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Volume 03 Issue 12

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From left, Mayor Don Tatzin, Carol Federighi, Mike Anderson, Carl Anduri, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Russell and Vice Mayor Brandt Andersson. Photo Doug Kohlen

## Playtime for City Council at Unveiling

By Cathy Tyson

**LAMORINDA**  
WEEKLY

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Glenn Nosse's  
**STREET DAWG**  
see page 14

Beneath a dazzling blue sky, Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin dedicated a new high-tech playground at the south end of the Community Park, near the baseball fields. Supporters and the balance of the City Council were there to cheer him on. It's not every day you get to see the Mayor take an inaugural slide.

Clearly playgrounds have come a long way from the monkey bars of yesteryear. "Our objective was to create a playground with a unique identity that will draw kids out to play in Lafayette Community Park. This universally accessible playground is visually stimulating and offers different

types of challenges and experiences," said Karen McArdle, Landscape Architect of Lafayette-based Hansen McArdle Inc. "Climbing, sliding, cooperative and creative play activities are encouraged under, around and on the treehouse-like tot structure. A xylophone, gong and auditory surprises are incorporated. The tot play area has an attractive fabric shade canopy and is enclosed by a fence. Older kids are invited to experiment with movement and will be challenged by the climbing rock and a sculptural assemblage of dynamic equipment." ... continued on page 12

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## Camaraderie Cleans Up at OMPA Championships

Individuals Overwhelmed by Team Support

By Lou Fancher



Ranch fans cheer

Photo Jordan Fong

The nine teams competing in the Orinda Moraga Pool Association (OMPA) championship swim meet, held this year August 7-9 at Campolindo High School, know that winning doesn't happen in just three days. Winning is in the kids' camaraderie, inspiration comes from the coaches, dedication is supplied by the parents, and that is how champions are made for life, not just for water.

Even so, the 53rd annual OMPA, held August 7-9, offered no shortage of stellar accomplishments.

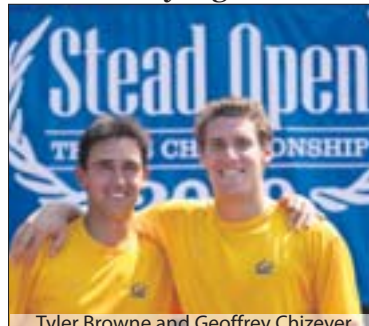
... continued on page 21

### Combined Team Scores Place Team Points

- 1 Orinda Country Club OCC 4,013
- 2 Sleepy Hollow Swim & Tennis SH 3,162 .50
- 3 Moraga Country Club MCC 2,752
- 4 Meadow Swim & Tennis Club MEAD 2,656 .50
- 5 Campolindo Cabana Club CCC 2,107
- 6 Moraga Ranch Swim Club MRSC 2,033
- 7 Moraga Valley Pool Swim Team MVP 1,918 .50
- 8 Orinda Park Pool Swim Team PARK 1,805
- 9 Miramonte Swim Club MIRA 1,276 .50

## Locals Rally Against Competition at Stead Open

By Guy Dotan



Tyler Browne and Geoffrey Chizever

For 26 years the Moraga Country Club (MCC) has hosted a tennis tournament and over that time the event has grown in prestige. The tournament began in 1983 with \$2000 in prize money. Three years later Stead Motors became the major sponsor and the prize money increased to \$25,000. With acknowledgement from major tennis magazines, the Stead Open... Read on page 23

## A Vision for Downtown Orinda



By Andrea A. Firth

"There could be some really exciting things going on in downtown Orinda," states Peter Hasselman, an architect and urban designer who has lived in Orinda for over thirty years. "You need a vision," adds his friend Bill Simpson, also a longtime resident and a local architect, ...

Read on page 4

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Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Monday, September 14	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, September 3 <i>August 20 cancelled</i>	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Tuesday, August 25	
Senior Services	3:00pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, August 27	
City of Lafayette:	
http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us	
Chamber of Commerce:	
http://www.lafayettechamber.org	

# Lafayette

# Lamorinda Community

# Lafayette



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## No Pot Sales in Lafayette ...at least for now.

**By Cathy Tyson**  
Lafayette adopted an ordinance extending the temporary moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries (MMD) for an additional ten months and fifteen days. The Moratorium established in late July of this year was set to expire on September 10, 2009; since the next Council meeting is slated for September 14, the brief gap was covered. Because this type of business would be the first of its kind, the City of Lafayette directed staff to study medical marijuana dispensaries. Although, "at this point we don't have any medical marijuana dispensary applications," said Assistant Planner Michael Cass. The planning services division will be looking at land use classification regulations. Police and the city attorney's office will continue to conduct research on possible negative impacts. Currently the "general retail sales activity" that could potentially cover a MMD classification covers a broad range of businesses. Obviously a MMD dispensary is not the same as a Yogurt Shack. In Contra Costa County only Martinez and Pinole have MMDs. Currently Oakland has four dispensaries. It's a brave new world since Proposition 215 passed in 1996 allowing a legal defense against marijuana charges for seriously ill patients smoking pot. Hearings for the landmark legislation legalizing the sale and use of marijuana in California, Assembly Bill 390, The Marijuana Control, Regulation and Education Act are tentatively scheduled for early next year.

## How the State Budget Cash Grab Affects Lafayette

**By Cathy Tyson**  
City Manager Steven Falk gave a packed house an earful on the impact of the state budget being balanced on the back of every city and town in the state at the August 10 City Council meeting. He spoke about the two separate resources that the state Legislature will be dipping into: a record \$2.05 billion from redevelopment agencies statewide over two years - \$1.7 billion for fiscal year 2009 - 2010 and \$350 million in 2010 - 2011; and \$1.9 billion will be "borrowed" from property tax revenues across the golden state. "The budget deal amounts to nothing less than an unwanted and aggressive molestation of California's already-suffering cities," said Mayor Don Tatzin and Falk in a statement. What that means for Lafayette is a loss of \$480,000 in property tax proceeds which is "the equivalent of half the general fund contribution to the road repair program," said Falk. This type of grab can only happen twice every ten years according to Proposition 1A, which voters passed overwhelmingly just five years ago and requires repayment with interest within three years. "Luckily we've been prudent and have money in the bank," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson. Early on in the budgeting process, anticipating this kind of cash grab, she allocated \$540,000 for the state take-away. Believe it or not the City is actually \$60,000 ahead on this front, thanks to conservative budgeting. It's expected the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency will lose \$1.1 million for fiscal year 2009 - 2010. To put this in perspective, "that's about 50% of what the RDA receives every year," said

**A Red-Eye Disturbance 7/26/09** - Lafayette Police responded to a report of a disturbance in Village Center. When they arrived, they found two male subjects engaged in an altercation. Neither party wanted to report being a victim of battery and neither had any visible signs of injury or trauma. Police noted one subject had a strong odor of alcohol on his breath and red, watery eyes. After the subject admitted to drinking a "few" bottles of wine, Police ran a background check and discovered he was on probation that prohibited him from consuming alcohol. He was arrested on a probation violation and transported and booked at the Martinez Detention Facility.

**Grand Theft 7/29/09** - An alert, concerned and anonymous Marlene Drive citizen made a late-night call to Police to report a loud noise coming from the street. When Police arrived, they discovered a Jeep with open doors and a smashed rear window. Police contacted the owner of the vehicle who reported several items were missing. Digital photos of an unknown subject matter were among the missing items. There are no leads or witnesses.

**The Vandalism of the Door 7/31/09** - Lafayette Police were called to an apartment building on East Street after a resident telephoned the landlord about a loud noise coming from the storage room. An unknown subject had kicked in the door of the empty storage room and made away with nothing. Cost to replace the door is \$300.

**Cell Phone Harassment 8/2/09** - A Lafayette citizen called Police to report an unknown subject had been calling his cell phone for two weeks leaving annoying messages. On the morning of the day of the report, the victim had received 17 phone calls. Messages included "You're gonna find out that everyone hates you" and "I'm your gay lover; let's go for a run." The victim believes the calls may be linked to an Orinda incident that he has voiced a strong opinion about. The harassing calls began shortly after he went public with his opinion. The victim reported being afraid for his safety and was advised to change his cell number.

Robinson. "If Sacramento sees this as a revenue stream there is nothing to keep them from coming back next year."

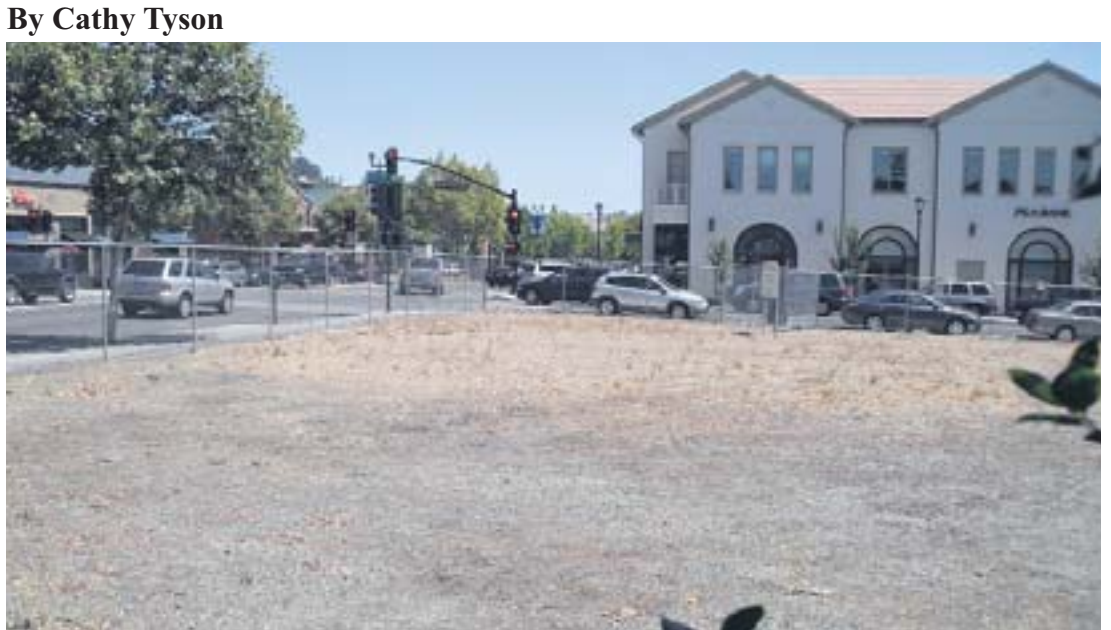
"Loss of Redevelopment funds will have profound affect on the library," said Falk, explaining that now the city will have to take out a bigger loan than originally planned to complete the project.

As part of the City Council meeting, State Senator Mark DeSaulnier and Assemblymember Nancy Skinner were invited to explain their "yes" votes for these cash grabs of Redevelopment and property tax funds. Both voted yes on taking Redevelopment funds, but only Skinner voted yes on borrowing \$1.9 billion in property taxes.

"It's obviously not a good situation," said DeSaulnier referring to the difficult choices presented, "Schwarzenegger wanted to eliminate Cal Grants - among other things. We fought not to eliminate those." He joked that perhaps it was the masochist in him that brought him back for the second time in as many months to a Lafayette City Council meeting. Assemblymember Skinner was out of town, but sent a representative who said, "The state of California needs additional sources of revenue" and went on to explain Skinner's votes.

In the end DeSaulnier took his lumps and suggested there are better alternatives than taking money from cities, suggesting that California is 49th out of 50 states in the alcohol tax rate and 39th out of the 50 states in the cigarette tax rate. Those could be two possible revenue streams. Neither suggestion calmed an irate meeting attendee who said, "I am furious! This is ridiculous!"

## Potentially More Parking Downtown



Potential parking lot on Mt. Diablo Blvd. Photo Cathy Tyson

Those quarters deposited in parking meters can really add up. In the years since meters were installed in the early 1990's, all of the revenue generated from their use and other parking related sources has gone into a special fund to acquire off-street parking. Lockboxes near BART, the sale of parking permits at city lots, and dreaded parking tickets all contribute to this fund, now at \$2.5 million. The expectation is that this substantial sum could really add to the number of off-street parking spots available in the downtown core, a long term goal of the city.

The City is interested in land not only to build a parking lot, but potentially a parking structure, or possibly a public/private parking situation - over or under retail or office development. How do all those coins total enough to put a dent in the city's parking problem? Although it seems like they're everywhere, you'll find meters exclusively in the downtown area. The 230 meters collected \$123,000 last year, with parking tickets bringing in roughly twice that amount. Last year Parking Enforcement Officers wrote just shy of 8,000 parking tickets, according to Cathy Surges-Moscato, Community Services Officer. In looking at possible parcels, contenders had to not be too small or too big - over .45 acres, not too narrow, or too difficult to access. "Sufficiently

large to get at least a double row of parking, maybe a structure" said City Manager Steven Falk. Some possible locations are already vacant, for example at the corner of Mt. Diablo and Dewing, pictured above. One broker for the former Links appliance location already expressed an interest in selling to the City. Now it's clear where potential locations are, and what the overall budget is, the only thing needed are some takers of the City's offer. For parties willing to make a deal, the City is required by law to pay the fair market value of a property determined by an independent appraiser. Those interested have until September 30, 2009 to make contact with city staff. This could be a way out for struggling land owners and a huge relief down the road for drivers.

**Correction**, issue date 08/05/09: In "Library Hosts First Ever Chess Tournament," Farhad Azimzadeh was not a professor but rather a teaching fellow at Lamar University. Since 1988 he has been working for the California Environmental Protection Agency.

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# Moraga

# Lamorinda Community

Calendar	
Town Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Wednesday, September 9	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Moraga Library 1500 Saint Marys Rd	
Tuesday, September 8	
Design Review	7:30pm
Moraga Library 1500 Saint Marys Rd	
Monday, August 24	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, September 11	
Town of Moraga online: <a href="http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us">http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us</a>	
Chamber of Commerce: <a href="http://www.moragachamber.org">http://www.moragachamber.org</a>	



**Possession of Pot, 8/10/09** At about 10:30 p.m. Moraga officers were conducting a security check of Campolindo High School when they noticed a car in the Cabana Club parking lot. The driver voluntarily handed over a small amount of marijuana and was issued a citation for possession.

**Camping in Sanders Ranch, 8/09/09** Officers responded to a call from a Merrill Drive homeowner reporting observing an approximately 20-year-old male with a backpack in a field near his residence. The young man took off, but cops found several chairs, a large wooden table, and piles of empty beer cans, several tiki lamps and a half gallon of lamp fuel. Drunk people, dry hillside and tiki torches, not a great combination.

**Danger to Self, 8/03/09** Moraga police responded to a Larch Avenue home where an elderly female was attacking her social worker. Cops determined that she was a danger to others; subsequently she was taken to Contra Costa County Hospital for a 72 hour psychological hold to be evaluated by mental health professionals.

**D.U.I., 8/03/09** A Nissan Altima was stopped on Ascot Drive, officers noticed the smell of alcoholic beverages on the driver like a musky cologne. The driver was subject to a field sobriety test, which resulted in a .233 reading. That's almost three times the legal limit. A taxi would have been a better option.

## Moraga Town Staff Moving Back to the Hacienda

*How temporary will this move be?*

**By Sophie Braccini**

It was just a little note in the Parks and Recreation Department's new catalog, reading: "...the majority of Town staff to move their offices to 2100 Donald Drive," but it was enough to start a small uproar among residents concerned with the town's strategy regarding the Hacienda de las Flores (located at 2100 Donald Drive).

It is the general consensus that the beautiful historic building should become more of a community center, while town staff offices should be located at 329 Rheem Boulevard, an office building owned by the town that houses the Police Department.

"The objective is to have the Hacienda de las Flores be Mor-

aga's Community Center and the building at 329 Rheem be the Town Hall," confirms Town Manager Mike Segrest, "but to have 329 Rheem ready for all of our staff to move in, we need to retrofit the second floor and forfeit the \$52,000 that we presently get from renting some of that space. At this time, we cannot afford either." So Segrest decided to move the staff presently operating at 329 Rheem back to the Hacienda where they were previously located and where the Public Works and Parks and Recreation departments currently reside. "This is an interim move," said Segrest who hopes to be able to rent the space at 329 Rheem to increase the Town's income.

... continued on page 7

## Council and Committees on Vacation in August, but not the REC

**By Sophie Braccini**

The Town Council will not be meeting at all in August, and neither will the Traffic and Safety Advisory Committee; the Planning Commission met just once, on August 17. But some volunteers are using August to work even harder. The Revenue Enhancement Committee (REC) is being super-charged in August with three meetings instead of two.

The Committee, chaired by Dick Olsen, plans to give the Town Council a preliminary report in September and wants to be sure it has explored every possibility to find long term resources for the town. The group met on August 3 and 17 and will meet again on August 31 at 7:00 PM. at the Hacienda. "The Town Council has asked for our Final Report by the end of November, and I have personally committed to them that I will do everything within my power to deliver that report before Thanksgiving,"

said Olsen.

The group works with three sub-committees, Economic Development, chaired by Larry Tessler; Infrastructure, led by Mike Metcalf; and General Fund, led by Tracy Vesely.

One of the long-term transformations that the Economic Development group is examining is how to better capture the image of Saint Mary's College and incorporate it into the town's dynamic. This sub-committee is also working on what can be done with the Rheem Shopping Center, searching for all possibilities including an imaginative scenario of the town purchasing the center and partnering with developers. They are also considering a business licensing fee. The 123 members of the Chamber of Commerce will be polled to see if they would support the concept and what they would expect in return.

... continued on page 7

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## Meet Moraga's New Town Clerk, Marty McInturf

**By Sophie Braccini**



Marty McInturf in her busy Moraga office Photo Sophie Braccini

Moraga's new Town Clerk, Marty McInturf, is an offspring of Lamorinda and although she now lives in Pleasant Hill she says that working here feels like coming home. McInturf, a Miramonte graduate, even gets the opportunity to share a lunchtime sandwich with her father, who lives just a few blocks away from the Town's offices.

But the workload in Moraga is not one that leaves a lot of family time. Between long Friday evenings putting together the packets for the Council meetings and extended nights spent at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School where the meetings take place, it takes a lot of

passion and a love of clerical work to find the job fulfillment that McInturf has achieved.

McInturf has lived many professional lives. Before becoming Moraga's Town Clerk, she was a part-time elected clerk in Pleasant Hill, a self-employed real estate agent, the Director of the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce, and an event planner at the Claremont Hotel.

"I have seen the advantages and pitfalls of different types of economic activities," says the Clerk, "the efficiency of private business, but also some of the drawbacks of non-profit, but its need for constant fund-raising; and finally government that's run by

many rules and regulations, but where processes and decisions are open to public scrutiny."

And it is in the City Clerk world that McInturf has found her true place. "When I go to City Clerk conferences, I find myself in rooms full of people like me," says McInturf, "people who like to help, people who like people, and people who pay great attention to details...this is me," says McInturf, "and I'm so happy to have found the job I wanted in the town I wanted. Sometimes, things in life just click."

Her boss, Town Manager Mike Segrest, also believes that the fit is great, "Marty's experience and positive attitude allowed her to step into the Town Clerk position and immediately demonstrate a capable dedication to serving the community."

"We're fortunate to have Marty on board with the Town," adds Mayor Dave Trotter. "Marty has handled her duties as Town Clerk to date in a very professional manner, and as Mayor I've enjoyed working with her."

Moraga is no cakewalk for staff. "I am lucky to get some volunteer help," says McInturf, referring to the Moraga Movers who have come to help, and the half day she gets from the police department's cadet, "but I could use even more."

... continued on page 7

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-Edda Moore, Member

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Prayer.....8:00am  
Traditional.....9:00am  
Contemporary.....10:30am

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**Weekly Activities Include:**  
**Wednesday:**  
Community Bible Study...10am  
REVERB (youth).....7pm  
**Friday Night:**  
BLAST! Kids Club.....6pm

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-Dr. Brad Reiches, GodThoughts, Volume 2\*



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-Barbara Hightower with her son Chris, Member

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# Orinda

# Lamorinda Community

# Orinda

**Calendar**

**City Council** 7pm  
Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way  
Tuesday, September 1

**Planning Comm.** 7pm  
Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way  
Tuesday, August 25

**Historic Landmarks Comm.** 3pm  
Gallery Room, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way  
Tuesday, August 25

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

**City of Orinda:**  
<http://www.cityoforinda.org>  
• all meeting notes  
• calendar updates  
Chamber of Commerce:  
<http://www.orindachamber.org>  
• local businesses  
• upcoming events



**Beer vandalism, 8/06/09** That's a phrase you don't hear every day. A young woman parked her Toyota Camry on Camino Sobrante on a Wednesday afternoon. She came to the car on Thursday and found the rear drivers side window smashed with an unopened beer bottle that was inside the car. She has no idea who would do such a thing. Estimated damage \$300. Wouldn't it have made more sense to just drink the beer?

**Water bottle vandalism, 8/06/09** The 17-year-old driver of a car heading down Camino Pablo noticed a purple older model Honda Civic drive past, at which point an unknown male threw a water bottle at the car. It hit the windshield and left a minor crack, estimated damage \$200. The young lady unfortunately did not remember the license plate number. Perhaps the beer thrower strikes again?

**Naked man, 8/04/09** An anonymous caller reported a naked man lying on a Patricia Road driveway. Cops found the 35-year-old male breathing but unresponsive. After being covered by a blanket, medical help arrived and the gentleman started to struggle and made random statements. He was taken to County Hospital.

**Burglary, 8/03/09** An unknown suspect smashed an 8" x 12" glass pane of the rear French doors of a Candlestick Road home. The thief took three computers - one iMac all in one, one iMac laptop and one Mac laptop. Estimated damage \$4900.

## Orinda Establishes Environmental Sustainability Working Group

By Andrea A. Firth

"The concept of undertaking local environmental initiatives and steps to reduce energy consumption is one that many of us were independently thinking about," states Emmanuel Ursu, Planning Director for the City of Orinda. "I have long thought about actions the city can take such as encouraging renewable energy production and increasing access to local foods, including community gardens," he adds. During the City Council's recent strategic planning

sessions, Council Member Steve Glazer suggested that the city develop a comprehensive approach to environmental sustainability initiatives, and so the Environmental Sustainability Working Group (the ESWG) was established.

The ESWG, comprised of Planning Commissioners Louise Adamson, Chris Kniel and Richard Westin and members at large David Mayeri, Kent Pavey, and Rick Kattenburg met for the first time in late July. ... continued on page 12

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## A Vision for Downtown Orinda

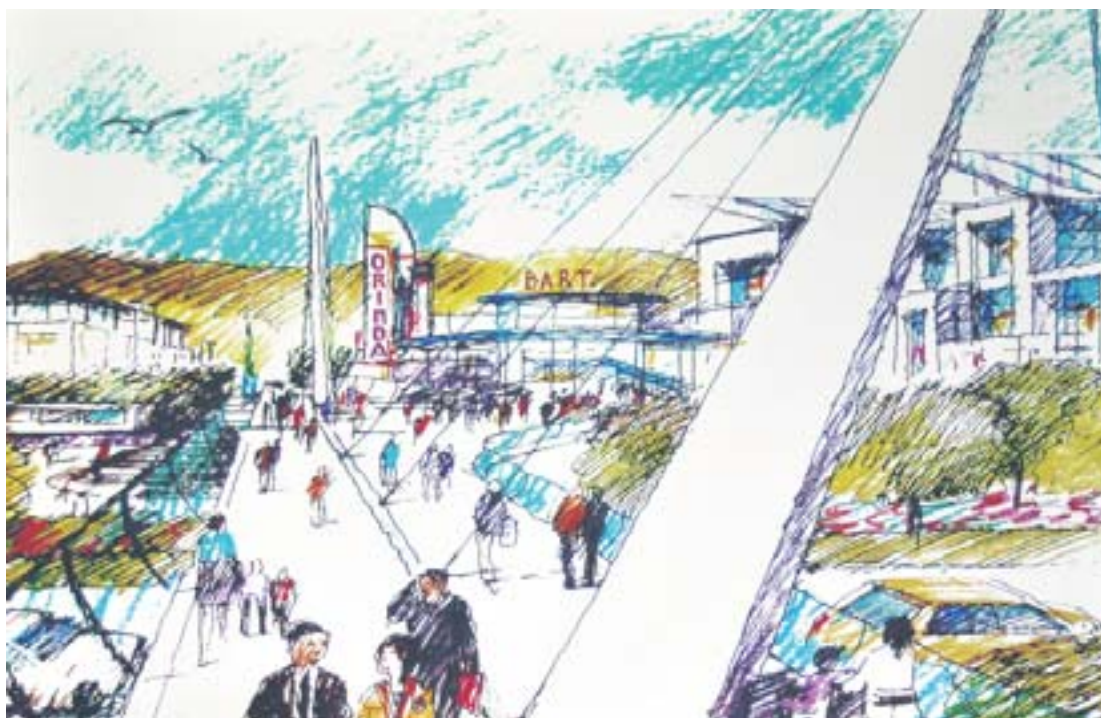
By Andrea A. Firth



Peter Hasselman (standing) and Bill Simpson (blue shirt) presented their outlines at the Orinda Rotray luncheon last week. Photo Andy Scheck

"There could be some really exciting things going on in downtown Orinda," states Peter Hasselman, an architect and urban designer who has lived in Orinda for over thirty years. "You need a vision," adds his friend Bill Simpson, also a longtime resident and a local architect, as he flips through Hasselman's colorful sketches depicting what the sliver of land occupied by Orinda Village and the Crossroads might look like with

Together the two architects have created a vision for Orinda's downtown district that has a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly European vibe filled with people and commerce. The design incorporates simple streetscape elements like plantings, additional seating, and improved lighting and signage along with more grand components such as the creation of large public plazas and cascading waterfalls, a



People walking on a pedestrian bridge between Orinda Theatre and Orinda Village

pair of pedestrian bridges traversing Highway 24, and a transportation center and mixed-use development at the BART station. Hasselman and Simpson were an ideal pairing to transform the ideas for a revitalized Orinda into tangible images. Hasselman has years of experience and numerous awards for the planning and design of urban developments in the United States and abroad. He has a prolific gift for drawing images that

project a sense of movement and life, and he sees change as part of a natural evolution for Orinda. "The nature of cities is that they change," states Hasselman. "It's important to value and enhance the beautiful elements of the city and not get hung up on the older, decaying bits that have nothing to recommend," he adds, liberally infusing words like recycle, modify, and rebuild as he discusses their approach. Simpson, who helped lead

the way for incorporation and served as the chairman of Orinda's first Planning Commission, has no fear of change either, in fact, he has been thinking about the revitalization of Orinda's downtowns for over 25 years. "I took the members of Orinda's first City Council and Planning Commission over to Mill Valley to show them what Orinda could look like, and they liked it back then," smiles Simpson. ... continued on page 7

## New Art in Orinda's Public Spaces

By Andrea A. Firth



Photo Ohlen Alexander

Move over John Deere, Orinda has its very own tractor—a playful, yellow mini-version that now resides in the Library Plaza. The tractor serves as the base element of a sculpture by artist Gale Wagner. Most Orindans, whether they realize it or not, are familiar with Wagner's work, which includes the sculpture Outtahere—the frog that continually leaps across the fountain just outside the Library. Orinda's Art in Public Places Committee (the APPC) recently installed new work by Wagner and six other artists in the plaza and surrounding area.

A little over a year and a half ago, the APPC placed the first works of sculpture in the Orinda Village downtown area with plans

to replace the works annually. "We originally thought a one year timeframe was appropriate for the works to be viewed, but we are moving to an 18 month to two-year timeframe to give sufficient time for the general public and visitors to view and enjoy the art," states

Regina Almaguer, a member of the APPC and a public art consultant for the cities of Oakland and San Francisco. "The art has become an attraction for people, and the community has responded very well to it," adds Almaguer. ... continued on page 10



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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Entrepreneurship One Option During Tough Economic Times

By Jennifer Wake



Lafayette technologist Robert Riebs discusses computer plans with Bobby and Navid Mazaheri at Town Hall Theatre Photo Jennifer Wake

With unemployment at around 11 percent in California, more people are considering striking out on their own. But what does it take to succeed as an entrepreneur? And what should you know before venturing out?

Lafayette resident Bobby Mazaheri, a recent graduate from UC Davis in Computer Arts, started X-Gaming Academy to teach 10-17 year olds how to create video games, but has added Web design to his repertoire lately due to an increase in demand.

"I'm seeing a lot more people going out on their own lately," he said.

One of those people is Bobby's brother Navid Mazaheri, 22. After completing a bachelor's degree in computer engineering at San Jose State University, last summer he decided to start his own business - SF Bay Area PC Repair - in Orinda, offering technology solutions.

Navid focused on his few clients, knowing that if he did a great job, and had reasonable prices, word would spread. He also wasn't afraid to talk to people about what he did and seek out help from other professionals.

While at a wedding, Navid spoke with Robert Riebs, a technologist/educator who owns MyTechnologist in Lafayette and has been in the technological business for over 25 years. "We started talking about iPhones, and exchanged business cards," he said. "I told him I was having

issues, and he said, 'Work with me. If you help me out, I'll help you out.'"

In addition to servicing his regular clients, Navid now works with Riebs as an apprentice. "He's given me advice about how to work with clients, how to access client computers remotely, how to stay focused."

"These guys can go into Twitter and other technologies without blinking," Riebs said. "Different generations start in different places. So I ask: What do I know? What does he know? How can we help each other?"

After a flood devastated the Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette, Riebs was contracted to re-create the entire technological infrastructure from the ground up. Navid (and his brother, Bobby) are helping out.

"All the wiring was destroyed in the flood," Navid said. "Robert and I started ripping everything out, ran wires inside, set up the phone and Internet, and then brought all the computers back." For Navid, it was a wonderful experience. "I'd never done anything start to finish before."

Moraga resident Annette Paczocha, 24, decided to join the ranks of entrepreneurs last December when she started East-bay Spanish, a learning program for children ages 6 to 10. After teaching Spanish in an after-school program at Del Rey Elementary, she saw a need for students to keep up the work during the summer so they wouldn't have to relearn every-

thing in the fall.

She created brochures and a Web site, but found she was limited by how she could distribute her information at school sites. She began bringing flyers to every outlet she could think of. "It doesn't matter where you go," she said. "Nail supply, Kinko's." She began to get calls, but scheduling was difficult and by the time summer started, she didn't have enough kids to make it worthwhile.

She's undeterred, however. "I'm going to start earlier next year. Persistence is key, and not being afraid to approach people to talk about what you're doing," she said.

As owner of Successful Solutions - a project management firm - Caryl Morrison of Orinda understands the importance of people. Morrison says the more people you can talk to, the better.

Two years ago she changed the direction of her business and relocated to Orinda. Looking for ways to connect with new business people, she joined the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and regularly attends its Entrepreneur Club, which meets the third Thursday of every month.

"My business is extremely relationship-based," she said. "Joining the Chamber was what works for me and for my business. There was nobody at the Chamber that I knew and it was a great opportunity for me to meet new people, build new relationships and use members as resources."

Caroline McCormick, who owns Association Communications, Inc., in Lafayette was able to retain clients from her previous company when she started her business. While she was good at her job, she said she had no idea how to run a company.

She advises anyone considering starting a business to learn about HR, Finance, Marketing, and put together a good team to service the organization including an attorney, CPA and insurance broker.

Other entrepreneurs suggest starting small while you're still employed. Orinda resi-

dent Matthew Leutza started a tutoring business, Lamorinda Tutoring, three years ago as a supplement to his college and K-12 teaching schedule while pursuing his master's degree. "The extra income was nice since teaching salaries are low," he said. "After a while, I established a strong clientele through referrals and limited advertising."

Like most entrepreneurs, Leutza really enjoys being his own boss. "If you have a skill that is in demand, you must be willing to work hard and meet the needs of your clients," he said. "Punctuality, flexibility, reliability, and integrity are simple keys to success."

"I think you work harder when you work for yourself, than you might when working for someone else," added McCormick, "but the rewards are wonderful."

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### "Making the Right Choices"



As a California native Luita Swales, grew up in Oakland and always knew that she would one day go to Cal. Her mother acquired both a B.A. and M.A., which, according to Luita, was unusual back in "those days."

However, after graduating from high school in 1950, Luita was challenged financially even though her mother had obtained a position with Standard Oil. Luita said, "...my father walked out when I was 3 years old, leaving behind a good sized debt." Being a woman of determination, she never let that sway her belief that one day she would follow in her mother's footsteps.

During high school she was the winner of a writing competition that offered a substantial scholarship from the San Francisco Press and Union League Club, which she readily accepted. She recalled, "The only proviso was that I had to major in Journalism, which is how I eventually came to be one of the editors of the Daily Cal, the student newspaper."

After a brief marriage she returned to Cal Berkeley to attend graduate school and in the process of writing her Master's thesis discovered that she was really good with numbers. She said, "I enjoyed quantitative analysis more than word synthesis, so I switched over from words into numbers." Eventually she earned her Master of Arts in Biostatistics; she then enrolled in the PhD program later transferring to UCLA to complete her PhD.

Reflecting back on her days at Cal, she fondly recalls, "I had taken a part-time job for the City of Berkeley Public Health Department where I met the love of my life." After a long courtship of six years and commuting back and forth from the Bay Area to the campus of UCLA she and Glenn Lynch were married. Glenn brought three sons to the marriage that embraced Luita as part of the family, a relation-

by Denise Lemings

ship that continues to date. With great affection she says, "They love me and we visit quite often."

Luita worked for many years for the Alameda County Health Department, and eventually retired as Director of Finance at Highland Hospital.

When asked why and how she came to live at The Moraga Royale, she replied, "I lived in Lafayette for almost 40 years and had moved to Rossmore after my husband passed away in 2004. I had recently began to have minor medical challenges and wanted to find the right place for me while I was still in charge, making my own decisions. I worked hard all my life so financially I could live anywhere. I took two and a half months researching and visiting many, many places, I think fifteen or sixteen in all, I didn't keep count really."

Luita found The Moraga Royale's staff to be of the most importance in making her decision, saying, "Other places may be newer but when I walked down the hall and the housekeeper and caregiver looked me in the eye, smiled and said hello, that did it for me, I knew this was the place for me."

Luita maintains her independence and her relationships with her family, church and community and is very involved at St. Stephen's in Orinda, in addition to frequently driving to Rossmore to visit and attend various functions throughout the month. When asked to sum up how she feels about choosing Moraga Royale, she leans forward and says with assurance, "Life's about making choices and I feel like I made the right one, I feel safe and secure here."



Luita works in her office suite at Moraga Royale

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**LAMORINDA Community**

**Letters to the Editor**



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

To the editor:

Kudos to Andrea Firth on her thoughtful and informative article on the Moraga Orinda Fire District pension issue. This story has taken on a life of its own with our local daily newspaper opting for sensationalism over journalism, and the usual chorus of contrarians making ludicrous (albeit predictable) assertions that the fire chief's pension could be used to fix Orinda's roads.

front of me, stood up and yelled out, "Where are the Republican candidates?" The moderator calmly stated that there would be no verbal discussion from the floor. She raised a piece of paper and said all comments need to be submitted in written form. She instructed someone to bring the man a piece of paper. The folks around the gentleman explained the evening's format to him - first the Democrats would speak, followed by the Republican candidates. The man sat down and remained throughout the evening.

Sensational accounts may provide provocative fodder for idle chatter, but they do little in the way of furthering thoughtful discourse. Moreover, it saddens me to think that this issue has been spun in such a way as to call into question the integrity of Fire Chief Pete Nowicki who has served our community with honor and professionalism for over 26 years. Certainly he, and the men and women who work under him deserve better.

The Democrats and the Republicans had equal time. Many questions were asked and answered. The candidates stayed around afterward and answered more questions. I learned a lot from all the candidates. I left feeling more informed and better prepared to make my choice for the coming election.

Ms. Firth's was the first account I've read that actually presents the facts with a balance of opinions and calls attention to the real question, that being the long-term viability of the current pension system.

I went home and turned on the news. The lead story was of a town meeting where health care was the topic. There was yelling. There was anger, and there was frustration. The speaker had no chance to educate the people on his interpretation of the facts contained in the health care bill. The people had no chance to learn from him about health care. I then realized why two policemen were at the Moraga event. There was concern that the candidates would not be able to speak, due to being interrupted by a crowd of angry people. This did not happen. 500 people sat quietly, asked their questions and allowed the candidates to respond. Everyone learned.

Pat Rudebusch  
Orinda

Dear Editor,

This past week I attended the candidates' forum at the Soda Center auditorium at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. It was packed with 500 people. I had come to learn about the views of the Democratic and Republican candidates that are running for Ellen Tauscher's 10th District seat in the House of Representatives. I knew very little about any of the candidates, so I went to learn what they believed on many of the important issues that affect Contra Costa County and the nation.

Education is key to inform the electorate. Free speech is the right of all citizens. Dissent must be heard, but not at the cost of the free speech of others. There is room in this system for all views to be spoken and heard. Let us be sure we do not harm our system by our anger, frustration and fear. Let us remember that information is needed on all sides of an issue, and let us create environments, as was done at Saint Mary's College, where all ideas are welcome at the table. In this way we will all have a better chance of making an informed decision.

On the main floor on either side of the stage two uniformed policemen gazed out at the crowd. As I watched them, I wondered, "What are two policemen doing at a public forum in Moraga?" Shortly after the moderator began, an elderly gentleman, right in

Edy Schwartz  
Moraga

**Public Forum JOIN IT**

**Moraga Orinda Fire District**

I am writing in response to MOFD Director Frank Sperling's public forum article in the August 5 edition regarding Chief Nowicki's highly publicized pension. While Director Sperling spoke for the MOFD board, I think I speak for a significant percentage of Moraga-Orinda's 34,000 taxpayers.

pension system; that Chief Nowicki "regularly contributed 26.5 % of his base pay to the retirement system." A \$242,000 pension, inflating at 3% for 30 years, requires a \$3.8MM investment today assuming that investment could grow at 7.8%; which the county pension system contends has been their long term investment return (before their 27% loss in 2008). Can MOFD or Chief Nowicki show that the employee plus employer contributions to the pension plan over Chief Nowicki's tenure with MOFD have grown to \$3.8MM; especially after the 2008 plan losses? Now is not the time to be handing out special pension benefits as good bye gifts unless it is contractually mandated.

While MOFD provides the community with superior and effective service, the community also expects that our tax dollars are well spent.

4) Director Sperling stated that cutting back on a chief's salary and benefits was not reasonable as "We're a small fire and emergency medical services district that must compete with ..." At the August 5 MOFD board meeting, it was reported that in response to a search for a new chief to replace Chief Nowicki, the district had received 56 applications. Obviously, the word is out in the firefighting community that MOFD provides more than adequate compensation.

The MOFD board may feel their actions regarding Chief Nowicki's pension are appropriate, but many of us taxpayers doubt it, and a recent article and an editorial in the Contra Costa Times even question the legality of their action. The fact that these decisions increased Chief Nowicki's pension from a last year base salary of \$185,000 to a staggering (for a 51 year old municipal employee) \$242,000 (which will then be adjusted for inflation upward for the rest of his life) indicates that efficiency and financial prudence are not the district's main goals. This \$57,000 annual "bonus" will add up to \$2.7MM over the next 30 years and adds an additional \$1MM unfunded liability to the district's already seriously underfunded pension plan.

5) Going further, Director Sperling stated "Were we to offer substantially lower salaries and benefits than our competitors, our ability to recruit and retain the excellent firefighter-paramedics that we now have would be completely undercut." At a recent presentation to The Board, the firefighter in charge of the reserve program stated (a) the program was the doorway to full time employment and (b) they had to cut off the application process because the applications pile was several feet high. It appears, again, that Director Sperling's assertions are dubious at best. MOFD has 5.5 firefighters per 10,000 population. This is almost 4 times the ratio for neighboring Con Fire. The number of incidents, per capita, for the two districts is the same. The math says MOFD firefighters work 1/4 as many incidents and are open to 1/4 the risks as Con Fire firefighters. There are significant non-monetary benefits for working at MOFD as well as monetary benefits.

Let me address a few points Director Sperling made in his address to the community:

Director Sperling seems to blame the vagaries of the county employee pension system for Chief Nowicki's pension spike, but it appears to many that the MOFD Board may have made a gift of public funds to the former chief. The MOFD Board's contention that they have been mis-portrayed as squanderers of the public purse has yet to be proven to this taxpayer. It leads one to wonder what other inefficiencies will be uncovered.

- 1) Director Sperling agrees that amendments were made to The Chief's contract but that these amendments were made "so that the Fire Chief's pension would be computed on a basis similar to the calculations for the lower-ranking Battalion Chiefs and Administrative staff." Lower ranking individuals in the department do not have a \$185,000 per year base salary. Three years prior to retirement, upon his elevation to chief, Chief Nowicki's salary was increased by about \$35,000. To carry that increase into retirement for the rest of his life would seem benefit enough for acting as chief for the last three years. An additional \$57,000 per year for life is excessive to say the least.
- 2) Director Sperling stated that the vacation sell-back "our Board agreed to accounts for only 3.9% of the Fire Chief's total pension." 3.9% of \$242,000 is \$9,400. But the Lamorinda Weekly says the impact of the contract amendments added 460 hours to The Chief's final year of compensation. With an \$185,000 base, 460 hours equates to about \$40,000. Another media account agrees with this \$40,000. If Director Sperling's assertion that the amendments only accounted for \$9,400, what accounted for the remaining \$48,000 increase?
- 3) Director Sperling stated that there is a major difference between private pension systems and the public safety employee

Keith Jacobsen  
Orinda  
(Keith Jacobsen is a former Treasurer of the City of Orinda)

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.



# LAMORINDA Community

## Moraga Town Staff Moving Back to the Hacienda

... continued from page 3



Town-owned building at 329 Rheem Blvd.

Photo Wendy Scheck

Some residents questioned the financial aspect of the move. Why move staff from 329 Rheem when office rentals in Moraga are at an all-time low? And why spend money on adapting the Hacienda for the return of staff if this is just for the short term?

Segrest explained that the repairs and improvements done at the Hacienda needed to happen whatever the final use of the building.

All the work involved in the move led the Hacienda Foundation, a volunteer body of residents dedicated to raising money for the Ha-

cienda, to question its temporary nature.

"We were informed by the town of the coming move," says the Foundation's President, Judy Dinkle, "but we wish staff would have involved us more. We are trying to fund raise and the uncertainty

makes it more difficult." Dinkle adds that the impression is that there was no thought given to how the move would impact the Foundation.

Other town groups were concerned that the town would take over space that is now dedicated to recreation activities. "That is a misunderstanding," states Segrest, "staff will only occupy the second floor of the Hacienda." He added that the town would use additional storage space in part of the Casita, but that it will not affect the activities that are held there.

"The strategy of the town has changed over the past months," says Dinkle, "it is hard to have an opinion at this time because it is not finalized. We want to try to accommodate the plans and go along with them." The Hacienda Foundation will continue to work with the Parks and Recreation Department on their next big event, the first Oktoberfest, at the Hacienda.

## Meet Moraga's New Town Clerk, Marty McInturf

McInturf would like to have more time for reforms and people, she wants to see herself as a hub for the town residents: "I love to interact with people," she says, "and they call or come to see me all the time with all sorts of requests."

Residents call her to com-

plain about a neighbor, to inquire about events, resolutions, or about planning issues. "I need to be totally connected with everything that's going on in town and I'm getting there," says the Clerk who started her job four months ago and hasn't had a lot of time to catch her breath. "The fact

that the Council will not meet in August is a good thing for staff, it will give me time to catch up," she adds. McInturf has ideas on how to improve organization and processes; the issue is to find the time and resources to implement them.

"I have started to scan and

... continued from page 3

file online, with a volunteer, all the resolutions that were passed by the Council over the past years," explains McInturf, "my objective would be to have more information available on a more user friendly web site to improve the public's access to town facts."

## Council and Committees on Vacation in August, but not the REC

... continued from page 3

The Infrastructure committee faces the tremendous challenge of finding long term financing for the maintenance of roads and drains, as well as for other town's properties such as public facilities and parks.

One idea would be to re-assess the Lighting and Landscape District. This very small amount of taxation appears on Moragans' tax bills (between \$8 and \$16) and is what the town charges residents for lighting. At this time, the modest tax covers only a portion of the cost of public lighting;

the total bill is paid by the town from the General Fund. The town could decide to pass along the total cost of lighting to its residents, and could add parks maintenance as well. The town would then free between \$400,000 and \$500,000 from the General Fund that could be directed to road maintenance.

Bonds are being studied for long-term infrastructure maintenance, as is the possibility of establishing a Mello-Roos District. Mello-Roos is designed to allow any city to collect funds from its

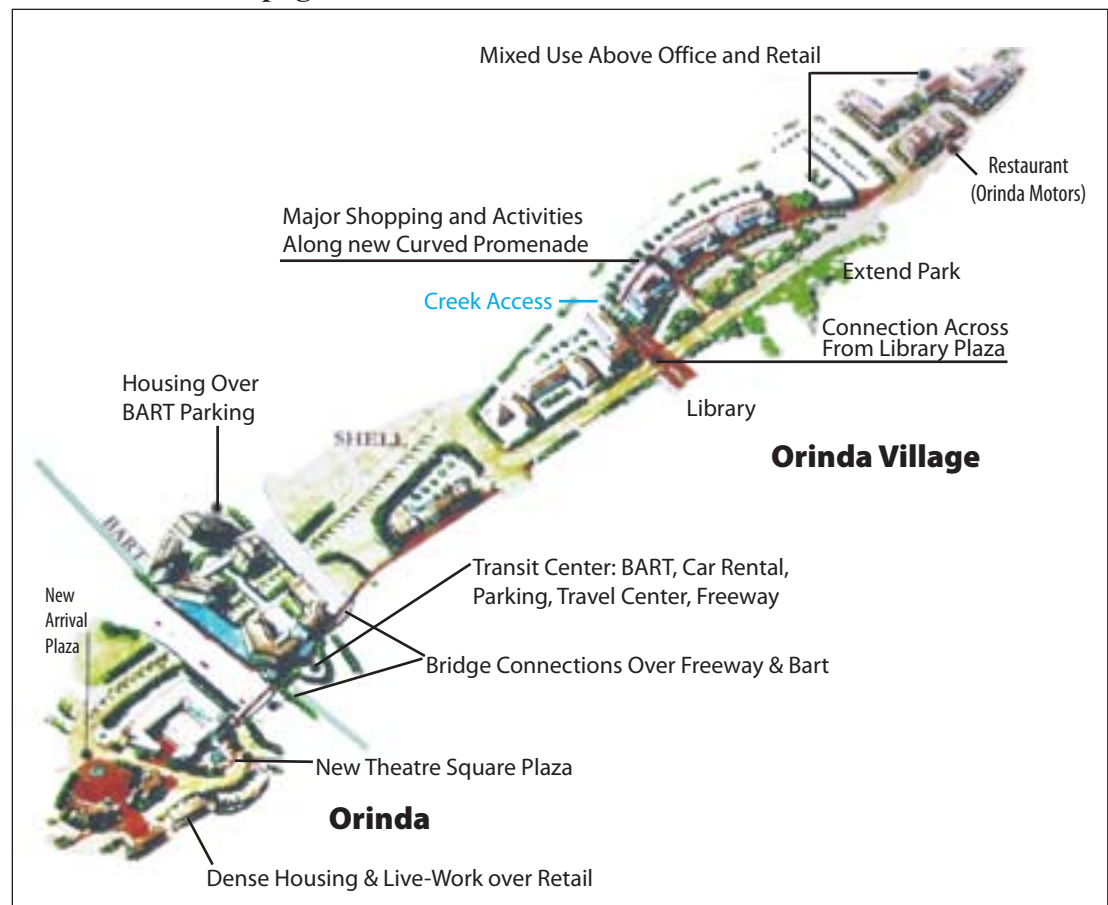
residents for financing of public improvements and services, such as streets, sewer systems and other basic infrastructure. A two-thirds majority vote of residents is needed to form such a District. Once approved, property owners pay a special tax each year.

The General Fund sub-committee is also studying the impact of new taxation such as a Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT). This tax brings significant resources to the neighboring city of Lafayette through the hotels and motels within its boundaries. In

Moraga, preliminary data shows that there is a need for a hotel. TOTs are in place in most Contra Costa cities that have hotels and averages 9.5%. The sub-committee is also studying the positive and negative aspects of becoming a Charter town; for example, a new real estate transfer tax could be paid directly to the town when homes are sold. Members of the Committee remarked that such a tax would make sense only if neighboring communities went the same route (Lafayette is currently considering a Charter).

## A Vision for Downtown Orinda

... continued from page 4



Both men support the work of the City's Planning Process Review Task Force in revising guidelines related to downtown revitalization, but Simpson acknowledges that change will not come about through new ordinances. They have found that most people are visual learners—they need a picture to go with the words. "If there is a vision of what the city could be, something people could see, this might attract a different kind of developer to Orinda," explains Hasselman.

Hasselman and Simpson have begun to share their vision for the future of Orinda more widely. At a recent meeting of the Orinda Rotary Club, Hasselman narrated a slide presentation of his sketches for revitalizing Orinda's business district, identifying the opportunities and solutions available to address the City's current problems. According to Hasselman, one of Orinda's key drawbacks is the limited amount of public space which results in a linear, boring central business district. "My rough calculation shows that

80% of the downtown space is devoted to streets and parking and that leaves just 20% of the land area for nice buildings, parks, arcades, and courtyards," states Hasselman who proposes creating several sunlit public spaces and a better parking system.

What to do about the transmission towers that are dotted through the downtown landscape or how high is too high for buildings, questions that have plagued recent discussions of downtown revitalization, do not faze the two visionaries who take a long-term outlook on the process. "I think technology will evolve over the next generation that will provide solution to the transmission tower problem," says Hasselman. Simpson understands the concerns over building height and respects the impact on residential properties near downtown. However, both men see opportunities, not darkness, in allowing increased building height in some areas that could enable space for urban attributes such as additional parking, tre-

lises, and roof gardens.

"The next generation will be interested in green architecture, the economy of energy, pedestrian access, environmental quality, and recreation [in the downtown spaces]," adds Hasselman. Creating a downtown that meets the needs and expectations of the next generation seems to be the primary goal of both men who are working to share their vision for Orinda with the community through public meetings throughout the year.

Peter Hasselman will present An architect's personal vision of Downtown Orinda for the next generation; Opportunities for sustainable growth at the Fall luncheon of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce on Friday, October 23rd from Noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Orinda Country Club. The cost is \$30. RSVP 925-254-3909 or <http://orindachamber.org/events.php#luncheon>.

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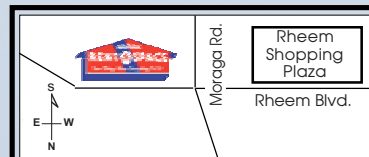


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**• Living Longer and Loving it •**  
**Local Poet Denver Nunley gets his Heart's Desire**

By Moya Stone



Denver Nunley

Photo Moya Stone

**D**enver Nunley has a very special day coming up. On August 21 he will not only be celebrating his 95th birthday, but he will, for the first time, be reading his poetry to a public audience at the Orinda Library. Nunley lives at Manor Care

Center in Walnut Creek and thanks to their program called Heart's Desire he will finally realize a long held dream of sharing his verse with the world.

Heart's Desire was implemented by Manor Care Center ten years ago to offer something special for their residents. The program is modeled after the Make a Wish Foundation, which gives wishes to terminally ill children. Manor Care

Activities Director Kelly Hardman says they have fulfilled dozens of wishes. "It's a lot of fun for us and for the residents," says Hardman. "It's really a blessing."

Wishes are submitted by residents and chosen by a committee, but no one is ever turned down. "It's such a pleasure for us to see the residents' faces when they get their wish," says Hardman. Over the years, wishes have included a dinner cruise on the bay for one resident and his family, a Notre Dame football game, a hot air balloon ride, and a day grooming and feeding horses.

Nunley couldn't be happier about his wish and hopes people will be caught up and entertained by his poetry. Heart's Desire is planning to take Nunley's collection of over 200 poems, titled Poems from the Heart, and have them printed and spiral bound. Hardman knows someone in the publishing business who has volunteered to look into getting the collection published.

Born in Texas in 1914, the young Nunley had to grow up quickly living in poverty and losing his mother to Dust Pneumonia. Life has been challenging but always interesting for the poet. He worked on a farm, flew planes for the Navy in World War II, became a hypnotist, practiced yoga, and taught Human Relations at Contra

Costa College for 13 years. Sorrows have not spared Nunley, having lost two of his four children and more recently his wife. But he speaks of his life with good humor and can easily recall minute details of events long past. He recounts meeting his future wife as if it just happened yesterday, not in 1942. "I can still see Patricia sitting in that nightclub," he shares. "Her hands and face fascinated me." His experiences and zest for life are fodder for his poetry, of which he says, "It lives, it breathes, it's me." Energetic and engaged, Nunley can still recite poems he learned in grade school and counts Longfellow among his favorite authors.

Although he had always dabbled in writing poetry, it was after an accident 21 years ago that Nunley experienced a shift in his work. He fell off a BART platform onto the rails and was hit by an oncoming train. He survived four months of rehabilitation and writes of the experience in the poem titled, *This is More*: "Mentally I found a new life full of confidence and began writing poetry with a feeling that the creator was directing my mind and hand."

Join Denver Nunley for an afternoon of his life in rhyme on August 21 at the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, 3PM.

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**Lafayette Senior Services On Going Programs:**  
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Positive Living Forum- On the second Thursday of each month, 10:30 - noon, 9/10  
Bi-Monthly Caregiver Support Group, Mondays, 8/24, 9/14 & 9/28, 1:30 - 2:30 PM

**Tea Dancing with Karen and Michael,** every Wednesday, 12:30-3:00 PM, 500 Saint Mary's Road, Lafayette. All event/programs \$1 Members/ \$3 Non-Members. For info call (925)284-5050.

**Widowed Person's Support Meetings.** Saturdays from 10 a.m. to Noon at St. Stephen's Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda: September 12, 19, 26, October 3, 10 and 17, 2009. Meetings are informal discussions among the participants of the emotional and practical needs and concerns of the bereaving person. All widowed persons are welcome. For questions call (925) 932-3448.

**Free Brain Gym Introductions for Seniors,** August 8 and August 22 and Sept 12, 10 - 11:30 am, 58 Van Ripper Lane, Orinda. Learn tools that bring your brain, body, and balance to their optimum. You will improve concentration, memory, vision, hearing and movement in easy steps. Have Fun and Take It With You!! RSVP with Pam Whitman (925)253-1223. For more information visit [www.transitionpoint.org](http://www.transitionpoint.org).

**The Peripheral Neuropathy Group** will meet on Friday, August 28, from 12 PM to 1:30 PM in the Las Trampas Room of the Hillside Clubhouse, in Rossmoor. Dr. Steven J. Holtz M.D. will be the guest speaker and will give a presentation, as well as answer questions, about peripheral neuropathy. Peripheral Neuropathy group meetings are open to all those living outside as well as inside Rossmoor. There is no cost for these educational meetings. For questions of any kind please contact Nancy Ostrander at 930-9524 or Carolyn Cash at 254-8195.

**Computer Maintenance 101 with Ed Zeidan, Nerd4Rent.** This popular and informative class will cover the basics of computer ownership for seniors. We'll describe what steps to take to keep your computer running well, when to replace vs. repair, and give recommendations on what features to look for in your next computer. Tues 9/22 from 10:30 - Noon. Please call (925)284-5050 to reserve a spot. \$1 Members/ \$3 Non-Members. LCC, 500 Saint Mary's Road, Lafayette.

**Falling Down is Often Life Changing** - Especially for Older Adults - Workshop by Supervisor Gayle Uilkema and Jennifer Mountain, Manager, Contra Costa County Fall Prevention Program. Falls are not accidents if they are preventable and falls don't just happen because you're older. Learn about specific steps and comprehensive solutions by which we can re-design our living spaces, look at the drugs we take, improve our physical well-being, and address other everyday choices we make that could reduce the risk of hurting ourselves through falls. Tues 9/29, 10:30 - Noon, Elderberry. Please call (925)284-5050 to reserve a spot. \$1 Members/ \$3 Non-Members. LCC, 500 Saint Mary's Road, Lafayette.

**To celebrate Grandparents Day** on September 13, The Vagabond Players has announced an Outstanding Grandparents contest. It is open to Contra Costa County residents whose grandparents or great-grandparents also live in the county. Judges will be looking for entries that reveal the positive influence of a grandmother-grandfather couple on their kin and others, according to the sponsor. The grandparents of the three chosen entrants will receive gift cards from participating restaurants and merchants. Entries must be 200 words or less, and postmarked no later than August 28. Send entries to The Vagabond Players, 608 Twinbridge Ct., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.



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**SMC Expands Weekend College Courses**

By Andrea A. Firth

Saint Mary's College (SMC) has expanded their Weekend College to include an array of non-credit course offerings designed to peak the interest of adult learners throughout Lamorinda. "The response to our earlier courses has been great," says Grete Stenersen who runs the program at SMC. "Expanding the program has been a natural follow on to our commitment to come up with interesting ways to create bridges with the community," she adds.

classes focused on the appreciation of poetry, prose, and the classics. One such course is a "Meet the Author" Book Club where participants get to come and discuss books with a faculty facilitator and then attend a free reading by the author on campus. "I see this as a way to deepen your experience of the Creative Writing Reading Series by engaging with a group in discussions beforehand," states Marilyn Abildskov, Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at SMC. "From my perspective, the only thing better than going to a literary event is going to a literary event and getting the chance to talk with other people about it. This gives people from the community a chance to do both," she adds.

time using multiple perspectives from various academic disciplines, different cultures, and personal experiences of members of the class. "Time is serious and playful at the same time. We save it. We lose it. We are run ragged by it. It drags on," Dow riffs. "We'll employ the shared inquiry process that is favored at SMC to discover what [the participants] want to do with time," he adds. "Our understanding will be driven by engaging one another."

Other Fall courses include a review of famous films, an introduction to the philosophy of wine, and learning how to write your own story or care for your aging family member. All the courses are designed to provide opportunities for participants to enrich themselves according to Stenersen. "All of the faculty are very excited about having the opportunity to share with the community around us."

"It's About Time" taught by longtime SMC faculty member Phillip Dow, a widely published poet with an optimistic, unconventional approach, will explore

The first thing one should know about SMC's Weekend College is that it is not on the weekend. Most of the courses are offered on weeknights between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. and taught by SMC faculty and alumni. (Stenersen reports that a new name for the Weekend College is under consideration.)

SMC's selection includes

**SMC's Weekend College Courses, Fall 2009**

**"Meet the Author" Book Club**  
6:00 to 7:30 p.m. (followed by author's reading at 7:30)  
Wednesdays, Sept. 2, 9, 23 and 30; Oct. 14 and 28, Nov. 11

**"It's About Time," Part I**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Wednesdays, Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30; Oct. 7

**"It's About Time," Part II**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Wednesdays, Oct. 14, 21 and 28; Nov. 4, 11 and 18  
[While participating in Part I is suggested for registration in Part II, it is not required.]

**Telling Our Stories: A Memoir Writing Class**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Mondays, Sept. 14, 21 and 28; Oct. 5, 12 and 19

**Telling Our Stories II: A Memoir Writing Class**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Tuesdays, Oct. 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17 and 24; Dec. 1

**Alumni and Friends Great Books seminars**  
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.  
Tuesdays, Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20 and May 18

**Understanding Our Aging Family Members**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Wednesdays, Sept. 16, 23 and 30; Oct. 7, 14 and 21

**Famous Films: Viewing Values in Society**  
6:00 to 8:00pm  
Wednesdays, Sept. 16, 23, and 30; Oct. 7, 14 and 21

**The Philosophy of Wine: An Introduction**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Thursdays, Oct. 15, 22 and 29; Nov. 5, 12 and 19

**Poetry by Nature**  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Mondays, Oct. 19 and 26; Nov. 2, 9, 16 and 23

For more information go to <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/weekendcollege>. To register for these courses, contact Grete Stenersen, Weekend College Director, at 925/631-4162 or [gsteners@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:gsteners@stmarys-ca.edu).

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# • Life in LAMORINDA •

## Vehicle Sets Itself on Fire in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini and Lee Borrowman



MOFD fire crew at the scene

A Moraga resident awoke to the light of flames coming from his Volvo that was parked in his driveway on Sandringham Drive South at about 2:00 a.m. on Friday, August 7. The fire quickly spread to nearby vegetation. According to Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Battalion Chief Stephen Healy, the homeowner acted quickly to evacuate his family from the home after realizing that the fire

could spread to the house.

Five crews from MOFD and two from Contra Costa County Fire responded to the vehicle, which was totally destroyed by the fire. No injuries were reported.

The next day traces of the fire were visible on the garage door of the property. A pine tree in front showed burned branches on one side. The owner of the used Volvo explained that the car caught fire

spontaneously during the night.

Battalion Chief Healy concurred. "Modern vehicles are outfitted with a complex array of electronic systems and it is possible for them to catch fire even when the vehicle is at rest," said Healy, "it is a rare occurrence, but we had another fire that occurred in a garage in Moraga in the past year."

Five apparatus were dispatched to the scene, as is normal

procedure, and the fire was put out in less than an hour.

"Junipers grew on that property," said Healy, "those are extremely flammable bushes, containing oils like eucalyptuses trees, and they burn vigorously once ignited."

Healy recommends that residents check fire-safe landscaping guidelines and seriously consider replacing juniper with other types of fire resistant vegetation. Healy recommends the U.S. Fire Administration's website for information: <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/fswy12.pdf>

Moraga Orinda Fire District Fire Marshall Mike Mentink urges residents to use caution when working with power tools which may produce sparks during periods of high fire danger. Sparks from a grinding tool ignited dry vegetation behind Grizzly Peak Stables on Lomas Contadas in Orinda on August 10. The fire burned 1.5 acres before being extinguished.

## Suspension of Prop 1A Focus of MOFD Finance Committee Meeting

By Lucy Amaral

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Finance Committee met August 6 to discuss the effects of the suspension of Prop 1A, an action which allows the State of California to borrow up to eight percent of property tax revenue from local governments and special districts (like MOFD), to

offset the State's deficit.

If the full amount is borrowed by the State of California, MOFD can expect to be shorted over \$1.3 million in tax revenue for the 2009/10 budget year. As this money is considered a loan, the State is technically required to repay the borrowed funds within three years, with interest. In the meantime, the first 'shorted' funding payment will be December of this year, when property tax revenue is distributed.

Finance committee members John Wyro and Frank Sperling were also briefed by staff on the options by which MOFD could offset their reduction. Within the California State Assembly Bill ABx4 15, which

suspended Prop 1A, there was also language that set up the opportunity for local agencies to form a joint powers authority (JPA) to issue notes backed by the state's repayment obligation. MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki said that the Board has not made any decisions whether or not to participate in the JPA issued notes, and that for this year, the borrowed funds can be absorbed through MOFD's reserve fund.

During the discussion, the committee made it clear that borrowing from reserves is not a long term fix and repayment by the State is critical. "(For this year) we are able to (continue to) provide a high level of service with the budget we have to work with," Wyro said.

"However, we will feel this cut deeply if the money cannot be recovered from the State."

Even without the State's take, stagnant tax revenue and higher fixed costs has MOFD already running an almost \$900,000 deficit for the 2009/2010 budget year. This shortfall will also be filled with reserve funds, however, Nowicki said that they are actively addressing the issue. Immediate modifications include not 'up-staffing' on red flag days, he added, and other changes will come in the winter months, when the fire danger is not as high.

The committee said they will present this information at the next MOFD Board meeting scheduled for August 19.

## MOFD Moves Closer to New Fire Chief

By Lucy Amaral

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) moved one step closer to choosing a new Fire Chief. At a MOFD work session Board meeting held August 5, executive recruiter Bill Avery advised the Board that 56 applications have been received, many, he said, "at senior command staff levels within their current agencies." The individual hired for this position will replace interim Fire Chief Pete Nowicki, who officially retired in December of 2008 but has been retained on a contract-basis until a replacement can be found.

Avery told the Board that the next step would be to conduct formal interviews and, with the help of "Stakeholder" groups including a community panel, an internal team and a Chief's team, will whittle down the applicants to a "short list" that would then be presented to the Board for their review. No

specific date was given for the final presentation. Board members Frank Sperling and Fred Weil strongly recommended a very expedite the process and requested a timeline going forward. Weil said he hoped a new Fire Chief would be signed no later than September 30.

During the meeting, the Board also responded to the recent press coverage regarding Chief Nowicki's retirement package. Through an ad hoc committee the Board issued letters to the editor to various publications (including Lamorinda Weekly) and responded to press and community inquiries. Board President Pete Wilson said he hopes these efforts will suffice and that the Board can get back to "working for the good of the district." (The Board has posted its response on the MOFD website: <http://www.mofd.org>.)

With regard to the Board's request to learn more about how the retirement components work (this time specifically the "3% at 50" rule), and what changes the Board might be able to enact, Chief Nowicki advised the board that the San Ramon Fire District (SRFD) recently retained an attorney to report on the Ventura Decision (vacation buy-back), where the Board's responsibilities end and legislative responsibilities begin. Nowicki also said that SRFD has hired an independent retirement consulting company to compare SRFD's retirement system to other fire departments in the area. These reports will be presented to the SRFD at their board meeting on August 27 which will then become available to the public. Nowicki said he will acquire these reports and present them to the MOFD Board in September.

## New Art in Orinda's Public Spaces ... continued from page 4



Photo Ohlen Alexander

The new sculptures include a gateway piece that one walks through by artist Joyce Clemens and a kinetic peacock by Martinez-based Patricia Vader. "We deliberately try to identify a wide variety of styles and media that will appeal to a broad spectrum of individuals, both adults and children," notes Almaguer.

City Hall will be the recip-

ient of two table-top sculptures from the estate of James Presntini, a well-known artist who taught at the University of California at Berkeley.

One of this installation's most unique works is a piece entitled Surveillance by artist Kent Roberts that will be suspended in the atrium of the Library by the end of the month.

All of the sculptures are

currently "on loan" to the city, and the APPC is currently soliciting the input of residents regarding the potential acquisition of public artwork. A brief survey is posted at the city website for residents to weigh in (<http://www.cityoforinda.org>). "The ultimate goal is to purchase one or more works as permanent acquisitions, states Almaguer.

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activities. Submissions can be sent to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), with the subject header In Service to the Community.

**Making a Difference in the Community**

Submitted by Siv Ricketts

Were you among the crowds who attended OMPA at Campolindo High School? If so, you may have walked along the newly repaired and installed foot-path connecting the parking areas and the Soda Swim Center. The project was completed just in time for OMPA thanks to Moraga resident Devin O'Brien and a team of dedicated volunteers, including Moraga resident Cheryl Grubbs and Lafayette resident George Nickelson. O'Brien says, "The old path was pretty dangerous. A number of people had fallen and there were exposed pipes at one end which presented a real tripping hazard. It's difficult to exag-

gerate what an improvement this path will make."

O'Brien conceived the idea for this project after receiving \$50 on April 12 (Easter Sunday) from Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. At the conclusion of each of two worship services that morning, 10 volunteers from each service were handed a \$50 bill for the purpose of creatively serving the community.

Projects have been as unique as the individuals who accepted the challenge. Some have been simple and sustainable, such as providing home cooked meals to neighbors experiencing hard times, while others have been

one-time events or significantly more involved. Tony Gerst and son Andrew Gerst of Moraga took two boys who recently lost their father to an A's baseball game, complete with hot dogs and sodas. Moraga resident Lisa Lewis threw an impromptu appreciation party for the group of developmentally delayed young adults who regularly clean and care for Moraga Commons. Karyn Bergen of Alamo is creating awareness and fundraising for a wheelchair-equipped van for Lucas da Silva, a 5 year old Moraga resident with a rare chromosomal disorder (the only case worldwide). The Bay Area Res-

cue Mission in Richmond and Monument Crisis Center in Concord received donations of food and goods for their constituents. And Les Deane of Lafayette is planning a blood drive to take place on Saturday, September 26th at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church.

While some individuals received "seed" money, the idea was to inspire everyone to open their eyes to see the abundant opportunities to make a difference in the community. You can read more about these and other projects on the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church website: [www.mvpcetoday.org](http://www.mvpcetoday.org).



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**Moraga Royale Gains Victory at St. Mary's College**

Submitted by Denise Lemings



Photo Denise Lemings

It was a perfect day to go out and play, according to the residents and staff members at the Moraga Royale, and they did just that! It was the Third Annual Soccer game where staff played against Julie Foudy's Leadership Team, made up of girls from 13-15 years old.

Foudy, former Captain of the USA Women's Soccer Team and two time Olympic Gold Medalist among other accolades, encourages community service as part of her leadership camp. The National Charity League also came to assist and rally with the residents and staff.

According to Al Pyne, Transportation Director for the Moraga Royale which provides Independent-Assisted Living and Memory Care for retirees, began three years ago when Foudy's organization contacted him and asked if there was anything they could do to help the

senior residents. Pyne said, "Basically they called up and offered their help and I told them they could serve lunch if they wanted to." During the conversation Pyne said, "In return I also offered up a challenge soccer game and Foudy accepted being the great sport that she is and the game was on!"

Foudy, who attended the game, will be back next year with her Leadership team and is looking forward to the fun filled competitive exchange, according to Pyne. The Moraga Royale team was led to victory with Pyne as their designated coach for a 6-3 win.

**Lafayette Garden Club Supports Library**

Submitted by Sharon Hunter



Photo provided

Ruth Mc Cahan of the Lafayette Garden Club presented a check for \$2000 to Kathy Merchant, President,

Lafayette Library and Susan Weaver, Senior Community Library Manager. This donation is for the Lafayette library and

Learning Center Foundation. The Garden Club founded a Landscape and Horticulture Fund two years ago to purchase horticulture books and periodicals and to support programs on gardening, landscape design, conservation & environmental issues at the Lafayette Library. The club's objectives are to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening and to encourage civic planting and conservation programs. Additionally, the Garden Club has volunteered to do flower arrangements for the library. We have a number of members with professional experience in floral design that have participated in Bouquet des Artes at the de Young.

**WHEN A CLUNKER IS A GOOD THING**

Ask Jeff



Jeff Joyce

Well, these days your old car or truck could be worth up to a \$4500 government credit if your vehicle qualifies for the newest stimulus plan. You can actually receive a federal credit toward a new car purchase or lease if you turn in your old gas burner to a participating new car dealership. So it lowers the sales price and gets older, gas guzzler type vehicles off the road for good! Then your trade in will be sold for scrap where it will be crushed and will

likely be turned into landfill somewhere, although some parts may be removed for resale (except engine and driveline parts). I guess my only concern is, what if you can't afford new and you don't want a new car payment? Well, some older cars are still well worth keeping and fixing up. More people are holding on to their cars longer than ever, but now there are some options if your old car qualifies. Go to [www.cars.gov](http://www.cars.gov) for all of the details.

Dear Jeff:  
When is a good time to get rid of my car before it starts costing me big bucks to repair?  
Signed, Concerned in Concord  
Dear Concerned  
With today's cars and truck lasting longer than ever, there is no timeline that you can go by. The technology in the modern automobile can see cars reaching higher miles than ever (well over 200,000 miles in many cases). So take care of your car, change the oil regularly,

maintain vital fluid levels and enjoy life without car payments.

Dear Jeff:  
My car has a bad shaking problem when I'm braking and it feels like my wheels are going to fall off. Should I have the tires balanced?  
Signed, Shaky in San Pablo  
Dear Shaky:  
Sounds like you need to have your brakes checked first. Most all cars use disc brakes up front and if the brakes become overheated, the rotors can become warped, which will create an uneven surface contact between the brake pads and rotors. If you drive down hills or stop and go traffic, shift your transmission to a lower gear when slowing down which will help lower the heat within the braking system.

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](mailto:jjoyce@orindamotors.com)

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**Orinda Establishes Environmental Sustainability Working Group**

**Working Group**

The group's established mission is to promote and implement initiatives throughout the city that reduce energy consumption, increase the quality of life of residents, and preserve the community for future generations.

The working group's primary areas of focus will be improved home efficiency through the cre-


ation of checklists that will describe actions property owners can undertake to reduce residential energy consumption; community outreach and education to provide residents with information on available programs, grants, and opportunities to increase energy efficiency in their homes; and the launching of strategies to encourage developers and

... continued from page 4

property owners to undertake energy efficient projects, such as the implementation of a green building code (Orinda currently does not have any green building requirements).

The next meeting of the ESGW will be held on Monday, August 24th at 4:00 p.m. in the Planning Conference Room at City Hall.

**Lamorinda Home Sales continued**

	<b>LAFAYETTE</b>	Last reported: 19
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$532,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,650,000
	<b>MORAGA</b>	Last reported: 13
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$360,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,375,000
	<b>ORINDA</b>	Last reported: 13
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$599,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,650,000

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.

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**Playtime for City Council at Unveiling**

... continued from page 1

The design and construction of the new play area took nearly seven months from start to finish, and is scheduled to officially open to the public around August 20. Park Development Fees paid for the project. Developers who are building a subdivision as well as residents doing a major home remodel, such as adding a couple of bedrooms to an existing home are required to pay Park Development Fees. The idea is that when increasing the city population, a

contribution to city parks and recreation is required. This could be toward purchasing land or in-lieu fees toward a playground such as this.

Although estimated by city engineers to cost \$180,000, residents got a lot of bang for their Park Development Fee buck, the low bid came in at just under \$125,000 due in part to the depressed economy.

In his dedication speech Mayor Don Tatzin recalled the history of the Community Park,

"Back in the early 80's shortly after Cal Trans declared surplus several tracts of land that had been intended for a freeway through Burton Valley, a group of citizens met with, what was then called the Recreation Commission and recommended the City buy 68 acres of this property for a city park." The City Council approved the purchase embarking on an ambitious plan to build new sports fields, then a parking lot, foot-bridge, picnic areas and restrooms.



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**Lamorinda Foreclosures continued**

<b>LAFAYETTE</b>	Via Roble, First National Bank, 07-27-09, \$1,700,000, 4566 sf, 5 bd Via Roble, First National Bank, 07-27-09, \$2,100,000, 6223 sf, 6 bd
<b>MORAGA</b>	Ascot Court, JP Morgan, 07-15-09, \$139,000, 858 sf, 1 bd Ascot Drive, Home Equity Loan Trust, 07-15-09, \$253,920, 753 sf, 1 bd
<b>ORINDA</b>	Dalewood Drive, Bank of America, 07-24-09, \$1,095,398, 4622 sf, 4 bd Lucille Way, Aurora Loan Services, 07-15-09, \$645,211, 1125 sf, 3 bd

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**Less-power or Power-less?**

By Dave Rochlin and Katy Foreman

**D**ave: Well it's mid summer, the time of year when many folks around Lamorinda are left shaking their heads in disgust when their PG&E bills arrive. If you decipher PG&E's complex rate structure, it gets pretty clear that they really want you to use less power. That big bill isn't profiteering-- it's a message. Building power plants and new transmission lines is expensive.

**Katy:** I think everyone benefits when we consume less power - especially the expensive peak power, which is what prompts utilities to build more power plants, something none of us want. Particularly coal ones! I'd rather see us meeting the state's clean energy requirements.

**Dave:** So PG&E has arranged it so that the more wasteful Kilowatts that you use are more costly....the last 200 Kwh you use in a month can actually cost 3 times as much as

the first 200. This means that many of us can cut our electrical bill in half, just by cutting our power usage by 25%. It's almost like getting free car payments or free cell phone service, just for being aware of your energy use. Cell phone service...now there's profiteering.

**Katy:** Well according to Nielsen, the average teen sends 80 text messages a day...so that's another bill you can take control of.

**Dave:** Not likely.

**Katy:** Anyway, don't forget that reducing power use also helps the planet.

**Dave:** Of course! But whatever the motivation, we need to cut down on power.

**Katy:** Pools can be a killer on the power usage. A typical home pool uses about as much energy as it takes to power a home for three months (without a pool!). So it's important to look at how often you

run the filter, use timers so they run off-peak, keep filters clean, and consider a solar solution for heating the water. Solar water heaters for pools can pay for themselves in five years or less.

**Dave:** As a former pool owner, I couldn't believe how much my bill went down by running the sweep less. Air conditioners can also push you into the higher rate tiers. Keeping the ducts and filter clean, using a programmable thermostat, and only cooling the house when you're home can help. Where we live, opening windows at night and closing them during the day can make a big difference as well. Finally, replacing incandescent light bulbs with CFLs saves on both lighting AND cooling bills, since most of the energy used by incandescent bulbs produces heat, not light.

... continued on page 14

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## business briefs

### Local Women get into the Fashion Business

#### Jane Wiser for Etcetera, Jane@wiserfamily.com

The week of August 20-26 will be Jane Wiser's first private fashion showing as an Etcetera representative. She will have just a few days to present and sell the brand's Fall collection to her network, in her own Orinda home. For someone who was an architect and space planner, the new career could appear odd, but it matches this woman's own sense of style and gives her flexibility while generating some extra income for her family. "Trunk show" as it is called, is the selling method of Etcetera, a full line of elegant designer clothes owned by the Connaught Group, which is also responsible for the Carlisle Collection. The company sells only through private sales managed by independent representatives in their homes. The network receives, four times a year, the full collection for their clients to buy, by appointment only. "Last April I had a first trial run here with my manager Jeanie Rotticci to help me," she said, "I had invited about 200 people, 60 came and I sold 200 pieces of clothing." This result is considered pretty good for a first time, so Wiser decided to make a commitment to Etcetera. For the August show, she will receive a large shipment containing the new collection. "It encompasses a large assortment of patterns, colors and sizes," she says. Customers will try and choose in the privacy of her home. The mother of three (two in college and one at Miramonte), feels that the career move is right for her. "I would have difficulty selling something that I wouldn't be proud of," she says, "and even if fashion is not my background I have a sense of harmony and esthetic from my previous career that translated easily." The Etcetera line of clothing is not inexpensive. Nation wide, most of the customers are busy executive women who appreciate having a sort of private consultant who over the years knows what they have and like, and can offer the new pieces that are going to match and improve their wardrobes. There are three other Etcetera representatives in Lamorinda. Karen Orwig (k.orwig@sbcglobal.net) in Moraga will have a show after Wiser, followed by Yvonne Grace (sfgraces@yahoo.com) in Lafayette and Noel Twist in Orinda (twistnd@comcast.net). The company is looking for additional representatives in the Lamorinda area; interested parties can contact the company's Director of Recruiting, Edie Dance, at 850-484-8120 or edance@etceterany.com.



Jane Wiser with a small sample of the Etcetera collection in her Orinda home  
Photo Sophie Braccini

### Lamoreem Gymnastics Moves To New Location and Changes Name to Luna Gymnastics

For 28 years Wayne Clark made a big success of Lamoreem Gymnastics offering top notch gymnastics classes for children and young adults, in a large warehouse-looking studio located in the back of the Rheem Shopping Center. Clark decided to transfer the ownership of the business to Lisa Bond-Nelson (he will remain as a coach), who couldn't negotiate acceptable terms with the owner of the building Kimco Realty Corporation. "We were able to find a new space close by located along Moraga Road where 24-hour Fitness used to be," said Bond-Nelson, "this better location includes outside maintenance, better visibility, windows, a larger size (almost an extra 1000 sf), and attentive property managers." Bond-Nelson and her team are preparing an opening ceremony in early fall once they are settled in their new facility. The building houses Curves as well, which also made the short move from Kimco-owned Rheem Center to the stand alone building at 594 Moraga Road.

### Thursday at Theater Square

Live music, massage, art, wine and gourmet food for two more Thursdays. On September 3 and 17 the merchants at Theater Square in Orinda invite residents to enjoy a relaxing evening from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Massages at Entourage are 30% off for this event. Shelby's is expecting customers to come and taste their delicious cuisine while sipping fine wine. The Square will feature fine art exhibits and live music from East Bay bands.

### Mt Diablo Business Women - Event - September 10, 2009

Networking Dinner, 5:45 to 8:30 p.m., Sept. 10, 2009 with guest speaker Carole Rehbock, MCC of Consulting & Coaching Solutions. She is a coaching, consulting, and management transition expert and specializes in leadership development, performance improvement and transition management. Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette; \$37 members, \$55 guests.

### Lois Rider Kubota Named Sales Associate for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Orinda

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage announced that Lois Rider Kubota has joined the company's Orinda office as a sales associate. In her new position, Kubota will specialize in residential sales in Contra Costa County. "We are thrilled to have Lois join our team," said Val Cook-Watkins, manager of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Orinda. Prior to joining Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Kubota worked in the financial services industry as an insurance broker at Unistar Benefits Insurance Services.

### News from the three Chambers of Commerce

#### Lafayette

- Still time to enjoy "Rock the Plaza" the event put out by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, the City of Lafayette and Red House Studios. The 'Rock the Plaza' series will take place in Lafayette's Plaza Park at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. The headliners start at 6:00 p.m. and are presented free of charge. Come early for a good spot on the lawn and a chance to hear the opening "teen" bands. Two Friday evenings left:  
August 21: The Spazmatics - due to popular demand, the geeks are back! <http://www.spazmatics.live.com>.  
August 28: The Synthetics - popular & danceable covers, <http://thesyntheticsband.com>.
- Mark your calendars: Lafayette Art & Wine Festival - Saturday, September 19 & Sunday, September 20 - Downtown Lafayette.

#### Moraga

- The August Chamber meeting will be Tuesday, August 25th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Moraga Commons Park. The August meeting will be a barbecue. Spouses and/or significant others are invited.

#### Orinda

- Second Orinda Restaurant Tour on September 29. The Tour is a component of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's "Shop Orinda Campaign." The event is scheduled this year for Tuesday, September 29, from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. The fun will start at Theater Square with appetizers from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The restaurant Tour itself is from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and will include favorite local restaurants, and dessert from 8:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The event benefits the Orinda Schools. Tickets should be purchased in advance for \$30.00 per person - with tickets at the door costing \$35.00. Purchase your ticket online at [www.orindachamber.org/OrindaRestaurantTour2009.htm](http://www.orindachamber.org/OrindaRestaurantTour2009.htm).

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

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

## Local Teens Celebrate Book Launch and Literacy Philanthropy

By Sophie Braccini



Teens volunteering at Be the Star You Are! (L to R): Rachel Glass, Elyse Kolnowski, Dani Wong, Gaby Gryko  
Photo Sophie Braccini

September 13 is the official launch of the book *Be the Star You Are! For Teens*, written by teens, for teens. This book is a sequel to Cynthia Brian's *Be the Star You Are!*, published five years ago, that celebrates life through real stories of people who make a difference in a variety of ways. The new book contains 38 contributions, 30 of them written by teenagers. The party to be held on September 13 in Moraga will commemorate ten years of literacy philanthropy by the non-profit organization Be the Star You Are.

When she started to volunteer at Be the Star You Are three years ago, Jacqueline Tao, a junior at Campolindo High School, didn't know that it would lead her to be a published author. When Brian got the idea of doing a teen version of her own book, she started a writing competition and asked her volunteers if they wanted to participate. "I wrote a text called the Gift of Simplicity," said Tao, "it was inspired by a visit I made to Tibet where I observed how very little materialistic things children needed there to be happy."

Each youth contribution is

different and reflects on their experience. Dana Wong wrote the Gift of Faith, inspired by the tragedy that hit her family when her father had a stroke. "I am very close to my father, I have a lot of respect for him," says the Campolindo Senior, "writing about his ordeal helped me voice my emotions." Wong and her family are very proud that she is now a published author. "It is very empowering to see that other people are interested in what you have to say," she adds.

Other contributions include the Gift of Daring by Rachel Glass, a junior at Las Lomas, and the Gift of Charity by Elyse Kolnowski, a senior at Carondelet High School in Concord.

Not all the contributors to the book are actively involved with the charity. Contributions came to Brian from all over the United States and the world. "They are all so different," says Brian, "they are unique and all bring a different piece of inspiration and hope."

Writers or not, all the members of Be the Star You Are are actively preparing for the party. All of the leaders but two are teen volunteers. "That's how they learn," says

Brian, "we want to grow people and let them make mistakes."

Gaby Gryko has been with the group for almost a year. She started while at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School and is already co-chair of the book review team. For the celebration, she sells ad space on the program, calling businesses or visiting them. "I get pretty good response," she says.

The team is expecting 400-500 people to show up for the book-launch/anniversary dance party. Four different bands will play; food, drinks and mocktails will be served. Twelve of the thirty teen authors will be there to sign the book's first release. There will be a raffle and a silent auction; all proceeds (including present and future book sales) will entirely benefit the charity.

The event is on August 13, from 4:00- 9:00 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street in Moraga. Tickets are \$13 in advance, \$20 at the door for standing/dancing (VIP tables for 10 \$713). Pre-buy the book and a party ticket for \$27.

For tickets and details go to: <http://www.bethestaryouare.org/10thAnniv.html>.

### Green and Greener

#### Less-power or Power-less?

**Katy:** I don't have a pool OR air conditioning! But we've replaced all of our windows with energy efficient, double pane versions, and installed an attic fan which keeps the attic around the same temperature as the outside, instead of having it become a pizza oven on hot days. The new windows have the added benefit of keeping the house quieter, and the fan extends the life of the roof.

**Dave:** Attic fans make a huge difference. At the Earth Day festival in Lafayette, I even saw a firm selling solar powered attic fans....you don't need any electricity at all!

**Katy:** Speaking of solar... I have to plug the clothesline again, especially at these temperatures. My clothes are drying faster than they would in the dryer.

**Dave:** I believe I've expressed my opinion on that one before.

**Katy:** Yes you have. If you feel like your electrical bill is out of control, write us at [info@climatepath.org](mailto:info@climatepath.org) and we'll send you a checklist of things you can do to bring that bill down! If your bill is already low, write us and let us know what you did, so we can share it with others.

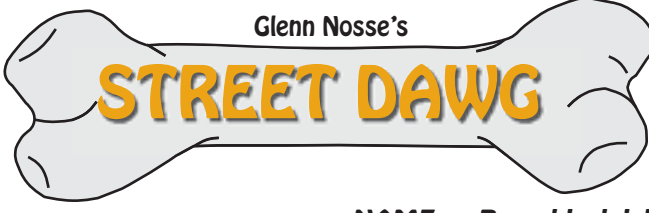
**Dave:** On a final note, EBMUD also charges a lot more if you go

### ... continued from page 13

over baseline. Just like with your power bill, small reductions in your water use can lead to big savings.

Katy Foreman is a committed environmentalist who lives in Lafayette, and Dave Rochlin is a lazy environmentalist who lives in Moraga. Together they operate ClimatePath. Individuals and businesses can measure and then reduce their carbon footprints through tax deductible donations that support carbon reduction activities, renewable energy project, and forestry initiatives around the world at [www.climatepath.org](http://www.climatepath.org)

Glenn Nosse's



**STREET DAWG**

When not flying high in Bay Area skies, Glenn Nosse hangs out in Lafayette with his two- and four-legged friends.

**NAME:** Bo, a black lab mix  
**AGE:** 2  
**JOB:** Flew since puppyhood on the CBS5 helicopter as a crew member with Pilot, Rod Jamieson and Videographer, Glenn Nosse.  
**RESIDENCE:** Lafayette, living with masters Barbara and Walt Luke.  
**STATUS:** Single, but looking.  
**SMART / STUPID PET TRICK:** None, thinks of himself as being a human.  
**FAVORITE RIDE:** Helicopters  
**FAVORITE WALK:** To Bo's in Lafayette to smell the ribs.  
**CURRENT JOB:** Retired, sleeping, but looking toward the skies whenever I hear a helicopter.




Photo Glenn Nosse



Alcalanes High School • Bentley School • Burton Valley • Camino Pablo Campolindo • Contra Costa Jewish Day School • Del Rey Donald L. Rheem • Glorietta • Happy Valley • Joaquin Moraga

# Lamorinda Schools

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

## New Program Focuses on Social Skills for Kids with Autism

By Jennifer Wake



MAPSS students take an art break with counselors before outdoor activities

Photo Jennifer Wake

Several Lamorinda students on the autistic spectrum participated in a unique camp this summer called MAPSS (Mental and Physical Social Skills) at Bancroft Elementary School in Walnut Creek.

The program was created by certified fitness expert Adam Feisterstein, board certified behavior analyst Tanya Scott, and educational specialist Meredith Akers to offer a positive setting for social skills and fitness routines that increase confidence, self-esteem and social behavior.

"Meredith and I have primarily provided support in schools and homes. We have always talked about the idea of social groups and camps in our plans and when a colleague of ours introduced us to Adam, a great team was formed," Akers said. "Combining our focus on social skills, promoting appropriate behavior and passion for building community with a health and fitness component was a great fit."

According to Akers, many of the kids at MAPSS would not experience success on a traditional sports team or during recess and PE, not only feeling unsuccessful with their abilities to participate in physical activities but also feeling unsuccessful socially.

"Our program supports kids in experiencing success both in physical activities as well as in social activities," she said. "They are taught physical activities that promote team work and group collaboration but they are also taught fitness activities that they can do themselves at home."

This fall, MAPSS will be offering afterschool classes at the Moraga Commons, as well as in Berkeley, Oakland and Walnut Creek, and it hopes to expand of-

fering to Lafayette in January. Class size will range from six to 10 students with a 5 to 1 student to staff ratio.

"The fall program will involve behaviorists along with fitness instructors, focusing on social skills, group participation, exercise routines, sports and calisthenics," Feisterstein said. The typical age range for MAPSS is 5 to 18, but there is also a transition program for young adults over the age of 18 which will begin in September.

"We are teaching skills kids will use for life to build and maintain healthy bodies as well as healthy relationships," Akers said. "I don't know of any other programs that have a fitness focus with the collaboration of educational and behavioral support."

For information, contact Feisterstein at wearemapss@gmail.com.

## Science in the Kitchen ~ Easy Experiments for Kids

By Jonathan Winter



Friends Iain Anderson and Jefferson Wake compare two soaps from experiment

Photo Jennifer Wake

Did you ever think about how your microwave works? Microwaves are a kind of light energy that you can't see called *electromagnetic radiation* (ER). Microwaves, like all ER, travel in the form of waves, like the waves you see at the beach. These waves heat things by moving the water molecules inside your food. They are very handy to use in a kitchen because they are not absorbed by the glass, or ceramic or plastic that you cook with. Here are a couple of experiments that you can safely do with a microwave. You might have to adjust the times in these experiments depending on the power of your microwave.

### 1. Gather these supplies to find your microwave's hot spots:

- Chocolate Bar
- Plate

Remember that ER travels in waves? When two waves come together, and the top or crest of a wave hits another crest, the two combine and you get a wave that's twice as big. When a crest hits a trough (the lowest point of a wave) the two waves cancel each other out. You can see where the big waves are with the chocolate bar.

### 2. Start your first experiment:

If your microwave has a turntable, take it out. Put the chocolate bar on the plate and into the microwave. Heat it for 30 seconds on *High*, then take it out and put back in the turntable.

What happened?

The chocolate bar will have melted unevenly. The spots where the bar is melted are where the bar was hit by the double-big waves. (The turntable is to spin your food so it cooks more evenly. In this case we wanted our experiment to cook unevenly.)

Don't eat your chocolate yet!

### 3. Gather these supplies for gas experiments in the microwave:

- Bowl of water
- Plate
- Paper towel
- Bar of Ivory brand soap
- Marshmallow

### 4. Start your second experiment

Step A:

Put the marshmallow in the bowl of water. You should notice that it floats. Take it out and put in the soap bar. It floats too, right? That's because there are lots of little air bubbles trapped in the marshmallow and the soap, making them *buoyant*.

Step B:

Put the soap on a paper towel and microwave it on *High* for 1 minute.

What happened?

As the tiny water molecules in the soap heated up, they heated the air around them. The air expanded, or pushed out, enlarging the soap.

Can you guess what will happen to the marshmallow?

Step C:

Put the marshmallow on the plate and into the microwave. Heat it on *High* for 30 seconds

What happened?

As you may have guessed, the marshmallow expanded just like the soap, due to the heating of the air inside it.

If you have any graham crackers nearby, you can combine the marshmallow and chocolate on one to make a delicious s'more. Then you can use your expanded soap to wash up in the bathtub!

Jonathan Winter has been a science teacher at Lafayette Elementary School in Lafayette since 2001. He lives in Moraga with his wife, children, numerous pets - and he experiments frequently in his kitchen.

## Taking Charge of College Admissions

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

Many parents can recall the days when students applied to one, or perhaps two or three colleges, got accepted to their first choice school, and were done. Today, when eleven million readers across the nation eagerly await the annual August issue of US News and World Report on college rankings, those days seem far behind us and college admissions seems unduly stressful. There are many reasons why this is so. First, thanks to the Baby Boomer generation, there are more high school graduates, and more of these students plan to attend college. In 1997 there were 2.3 million high school graduates compared to 3.3 million in 2009. Projections indicate these numbers will remain high until at least 2022. In addition, the demand for higher education has risen steadily, translating into greater numbers of applicants. For many, a college degree is viewed as the path to economic security, and studies confirm a strong correlation between earnings and educational attainment.

On their part, colleges have responded to increased demand by aggressively reaching out to prospective applicants. Colleges are escalating marketing efforts to attract large and diverse pools of qualified applicants. Broad student recruitment and direct outreach continue to grow in popularity both nationally and abroad. Schools send students multiple letters, attractive guidebooks and invitations to attend regional college conferences and visit campuses for specially arranged tours. College admissions officers visit local high schools and host booths at college fairs. And, of course, technology makes it easier than ever to access college Web sites, take virtual tours and prepare college applications. The Common Application, a standardized form that can be completed once and submitted electronically, has simplified the process; it is currently used by over 350 colleges nationwide.

These trends result in more students applying to more

schools than ever before. Yet this is only part of the reasons for the increased stress. Digging a bit deeper, we see that the sources of anxiety afflicting many families are fairly limited in scope. Admission stress is most felt by students who are applying to the 50 most prestigious colleges and universities in the country. More students are competing for the same number of freshmen spots at these institutions, so many otherwise qualified applicants simply cannot get in. Unfortunately, heightened media attention on these colleges makes it appear more difficult to gain entry to colleges and universities everywhere. The overall impact on students and parents can be nerve-racking. The pressure mounts to take more challenging coursework, register for increasingly earlier test prep, and hire expensive consultants to help students "get into" to the "right" college. College admissions has become big business, and students are the consumers. Education begins to be treated as a commodity rather than a public good. The competition creates a game of winners and losers, and the quality of education may become compromised.

There are a few simple guidelines that can help students reclaim the college admissions process. First, control what you can control. With all the hype, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is you, the student, who should be highly selective in the college she chooses. It is the student who must research and select colleges that meet her interests, needs and academic goals. Next, plan ahead and start early. Involve yourself in activities that are exciting to you. Colleges admit students who take grades seriously, challenge themselves and demonstrate consistent involvement in a couple of activities they are passionate about. Taking charge also means taking an honest look at areas for improvement and focusing on these during the high school years. Being a senior is far more fun and rewarding if you prepare

the groundwork by doing what needs to be done in the first three years. No matter when you get started, the secret is good organization and planning, and applying to colleges that are a good match for you. It is helpful to remember that a good, often a great education can be had at more than 2500 colleges nationwide, and most of these institutions accept 50 to 80 percent of their applicants.

My column will appear regularly through the 2009-2010 academic year. Seniors can look forward to reading about what needs to get done and when. Younger students can learn much about what lies ahead and focus attention on the high schools years as a time to prepare for college. Topics will include college selection criteria and fit, getting organized, teacher recommendations, standardized testing, essays and interviews, college visits, financial aid and more. In the spring, I may be persuaded to share hidden gems—colleges I visit that could be a perfect fit for next year's graduating class! For now, enjoy the last days of summer. In September we will get to work!



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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# Lamorinda Schools

SCHOOL CALENDAR		
<b>School Governing Board Meetings</b>	<b>Lafayette School District</b>	<b>Moraga School District</b>
<b>Acalanes Union</b>	LAFSD Office 3477 School Street, Lafayette	Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
High School District Board Room AUHSD Office 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette	Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009 at 7 pm	Tentative Date - Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2009 at 7:30 pm
Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2009 at 7:30pm	<b>Orinda Union School District</b>	
	OUSD Office 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda	
	Monday, Aug. 24 at 6:00pm	

## Far From Home

### “Sack Lunches to Suitcases”

By Tommy Miers

Tommy Miers is a 2009 Miramonte grad on his way to Chapman University; the following is the first in a series of columns sharing his experiences as he heads 'far from home.'

As the dog days of summer wind down, I watch from afar as the families in my neighborhood struggle to remove the “Swim Fast Max!” or the “Go Waves” engraved in their windows in yellow and green car paint. All the while, the visions of sack lunches, freshman hazing, and “all-nighters” (to finish some horrendous history project) seem to inevitably loom in the near future. While it may be the fear of starting high school, the anticipation of finally being able to drive a car to school, or the stress of starting to think about college applications, the road back to school seems to always bring a palpable excitement into our homes. However, for many others and myself there is a much different feel in

the air. Instead of the freshman hazing, it's the freshman 15, instead of sack lunches it's a 3-foot mini fridge, and the idea of an “all-nighter” might not be completely related to school-work anymore.

Living in Orinda has undoubtedly prepared me for the academic rigors of college, but how could it ever prepare me for what is to lie outside of the classroom? It will be like nothing I have ever experienced before to wander into a Safeway and not know at least half of the families shopping inside. Or, to walk into a classroom and not have my last name read aloud with either delight or despair by a teacher who has already made up his or her mind based on my older siblings. It is this idea of finally being alone that seems to overwhelm me more than freshman hazing or college applications ever did.

Although it may seem like fear and uncertainties cloud the lives of my peers and I, now is more of a time for rejoice than

anything else. It started when we were young playing recreational soccer, baseball, and 7 a.m. swimming. It continued to build throughout tri-city dances and made the transition from AIM to Myspace to Facebook along with us. In the weeks to come, these bonds that we have formed will get packed away tightly in the suitcases and cars around Lamorinda, and eventually find a new home wherever we may be. For we may be far from home, but the world of sack lunches, freshman hazing, and “all-nighter's” has left an indelible footprint on our lives.



## “POWER of YOUTH” Writing Contest Announced

Submitted by Joan Stevenson

Students from throughout Lamorinda can win the chance to check out books on Opening Day on Nov. 4 at the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center and receive a POWER of YOUTH library card as part of a writing contest, “Why Libraries,” sponsored by the City of Lafayette, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation, the County Library and local schools.

Student works from the contest, which is open to all local children, youth and teens, will be evaluated against others in the same grade division with one winner in each division.

The four age/grade divisions, themes and maximum word counts are:

- Kindergarten through Grade 2 (or up to age 7),

“Why I Like Libraries?” (maximum 250 words)

- Intermediate Grades 3-5 (or ages 8-10),

“Why I Like Libraries?” (250 words max.)

- Middle/Junior Grades 6-8 (or ages 11-13), “Why is the New Lafayette Library and Learning Center Important to Me?” (500 words max.)

- Senior Grades 9-12 (or ages 14+),

“Why Are Libraries Important to Society?” (1,000 words max.)

Entries may be handwritten or typed, and should reflect grade-appropriate grammar, punctuation, and spelling. While prose and poetry are all accepted, the entry must relate to the theme. A panel of judges

will judge the essays based on Creativity, Originality and Relevance to the Theme. (Students should do their best, but misspelled words do not disqualify anyone – a well developed concept is more important than technique.)

Deadline for entries is Oct. 15. Please include the entrant's name, address, phone number and email address on the entry, and include the entrant's name on the back of each page in case pages become separated. Submit entries to the current Lafayette Library, the Lafayette City Offices or your school site office. (Not responsible for lost or late entries.) For more information, please call the Lafayette Library at (925) 283-3872.

## Lafayette Illustrator and Author Launch Book at aMFa in Orinda

By Jean Follmer



“Beefy's First Lesson” illustrator Nancy Rosso and author Juandell Lens Brunner share their first book. Photo Jean Follmer

Author Juandell Lens Brunner flew in from Helsinki, Finland, to launch his first book at aMFa (Allison McCrady Fine Arts) in Orinda. Before his move to Finland, Brunner was a tennis instructor at Rancho Colorados Swim & Tennis Club in Lafayette. It was there that he met illustrator Nancy Rosso. “I've given tennis lessons to all of her kids,” Brunner said. “I had wanted to write a book for some time, but the time wasn't there. I remember Nancy say-

ing she was an artist.”

Brunner grew up in Florida and began playing tennis as a child. He encountered challenges along the way, but persevered. “I was told that tennis wasn't for blacks – it was for rich people. I'm glad I didn't believe it,” Brunner said. “Beefy's First Lesson” is about a 6-year-old boy who hails from a tennis family and gets his first racket and lesson on his sixth birthday. Beefy happens to be black. “I wanted to write a book be-

cause when I grew up there were a lot of people that saw a lot of potential in me,” Brunner said.

Nancy Rosso is the talent behind the beautiful hand drawings in the book. “I've been drawing all my life. I was the kid who sat in the back of the classroom and drew while the teacher was talking,” Rosso said. A first book for Rosso as well, she was pleased to include her hand drawing in the book. Rosso said it would have been much easier to produce the photos digitally but they really wanted to incorporate art with the story. Rosso had a table set up for children to try their hands at authoring and illustrating. Children were invited to draw a series of pictures with captions that told a story of their choice; most stories centered on “what I did this summer.”

Brunner and Rosso became acquainted with Angelina McKinsey of Martin Pearl Publishing and “Beefy's First Lesson,” the first of a series of books, was born. In conjunction with Martin Pearl Publishing, Brunner and Rosso generously donated 10 percent of proceeds to EFO, LASF or MEF. For more information, visit www.martinpearl.com.



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### Bodhi Seed Camp, Awakening Young Minds

By Sophie Braccini



Children sitting in the Monastery during story telling

Photo Sophie Braccini

For the first time, the Buddha Gate Monastery of Lafayette proposed a camp for children ages 5 to 15 where they learned about Buddhist values and Chinese culture, how to meditate, and mingled with more traditional fun activities. Quite an unusual experience in Lamorinda!

The Buddhist Monastery is nestled on a peaceful property at the northern border of Lafayette. The week-long camp was full, with 80 kids attending, and began on August 2.

Classes were taught by the Abbess, Master Jian Sheng, herself and many other volunteers. Evan Cushing, a Lafayette native and college student majoring in philosophy and religion, was the head of the T.A.s. "The children were amazing," he said. "Most of them had had no previous experience of meditation and/or Buddhism. Some hated it at first, but they got taken by the Abbess story-telling abilities and through her guidance learned to quiet their bodies and mind. After two or three days they got the knack of it and loved it."

The children confirmed. "It is hard to concentrate on nothing," said Uma who will be attending sixth grade at Stanley Middle School this year. "You make sure your body is completely still and after I really enjoy the calm." She plans to continue the practice, especially

before tests.

"I like to sit still," said 10-year-old Irene.

The young T.A.s enjoyed the camp as well. Fifteen-year-old Alan Deaton (who will be a junior at Miramonte this fall) had never had any exposure to that culture and its practices. "Once I was able to do it, it was cool, it felt really relaxing and I was truly focused afterward." Deaton was interested by the whole camp, and, even though he does not think he would become a vegetarian, enjoyed the values that were taught.

Meditation is a technique that is central to the Buddhist teaching. "Meditation is a way to raise awareness and reveal one's true nature," said the Abbess. "In our busy lives our minds get scattered. Meditation helps to re-center inward." She was very impressed by the children who came to the camp. "They were very active and present," she said. "They followed guidance and participated eagerly."

Meditation was just a part of the daily activities of the children. They experienced Tai Chi, Dharma instruments, candle making, mosaic, and gymnastics, among other activities. The Monastery did not require any payment for the camp. "This is Dana giving," explains Margaret Goglia, a Moraga resident who has been involved with Buddha Gate for two years. "One gives

without expecting anything in return."

Parents can make donations, according to what feels right to them or they can help with the camp. Uma's mother, Lafayette resident Shalini Agrawal expressed her gratitude for the experience. "There is nothing quite comparable in the area," she said. "The Buddhist teachings are not exactly our culture (her family is Hindu), but the values are universal and very centering." She appreciated the opening to a different culture that the camp offered her daughters.

For the Abbess, the purpose of the camp was to plant a seed. "In Taiwan, our Venerable Master Wei Chueh created a children camp many years ago." She remembers the story of a student who had been to the camp as a kid, and who, as a young adult met with challenges that drove him close to deep depression. "He was able to draw from the happy memories he had kept from his youth camp to re-center his life and he wrote a beautiful thank you letter to the Monastery," she remembers, adding, "When a seed is planted you never know when it will mature and flourish."

During the year, the Monastery offers on-going classes for children and adults. For more information, go to [www.buddhagate.org](http://www.buddhagate.org).

### 4-H California Youth Fair, Something for Everyone

Submitted by Jennifer Chan



Advanced poultry showmanship participants at the CA Youth Fair. Left to right - Carolyn Campbell, Alison Jefferson, Allison Kostecki, Madison Gibson and Jennifer Chan

This year's winner for small master showmanship (one of the highest 4-H honors at the California Youth Fair held July 13 to 18 at the Antioch fair grounds) was Allison Kostecki from Lamorinda.

Throughout the week participants practiced and trained their animals so that they were ready later in the week for showmanship - a basic competition where participants work animals to the best of their ability. An overall winner is chosen who had the best showing of all of the different species.

Animal competitions weren't the only thing at the fair. The Stills building featured still objects created by 4-H'ers. There was sewing, woodworking, cooking, photography, poetry, decorating, educational panels, and so much more. These items, too, got placed. Anyone under nine years old

was not judged but received a participation ribbon.

For more information about the Contra Costa County 4-H youth program, visit <http://groups.ucanr.org/cc4h/>. Twelve-year-old Jennifer Chan attended the California Youth Fair with her 4-H Club in July.

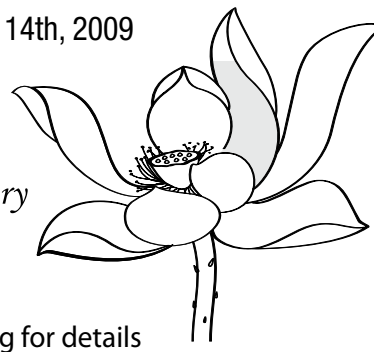
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## How Six Figure Income Families Get Thousands of Dollars in Free Money For College

Local man teaches free workshops to help parents save thousands in process

**Moraga**---East Bay parents that are planning on sending a child to college in the next few years, but aren't quite sure how to pay for it can now rest a little easier. Gerna Benz of Bay Area College Planners has been educating families in the community for over 15 years.

"It's really sad, but most parents that we talk to have done real well financially, but never found the time to save for college, and now they're facing a bill of \$18,000-\$45,000 a year, and they don't know who to turn to," he says. "Further, most of the time, all they hear is to not even bother applying for any aid because they make too much money. However, most of the time, that is simply not true even if they make a six-figure income."

Gerna would know, because his group has worked with over 1400 families in the last 10 years ranging from single moms to corporate CEO's, and they say they can help anyone get through the process and save a bundle.... no matter how good of a student they have or how much money they make.

"I got started in this because I was a very good student, but no one told us anything about how to access money for college, or even how to pick a career...so I didn't go right away. But, I vowed that I would learn the process and devote my time to helping families not fall into the same trap that we did. 'Simply put, we show parents the truth that they aren't hearing anywhere else about how the college process really works and save thousands of dollars in the process.'" Lamorinda parents will have an opportunity

to hear Gerna speak. He is teaching his class 'How to Give Your Kid a 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke!' on Saturday August 22nd at the Moraga Library located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556 from 11:00pm-12:15pm PM.

"We'll discuss everything from the greatest myths about the college process, to how to send your student to a fancy private school for less than the cost of a junior college...it'll be like learning how to get a brand new Lexus for the price of a used pick up truck," he grins.

Topics will also include why private scholarships and 529 plans are a waste of time, how to double or even triple the amount of free money you receive from each school, and how to avoid the one mistake that will kill your chances of getting any money at all that almost every other parent will make this coming January, and much, much more.

"They will learn a ton, and I do my best to make the class fun," he says. "It's like I'm giving them a super bright flash light to navigate a pitch black cave, while all the other parents continue to stumble around blindly! 'Don't forget: the class is totally free, but seats are limited. Also, we are not sure when we will be teaching these classes in the East Bay again since my August and September calendar is already filling up, so come on out and see me.' You can reserve a seat online at [www.baycollegeplanners.com](http://www.baycollegeplanners.com) or by calling our 24 hour reservation line at (877) 924-3726.

Submit stories to

[schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

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**Not to be missed**

shapes, colors, and mood he finds at a particular time and place. The exhibition runs from August 1st to 31st and is sponsored by the Orinda Arts Council.

The Moraga Art Gallery presents



a new group show, "Bold Statements" by local Bay Area and Lamorinda artists showing watercolors, oil painting, collage, ceramics, photography, mixed media, jewelry and glass design. August 18 - October 31. The Gallery is doubly featuring the work of Angelica Samame, painter and jewelry designs by Laura Paige. The public is invited to the Opening Reception on Saturday, August 22, from 3-5 pm. Moraga Art Gallery, 570 Center St, Rheem Valley Shopping Center/next to Longs Drugs. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 pm. (925) 376-5407.

phone: (925)631-4379. Website: hearstartgallery.org.

**Martinez Gallery of artwork** done by students of the "Green Youth Project", a new arts program at Juvenile Hall. Karan Simoni is the Director of the program and is enthusiastic about her students work. Making use of dumpster diverted items to promote self awareness and healing has brought about some positive changes and generated new perspectives in the youth involved in the program. The exhibit runs from September 14 through the 21st. There will be a reception at the GALLERY on September 18th from 6pm to 9pm. 630 Court Street, Martinez. 925 370-6270. M-F 9-3, Sat. 9-1.

**Leslie Swartz, a member of the Moraga Art Gallery**, and Moraga resident, will have a display of her paintings and drawings at the Moraga Library during the entire month of September. The theme for her show is 'A Celebration of Diversity'. Working with a variety of media--including oils, acrylics, graphite, pen, and pastel--Leslie draws inspiration for her productions from observations of nature, the photographs she has taken on visits to various destinations, and from her imagination.

**Susan Paulson will be exhibiting** her original paintings during the month of August at Fastframe of Lafayette. Paulson, who grew up in Orinda and whose mother was an art teacher, is a mostly self-taught artist. She studied interior design at Western Design in SF and became an interior designer, which she credits for keeping her in a creative environment working with colors and textures. Last year Paulson studied art in Paris and was inspired, much like the impressionists, by the natural light in France. FASTFRAME is located at 3571 Mt. Diablo Blvd., next to Postino's. Call owner Anthony Ruiz at 283-7620 for more information.

**MUSIC**

**August 20, Dave Crimmen** (Rockabilly) - The last of the Moraga Summer Concert series, Thursday evening at the Moraga Commons Park. Bring your picnic blanket or lawn chairs to the grassy hillside in front of the band shell. Enjoy the music while your children enjoy the park. Snack Bar opening at 6:00 pm. Concerts start at 6:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm.

**Not to be missed**

**San Francisco Opera Guild**, East Bay Chapter Presents: Meet the Maestro! Sunday, August 30th, 5:30 p.m. at the Veteran's Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette. Hors d'oeuvres, wine and other beverages will be served. Cost: \$45 (approx. \$30 tax deductible). All proceeds benefit the San Francisco Opera's education programs for students K-12 and to help promote the careers of aspiring young singers. Information: Silvia Lin, (925) 838-9255 or LLLL@juno.com.

**Young People's Symphony Orchestra (YPSO)** holds auditions for new members August 26, September 1 and 3 for the 2009-2010 season. Auditions are held at Crowden Music Center, Rose St. at Sacramento St. in Berkeley, 4:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m., by appointment. Candidates should prepare a scale and a solo, and will be asked to sight-read standard repertoire which is provided at the audition. YPSO is the oldest youth orchestra in California and the second oldest in the nation. The orchestra is comprised of 94 youths ages 11-22 who come from 28 Bay Area cities in five counties. Rehearsals are Mondays, 6:00-9:30 p.m., September through June, at Crowden Music Center. The season will end with a June tour to Alaska. For an appointment, visit www.ypsosmusic.net, email ypsosmusic@yahoo.com.

The 'Rock the Plaza' series will



Rock the Plaza with Total Eclipse

take place in Lafayette's [Elam & Margaret Brown] Plaza Park at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. The headliners start at 6:00pm and are presented free of charge. Arrive a little early for a good spot on the lawn.

**August 21:** The Spazmatics -due to popular demand, we're bringing back the geeks- www.sfbands.net/Spazmatics.htm.

**August 28:** The Synthetics - popular & danceable covers- www.thesyntheticsband.com.

**On Tuesday, August 25 at 7 p.m.**, the final offering of the Summer Music Series at the Orinda Library is a lively change: The Real Placebos. This popular local group plays American Roots Music, which in-

cludes everything from acoustic blues to old time standards that originated in the deep south. The program will take place inside the library, beside the fireplace, which allows for a casual, intimate atmosphere. It is free of charge and will last about an hour. The Orinda Library is at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more information, please call (925) 254-2184 or visit the library website at http://ccplib.org.

**THEATRE**

**D.V.C: Department of Drama Announces Auditions** August 26-28 for its Production of URINETOWN. Director: Ryan Mark Weible "One of the most uproariously funny musicals in recent years, URINETOWN is a hilarious tale of greed, corruption, love, and revolution in a time when water is worth its weight in gold.

**Rosie the Riveter & the "Homefront Soldiers"** of WW2 are the subjects of The World Premiere Musical RIVETS by Kathryn G. McCarty (libretto/lyrics) and Mitchell Covington (music), on the SS Red Oak Victory at the site of the historic Kaiser Richmond Shipyards. Produced by Galatean Players Ensemble Theatre. WHERE: Onboard the SS Red Oak Victory, 1337 Canal Blvd., Berth 6A, Richmond. www.ssredoakvictory.org. WHEN: August 28 - Sept. 27. Box Office (925) 676-5705 www.galateanplayers.com.

**Cal Shakes presents Samuel Beckett's "Happy Days"** August 12-Sept 6th. Artistic Director Jonathon Moscone brings the work of the Nobel Prize-winning Beckett to the Bruns stage for the very first time with this astounding portrait of a woman buried up to her waist in sand, and in the comically painful toil of her life. Bruns Amphitheater: 100 Gateway Blvd., Orinda. Box office: 510.548.9666 or www.calshakes.org.

**Town Hall Theatre begins** its new season with a comedic powerhouse: Yasmina Reza's 'ART' September 3 - October 3. Described as a marriage between Moliere and Woody Allen, this play asks the big questions: what is art, and why does it matter? Written by the 2009 Tony Award-winning playwright, Yasmina Reza, 'Art' has garnered much praise since it was first performed in 1994. In 1998 'Art' earned Reza a Lawrence Olivier Award and a Tony Award for best comedy. For Tickets: (925) 283-1557 or online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.

**ART**

Lafayette Gallery's new show, "Ten Years Together," runs from August 4th to October 10th. Since opening its doors to the public in 1999, the Lafayette Gallery has presented over sixty-five art exhibitions, each with a different theme. The founding members envisioned a gallery that would support art and artists. The Gallery features work in oil, acrylic and watercolor painting, pastels, printmaking, mixed media, collage, sculpture, pottery, woodworking, glass and jewelry. The new show will pair recent work with earlier

work by the member artists. Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday; 11AM to 5pm. (925) 284-2788, www.Lafayettegallery.net.

**Award-winning watercolor artist** George Ehrenhaft will display 30 paintings at the Orinda Library Gallery during the month of August. The selection of landscape paintings includes several close-to-home sites such as Lafayette Reservoir, Moraga Ranch, Tilden Regional Park, and Mount Diablo, among others. Ehrenhaft, a resident of Moraga, prefers to paint plein-air rather than from photos in order to convey the

"California in Relief: A History in Wood and Linocut Prints" is on view through Sunday, Sept. 20, and features nearly 100 works of art spanning 100 years of California art history. The exhibition is curated by Art Hazelwood, who also curated the highly praised 2002 William Wolff retrospective, "Masquerade and Revelation." Public Hours: Wed - Sun, 11 AM - 4:30 PM. Admission: \$3 adults; kids 17 and under free; Gallery members free. Gallery Tele-

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# Not to be missed

## LITERATURE

**Orinda Theology Group.** A new theology discussion group has been formed by members of the Orinda Community Church. We select books of interest to the group members and meet once a month to share insights from our reading. We wish to invite anyone interested to join us every third Tuesday of the month, at 7p in the library of the church hall at 10 Irwin Way. We have taken the summer off but will reconvene Tuesday, Sept 15 at 7pm. The book currently under study is Deepak Chopra's "The Third Jesus" which may be purchased at Orinda Theologians" to get a discount there. If you have any questions, contact Orinda Community Church office at (925) 254-4906.

**Come experience storytelling** with the Contra Costa Tale Spinners keeping the oral storytelling tradition alive! The swap meets the Fourth Thursday of every month at the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way in the Gallery Room from 7:00 - 9:00 PM. This THURSDAY August 27 2009, Bobbie Kinkead tells an epic story from the Celtic Mabinogion, 'Geraint and Ebin' from Lady Ebin's point of view about her husband's quests as a knight. We welcome listeners and provide 70 minutes of open mike for all who wish to share a story, be it funny or sad, true or not. Contact Sally at (925) 372-7036 or Bobbie at (510) 655-5608.

**BOOK SALE - Friends of the Orinda Library - Thursday, Sept. 3 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Sorting Room and Bookshop (Bookshop will remain open until 6 p.m.) This monthly sale offers quality books for all interests and all ages. Funds raised are used for new books, computers and other library materials and library programs. Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. (925) 254-1358.

**Friends of the Moraga Library present** their annual sale of (sorted) books, CDs, videos etc. Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.—Book Sale and bag sale from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd, (925) 376-6852.

**Celebrate Lafayette's Local Authors!** Thursday September 3 at 7:30 pm. The Friends of the Lafayette Library invites you to honor our local literati—from the nature-inspired poems of David Seaborg to the gut-wrenching, real-life stories of Marie Estorge; from Hugh Winig's fasci-

ating stories of a career spent listening to his patients to Maria Espinosa's novel of a troubled mother-daughter relationship to Pamela Prime's book about spiritual awakenings. Here, in our very own town, we find great talent and inspiration. Come hear these authors read and discuss the writing (and publishing) process.

## KIDS

**Back-to-School Shoe Sale** to benefit kids in Africa, Saturday, Aug. 29 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The J.F. Kapnek Trust, which works with orphans and vulnerable children in Zimbabwe, has partnered with The Nurture Center in Lafayette to sell hundreds of pairs of brand new children's shoes to support preschool and pediatric HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Zimbabwe. Brands include Keen, Stride-Rite, Primigi and many more in sizes toddler to children's 4. Each pair is only \$15. All proceeds support Kapnek programs. Come early for the best selection. 3399 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Details: info@JFKapnekTrust.org or www.JFKapnekTrust.org.

**Orinda Idol 2009 Finalists Sing!** Orinda Farmer's Market August 29th 10:15am-12:15pm, Orinda Idol 2009 FINALS! Orinda Theatre September 13th 11am-7:30pm It's Free! Come Early! Competition Schedule: 11:00-12:30 Elementary Gr. K-2 & 3-5; 1:00-2:15 Middle School; 2:45-4:00 High School; 4:30-5:45 Groups Gr. K-5 & 6-12; 6:15-7:30 Announcement of Winners.

**Get your party shoes on and celebrate** the 10th anniversary of the literacy charity, Be the Star You Are! at our mega BOOKS AND BANDS BASH BENEFIT on September 13 from 4-9pm in Moraga. New York Times best selling author, Cynthia Brian, and contributors launch the new book, Be the Star You Are! for TEENS and you and your family can come dance under the stars with music from live bands. For tickets and information go to bethestaryouare.org. Place: Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. For ticket info call (925) 377-7827. Event is sponsored by Be the Star You Are!®, a local literacy charity, celebrating its 10th anniversary and is all organized by local high school teens. Tickets: \$13.

**Follow the Yellow Brick Road** to Moraga Royale for a fun time celebrating Grandparent's Day! Enjoy a Jazz Band, Pony Rides, Local Wiz-

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**Children's Events at the Moraga Library:** Wednesdays, Sept. 16, 23 and 30—Lapsit Storytime—10am - for babies 6 to 24 months and their caregivers. Wednesdays, Sept. 16, 23 and 30—Toddler Time—10:45am - stories, rhymes and fun for ages 2 to 3-1/2 with adult participation. Tuesdays, Sept. 15, 22 & 29—Crafty Storytime—4 pm - stories and crafts for ages 4-7. 1500 Saint Mary's Rd, Moraga, (925) 376-6852.

## OTHER

**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.

**"It's a Luau! Join Beachcomber Singles** for a Fundraiser for Juvenile Hall Kids. Saturday, August 22 in Hercules in the afternoon through to the night. Authentic Polynesian food including a Kaluha Pig and over 30 authentic Polynesian dancers. Many door prizes to win, drawing starting at 7:30 p.m. Music for dancing by "Now Playing" from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Reservations are \$30; call Jerry at (510) 799-2207 EARLY for a space. Bring your favorite beverage and a gift for the girls suitable for ages 10 to 18. Dress Hawaiian and bring your swim suit.

**On Saturday, September 19th** from 10am - 2pm the town of Orinda will host the 5th Annual Classic Car Show. This free event, presented by Orinda Motors, continues to benefit the Seniors Around Town transportation service, an Orinda Association program. In addition to American and European classic and modern exotic cars, this year's event will feature special exhibits of classic and custom motorcycles as well as vintage race cars. The event is free, but if you make a donation of \$25 you will have an opportunity to ride in one of the cars during the parade at the close of the show. Last year's event had more than 125 car entries and raised \$16,000 for the Seniors Around Town program. The Show will be held in Orinda Village at Orinda Motors, located at 63 Orinda Way.

**Join more than 500 Bay Area residents** as we participate in The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network's (FAAN's) Walk for Food Allergy: Moving Toward a Cure. It will take place in San Francisco, at the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park, by the De Young Museum and California Academy of Sciences on Sat, Sept 12: Check-in 8:30 AM, Start 9:30 AM, Entertainment/Children's Activities until 12:00 PM. FAAN

(www.foodallergy.org) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public awareness of food allergy and its consequences, to providing advocacy and education, and to advancing research on behalf of all those affected by it. Volunteer to help organize the Walk or to help on Walk Day. For more information, please visit www.foodallergywalk.org.

**Country Western BBQ & Dance,** Sept. 19, 6:00 - 11:00 p.m., music provided by The California Cowboys, Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga, for info. (925) 376-6850.

**Fall's 12-week series of Awareness Through Movement®** classes starts Sept. 8th at Lafayette Community Center. Based on the Feldenkrais Method® of Somatic Education, lessons consist of following gentle and enjoyable movement instructions focusing on flexibility, balance and coordination. These classes can compliment any wellness program and no prior experience is necessary. Call (925) 284-2232 or go to www.LafayetteRec.org. for registration details. Contact instructor directly for further information about class content: Peterboffey1@gmail.com or (925) 395-1240.

## GARDEN

**Montelindo Club general meeting** and speakers, third Friday of the month, September through May. Friday, September 18, Orinda Community Church, #10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Refreshments and plant sale at 9 a.m., meeting at 9:30, speaker at 10:30. The meeting is free and welcomes guests and new members. Web site: http://www.montelindogarden.com. email contact: montelindogarden@aol.com. The September speaker will be Napa Valley native, Cynthia Brian, author of "Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul." Her topic will be "Digging Deep- Gardening With Cynthia."

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## Please submit:

**Events:** calendar@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Stories:** storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Letters:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Opinion:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com

**The BOOKS and BANDS BASH BENEFIT!**

Dancing Under the

Sunday, September 13th  
4:00-9:00pm

Celebrating Moraga's own **Be The Star You Are!**® literacy charity's 10th anniversary and the launch of the new book, Be The Star You Are!® for TEENS featuring many teen writers from our community.

Place: Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga, Ca. 94556  
Price: \$13.00 in advance. Tickets are limited!  
Date/Time: Sunday, September 13th, 4:00pm- 9:00pm

Come out to this fun community party and dance to local bands, enjoy great food, and meet book contributors!

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Orinda Motors Presents **om**

**The 5th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show**

Saturday, September 19th, 10am-2pm

Benefiting the Seniors Around Town Transportation Program

**FREE ADMISSION**

**Cruise in a Classic!**  
Donate \$25 and choose your ride for the parade

Enjoy vintage and modern exotic cars and motorcycles, food, music, and more! The show will be held in Orinda Village at Orinda Motors, 63 Orinda Way.

Join us as a spectator or to show your car or motorcycle!

See a Special Factory Display of Arlan Ness Vintage and Custom Motorcycles

The 5th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show Sponsored by:

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Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining •

**Correction**, issue date 08/05/09:  
In Mikaela's Artichoke Risotto, I mentioned how to add the broth, however missed the broth in the ingredient list. The recipe calls for 3 ¼ cups of chicken broth.

## Summer Fruit Crisp with Vanilla Bean Ice Cream

By Susie Iventosch



Lauren Hoover Photo provided

Have you ever tried a wheat-free, dairy-free recipe only to discover it tastes like a cardboard copy of real food, lacking the key attributes of flavor and texture? If so, Lauren Hoover has just the cookbook for you. No Wheat, No Dairy, No Problem is a revolutionary cookbook filled with 150 tested recipes, which, in addition to being wheat and dairy-free, use only unrefined sugars, so diabetics can enjoy them too.

"No Wheat No Dairy No Problem aims to help everyone with food sensitivities or allergies, diabetes and autism," Hoover pointed out. "However, it is for anyone who desires to eat and cook healthy. It is also great for people who need to eat heart healthy diets, since the main flour used is oat flour."

Hoover, a graduate of the California Culinary Academy and St. Mary's College of Moraga, wrote this book so people with limited diets and food issues won't unnecessarily be deprived of the recipes and foods they've grown to love ... like ice cream!

"I suffered stomach aches and congestion my whole life, until I was finally diagnosed with a dairy allergy at the age of 35," she said. "As a pastry chef, I was overexposed to wheat, which resulted in wheat allergy, too."

Prior to her diagnosis, Hoover had grown weary of her daily discomfort and thought "it can't be normal to feel like this all the time." So she made a concerted effort to find out what was wrong with her. Her research pointed to a possible wheat allergy, and as a result she omitted wheat from her diet, which made her feel better, but still not great. Then she met with an internist who ordered blood work that revealed a dairy allergy. Within six weeks of cutting out dairy and wheat, Hoover had a new lease on life.

"The stomach aches and congestion went away and I had more energy than ever before," she explained. "But the foods I was able to eat on my new regime often tasted like cardboard. So I started converting old favorites into new edibles for me."

Hoover also says that many children who actually have wheat allergies have been misdiagnosed with autism.

"The autism community is making great strides

with this kind of diet," she said. "There have been cases where autism symptoms have vanished after being on a wheat-free, dairy-free diet."

With a new-found mission to help as many people in the world as possible, this classically-trained chef who honed her culinary skills in many famous kitchens (La Folie, Hyatt and Marriot resorts, Fairmont Hotel, Bally's Hotel and Casino and Wente Brothers Winery, to name a few) decided to write a cookbook at the urging of her good friends.

For the past seven years, that is exactly what she set out to do, working weekends and nights on the book, which was just published in July.

"Through this cookbook, people on limited diets due to allergies can now enjoy many of the foods they know and love," she said. "Actually, anyone can try these recipes and appreciate that eating and cooking healthy can be delicious!"

Alisa Fleming of GoDairyFree.org said, "Lauren Hoover applied her expertise and own experience to create this cookbook filled with tantalizing recipes. Her use of natural ingredients and [her] unwillingness to sacrifice an ounce of flavor has resulted in this delicious compilation of Southern comfort food, elegant entertaining and seductive desserts that will make you forget what isn't inside!"

In the book, Hoover offers tips for what to look for on labels to determine dairy and wheat content, helpful hints about safety and sanitation, and resources for where to find more information about food allergies and how to combat them. No Wheat No Dairy No Problem offers suggestions of how to eat healthier in general and the recipes call for commonly found ingredients.

"It was very important to me to use healthy, familiar and readily available ingredients in my recipes for No Wheat No Dairy No Problem" Hoover said "In realizing that not everyone has a health food store or specialty shop near their home, I added recipes for the main ingredients including: almond milk and oat flour in case people cannot find the ingredients they can make them."

This recipe for Summer Fruit Crisp is timely with all of the beautiful ripe stone fruits at the farmers' markets. We made this dish last weekend with peaches, plums and nectarines and it turned out beautifully!

To learn more about food allergies, or to purchase a copy of No Wheat No Dairy No Problem, please visit [www.NoWheatNoDairyNoProblem.com](http://www.NoWheatNoDairyNoProblem.com)

### INFO BOX

Agave nectar, a natural extract from the cactus plant with minimal processing, has a low glycemic index (eliminated the highs and lows associated with refined sugar) and tolerated by most diabetics.

There has been a lot of confusion about oats not being gluten-free. The oats are actually gluten free, but most are contaminated with gluten in the manufacturing process. Now there are companies such as Bob's Red Mill, ([www.gluten-free.org](http://www.gluten-free.org)) that have gluten free oats available.

### Summer Fruit Crisp

I look forward to summer fruits all year long. Who doesn't like warm fruit with a crumbly topping with vanilla ice cream?

Yields: 1 (9x12) pan or 2 quart round soufflé dish-serves 6-10 people

### INGREDIENTS

#### Filling

- 3 pounds of stone fruit (nectarines, peaches, apricots, plums), 1 inch slices
- ½ cup agave nectar
- 1 teaspoon real vanilla extract
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon tapioca starch or 2 tablespoons oat or barley flour

#### Topping

- 1 cup oat or barley flour, sifted
- ½ cup date sugar or maple sugar or sucanat (I substituted organic turbinado raw cane sugar)
- 1 stick vegan Earth Balance, cold or frozen and diced
- zest of one lemon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla powder, optional
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds)
- ½ cup old fashioned rolled oats (not quick cooking)

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Wash lemons and fruit with vegetable wash. Do you know how many people have handled that fruit? Trust me, you don't want to know...just wash it and rinse well with cold water! Slice fruit and put in a large bowl and add the rest of the filling ingredients to the fruit, stir well. Place fruit mixture into a 9x12 glass baking dish or a 2-quart round soufflé dish or something equivalent-it can be a different shape, but the same size. Set fruit aside.

For the topping, place all ingredients into a food processor with the "S" blade (Sabatier chopping blade) and pulse until it is crumbly and the size of cherries. This can also be done with a pastry cutter in a bowl. Pour evenly over fruit and bake for approximately 30 minutes or until the topping is golden brown and fruit is bubbling. Cool for one hour.

\*Can prepare crisp ahead of time and freeze to bake at a later time. If frozen, increase baking time to approximately 1 hour.



Susie Iventosch  
suziven@gmail.com

Please see page 21 for the ice cream recipe.



Lauren's peachy-pear crisp  
Photo Susie Iventosch

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## We're making whoopie!

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Visit us Friday 8/21/09 at 35 Lafayette Circle where we'll be handing out free Whoopies from 2-4pm!

\*Limit 1 Whoopie per customer

## Back to School Night

Saturday August 29<sup>th</sup>  
5:30 to 8:30 pm

**10% Donation to MEF:**  
(dinner and art purchases)

**MORAGA EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

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LAMORINDA's Restaurants		... updated July 8, 2009 ...	
<b>American</b>			
Bistro	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-7108	
Chow Restaurant	53 Lafayette Cir, Laf,	962-2469	
Quiznos	3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	962-0200	
Ranch House	1012 School St, Mor,	376-5127	
Terzetto Cuisine	1419 Moraga Way, Mor,	376-3832	
The Cheese Steak Shop	3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-1234	
<b>BBQ</b>			
Bo's Barbecue	3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-7133	
<b>Burger Joint</b>			
Flippers	960 Moraga Rd, Laf,	284-1567	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	400 Park, Mor,	376-8888	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	76 Moraga Way, Ori,	254-8888	
<b>Café</b>			
Ferrari-Lucca Delicatessens	23 Lafayette Cir, Laf,	299-8040	
Geppetto's cafe	87 Orinda Way, Ori,	253-9894	
Mamounia Express Cafe	3732 Mt. Diablo Blvd #179, Laf,	299-1372	
Rising Loafer	3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf,	284-8816	
Susan Foord Catering & Cafe	965 Mt. View Dr., Laf,	299-2469	
<b>California Cuisine</b>			
Artisan Bistro	1005 Brown St., Laf	962-0882	
Metro Lafayette	3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-4422	
Shelby's	2 Theatre Sq, Ori,	254-9687	
<b>Chinese</b>			
Asia Palace Restaurant	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor,	376-0809	
Chef Chao Restaurant	343 Rheem Blvd, Mor,	376-1740	
China Moon Restaurant	380 Park St, Mor,	376-1828	
The Great Wall Restaurant	3500 Golden Gate Way, Laf,	284-3500	
Hsiangs Mandarin Cuisine	1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori,	253-9852	
Lily's House	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf,	284-7569	
Mandarin Flower	581 Moraga Rd, Mor,	376-7839	
Panda Express	3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	962-0288	
Szechwan Chinese Restaurant	79 Orinda Way, Ori,	254-2020	
Uncle Yu's Szechuan	999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf,	283-1688	
Yan's Restaurant	3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-2228	
<b>Coffee Shop</b>			
Millie's Kitchen	1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf,	283-2397	
Squirrel's Coffee Shop	998 Moraga Rd, Laf,	284-7830	
Village Inn Café	204 Village Square, Ori,	254-6080	
<b>Continental</b>			
Petar's Restaurant	32 Lafayette Cir, Laf,	284-7117	
Vino Restaurant	3531 Plaza Way, Laf,	284-1330	
Duck Club Restaurant	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-7108	
<b>French</b>			
Chevalier Restaurant	960 Moraga Road, Laf,	385-0793	
<b>Hawaiian Grill</b>			
Lava Pit	2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori,	253-1338	
<b>Indian</b>			
Swad Indian Cuisine	3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	962-9575	
<b>Italian</b>			
Giardino	3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-3869	
Knox Restaurant, Lounge	3576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-5225	
La Finestra Ristorante	100 Lafayette Cir, #101, Laf,	284-5282	
La Piazza	15 Moraga Way, Ori,	253-9191	
Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria	975 Moraga Rd, Laf,	284-3081	
Michael's	1375 Moraga Way, Mor,	376-4300	
Mondello's	337 Rheem Blvd, Mor,	376-2533	
Pizza Antica	3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-0500	
Pizzeria Amoroma Restaurante	65 Moraga Way, Ori	253-7662	
Postino	3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-8700	
Ristorante Amoroma	360 Park St, Mor,	377-7662	
<b>Japanese</b>			
Asia Palace Sushi Bar	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor,	376-0809	
Blue Ginko	3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	962-9020	
Kane Sushi	3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-9709	
Kirin Sushi	356 Park Street, Mor	376-2872	
Niwa Restaurant	1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori,	254-1606	
Serika Restaurant	2 Theatre Sq # 118, Ori,	254-7088	
Yu Sushi	19 Moraga Way, Ori,	253-8399	
<b>Mediterranean</b>			
Petra Café	2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori,	254-5290	
Oasis Café	3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-8822	
Turquoise Mediterranean Grill	70 Moraga Way, Ori,	253-2004	
<b>Mexican</b>			
360 Gourmet Burrito	3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-1270	
Casa Gourmet Burrito	3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-4415	
El Charro Mexican Dining	3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-2345	
El Jaro Mexican Cafe	3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-6639	
La Cocina Mexicana	23 Orinda Way, Ori,	258-9987	
Mucho wraps	1375-B Moraga Way, Mor,	377-1203	
Baja Fresh Mexican Grill	3596 Mt. Diabole Blvd, Laf,	283-8740	
Celia's Restaurant	3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-8288	
El Balazo	3518D Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	284-8700	
Maya Mexican Grill	74 Moraga Way, Ori,	258-9049	
Numero Uno Taqueria	3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-1333	
<b>Pizza</b>			
Mountain Mike's Pizza	3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-6363	
Mountain Mike's Pizza	504 Center St, Mor,	377-6453	
Pennini's	1375 Moraga Rd, Mor,	376-1515	
Round Table Pizza	361 Rheem Blvd, Mor,	376-1411	
Round Table Pizza	3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-0404	
Village Pizza	19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori,	254-1200	
Zamboni's Pizza	1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori,	254-2800	
<b>Sandwiches/Deli</b>			
Bianca's Deli	1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor,	376-4400	
Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub	64 Moraga Way , Ori,	254-7202	
Kasper's Hot Dogs	103 Moraga Way, Ori,	253-0766	
Noah's Bagels	3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-0716	
Orinda Deli	19 F Orinda Way, Ori,	254-1990	
Subway	396 Park St., Mor,	376-2959	
Subway	3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf,	284-2627	
Subway	Theatre Square, Ori,	258-0470	
<b>Seafood</b>			
Yankee Pier	3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	283-4100	
<b>Singaporean/Malaysian</b>			
Kopitiam	3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,	299-1653	
<b>Steak</b>			
Casa Orinda	20 Bryant Way, Ori,	254-2981	
<b>Tea</b>			
Patisserie Lafayette	71 Lafayette Cir, Laf,	283-2226	
Tea Party by Appointment	107 Orinda Way, Ori,	254-2206	
<b>Thai</b>			
Amarin Thai Cuisine	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf,	283-8883	
Baan Thai	99 Orinda Way, Ori,	253-0989	
Royal Siam	512 Center Street, Mor,	377-0420	
Siam Orchid	23 Orinda Way # F, Ori,	253-1975	
<b>Vietnamese</b>			
Little Hearty Noodle, Pho & Pasta	578 Center St., Mor,	376-7600	

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



Dining • Dining •

**Vanilla Bean "Ice Cream"**

Cold, smooth and creamy with the exotic flavor of vanilla bean! Add a scoop to any dessert or enjoy alone.  
 Yields: 1 quart  
 Special Equipment: Ice cream maker or Kitchen Aid frozen ice cream bowl attachment with paddle, glass pitcher.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 cups regular coconut milk\*
- 1 ½ cups light coconut milk, chilled
- ½ cup agave nectar or clover honey
- 6 large organic egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon real vanilla extract or 2 vanilla beans

**DIRECTIONS**

In a saucepan, heat 1 2/3 cup regular coconut milk, ½ cup agave nectar or honey over medium-high heat until it simmers (170 degrees). If using a vanilla bean, split lengthwise and use the back of a knife to scrape out the seeds. Put the seeds and pod into the coconut milk to simmer. After it comes to a simmer, remove vanilla bean pods and set aside.  
 In an electric stand mixer, with whisk attachment, beat egg yolks on medium-high about 5 minutes until pale and light and a thick ribbon runs off the whisk when lifted. Reduce to low speed and slowly drizzle in 1 cup of hot coconut milk/honey.  
 Pour egg/coconut milk mixture back into saucepan of the remaining coconut milk, remove vanilla bean pod. Whisk constantly over medium-high heat until it is thick and at 180 degrees. Dip a spoon into mixture and wipe a clean line across the middle of the spoon. If the line stays clean and the mixture does not run down into the line, it's done, otherwise continue to cook a little longer and test every minute. If you overcook it, it will curdle.  
 Add remaining chilled light coconut milk, 1 tablespoon real vanilla extract if you did not use vanilla beans and whisk. Pour into a glass pitcher, cover mixture and refrigerate 6 hours or until 38 degrees. Be sure you have a thermometer in your refrigerator and keep it between 34-38 degrees-over 40 degrees is optimal temperature for bacterial growth!  
 Follow the manufacturer's ice cream machine instructions to churn. When finished churning, pour into plastic containers and freeze for 8 hours or overnight for premium ice cream texture, or eat a little of it now, which will be soft serve consistency. Scoop and enjoy!  
 \*Note: you can use all light coconut milk, but the texture will not be as creamy.

This recipes are available on our web site.

Go to:

www.lamorindaweekly.com

Susie can be reached at [suziven@gmail.com](mailto:suziven@gmail.com)

Many of our readers like Susie's recipes. Our website now features a link to our recipe page where you can read, print or download all of the recipes we have published.

If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977

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**SPORTS**

**LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS**

**Look Out for Highway 24**

*Lamorinda Teams Rock the Blocks at County Meet*  
 By Jean Follmer



lane 1 - Barbara Lanier, lane 2 - Ashley Jennings, lane 3 - Shelby Burman, lane 4 - Dana Holt, lane 5 - Lauren Bugglin, lane 6 - Alex Toohey, lane 7 - Mia Tittle

Lamorinda swimmers made waves at the 49th Annual Contra Costa County swim meet at Acalanes High School last weekend. Local teams took five Top 10 placements in Division I alone and recorded eight High Point winners.

Orinda Country Club (OCC) finished in second this year, bumping Springbrook from their 2008 finish to this year's third place. Maddie Murphy was an essential contributor to OCC's success, taking first in the 11/12 girl's individual medley. High Point winner Charlie Wisner, 14, followed Murphy with an IM win, smashing a 1985 meet record by nearly three seconds with a time 53.83. Wisner turned on the burners again in the next event to break a 1996 meet record with a time of 26.91 in the 50-yard breaststroke preliminaries. The OCC 7/8 Girls won both the medley and the freestyle relays with team members Ryan Hagglund, Paige Hanley, Sophie Cortese and High Point Winner Sophia Kosturos.

Springbrook's third place finish came with help from twelve-year-old Nicholas Inserra first place in freestyle and butterfly, just narrowly missing meet records in both. Inserra anchored his free-relay team to take first place and a meet record

of 1:44.76 with teammates Brady Aiello, Dylan Foster and Nathan Brickman. A disappointing disqualification in the medley relay kept Inserra from the seeded fourth blue medal.

Lafayette-Moraga Youth Association (LMYA) leapt from tenth in Division II last year to seventh in Division I. Alec Baker placed first in the 7/8 boys 25-yard freestyle to just miss a meet record with a time of 13.86. Baker turned on the gas again to win the 25-yard butterfly for the High Point trophy. Baker's medley relay with teammates Jack Larsen, Christopher Rogers and Reider Martinsen secured Baker a third blue medal.

Despite a tenth place finish, Moraga Country Club did boast a few first place finishes. Dana Holt, 16, took home four blue medals with wins in the 100-yard freestyle and backstroke, medley relay with teammates Alexandra Toohey, Lindsey Mascheroni and Madeleine Smith and the freestyle relay with Smith, Toohey and Lizzie Peiros.

Moraga Valley's strength came in 8-year-old Megan Colpo, who won both the 25-yard breaststroke (18.25) and backstroke (17.66) for the High Point tie with Kosturos of OCC.



Chase Lanier (13), Sam Anderson (14), Megan Dietrich (13) and Katie Greer (14) Photo Doug Kohen



Photos Doug Kohen



High point winner Nicholas Inserra, Springbrook Swim Club



Andi Mishimi, Moraga Ranch Swim Club Photo Doug Kohen

Lamorinda High Point Winners		
6 & under Girls	Molly Midthun, Campolindo Cabana Club	37
(Midthun tied Anelise Kiepen of Round Hill CC for High Point)		
7/8 Girls	Megan Colpo, Moraga Valley Pool	40
	Sophia Kosturos, Orinda Country Club	40
7/8 Boys	Alec Baker, LMYA	40
(Baker tied Ryan Iannaccone of ECS for High Point)		
9/10 Boys	Stephen Schmidt, Orinda Country Club	40
11/12 Boys	Nicholas Inserra, Springbrook Swim Team	40
13/14 Boys	Charlie Wisner, Orinda Country Club	40
15/18 Girls	Dana Holt, Moraga Country Club	40

Lamorinda Team Points		
<b>Division I</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Orinda Country Club	1,186
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Springbrook Swim Team	948
7 <sup>th</sup> Place	Lafayette Moraga Youth Association	588
9 <sup>th</sup> Place	Sleepy Hollow Legends	556.50
10 <sup>th</sup> Place	Moraga Country Club	541.50
<b>Division II</b>		
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	Moraga Ranch Swim Team	217.50
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	Miramonte Swim Club	197.50
6 <sup>th</sup> Place	Sun Valley Swim Team	180.50
9 <sup>th</sup> Place	Rancho Colorados Swim Team	124
11 <sup>th</sup> Place	Campolindo Cabana Club	106
12 <sup>th</sup> Place	Moraga Valley Pool Swim Team	105
14 <sup>th</sup> Place	Orinda Park Pool Swim Team	85.50
15 <sup>th</sup> Place	Meadow Swim & Tennis Club	85
<b>Division III</b>		
10 <sup>th</sup> Place	Oakwood Athletic Club	27
11 <sup>th</sup> Place	Las Trampas Swim Team	21

**Twist, Flip to the Top**

*Sherman Swim School Holds Annual Invitational Dive Meet*



Asher Lichtig receiving silver medal from Steve Sherman Photo Ohlen Alexander



Maren Kjell of Moraga Photo Ohlen Alexander

Divers from around Northern California traveled to Sherman Swim School in Lafayette last weekend to compete in the 49th Annual Sherman Invitational Diving Meet. The one-meter springboard witnessed 66 divers of all ages-- from seven year old Jayden Briggs,

winner of the 7 & under boy's event, to International Masters Diving Champion Bob Sherman, winner of the 80-89 year old contest.

While out-of-towners had a good run, local divers proved to be tough competition. Sherman Diver Asher Lichtig placed second with 286.15 points in the 14-15 year-old Junior Olympic Boys despite practicing only twice in the last month. Although competition is fierce, this invitational event is a welcoming to novice divers, called "Future Champions." These new divers compete in one of five Future Champion levels and skills include forward and backward jumps, or forward and backward falling entries, "line-ups."

**Submitted by Steve Sherman**

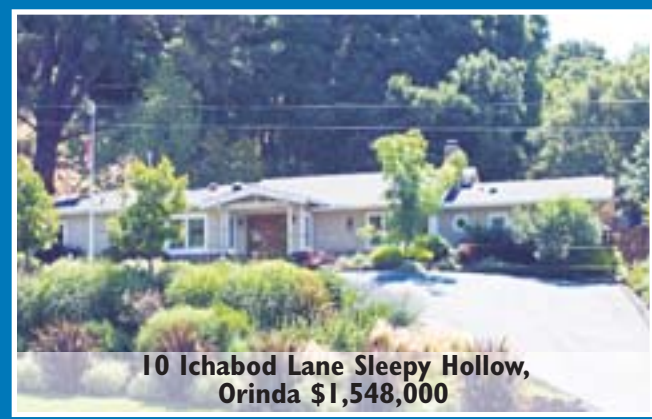
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Joe Zachrin, a Moraga resident, competed and won his first diving meet with 107.2 points. Zachrin performed four skills in two dives.

Among the local Masters from Sherman Divers -- those 20 years and older -- Marie Estorge of Walnut Creek dived one of her best meets, taking second place in the women's 40-49 age group with 311.70 points. Mike McGowan of Berkeley won in the men's 60-69 age group with 284.55.





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## SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### Six Dads Race in Triathlon

Local Man Qualifies for the Kona Iron Man  
Submitted by Stacy Giglio



Pre-race group photo. Back row (l to r) Bret Goodman (lafayette), Jim Huchingson (Lafayette), Brian Rhea (formerly Orinda—now Wash, DC), Rob Giglio (Moraga) Front row (l to r) Blake Wise (Moraga), Carter Hemming (Orinda), Ken Webster (Lafayette)  
Photos submitted by Stacy Giglio

Six local dads, all over the age of 40, competed in the Iron Man Triathlon in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho on Father's Day. "LATR" (Lamorinda All Three Racing) put in a year of dedicated training to prepare for the event and it paid off—every man completed the race in their goal of less than 12 hours. Jim Huchingson qualified for the Kona Iron Man.

**The six men:** Bret Goodman, Lafayette; Carter Hemming, Orinda; Rob Giglio, Moraga; Ken Webster, Lafayette; Blake Wise, Moraga; Jim Huchingson, Lafayette.



Carter Hemming (Orinda) on the 112 mile bike course



Jim Huchingson (Lafayette) running the 26.2 mile run course and going on to qualify for the Kona Ironman World Championships with his 10th place finish.



Blake Wise (Moraga) finishing the 2.4 mile swim

### Camaraderie Cleans Up at OMPA Championships

Individuals Overwhelmed by Team Support  
... continued from page 1



Charlie Wiser OCC

Photo Deanna Wentzell

A total of 21 individual and six relay meet records were broken. Katie Bilotti, 18, this year's Outstanding Swimmer-Girls, set three personal best records, beating her own times from 2008 in the Back and Fly events. Charlie Wiser, 14, the Outstanding Swimmer-Boys, decimated five meet records, including a twenty-three year relic from 1986, swimming the 50 Fly in 24.0.

Starting on Thursday, teams warmed-up and worked out; building enthusiasm for Friday's IM Relay Finals. "It's a friendly competition," said this year's team publicist, Josie Kelley, "because kids stick with it and the team spirit builds year after year." It's true of each individual team, but remarkably, it's also true of the combined 1700-plus swimmers entered in OMPA this year.

Jane and Chip Wiser, whose son Charlie left no question he is a speedster, were suitably revved-up. "The spirit, with everybody rooting each other on: it's a whole different world!" said Chip. Charlie, caught

up in the excitement noted, "When I breathe, I can hear the crowd through my cap."

If the star of the show is the spirit, the runner up is the bountiful talent residing in this area. Nicholas Deaver, a 16-year-old from Meadow Swim & Tennis Club, set new meet records with a 52.99 100 IM, a 24.02 Back, and a 22.59 Fly. Megan Colpo, 8, swimming for Sleepy Hollow, set aside meet records in Breast and Back.

Clearly, these swimmers, even at a young age, are hyper-focused. Ashleen O'Brien, an 8-year-old Campo Cabana Club swimmer, was looking to improve in the fi-

nals. Still, she wasn't discouraged. "My teammates help me to not just worry about getting first place," she said. "At first I really hated swimming, because I was afraid, but when I got the confidence, I forgot all that fear."

OMPA is more than a swim meet, more than simply an opportunity for local kids to feel good. "It's the epitome of a community event!" said Sleepy Hollow Head Coach Matt Ehrenberger, his arm sweeping wide to include the kids, the tents, the crowds, the fin-topped SUV's in the parking lot. He's watched generations of swimmers dive in and grow-up in the process. This year, McKenna Farrar, 18, got his nod: "She came back this year to do it right," he said. "What she's done for this team, her leadership, has been more beneficial than any points she scored at the meets." All nine clubs recruited their senior swimmers to coach the junior athletes, forming a never-ending chain of young swimmers and mentor coaches. "These teen age swimmers, when they were four or five, looked up to their coaches," Kelley explains, "Now, they get to coach. The effect is magic."



Christina Vidal

Photo Jordan Fong

### 3Ks for Cancer

Oakland A's Pitcher and Local Boy Team Up to Raise Awareness

Hudson Davis, a 13-year-old Lamorinda resident and cancer patient at Children's Hospital and Research Center gave Craig Breslow, Oakland A's relief pitcher, a tour of the hospital on August 4. Breslow began the Three Strikes Foundation in 2008 to raise money for pediatric cancer. Davis, a truly dedicated player, continued to play Little League while undergoing treatment for a malignant brain tumor in 2008. His pitches have been clocked at 70 miles per hour. Davis was invited by Breslow to watch batting practice and throw the ceremonial opening pitch at the A's game on August 4 against the Texas Rangers. C. Graveson



Davis and sister, Molly, with Breslow

Photo Kristy Fick, Oakland A's

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<b>Sat, Sep 5 VB</b> Texas A&M McKeon-Pavilion 7:00 PM	<b>Wed, Sep 9 VB</b> San Jose State - McKeon Pavilion 7:00 PM
<b>Sun, Sep 6 WSOC</b> Texas A&M - Saint Mary's Stadium 9:00 AM	<b>Thu, Sep 10 VB</b> Eastern Washington - McKeon Pavilion 7:00 PM
<b>Sun, Sep 6 MSOC</b> UC Riverside - 3:00 PM	<b>Fri, Sep 11 WSOC</b> SMU - Saint Mary's Stadium 4:30 PM

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## Locals Rally Against Competition at Stead Open

By Guy Dotan

For 26 years the Moraga Country Club (MCC) has hosted a tennis tournament and over that time the event has grown in prestige. The tournament began in 1983 with \$2000 in prize money. Three years later Stead Motors became the major sponsor and the prize money increased to \$25,000. With acknowledgement from major tennis magazines, the Stead Open has dramatically increased professional athletes' interest.

While the tournament hosts many professional athletes it is unique in the fact that local athletes are welcome as well. MCC's Mark Orwig, the tournament director, stated, "What makes this tournament special is that it gives the opportunity for the local players to compete alongside many different levels of experience. Collegiate players, players looking to go professional, and professional players all get to compete for the prize money while the locals have the chance of a lifetime to go up against some of the best in the country."

This year many local players competed at the Stead Open. Some of the local players and Diablo Foothills Athletic League (DFAL) graduates

included Tyler Browne (Las Lomas and Cal assistant coach), Nick Balou (Campolindo), John Karsant (Acalanes), Ellie Faulkner (Campolindo and University of San Diego) Chris Rasmussen (Miramonte and Stanford), Alan Shin (Dublin) Evan Rose (Campolindo and Cal), Tony Franco (Campolindo), Sean Peterson (Campolindo), among others.

The tournament came to an end on Sunday, August 9 and the results are as follows: men's singles (2) Brad Weston defeated (3) Chris Wettengel 6-3, 6-2; women's singles (9) Ellen Tsay defeated (9) Aerial Ellis 1-6, 7-6(4), 6-2; men's open doubles (5) Tyler Browne and Geoffrey Chizever defeated Gregory Hirshman and Richard Wire 6-4, 6-3; women's doubles (1) Kristen Schluckebir and Romana Tedjakusuma defeated (4) Suzanne Matzenauer and Alex Poorta 6-3, 6-4; mixed doubles (5) Eric Roberson and Yasmin Schnack defeated (4) Tyler Browne and Zsuzsanna Fodor 6-2, 7-6(3).

Some of the local players did exceedingly well. Ballou made it to the third round in singles. The Campolindo and Acalanes alumni doubles

team of Karsant and Franco made it to the second round. Browne made it to the fourth round in singles, won the doubles, and got second place in mixed. Browne said, "I played better than I thought I would. For me, singles is more about having fun. But doubles and mixed, I had high hopes. I know we could do well but you never know at events like this how tough the competition will be." Browne has played in this tournament for six years and said, "This is a great tournament. Mark puts on a great event. It's nice to be the local kid and there is so much community support. It's great to play in front of people who are there for tennis."

For many of the local players winning is not what is important. Two competitors, Jake Peiros and Tim Quock, both graduates of Campolindo, entered the men's doubles and were matched-up against Franco and Karsant. The match was a blowout, Karsant and Franco won 6-0, 6-0. After the match, however, Peiros was not disgruntled about the loss. He said the Stead Open is a great opportunity to see, "...how we stack up against the more experienced players."



Alex Poorta



Tyler Browne



Brad Weston Photos Doug Kohen

## United Dominate Tournament with Three Shutout Victories

Submitted by Julie S. Morgan



Photo provided


The Lamorinda U12 Girls 1A soccer team finished second in the 18th annual San Ramon Valley Cup Tournament the weekend of August 1. The team stormed into the tournament winning their first game with a shutout, 5-0, against the San Ramon Spirit. The United carried their momentum into the second match-up against the San

Ramon Courage, again winning with a shutout, 2-0. In the final day of the tournament Lamorinda continued to dominate the competition. In a 7-0 shutout victory the United put out the flames of the Diablo FC Firepower.

Lamorinda finally met their match against the only other undefeated team in the

tournament, the #2 Bay Oak Blasters; neither team could get the advantage and the game ended in a 1-1 tie.


**15 total goals:** Gina Crosetti (1), Emily Holbrook (4), Sophia Zoller (2), Kayla Hohenstein (1), Jane Buckley (1), AJ Morgan (1), Bailey Yuen (1).




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## Only As Old As You Play

By Mikaela Cowles



Ann Bundy (2) and Carole Kay Lynn (4)

Photo Bob Johnson



Patty Trenkwalder

Photo Bob Johnson

H20 Soda Moms Water Polo member Jennie Johnson says, "Now in place of those years of meeting at the local coffee house early in the morning to carpool for our own pre-game ritual...an extra shot latte, a bran muffin and a last minute check of essentials—sunscreen, eye drops, and ibuprofen."

As most women get older, they leave physical contact sports like water polo behind; but a group of local Lamorinda women are not "most women." The Soda Moms team is made up of women of all ages, from those in their 20s to their 60s. Johnson says, "This is a diverse group of athletes in all stages of life." She has a point: one pregnant teammate shares the due date as the first grandchild of another player.

Even though some competitions do not allow them to play together because of their age differences, they practice as one team. The women range wildly in skill level, many of them join without previous experience. Their reasons for joining are as different as their ages, some members are interested in the competition while others are looking to learn a new game while getting a great workout. The team practices twice a

week led by head coach Andrew Morris at the Soda Aquatic Center at Campolindo High School.

H20's practice has paid off. They won the silver medal at their most recent demonstration tournament August 1-3. Johnson says they were all "pleased with the result, especially since the gold medal team had former members of the USA Women's National Water Polo team [playing]."

Competitions include periodic local tournaments, a yearly three-day Masters Clinic in Las Vegas and more serious competitions such as the Masters Nationals and FINA (International Federation of Swimming) Masters World Championship.

Connie Miller, the oldest Soda Mom, said, "When I was younger, they didn't have team sports for women really, so this is the first team sport I've played. It is a lot of fun." Miller was a member of the team in 2006 when they won the gold at the FINA Championship in the 50+ age bracket.

H20 is sponsored by the NSGA (National Senior Games Association). Founded in 1985, the NSGA has become a non-profit member of the United States Olympic Committee. It is dedicated to motivating men and women to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

Johnson is one of the newest members of H20, joining in the fall of 2007. As an "empty nester," she was looking for a new challenge while her life transitioned. The team has become more than just a way to workout; Johnson says, "I now really enjoy the tournaments. Coach Andrew and my experienced teammates are patient teachers, and traveling to a tournament with these ladies is always a great social experience."

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