Bdrms, 1508 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 5-18-09
15 La Plaza Drive, \$1,342,000, 4 Bdrms, 3394 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 5-28-09
116 Scenic Drive, \$1,055,000, 3 Bdrms, 2146 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-19-09
70 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2975 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 5-28-09

Lamorinda Foreclosures continued

MORAGA
Ascot Court, Wells Fargo Financial, 05-12-09, \$212,000, 1106 sf, 2 bd

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The State of Lamorinda Real Estate

By Conrad Bassett CRP, GMS

What is happening to real estate inventory in Lamorinda?

As of June 9, 2009, per the Contra Costa MLS, there were 119 single-family homes on the market in Lafayette, 38 in Moraga, and 84 in Orinda. The asking prices ranged from \$374,900 for a one bedroom, one bath home in Lafayette to \$7,500,000 for a 2.6 acre estate in Orinda. Ten of these homes are bank-owned foreclosures.

As of the same date there were 83 pending sales in the combined communities with asking prices of \$449,900 to \$2,995,000. Of these 83 pending sales, 46 had list prices of under \$1,000,000 and only two above \$1,800,000. Six are bank-owned foreclosures.

Since January 1, 2009, 121 homes have closed ranging from \$425,000 to \$3,050,000. Seventeen of the sales were REOs (bank owned properties.)

So, what does that mean?

On average, just over 20 houses have closed each month. With 119 on the market, there is a six-month supply of homes on the market. If no new homes came on the market, it would take six months to sell all of the inventory. In Alamo there have been 37 close year-to-date and 128 are currently on the market. At that absorption rate, it would take over 18 months to sell all of the homes. In Danville there have been around 20 homes selling per month so it would take around ten months to eliminate the current supply of 200

available homes. Lamorinda looks very good as demand is still strong and supply is still not as bad as that in a lot of competing communities.

Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS
Conrad is the owner of Outsourcerelocation Partners in Moraga who specializes in corporate relocation. He can be reached at 377-7356, or cbassett@outsourcerelocation.com

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*Based on information from Bay Area Real Estate Information Services, Contra Costa Assoc. of Realtors, Bay East Assoc. of Realtors, East Bay Regional Data, RE Infolink, San Francisco Assoc. of Realtors for the period 1/1/08 through 12/31/08. Due to MLS reporting methods and allowable reporting policy, this data is only informational and may not be completely accurate. Therefore, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage does not guarantee the data accuracy. Data maintained by the MLS's may not reflect all real estate activity in the market. ©2009 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned And Operated by NRT LLC. DRE License # 00313415

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Lamorinda Students Win in Ecological Art, Photography and Poetry Contests

Submitted By Brian Larson



"Kitchen of the Universe" Zach Watson



"The Light Comes Through" Caitlin Burnite



"The Last Flower Depends on You" Diana Kossakowski



"Winter Fairytale" Erin Cherry

Lamorinda Students Win in Ecological Art, Photography and Poetry Contests
Four Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School students won top prizes at the recent "Visuals and Voices Contest," sponsored by Berkeley-based EarthTeam Environmental Network, which handed out awards for ecologically-themed art, photography and poetry to creative middle and high school students from across the Bay Area.
EarthTeam provides middle and high school teachers, students, and youth leaders throughout the East Bay with curriculum-connected, community-service projects that inspire teens to become stewards of the environment.
The local students took prizes

in various categories. Sixth grader Zach Watson was awarded the \$100 global warming theme grand prize for his water-color depiction of the earth cooking in a hot frying pan – aptly titled "The Kitchen of the Universe;" seventh grader Diana Kossakowski won the first place \$50 prize in the middle school art category for her painting of a floating lotus flower titled "The Last Flower Depends on You;" seventh grader Thibaut Hardin won \$25 for second place in the middle school art category for his 3-D piece titled "Today's World;" and seventh grader Caitlin Burnite received the \$50 first place prize in the middle school photography category for her photo titled "The Light Comes Through."

Miramonte High School tenth grader Erin Cherry received an honorable mention for her photo titled "Winter Fairytale."
Middle and high school students submitted their own personal creations with an ecological theme. Along with an emphasis on judging entries that address an environmental topic, theme or issue, the submissions were also judged on artistic merit.
This year, EarthTeam added a new category to the Contest - the Green Idol – with Campolindo High School eleventh grader David Kant taking home the photography "Green Idol" prize for his photo titled "Sunset."
The talent show and award ceremony was part of EarthTeam's annual school year-end celebration of

environmental, community service, and educational accomplishments, which also included teachers and students who participated in other EarthTeam projects, such as the Global Warming Campaign. The event was held at Ex'pression College of Digital Art in Emeryville and included a warm welcome from California State Senator Mark DeSaulnier.
Student entries were displayed on EarthTeam's "The Green News" Web site at <http://thegreennews.net> prior to the contest so viewers could vote for their favorite poetry, interview, article, photograph, and art submissions. To learn more information about EarthTeam and how to volunteer or participate, call (510) 704-4030 or visit www.earthteam.net.

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Campo Grad Night a 'Suess-a-rific' Success

By Jennifer Wake



Photo Lori Edelstone

After a year of planning, constructing, painting, erecting, and fireproofing a Suessical representation of fun throughout the Campolindo High School campus, the work still wasn't done for approximately 200 parents who manned stations, served dinners, shuffled cards, took photos, manned fire pits, and undertook various other jobs to make their high school senior's Grad Night a huge success.
Co-chaired by Ruth Thornburg and Margo Isaacs, planning for this year's Grad Night at Cam-

polindo began last summer, starting with simple drawings and a call for hundreds of supplies, with items ranging from 400 heavy-weight sheet protectors to 450 feet of red duct tape.
"We worked on this for a year," Isaacs said. "Actual construction took approximately six months or so."
Parents began meeting once a month in the fall with each committee working on getting supplies, donations, workers, etc. "We began painting 'skins' – which are large pieces of wood that are later at-

tached to large metal frames, over winter break," said Tickets and Reservations chair Lori Edelstone. "We held work parties at the school to paint and build on most weekends around February. A lot of preliminary prep work was done at the school and stored in bins by the football field."
As graduation approached, parents worked tirelessly, often from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., to set up everything by the week before Grad Night, Edelstone said.
The gym had five rooms that included a casino, arts and crafts, photography, a mail room, and a beauty parlor. The quad had several different activities including: an inflatable bucking bronco, jousting, arcade games, fire pits, a DJ, and ping pong. Just to the side of the gym was a memory board room where parents/students put together individual memory boards for each student.
The multi use room was used at first for three shifts of dinner; the tables comprised a circus ring where performers from a circus group entertained the grads while they ate. Later the room was used for performances by a hypnotist and come-

dian. "We also had a flying trapeze outside for the kids to try out," Edelstone added. "That was a big hit."
Of the class of 303, 297 participated.

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Eight New Eagle Scouts in Troop 246

Submitted by Nancy Ingersoll



front row: Matthew Lenhart, Daniel Ingersoll; middle row: Gregory Angelides, Stephen Gessling, and Kevin Condie; back row: Michael DeChenne, Aric Morton, and Coleman Williams

Boy Scout Troop 246 of Moraga is pleased to announce the advancement of eight young men to Eagle Scout. Only about 5 percent of all boy scouts in America earn the rank of Eagle Scout and this troop is celebrating its third consecutive year with eight Scouts being honored at the troop's annual Eagle Court of Honor.

The following is a summary of their Eagle Scout Projects:

Gregory Angelides

A Campolindo senior, Greg led a team of volunteers that spent 130 hours cleaning up the area behind the community center of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Ascension in Oakland. The team refurbished 54 chairs, saving the church \$3000 in replacement costs, recycled 90 metal chair frames, and moved and reused 15 large barrels of decorative rocks weighing 800 pounds each.

Kevin Condie

Kevin, also a Campolindo senior, built benches for a garden area at Cambridge Elementary School in Concord. The bulk of the material for his project was donated by Sierra Point Lumber in Brisbane, Calif.

Michael DeChenne

Michael's Eagle project took place at St. Monica's Catholic Church in Moraga, where he led a team of nine scouts and adult helpers in building a new fence and gate, and cleared weeds and prepared soil for planting. The new fence is 24 feet in length, and was constructed completely from scratch with donated materials and equipment over a three day period. The project included over 170 man hours to complete.

Stephen Gessling

For his eagle project, Stephen (a Campo senior) renovated the access trail between the Campolindo neighborhood and the Lafayette reservoir. He removed overgrown brush and weeds, installed recycled plastic timbers to create landings, and put down a layer of crushed gravel. Donations were made by Mr. Snyder of Ace Hardware in Moraga, Lowe's, Diamond K of Lafayette, Campolindo Homeowner's Association and Mrs. Deb DeTrane, who suggested the project.

Daniel Ingersoll

A freshman at Campolindo, Daniel refurbished two large benches at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. The wood was splintering,

the paint was peeling, and some of the posts were rotting away. This required replacing most of the wood, sanding, staining, and waterproofing the whole thing. Nearly 100 hours were spent on this project.

Matthew Lenhart

Campo senior Matthew Lenhart built planter boxes for the kindergarten class as Cambridge Elementary School in Concord. The boxes will be used for the school's life science programs as well as to beautify the school grounds.

Aric Morton

Aric's Eagle project benefited St. Monica Catholic Church and its parishioners by refurbishing two atriums and other planting areas. Morton invested 198 hours to remove dying plants and old tree roots, install new irrigation and replant the areas with 50 plants.

Coleman Williams

Campo senior Cole cleaned up and restored a creekside area at Rheem Elementary School. He also built and installed benches and a sign identifying the creek. The area will be used by teachers at Rheem to teach students about the watershed. The Moraga Kiwanis provided funding for the project materials.

Gold Award Recipients Receive Town of Moraga Proclamation

Submitted by Jennifer Gerst



(left to right): Ken Chew, Jillian Hughes, Howard Harpham, Emily Gerst, Sarah DeMatteo, Dave Trotter, Amy Stagg, Mike Metcalf and Karen Mendonka

At their meeting on May 27, Moraga Mayor Dave Trotter along with the other Moraga Town Council members issued a proclamation dedicating that day to honor four young women who have achieved their Girl Scout Gold Award. Girl Scout Troop 30189 members Sarah DeMatteo, Emily Gerst, Jillian Hughes, and Amy Stagg earned

Girl Scout's highest award by completing service projects to benefit the community. The Gold Award represents the culmination of many hours of leadership, organization, networking and fulfillment of rigorous requirements from the Girl Scout organization. All of the recipients are recent graduates of Campolindo High School.

Score Choice and What You Should Know About It

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

Since everyone is enjoying a break from homework, car pools, and after school activities, now is the perfect time to learn more about college admissions in a less hectic environment. One of the more difficult choices students have to face when they apply to college is whether to use the CollegeBoard's new Score Choice option. Score Choice offers students the opportunity to decide what test scores to send to schools. Score choice is a much debated subject as well as an issue of some complexity; my goal in this article is to try to put things in perspective for students and their families.

In June 2008 CollegeBoard introduced Score Choice. Prior to this announcement, when a student took any SAT exam, the results became part of the student's official testing record. When a student requested test scores be sent to colleges, CollegeBoard complied by sending all scores from each test date. Since the advent of Score Choice, the college admissions world has debated the policy from every imaginable angle. Critics of the policy maintain that it favors wealthier students who can afford costly test preparation and multiple testing sessions to try and boost their scores. They argue that affluent students have an unfair advantage over students who are unable to afford coaching and repeated test administration fees. On the other side supporters insist that Score Choice was designed to reduce student stress by giving the option to choose what SAT scores to send to colleges. They point to free or low cost test prep options that would serve to level the playing field for all students regardless of family income. Still other commentators wonder what all the fuss is. After all, CollegeBoard gives students the option of what SAT scores to send to colleges, and colleges set their

own admissions criteria as they always have done. So what's the problem?

Here's the problem. It is true that colleges determine their own admissions requirements. And that fact has not changed because CollegeBoard introduced Score Choice. However, since Score Choice was implemented, institutions across the nation have been driven to clarify their policies with respect to it. For example, Yale, Stanford, Cornell, Pomona, University of Southern California and University of Pennsylvania have stated that they will continue to require applicants to send all scores from each testing date. Harvard and University of Chicago say students can decide to send their highest scores from any single sitting. Meanwhile, Colby College and Williams say Score Choice is irrelevant because they already cherry-pick the highest individual math, critical reading and writing scores from each student's test sessions—this being the most lenient policy of all. These colleges express the legitimate concern that students may inadvertently suppress scores that could be beneficial to their application; Score Choice does not permit students to select individual section scores.

Is this all confusing? Indeed it is, and unnecessarily so. The already complex admissions process is certain to become more stressful than ever if students get caught up in this latest admissions frenzy. What students need to understand is fairly simple. Students typically finalize the list of schools they plan to apply to in the fall of their senior year. By then most students have taken the SAT and/or the ACT at least once. As students check the application requirements of the colleges they plan to apply to, they learn what these schools want to see in terms of scores. Since you are ethically bound to comply with all

of a school's admissions requirements, the illusion of score choice fades, as colleges assert their rights to see whatever scores they wish to use to evaluate applicants. If you use Score Choice, it will be your responsibility to pay strict attention to each college's policy in order to know what to send and when. Problems could result due to misinterpretation of policy, gaps in applications and even missed deadlines as you wait for the latest round of test score results.

My advice to students is to steer clear of Score Choice and send your schools all your scores. Prepare well for standardized testing by using practice tests to gain confidence and improve your scores. There are many books available with practice tests (Check out CollegeBoard's The Official Guide to the SAT). Take advantage of free on-line programs (visit www.number2.com). As soon as you have acceptable results, put standardized testing behind you, relax, and move on to the next step in the college admissions process. Remember, the majority of the nation's schools accept the majority of applicants. Colleges and universities want to accept you, so prepare as best you can and don't lose sleep over standardized testing.

Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is an independent college admissions advisor located in Lafayette, California. Her goal is to help students and their families understand the college admissions process, research college and career options, create a college list and prepare a strong, organized and cohesive application. Dr. LaScala is a member of NACAC, WACAC, and HECA and earned a certification in College Admissions and Career Planning from University of California at Berkeley. Contact her at (925) 891-4491 or elizabeth@doingcollege.com.

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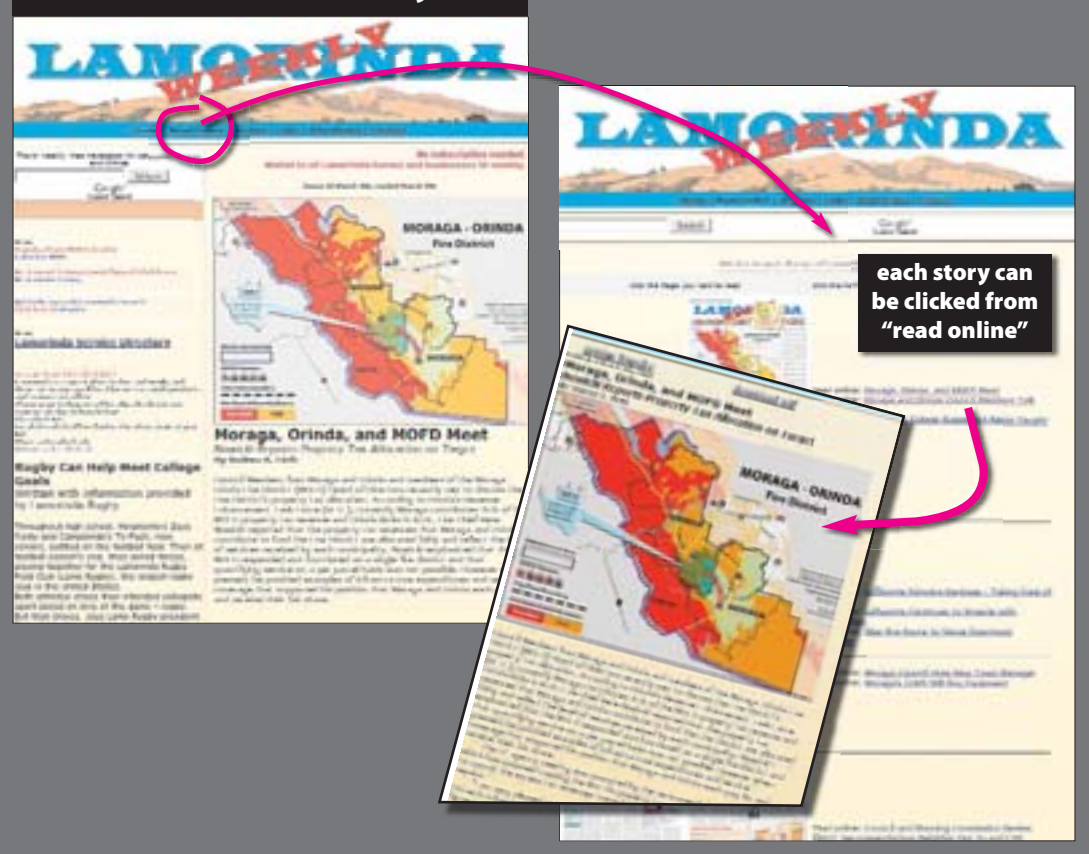
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Photos Cynthia Brian

Over the past weekend, my college friend, a CEO of an international company and self-described city slicker, arrived for a visit. “What would you like to drink?” I asked, expecting she’d want a glass of chardonnay. “Can you make a mojito?” she replied. Thanks to a bottle of rum from my recent lecture tour in the Caribbean, plus mint and limes from the orchard, I created my first Cuban tonic. “What’s on the menu?” she hungrily inquired. “Whatever is ripe!” I retorted as we grabbed a basket and headed to the vegetable garden. She told me she felt like a kid in a candy store as she picked fresh artichokes, lettuce, arugula, fennel, onions, Swiss chard, sorrel, strawberries, loquats, and a variety of savory herbs. On the way up the hill to the barnyard to gather the eggs, we stood under the mulberry tree plucking and devouring ripe red luscious mulberries as a family of deer and a dozen doves competed with us for the juicy fruit. On

the way down the hill, we picked tangelos, Meyer lemons, tangerines, wild strawberries, and plums to add to our feast. “What a treat!” she exclaimed as we swung in the hammocks after our culinary experience. “I never knew fruits and vegetables could taste so terrific. I want your recipes,” my high profile friend commented. Since I don’t use recipes but just cook what’s fresh using herbs and spices that complement the food, I told her she’d have to wait until I had time to figure it out. She may be waiting awhile.

A few generations ago, most households boasted a kitchen garden to supply the family with food. These days, gardening is more a hobby than a necessity. Yet, who can argue the delicious flavor and bountiful nutrition you’ll enjoy by picking a tomato from the vine, snapping a few peas, and popping them all in your mouth accompanied by tangy basil leaves? Whether you live in a high rise, a

city cottage, or in the country, you have the capability of carving out a little space for living green. Hopefully you planted your favorite vegetables and herbs and are now creating your menus around what is ready to harvest each day. Squash, peppers, beans, beets, lettuces, cucumbers, kale, eggplants, tomatoes, carrots, and all the herbs will be vying for your attention. Get creative, eat fresh, and feel the energy of organic. Food straight from the source is not only good for you, it makes you feel good, too!

When it comes to flowers, our gardens are a kaleidoscope of color. The common petunia, daylily, and prized roses are in continuous bloom. Make sure to dead-head as flowers wither to encourage re-blooming and maintain color all season. July is not a time to be planting because of the heat, unless you have unlimited water, and time to monitor the transition. Keep in mind that the rabbits, deer, gophers, voles, and moles are hungriest now

so you’ll want to be watchful for these feasting predators. Birds, bees, and butterflies are friends to our gardens, providing pollination. You’ll want to provide shallow watering dishes for cool dips and plenty of plants that provide food and shelter to keep attracting these flying allies. Butterflies specifically enjoy the buddleia species (hence the nickname “Butterfly Bush”) and bees buzz to aptenia cordifolia (red apple plant). Hummingbirds seek the sweet nectar from brightly colored tubular flowers such as fuchsia, columbine, penstemon, delphinium, salvias, lavender, and trumpet vines.

It’s summer and that means it’s time to enjoy the sunshine, relax with family and friends, and take life a bit slower. Fire up the barbecue, set a pretty outdoor table with bouquets from the yard, and scour your potager for supper. Pick your apricots, plums, and peaches for a scrumptious cobbler dessert. Don’t forget to make a glass of freshly squeezed lemonade, sit on the porch swing, and watch the sizzling sunset, as is my daily ritual. The light at the end of the day is soft and warm and we are reminded that even gardeners need a rest.

Hoist your American flag, be proud to be an American, and celebrate another day of independence. Happy July!



Petunias and Allysum

Photo Cynthia Brian

Cynthia’s Digging Deep Garden Guide for July

“What I enjoy is not the fruits alone, but I also enjoy the soil itself, its nature and its power.” Cicero

It’s hot, hot, hot and that means that our gardens are as thirsty as we are. Summer demands that we pay attention to the needs of our plants. Just as we protect our skin with sunscreen, be aware that many of our precious plants may need to be shaded or given more water. When planning a vacation, don’t forget to prepare your garden for your absence. Just because it’s summer and the living is easy, we still have chores in the backyard. Sharpen your tools and spend some time digging deep.

- MOW lawns at least once a week to maintain their health and keep lawn mower blades sharpened.
- MAINTAIN weed control by pulling young sprouts and composting.
- WATER when the soil is dry.
- CHECK sprinkler systems to make certain you are not over or under watering.
- EMPTY any standing water in your gutters, or other containers to keep mosquitoes from breeding. Add a couple of drops of bleach to bird baths or change the water frequently.
- CUT back snapdragons, petunias, and summer annuals for a second grand August display.
- DEADHEAD roses for continuous blooms.
- FERTILIZE container plantings with nitrogen for greener displays.
- MULCH with three inches of inert materials to retain moisture and keep plant roots cool.
- DISPLAY cut flowers from your garden. There is nothing more beautiful than an original bouquet straight from the yard.
- BEWARE of ticks. Always wash your body, hair, and your clothing after gardening. Take a good look in the mirror to make sure those pesky critters haven’t attached themselves to you. Even after taking every precaution, I’ve had more ticks surgically removed than I care to share.
- HARVEST your fruits. When fruit falls, never let it stay on the ground or brown rot fungus will spread to ripening fruit.
- REAP your produce from your vegetable garden and design dinner.
- SIT back with your lemonade to leisurely enjoy your July garden.

Life is beautiful!

Happy Gardening to You!

Cynthia Brian
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Cynthia Brian Photo Norbert

SAVE THE DATE for Sept. 13, 2009 from 4-9pm for the BOOKS AND BANDS BASH with Dancing Under the Stars benefiting Be the Star You Are! charity. This is the launch party for Cynthia’s newest book, Be the Star You Are! for TEENS. Many local teens are being published. All tickets sold in advance via PAYPAL, check, or credit card. Tickets only \$13 for the event; \$27 for a book and the ticket; \$20 for book only. Visit www.bethestaryouare.org to order today.

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Not to be missed

Walnut Creek. The course is challenging and offers steep climbs, descents and creek crossings. Website: www.savemountdiablo.org for more information or to register.

Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center annual Open House Celebration, 60 Don Gabriel Way, Orinda, Sunday, June 28: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. See riding demonstrations, meet our horses, and join us for hot dogs and lemonade. Student demonstrations will be held at 11:30, 12:30 and 1:30. Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides horseback riding lessons to children with mental and physical disabilities in a safe and secure environment. For more information: www.xenophontrc.org.

Saturday, July 11th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. drop by the Peace Corps Information Table at the Orinda Farmers' Market. Meet a recruiter and pick up information about serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in one of 76 countries. For more information: 510.452.8444 or www.peacecorps.gov.

Save Mount Diablo Hike for experienced hikers only Saturday, July 18, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm. Mt. Olympia is one of the park's prime destinations, a rugged outcrop with fantastic views of dizzying canyons. There are many things to attract your attention on the way - wildflowers well into summer, grotesquely eroded rock formations reminiscent of the American Southwest, the sequence of gradually expanding views. Approximately 9 miles, with a 2500 foot elevation gain. Co-sponsored by MDIA. Rain cancels. Bring: Trekking poles, fluids, lunch/snack, layers, sunscreen. Fee: None. Leader: Helene Crowley, (415) 974-2209, or crowh_8558@yahoo.com. Meet: 9 am at the end of Regency Dr. off Marsh Creek Rd, Clayton.

Rose Care workshop, Saturday, July 11, 10:00am McDonnell Nursery, 196 Moraga Way in Orinda. Please call 925-254-3713 or email info@mcdonnellnursery.com to reserve a seat.

2009 Rides to Defeat ALS with Matt Chaney-Central Coast Century (July 18, 2009) and the Napa Ride to Defeat ALS (September 19, 2009). You are cordially invited to join us at either

ride for a fun filled day of cycling, scenery, food and drink and an overall "Feel Good" day! To become a Hot Dawg team member or to just donate please email mdchaney2@comcast.net. ALSA is the only national organization that devotes 100% of its effort and resources to ALS research AND patient and family services.

Host Families Needed For Foreign Exchange Students. The Center for Cultural Interchange (CCI) invites you and your family to become a volunteer host family for a foreign exchange student. CCI provides over 1000 exchange students annually, the rare opportunity to live with American families across the U.S., from few weeks in the summer, up to a 10 month Academic High School year. Students are currently being placed for summer and the fall academic year. Students come with spending money, health insurance and the desire to participate in our American culture! Contact Laurie Dunn, Area Representative, for more information: 925-788-8566.

Salsa Dance classes in Orinda. No partner required, and no experience necessary. Drop-in, or take a series. Orinda - Mondays. Beginning 7:00-8:30, Intermediate 8:00-9:30 7-week series: June 15 - July 27. \$80 single, \$145 couple (non-resident \$88/single, \$160/couple) Drop-in: \$15, Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. To register, or for more information, call 415-505-3536 or 925-254-2445. Get a FREE class coupon at: www.SalsawithTomaj.com.

POLITICAL GATHERINGS

Love Your Enemies: Transforming Us vs. Them Thinking on Monday, June 29, 7:00 PM at Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. Speaker: Father Louis Vitale, a recent Peace Award Winner of Pax Christi and a retired Air Force Officer who served in the Korean War. Cost: \$15 general, \$5 students with current ID. Also please bring donations of non-perishable food items or large size disposable diapers for Monument Crisis Center will be accepted. Co-sponsors: The Social Action Committee of the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church. Wheel chair accessible

INDEPENDENCE DAY



4th of July in Moraga:

7:00 a.m. - Late registration Fun Run- runners meet at the Montessori School in the Moraga Center.
8:00 - 10:00* AM Pancake Breakfast \$5 (*or when food runs out! Hosted by MYIC)
8:00 a.m. - Kiddies' Runs - Free pancake breakfast for all 5 mile and 2 mile runners.
8:30 a.m. - 5 mile run and 2 mile run/walk
9:00 a.m. - Dog parade
9:00 a.m.- 1 p.m. - Car show
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. - Jumpies
10:30 a.m. - Kids' bike parade
11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. - Old-fashion games for youth
11:00 a.m. -9 p.m. - Food booth open
6:45 p.m. - Amanda McDowell sings the National Anthem
6:50 p.m. - Mayor's welcome
7:00-9:30 p.m. - Music by Larry Lynch and the Mob;
9:30 pm - fireworks

4th of July in Orinda:

7:00-10:00 am, Pancake Breakfast, Orinda Community Center.
8:00 am-9:00 am, 5k Fun Run & Haley's Run For a Reason, starts in front of Community Center.
10:00 am, National Anthem
10:00-11:30 am, Orinda Parade
11:30 am-1:30 pm, Park Activities, food, music, games, Mini Classic Car Show
12:30 pm preview the 2009 Orinda Idol Finalists at the bandstand.

Please submit:

Events: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

Stories: storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Letters: letters@lamorindaweekly.com

Opinion: letters@lamorindaweekly.com

EFO Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Submitted by Catherine Soso

Please join the many citizens who are involved with and support the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO), as we honor its 30 years of dedication to education with our "Pearls of Wisdom" Benefit Celebration on Aug. 29 at the Orinda Country Club Pool. The kids will be back in school earlier in the week, so plan to gather for an ultimate Back-to-School-Night! No-host cocktails, buffet dinner, a couple of games and dancing to the 13-piece Bob Claire Orchestra will make for one hot August night! Enjoy an evening amongst friends, who make a difference for our children, and perhaps come away from the event with some new ones.

Event Details:
"PEARLS of WISDOM"
Saturday, Aug. 29
5:30 p.m. Poolside at the Orinda Country Club
\$55 per person, Online Ticket Purchase: www.orindaefo.org OR
Send check payable to EFO 30th: 21c Orinda Way #123, Orinda, CA 94563
Purchase tickets at the EFO Booth, after the July 4th Parade

To request more information, please contact Catherine Soso via e-mail: EFO_PEARLSofWISDOM@Yahoo.com

SmART Summer at the Hearst

Hike & Draw on Mt. Diablo
Sun, June 28, 10 am - 2 pm
with Sharon Walters, expert hiker, and Warren Dreher, landscape artist
contact hdonner@stmarys-ca.edu for details

California in Relief: A 100 Year History in Woodcut Prints
Sun., July 26, 2 pm panel discussion, Reception following
Panel discussion with art historian, gallery owner, artist and collector, moderated by curator Art Hazelwood

Bonhams and Butterfields Appraisal Clinic
What's in Your Attic?
Wed., Aug 12, 10 am - 3 pm
\$10 donation per item
Experts will evaluate your paintings, prints, furniture, jewelry, decorative objects, Asian art, and antiques

Teen Portrait & Figure Drawing Workshop
Aug 10 to 13, 1 to 4 pm
with Teresa Onoda, artist instructor
Contact hdonner@stmarys-ca.edu for details

Closing Friday, July 3 - 11 am - 4:30 pm
Sacred Mountain: Images of Mt. Diablo and Mt. Fuji
and William Keith: Mountains of Shadow and Light

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Orinda Aquatics Competes with Olympians

Santa Clara International Invitational Swim Meet hosts tournament

Submitted by Ann Smallwood



Rachael Cleak, 50 meter freestyle

Photo Robert Ashby

Orinda Aquatics (OA) did not have to travel far to compete against big names. The Santa Clara International Invitational Swim Meet, June 11-14, at the George F. Haines International Swim Center in Santa Clara is known to host the best of the best including Michael Phelps. Twenty OA swimmers qualified to swim in this four day event.

"It is amazing that we have high school age swimmers qualifying and competing in a National Grand Prix Meet with numerous Olympians, record holders and internationally known swimmers," commented Coach Don Heidary. "These are kids who live in our community and started in recreational programs."

Meet qualifiers from the

team included Rachael Cleak, Eva Erikson, Isa Guardalebene, Jill Jones, Shelbi Luchini, Caroline Lukins, Sam Swinton, Jordan Tominatsu, Andrea Ward, Courtney Whyte, Brooke Woodward, Shannon Harman, Robbie Ashby, Jeremy Chang, Chris Chuck, Tommy Dowley, Sean Haufler, Jeffrey Strausser, Steven Stumpf and Shane Turtass.

'Tis the Season

OCC outswims Miramonte as Lamorinda's swim season begins

By Guy Dotan



Photo Doug Kohen

With the completion of the school year the season of summer sports promptly begins, swimming prominent among them. The Orinda Moraga Pools Association (OMPA) is one of our local recreational swim leagues; currently nine swim clubs from Orinda and Moraga participate in the league. Wednesday, June 17th, featured a meet between the Orinda Country Club (OCC) and the Miramonte Swim Club hosted by Miramonte at Miramonte High School.

OCC dominated the meet, finishing first in almost every event. However, the boy's 11-12 100 yard individual medley was won by Dylan Fara. The lone competitor in the event from Miramonte finished first against three OCC swimmers. Fara finished with a time of 1:14:47, securing a gold time for county. Finishing second, third, and fourth and all within one second of each other

were Brian Haufler, Evan Pauletich, and Grayson Judge with times of 1:19:37, 1:19:44, and 1:19:75 respectively, all good enough for a silver time.

The term 'county' refers to the league tournament at the end of the year, in which all swimmers who achieved a gold time can participate. The gold, silver, and bronze standards are set each year and differ based on stroke, gender, and age level.

Charlie Wiser of OCC continued his success by finishing first in all three events in which he competed, boy's 13-14 50 yard breaststroke, backstroke, and butterfly. Wiser recorded gold in all three events sporting a 28:40 in breast, 28:03 in back, and 26:18 in fly. At the age of 14, Wiser has second fastest time for all age groups in the 50 freestyle with a 23:16.

In the girl's 15-18 age group, Lauren Bugglin of Miramonte took first in both the

freestyle and butterfly finishing with gold times of 25:35 and 27:17. While in breaststroke 15-year-old Megan Freeman of OCC took first with a silver time of 36:50 and Haley Honens of OCC took first in backstroke with a silver time of 32:50.

However, OMPA is more than just a competition to medal for county. The league is about developing skills for the future. "Our goal is to teach the kids life lessons through swimming. Learning to work hard and develop one's own ability is a talent within itself and is more important than individual race times. The numbers are more for the coaches to get an understanding of the swimmers' development" remarked Trevor Rose, head coach at Miramonte. "Seeing our last heat, farthest lane swimmer beat his time by two seconds is just as meaningful as seeing one of our swimmers make county."

Send sports stories and ideas to:
sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Saint Mary's Baseball Player Recognized

Troy Channing receives fourth straight All-American selection

Written with information provided by Rich Davi



Troy Channing

Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's baseball player Troy Channing has only just completed his freshman season but his stellar performance in the West Coast Conference (WCC) has garnered much recognition.

Channing completed the WCC as the triple-crown leader, topping the conference charts with 20 homeruns, 75 RBI and a .379 average. Not only is Channing the first player

in Saint Mary's history to win the WCC triple-crown, he is only the third player to do so in the conference since 1985. The 20 homeruns and 75 RBI are also Saint Mary's single season records.

These top numbers have earned Channing a multiple of awards. He was recently named to the 2009 Pro-Line Athletic/NCBWA Freshman All-American Team, the Louisville

Sluggish Freshman All-American Team and the All-Ping Freshman Team. He was also one of 16 players named a semi-finalist to the Dick Howser Trophy.

On June 12 Channing was again honored as he was named Second Team All-American by Baseball America.

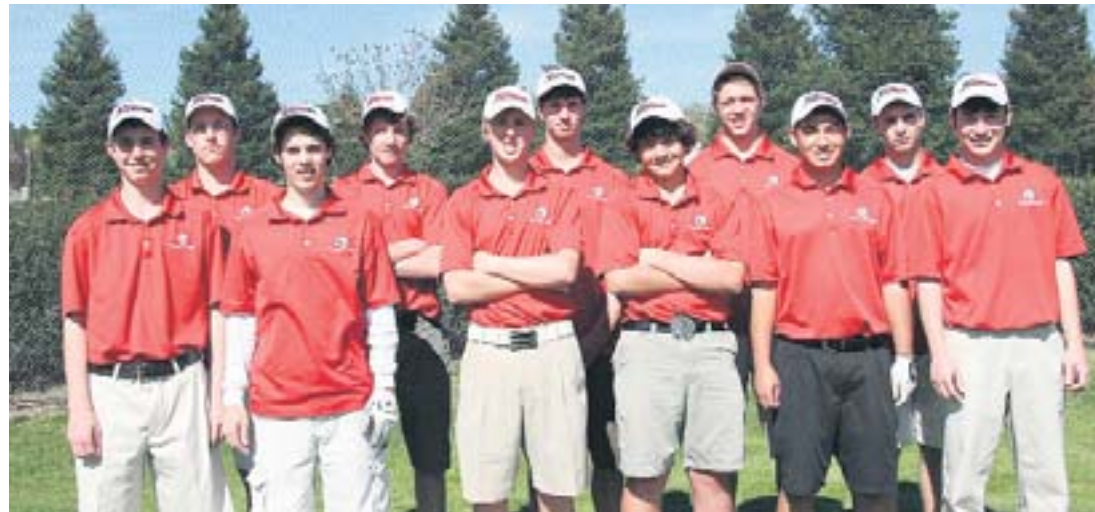
C. Graveson

Four Gaels Drafted by the Big League

The Major League Baseball (MLB) draft proved to be exciting for the Saint Mary's baseball team as four of their players were chosen. Three juniors and one senior were selected on the second day of the First-Year Player Draft. Junior outfielder Kyle Jensen was taken in the 12th round, number 368 overall, by the Florida Marlins. Junior first baseman Anthony Aliotti will be staying close. He was selected in the 15th round, number 453 overall, the Oakland Athletics. Junior pitcher Scott Schneider was taken in the 20th round by the St. Louis Cardinals with the 609th overall pick. Senior pitcher Brian Justice was chosen in the 27th round as the 820th overall pick by the Toronto Blue Jays. Head coach Jedd Soto had nothing but positive things to say about his players. Under Soto Saint Mary's has had 13 players drafted in six years.

Campolindo Golf Team Helps Community

Submitted by Jeff Wicker



Campolindo Golf Varsity Team

Photo provided

The Campolindo High School boys' golf team is holding a used golf equipment drive this Saturday, June 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Moraga Country Club in the parking lot next to the public putting green. Any clubs or bags are welcome and the donations are tax deductible. The collected gear will be

donated to First Tee of Contra Costa. First Tee is a national organization that distributes donated golf equipment to underprivileged kids.

For more information or questions please contact Camden Wicker (925) 376-4632.

LMYA Team Records Undefeated Season Oregon Ducks average 24 runs per game

Submitted by Fia Parker



Photo Caption: Back row, left to right: Coach Fia Parker, Savannah Mone, Molly Longchamps, Annie Roullier, Lexi Fraser, Kailey Meyer, Haley Pinella, Coach Flora Pinella

Front row, left to right: Nicole Edwards, Cate Hamalian, Isabel Elings, Nell Kessenich, Nicole Kessenich, Ashley Thoms

Photo provided

As the Lafayette-Moraga Youth Association softball season came to an end, one team in particular had a lot to be proud of. The Oregon Ducks recorded an undefeated season. The combination of second and third grade girls from Burton Valley Elementary School was coached by Fia Parker and Flora Pinella.

The Ducks closed out the regular season on June 6 with a de-

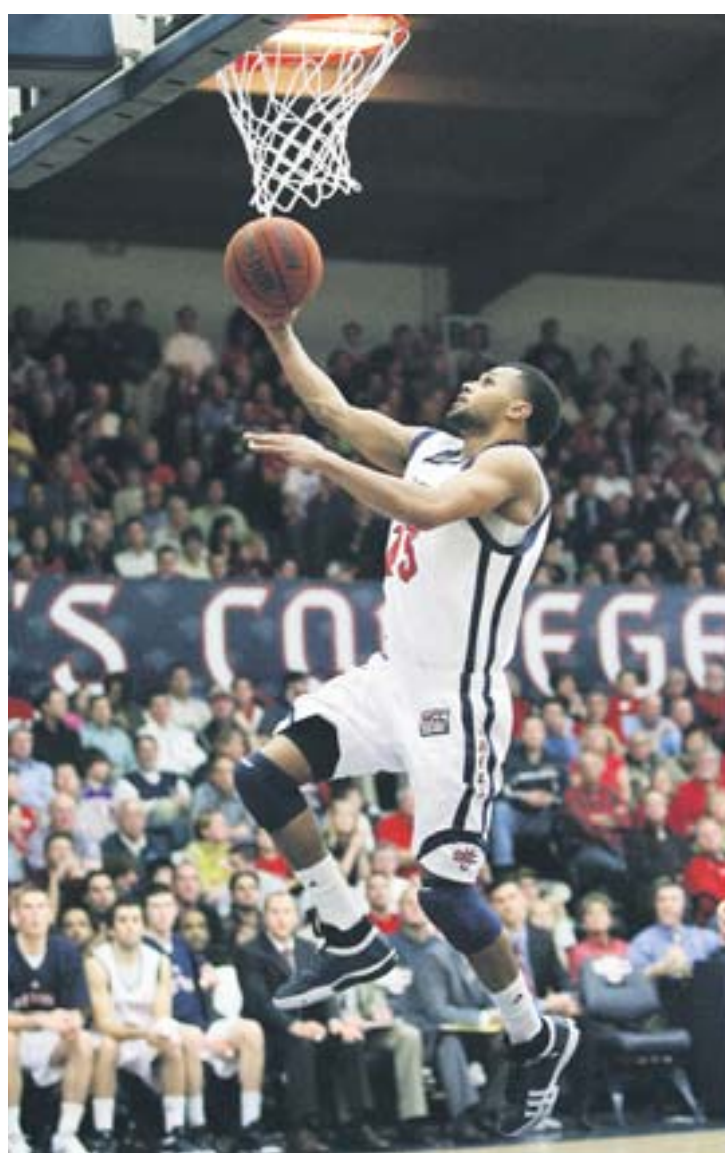
cisive 25-19 win over the Washington Huskies. The victory reflected their dominant season as the Ducks averaged 24 runs per game. In one game the team recorded a triple play and two double plays. The strong offensive team was not lacking on the defensive end as they managed to hold opponents to an average of nine runs per game.

"This was a very special group of girls, and they were able

to experience a magical season together. They worked hard during every practice and played hard during every game. The parental support was incredible, and all of the girls had a lot fun playing together. They were truly a pleasure to coach and it was wonderful to watch how much they challenged and supported each other throughout the season," said head coach Fia Parker.

Saint Mary's Player Enters NBA Draft

Patrick Mills forgoes final two years



Patrick Mills last January

Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's sophomore guard Patrick Mills has officially declared for the National Basketball Association (NBA) draft. Although he entered months ago he has formally announced he will forgo his final two seasons to play professionally. Mills has led the Gaels squad to both a NCAA tournament first round appearance and their first ever National Invitational Tournament (NIT) appearance. He has broken numerous Saint Mary's records. The NBA draft will be held at Madison Square Garden on June 25. ESPN will cover the event beginning at 4 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.

C. Graveson

Send sports stories and ideas to:

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or call 925-377-0977

Lamorinda Weekly is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda, CA

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Little League Teams Battle for Championship

Submitted by Todd Bequette



The Angels celebrate their victory

Photo Andi Kohen

Majors Division, Championship Angels 3 Dodgers 1

The Angels pitchers continued their post season dominance as they gave up only 2 hits and struck out 13 to earn the right to represent Lafayette Little League in the District 4 Tournament of Champions. The Angels jumped out to a 2-0 lead on a single by Tommy Nimura, a double by Max Flower and a two-out double to the fence by Brian Stone. The Dodgers battled back in the fourth, as Jared Finney led off the inning with a single, and Jack Eisner drove him in with a double to right. The Halos got the run back in the bottom of the inning, as Flower singled and then stole 2 bases while Doug Nimura battled through a 12-pitch at bat. Bryan Stone then hit a shallow foul pop fly to left. Greg Genovese raced in and made a sparkling sliding catch, but the speedy Flower scampered home with the final run of the game. Fireballing lefty Grant Young closed out the Dodgers with two innings of hitless relief.

and another RBI single by O'Donnell, but fell just short. The Sox were led on the mound by Matt Clark, Gareth Kwok, Nathan

Tarkoff, and Robby Rowell, while Brian Merken, Will Rembac, Nick Price and Ryan Regan starred on the hill for the Angels.



Photo Andi Kohen

AAA Division, Championship Redsox 4 Angels 3

The AAA Championship series saw the Angels, who had battled through the loser's bracket, take game one, but finally succumb to the Redsox in a nail biter at Buckeye. The Angels opened the scoring in the first on a single by Jules O'Donnell, but the Redsox answered in the second, plating three on doubles by Jerry Liu and Nathan Tarkoff, then adding another in the 5th on an RBI double by Robby Rowell. The Angels battled back with runs in the fifth and sixth on hits by Michael Green, Chase Wheeler

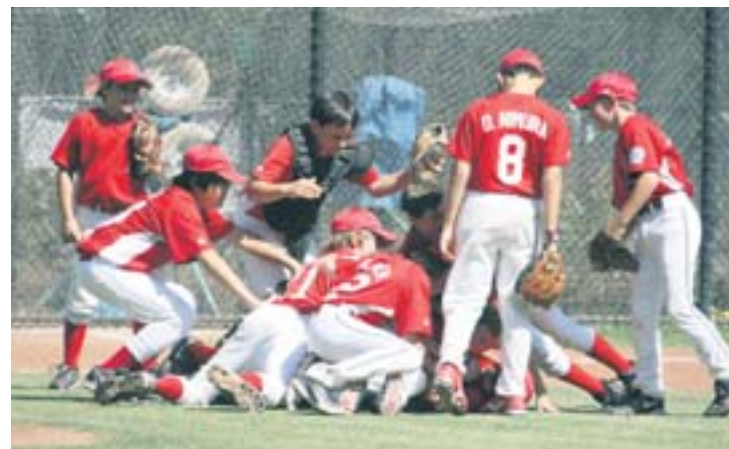


Photo Andi Kohen

Lafayette Little League Angels Win 1st Round at Tournament of Champions


Submitted by Todd Bequette

District 4 Tournament of Champions, Majors Division Lafayette Angels 12 North Oakland Tigers 4

The Angels represented Lafayette Little League well in their first round of the Tournament of Champions. Playing on their home field, the Halos gave the Tigers, champions of North Oakland Little League, a taste of what their Lafayette opponents had

been dealing with all year. The Angels jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the first on singles by Tommy Nimura and Grant Young, only to see the Tigers tie it in the bottom of the inning. The Angels added another in the fourth on a double and eventual steal of home by Max Flower, then extended their lead in the 5th with two unearned runs by the hustling Sean Heiskell and Josh Goodell. The

momentum turned briefly in the fifth, as North Oakland tied it with three in the bottom of the inning, but the Angels broke it open in the sixth. Five straight walks, followed by hits by Andrew McKendell, Grant Young, Flower and Doug Nimura keyed the big inning. Angel hurlers Doug Nimura, Jack Stryker, Max Flower and Cole Gallagher allowed only six hits while walking two.




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Moraga in the Majors

Campolindo graduate playing for Chicago White Sox

By Mikaela Cowles



Aaron Poreda was all smiles at spring training

Photo provided

Moraga's own Aaron Poreda made his Major League Baseball (MLB) debut for the Chicago White Sox on June 12. The 2004 Campolindo High graduate and Diablo Foothill Athletic League's Most Valuable Player was star struck as he emerged from the dugout about three hours before the Sox's faced off against the Tigers. "I can't believe it. I'm living the dream," Poreda said with a smile.

With each advancement of an athlete's career, the pyramid narrows around them and the reality of falling off the steep slope becomes greater. Signing with the University of San Francisco, Poreda began

to face better talent, yet he still posted an impressive sub 3.00 ERA in all three seasons he spent with the Dons.

In 2007, at the end of the Poreda's junior season, he entered the MLB draft. The Chicago White Sox's drafted him in the first round as the 25th pick, and he became the second player in Campolindo High School history to play professional baseball.

In making the jump to the minor leagues at 20 years old, many athletes experience a decline in their performance. Poreda was up to the challenge. He earned a 4-0 record with a 1.17 ERA in his rookie sea-

son while walking only 10.

Moving between high A-ball and AA Birmingham, he posted a 2.69 ERA in 201 innings for the duration of the minor league season.

Poreda continually pitched a fastball in the 90 mph range during 2009 Spring Training, making the lefty one of the White Sox's top prospects. However, still in need of work on his slider and change-up, he began the season in the minors. Poreda's hard work improved his off speed pitches. With this addition to his arsenal, he became a powerful threat.

When Bartolo Colon was put on injured reserve, Poreda had his chance. White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen made it clear this wasn't just a development trip. "You're going to be treated the same way as everyone else," Guillen told Poreda, "If you don't do the job, we have Southwest Airlines waiting for you to go to Charlotte."

Poreda was a successful starter in the Minors, but was happy to fill a bullpen role for the White Sox. "We're just trying to win games," Poreda said, "so I'm doing whatever the White Sox want me to do." Poreda did just that against the Minnesota Twins, as he came on in the seventh inning, striking out the first batter he faced with four fastballs. Poreda threw two and one-third innings, striking out three and giving up one hit before he was pulled.

With his strong debut, Lamorinda can expect Poreda's success to continue as we follow him through the rest of the season.



Aaron with his parents Barbara Anderman and John Poreda at his graduation from Campo in 2004

Photo Nelson Wilkerson

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