

# LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin is pleased to introduce the (not yet dressed for its debut) Lafayette Library and Learning Center

Photo Doug Kohen

## Sneak a Peek at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center

By Cathy Tyson

### LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Youngsters, oldsters and everyone in between will have something to enjoy at the brand new Lafayette Library and Learning Center (LLC). Although still under construction, it's getting nearer to completion every day and will be finished in time for the scheduled November 14 grand opening to the public.

From the smart book check-in system that automatically sorts and checks-in books to teen homework rooms, spacious children's area, dedicated historical society room, and technology lab, form and function come together brilliantly. Even without books on the shelves and with plastic covering the massive light fixtures, the interior looks like a

sleeker, more contemporary version of the Ahwahnee Lodge in Yosemite. Maybe it's the voluminous airy space of the main library area or the rough hewn columns and beams of the exposed truss system, hard to nail down the exact reason, but the LLC will be a terrific asset for residents to enjoy long into the future.

The attention to detail throughout the building is astounding – especially given the three story sloping site here in earthquake country and the need to accommodate so many different user groups.

Mayor Don Tatzin said they wanted to make the building inviting for kids coming from nearby Stanley Middle School and Lafayette Elementary and

encourage them to loiter and possibly even get their homework done. The outdoor plaza and amphitheater on the corner of Golden Gate Way and First Street are not only inviting places to hang out and wait for car-pool pick up, but a welcoming entrance to the building with lots of greenery and spectacular artwork.

The Historical Society will have a permanent home for the first time. Visitors can take a look at Peter Thompson's anvil from the first blacksmith shop in town, along with photos and organized archives. Also on the lower level will be the Friends of the Library Used Book Room – a clean, well lit place to get best sellers for a pittance. ... continued on page 8

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### Orinda Community Fund Takes Shape

By Andrea A. Firth

"I'm working very hard to raise private dollars to supplant the community funding that has been cut," states Orinda's Mayor Sue Severson as she describes the genesis of the Orinda Community Fund—a voluntary donation fund that enables residents to give tax-deductible contributions to the City to support community events and programs.

During the annual budgeting process this past spring, Orinda's City Council, like municipalities across California, had to balance the city's budget in the face of reduced revenues and contributions from the state. Ultimately funding was cut to a number of community programs, which represented about \$20,000 of general fund expenditures annually. The Council remained committed to supporting events like Orinda Idol and the July 4th celebration and programs such as Art in Public Places, but they needed new financial resources and felt that the community would be willing to help. Severson stepped up to take on the Council's charge to create a plan to find private monies to fill the void.

"Residents have always been able to make donations to the city," says Severson, noting that land and financial contributions have been given to the city in the past. The idea for a specific fund with a formal focus on supporting community programs was one of the recommendations of the Revenue Enhancement Task Force, she explains. ... continued on page 4

### Town/College Economic Partnership Growing

By Sophie Braccini



SMC students wearing the new t-shirts at a Women's Soccer game last Sunday. Left to right: Lacey Olson, Sarah Randall, Christina Katsaris, Aaron Jones Photo Andy Scheck

Neal McSherry is very passionate about what he does. As the Director of Ticket Operations for Saint Mary's College (SMC), he is charged with getting students and the surrounding community out to the school's various games and athletic events. ... continued on page 3

### Local Singers Vie for Winner's Circle at Orinda Idol 2009

By Jennifer Wake

Sequins, taffeta and even feathered boas adorned many of the more than 60 finalists and runners up who took the stage at the Orinda Theatre last Sunday to compete in the final competition of Orinda Idol 2009. But the true sparkle came from within when these kids (who ranged in age from 5 to 18... read on page 16



Photo Ohlen Alexander

### Lafayette Gallery Celebrates Ten Years Together

By Andrea A. Firth

The Lafayette Gallery is celebrating ten years in the making with a special joint exhibition of work by past and present members at the Orinda Library through the end of the month and a unique anniversary exhibit on display at the Gallery through October 10th. The Lafayette Gallery, a co-op of artists, was the brainchild of Kathy DeForest and Judy Miller. ... Read on page 9



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**Calendar**  
 City Council 7pm  
 Community Center, Manzanita Room  
 500 St Mary's Road  
 Monday, September 28  
 Planning Comm. 7pm  
 Community Center, Manzanita Room  
 500 St Mary's Road  
 Thursday, September 17  
 Thursday, October 1  
 Design Review 7pm  
 Community Center, Manzanita Room  
 500 St Mary's Road  
 Tuesday, September 22  
 Senior Services 3:00pm  
 Community Center, Alder Room  
 500 St Mary's Road  
 Thursday, September 24  
 City of Lafayette:  
 http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us  
 Chamber of Commerce:  
 http://www.lafayettechamber.org

# Lafayette

# Lamorinda Community

# Lafayette



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## Farmers de Lafayette

By Glenn Nosse



Lafayette Farmer's Market last Thursday

Photo Andy Scheck

If the statue could speak, the Marquis de Lafayette would have questions. Like, why did it take so long for the city to correctly spell his name, evolving from LaFayette, to La Fayette, to finally Lafayette in 1932, twenty-five years later? The first Farmers' Market in Lafayette finally made the cut on Thursday, September 4, in Plaza Park, fifteen years after it was first envisioned.

"There was resistance from the locals and independent grocers," explains Keith Farley, market manager for the Contra Costa Farmer's Markets Inc. Farley was quick to indicate that major grocery

retailer Safeway welcomed the Market, but company confirmation on this issue remains on the shelves. "We all have differing opinions," said a ranked Safeway employee.

Surrounding businesses also resisted, in fear of losing parking stalls to the peas and carrots. Chamber of Commerce CEO Jay Lifson says, "The Market is doing everything asked of them regarding monitoring the traffic, parking, and polling numerous customers and businesses with a mostly favorable reaction."

Farley defends the Market, saying, "Everyone does it for the love, not the money. The person

who grew it is selling it. We are the poster child for non-profits." Not that all of this matters to the organic fans and their children, like Anna McCarthy, seriously tasting a huge strawberry with little sister Sarah and mom Catherine. "We love the strawberries, I'm a Safeway convert," said McCarthy. She was followed by another hungry crowd that carried away all of the pies and pastries and ran supplies low among all vendors on opening day.

The second Market on September 10 experienced some heat; 103 degrees, by some reports. That, along with a well-attended affair at Acalanes High School, may have kept the count lower. One vendor was a conspicuous no-show when its delivery truck had problems getting to Lafayette, leaving a gaping, gopher-like hole between the onion farmers and bee keepers. "Growing



Shoppers enjoying a taste of fresh local produce. Photo Andy Scheck

"We are a sound-a-like BB King and a big moon rising behind the Marquis, the last Farmers' Market for this year is on September 17th.

## Art and Wine Festival This Weekend



Tom Taneyhill

Photo Cathy Tyson

Look for accomplished Lafayette painter Tom Taneyhill at the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival's Local Artist Alley, located between Chow and A.G. Fer-

rari at the Festival this Saturday and Sunday. He and scores of artists from all over the area will be selling their wares up and down Mt. Diablo Boulevard. C.Tyson

**You're a Winner!** Not. 8/19/09 An unknown suspect mailed out fake sweepstakes letters and forged checks from Diamond K Supply to various subjects in Lafayette. If you are the recipient of such a letter, pleased be advised that your golden ticket to the chocolate factory is fake and you need to contact the Lafayette Police. To date, no checks have been cashed and the motive is unknown.

**Too Many Margaritas?** 8/22/09 An unknown and appetite-free suspect burglarized El Charro, ransacked an office and damaged several items in the restaurant. It is possible that the suspect is not playing with a full deck because everyone knows that the good stuff at El Charro is found in the kitchen or behind the bar.

**Put Your Toys Away** 8/23/09 A Blackberry Court resident called Lafayette Police to report that his son's bicycle had been stolen from the front of the house. The bicycle was outside when the family left for a weekend trip and was gone when they returned a few days later. Missing is a \$200 Haro 10-speed. A more secure bicycle storage arrangement may be a future consideration.

**Not Your Average Traffic Stop** 9/1/09 Lafayette Police pulled a Toyota Camry over for a routine traffic stop and discovered the vehicle had been stolen from a repair shop in Oakland. A search of the vehicle revealed two large fixed blade knives on the driver's side floorboard and the front passenger on a parole violation for drug-related charges. Both men were arrested and taken to the Martinez Detention Facility for booking.



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# Moraga

# Lamorinda Community

Calendar	
Town Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Wednesday, September 23	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Moraga Library 1500 Saint Marys Rd	
Monday, September 21	
Design Review	7:30pm
Moraga Library 1500 Saint Marys Rd	
Monday, September 28	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, October 9	
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>	



D.U.I., 9/07/09 Moraga officers observed a weaving vehicle driving east bound on St. Mary's Road. What a coincidence, the driver was found to be under the influence of alcohol.

Attempted theft, 9/05/09 Police were dispatched to the Safeway on a report of attempted theft at 3:30 in the afternoon. A male shopper was seen running out of the store with a cart full of groceries that he neglected to pay for. A Safeway employee gave chase, the cart with \$94.68 worth of food was abandoned, and the would-be thief hopped in a silver car and headed out toward Lafayette.

Divots in driveway, 9/03/09 A Campolindo Drive resident called police to report several quarter size divots on his driveway and small chip marks on the sidewalk in front of his residence. The chip marks are approximately two weeks old. Perhaps a frustrated sleep walking golfer with amnesia is loose on the streets of Moraga.

Sprite vandalism, 9/06/09 Sometime between 7:55 a.m. on 9/06/09 and 8:05 on 9/06/09 an unknown person or persons threw an unopened can of Sprite at a Teodora Court home. The can was punctured by the impact and sprayed its sticky contents on the door and front porch. No damage, besides the mess, to the door. That's a first for this reporter.

## Moraga's Shame

Over Labor Day week-end, a mixed race couple staying at a home on Wandel Drive in Moraga awoke to find a cross wrapped in white cloth with the letters KKK written in black. The Moraga Police Department (MPD) is working with the FBI in the investigation. Chief of Police Bob Priebe urges anyone with information about this case to contact MPD's Lieutenant Jeff Price at 888-7049.

## Residents Opposed to Town Staff Move will get a Hearing

By Sophie Braccini  
A group of Moraga residents gathered at the Town Council meeting on September 9 to express their concern over the move of Town staff back into the Hacienda de las Flores. The issue was not on the agenda, so the residents spoke during the public comment period. Town Manager Mike Segrest had announced earlier this summer that staff presently located at 329 Rheem would return to the second and third floor of the Hacienda while the town plans for the retrofit of the Rheem building, finds the money to do the work and the complete construction.

Some residents are concerned by how long that transition period would be since there was no published timeline. They believe that the Hacienda's sole function should be recreation. These residents were further alarmed by the request by staff for funds to repair portions of the Hacienda. ... continued on page 8

## When Kids Play with Fire

Cause found for midsummer's Rheem Center blaze  
By Sophie Braccini



The Moraga Police Department has revealed the source of the fire that burned five acres on the hillside behind the Rheem Shopping Center, causing the evacuation of two Ascot Drive apartment complexes on July 26.

"The fire investigation was (initially) closed with the cause deemed 'suspicious, likely caused by humans'," said Moraga Police Chief Bob Priebe. "Fireworks were suspected from the start, but there was no evidence to be found because it all burned in the fire," he explained. The investigation was reopened when, on August 8, a mother brought her son to Mor-

aga Orinda Fire District Station 41 when she found out that he and a friend had been shooting off bottle rockets in the dry grass. The mother of the second boy was contacted and she brought him in. Due to their ages, 14 and 15, the boys' names have not been released.

Police also said that one of the mothers gave the bottle rockets to the boys.

"The information was then given to us (by MOFD), and we conducted the criminal investigation which has been presented to the District Attorney," added Priebe.

## Town/College Economic Partnership Growing

... continued from page 1



Neil McSherry and Edy Schwartz at a Moraga Chamber of Commerce event

McSherry is very imaginative when it comes to finding new ways to achieve his goal. When he reached out to Moraga's Chamber of Commerce he found someone just as passionate and imaginative as himself, Chamber President Edy Schwartz, who shares an interest in increasing the communication between town and gown. After a year of hard work, the two are now implementing programs that support both the College and local business; and Moraga's Revenue Enhancement Task Force is not far behind.

Over the past several months, Schwartz and McSherry have met every other week to work on their strategy. "We want to put into place win-win actions that benefit both the community and the campus," says Schwartz. "One of my tasks is to generate excitement for home athletic events," said McSherry, "so we called on local businesses for help."

McSherry proposed that retailers provide promotional offers and/or contests for game goers. With this promotion, they can display a banner at the game and are asked to show their support of the Gaels in their store. "Becoming a promotional sponsor during one of the SMC home games is an opportunity to get Moraga businesses in front of Saint Mary's College students for a minimal cost," commented a very positive Schwartz.

To further the good relationship, McSherry offers special treats for Chamber members, such as the recent \$2 tickets to any game during Labor Day weekend. When the previous sponsor of the Gael Force T-shirts declined to renew its sponsorship, the Athletic Department turned to the Chamber to see if it could fill the gap. The year-long

sponsorship places the sponsor's name on the back of the shirts that the 200 Gael Force students wear at the games. This year the shirts read, "Shop Moraga First," and the names of the four businesses that joined the Chamber in sponsorship: Pennini's, Lori's Swim and Sun, Union Bank and 5A Rent-A-Space.

"This is the beginning of a paradigm shift," said Schwartz, "we are building relationships that will endure and expand. This is part of Moraga becoming more of a college town, for the benefit of both entities." Schwartz is now cultivating relationships with the Performing Arts Department, the Hearst Gallery and the Weekend College. "I feel excited about working with the people at Saint Mary's. They are talented and very experienced in their fields and we are finding creative ways to work together," says Schwartz.

Schwartz is not the only one in town to have this vision. Moraga's Revenue Enhancement Committee (REC) has also suggested better integration of the college to improve the economic vitality of the town. "One of the large ideas of the Economic Development Subcommittee is to maximize the Saint Mary's College linkage," said REC Chair Dick Olsen during his preliminary report to the Town Council on September 9th. He indicated that the sub-committee was looking at ideas such as relocating the college bookstore to the downtown area, developing other college-oriented facilities (such as a sports bar and a sports clothing/equipment shop) and implementing a shuttle between the College and the town's two shopping centers.

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- Pear Festival, Saturday, September 26, 10a-4p, Commons Park
- It's not too late to sign up for a fall enrichment class
- Like Rancho Laguna Park? The Park and Recreation Commission has established a sub-committee to study the park to encourage maximum utilization while maintaining a safe environment for all people. Please comment!

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# Orinda

# Lamorinda Community

# Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, October 6	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, September 22	
Historic Landmarks Comm.	3pm
Gallery Room, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, September 22	
Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC), Community Room, City Hall	7pm
22 Orinda Way Monday, September 21	

City of Orinda:  
http://www.cityoforinda.org

- all meeting notes
- calendar updates

Chamber of Commerce:  
http://www.orindachamber.org

- local businesses
- upcoming events



**D.U.I., 9/03/09** A Crestview drive resident was pulled over for going 65 m.p.h. in a 35 m.p.h. zone on Moraga Way. Turns out he was driving on a suspended license and was on probation. The driver could hardly stand without falling over, his blood alcohol content was more than twice the legal limit. The car was towed. If you can't even stand up, you are clearly in no condition to drive.

**Jewelry heist, 9/02/09** A Davis Road couple called police to report missing jewelry. Police found no forced entry and the homeowners had not has any outside workers in the home recently, but they do occasionally leave the house unlocked. Estimated value of missing items, \$4,125.

**Attempted burglary, 9/02/09** An elderly Camino Sobrante couple heard a chime from their alarm system. The husband went to check the house and saw a male inside the residence with the front door slightly open. "What are you doing?" he asked. The suspect ran out the door. A perimeter was set up and the area was canvassed with negative results. Must've scared him away.

**Car burglary, 8/29/09** A patron parked in the Orinda Park Pool parking lot at 1:30 in the afternoon and returned to the vehicle at 3:00. The driver's side window was smashed and a purse that had valuables in it was missing. Note to readers: there have been smash and grab incidents in Lafayette as well. Best to leave anything of value like a purse, wallet, iPod, laptop, camera in the trunk. Unfortunately no suspects or witnesses at this time.



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## Orinda Establishes Strategic Funding Subcommittee

By Andrea A. Firth

Lately in Orinda it seems that most discussions in the civic arena, no matter how they start, come back to the dismal state of the roads and how to pay to get them fixed. At its September 1st meeting, the City Council discussed a proposal to create a Council Subcommittee to address community communication and outreach regarding city funding issues, revenue enhancement, and potential bond measures for the 2010 ballot. Despite the wordy agenda item title, exactly what the subcommittee represented and was to do was not clear to both residents in attendance and some members of the Council.

Council Member Steve Glazer, who had worked with staff to craft the proposal, explained that he saw the subcommittee's role as moving the recommendations of the Revenue Enhancement Task Force through the system. "Things have stalled," said Glazer. "It's all

about actively moving these things along," he added. Vice Mayor Tom McCormick advocated for the subcommittee's charge to be broadened and wanted to ensure that the subcommittee looked to options beyond a bond measure. "I see this as gathering information to address the infrastructure problem," said McCormick. "I want everyone in the community to have input on how we raise money. It needs to be inclusive." During the public comment segment of the discussion, two members of the citizen's group F.A.I.R. (Fire and Infrastructure Renewal), Steve Cohn and Art Haigh, addressed the Council stating that their group had been working aggressively on a plan to address the financing of the city's infrastructure needs, and that they planned to make a presentation by mid-October to early November. Former mayor Bill Judge also spoke and encouraged the Council

to again look at the MOFD funding inequity issue raised by the Revenue Enhancement Task Force (RETF) report from 2008 before moving forward on a bond measure. "It's gotten a lot of attention. It has raised concerns in the community. If people have a reason, relevant or not, to vote against a bond measure, they will," stated Judge.

After a lengthy and sometimes circular discussion, the Council agreed to retitle the subcommittee as the Strategic Funding Subcommittee and appointed Council Members Glazer and Amy Worth to serve on it. They are charged to work with staff and the community on communications regarding the funding of critical city services, advance the progress on consideration of the RETF recommendations, develop a draft public opinion survey, and provide advice on funding options including potential ballot measures.

## Orinda Community Fund Takes Shape

... continued from page 1

Severson held a brainstorming session with interested community members to identify ways to raise money for the fund and in the process established some guidelines. "I did not want to hold fundraising events just as fundraisers, but I wanted to create events that would benefit the city," states Severson. Partnering with groups both in and out of Orinda was another key element along with taking care to avoid conflicts with

existing fundraising events in the city.

Already Severson has made connections and moved forward with some fundraising plans while she has been "testing the waters" with a few other ideas. Soon she will make a formal presentation to the City Council to get their feedback and support. Among the fundraising concepts in development are a kids' triathlon set for November 14th at Miramonte

High School, a celebrity golf tournament tentatively scheduled for July of 2010 at Orinda Country Club, a 25th Orinda City Anniversary Gala, and an antiques appraisal event with Bonham and Butterfield. "All of these events are inclusive to all residents of Orinda and the surrounding communities," adds Severson. "I'm excited about all of the ideas and feel like these can go on as annual events."

### Correction, issue date September 2, 2009, "Case Sent to DA in Loudon Investigation:"

We incorrectly reported that Alexandra Gabrielli was charged with furnishing alcoholic beverages to a person under 21 and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. According to a written statement from Sheriff's Department spokesperson Jimmy Lee dated August 27, Gabrielli "will be charged." We attempted to contact Lee to obtain further clarification but he was not available as of press time this week.

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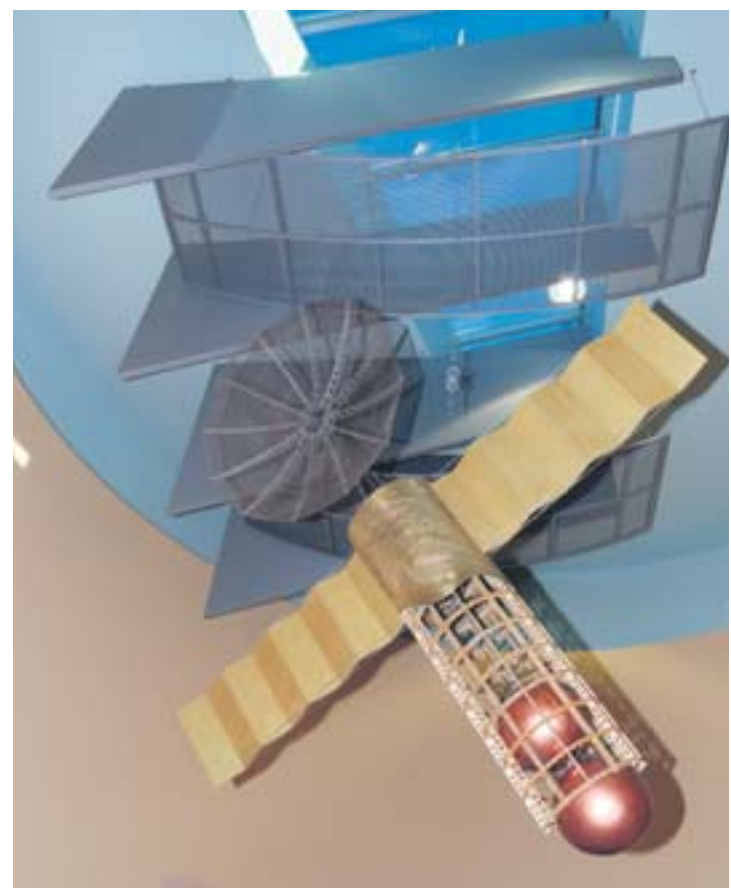


Photo Ohlen Alexander

**Surveillance**, a sculpture by artist Kent Roberts, is currently suspended in the atrium of the Orinda Library. The artwork is on loan to the city through the Art in Public Places Program. *A. Firth*

## Orinda Needs a Treasurer

By Andrea A. Firth

After nine years of volunteer service to the city of Orinda, Rob Garner has tendered his resignation as City Treasurer citing new business responsibilities that will impact his time as the reason. After acknowledging and thanking Garner for his service, the City Council moved quickly to a discussion of how to fill the vacancy and reviewed a survey of how the Treasurer's responsibilities are managed in other East Bay communities.

In Moraga, a volunteer that is appointed by the Audit and Finance Committee holds the position. In contrast, Lafayette's Director of Finance, a staff position, serves as Treasurer. Of the cities and towns surveyed, two have volunteer Treasurers (Moraga and Orinda), six have

the role managed by staff as part of the Finance Director's responsibilities (like Lafayette), and six other municipalities have Treasurers who are elected and receive modest compensation.

While Council Member Steve Glazer cited the city's prior success in recruiting well-qualified volunteers to support the city's management, Mayor Severson asked staff to explore incorporating the Treasurer's role into a staff position. Currently, Orinda is also recruiting an Administrative/Financial Services Director to fill the vacancy left following the departure of Beverli Marshall, who resigned in August. Staff will return to Council at a future meeting with a job description and recruitment options.



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**Life in LAMORINDA**

**Residents Eager to Participate in Urban Farmers Pilot Program**

By Cathy Tyson



Julia Myall's backyard, future home of a bounty of organic produce; plant-covered building in background is the future home of a chicken coop

You provide the land and water and get free abundant fresh organic produce; The Urban Farmers provides expertise and labor. That simple concept has taken off like wildfire in Lafayette. The organization was looking for 20 homeowners to sign up their backyards for the pilot project, now there are 115, and counting, locals who want to get in on it. "The response has been unbelievable," said Siamack Sioshansi, Urban Farmers' director, all via word of mouth and in Lafayette school newsletters.

"It's a revolutionary idea in Lafayette," said Yvette Lindgren, "we have a large lawn that is just not sustainable anymore. This is going to change the way people think of their backyards. We are really excited about it." Beth Ferree, PhD, another participant said, "The whole slow food and local food movements have engaged a lot of people's interest."

Photo Cathy Tyson  
A gardener herself, she adds, "There is something about working in the garden that's healing."

Chef, cook book author, and kitchen designer with Jack London Kitchen and Bath Gallery Julia Myall has a dream backyard waiting to be cultivated. Spacious, fenced, with existing irrigation, lots of sunshine and natural drainage, she can't wait for the Urban Farmers team to bring in and set up raised beds. Because she wants to educate fellow participants about how to prepare the vegetables in their boxes, she's looking forward to setting up regular free cooking classes in her future outdoor kitchen.

The concept was germinated this summer by Sioshansi's son, Cameron and a good friend and fellow Lake Forest College student, Alexander Agosta. They were home for the summer and unable to find employment, so were prompted

by Sioshansi to list their passions. Water, the environment, pesticide, reducing carbon footprints were some of their concerns.

This list ultimately morphed into a business plan that engaged the young men for ten hours a day until they had to go back to school in Illinois. Sioshansi is the founder and past CEO of Object Ware, formerly with Apple and IBM, and has a tremendous amount of technical expertise. Drawing on his farming background, he is tending the fledgling non-profit and watching it grow exponentially while the students are away at school.

How exactly does it work? Backyard farmers will get their generous share of organic communally produced fruits and vegetables. Homeowners can participate as much or as little as they please. Urban Farmers growers will design, plant, cultivate and harvest. Neighbors who don't have space for a garden can purchase boxes of fresh produce by paying in advance for weekly deliveries throughout the year. Fees paid go directly to pay a living wage to growers, and a portion of each harvest goes to charity.

For more information on the project, or to sign up for a Community Supported Agriculture box to enjoy the bounty of neighborhood edible gardens, go to www.theurbanfarmers.org and look for the contact us section. The Urban Farmers is looking for volunteers and interns, see website for contact information.

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**Dr. and Mrs. Mutch on BUILDING A LEGACY**

by Denise Lemings



Dr. and Mrs. Mutch

Everyone's life tells a story, some would say; a story that goes from one generation and is passed on to another. It's a story that you write yourself. Every paragraph is penned by your own hand, by the choices you make. The path you take and the people you meet along the way make a difference. They all help determine how your individual legacy turns out.

Dr. and Mrs. Mutch are residents at Moraga Royale, where they have lived for a year. They agreed to share some of their experiences as children, parents and grandparents. How the decisions they made along the way may have impacted their legacy.

Married for the past sixty-two years the couple seems to have developed a unison that can only come with spending a lifetime together. They are a handsome couple, figures that move with grace and ease as they gently settle in to share the past. Dr. Mutch, looking over the brim of his glasses, with eyes that twinkle begins to recollect how he and his lovely wife first met. Mrs. Mutch, (Mary Lou), sits quietly with a demure smile and looks on. "In brief, we first met at UC Berkeley, Mary Lou was a freshman and I was on my last year studying pre-med, we married four years later."

The couple, both native to California grew up in Northern California, Mary Lou in Piedmont and Dr. Mutch in San Francisco. After completing an Internship at UCSF, Dr. Mutch did a tour of duty in Korea for the US Army assigned to the Surgical Unit. His bride eagerly awaited his return. Upon discharge from the army the couple purchased a home in Orinda in 1954 and Dr. Mutch began a private practice in Oakland specializing in colon and rectal surgery. Along the way, they were blessed



The Mutch Family

with two children, a boy and a girl who live close.

According to their daughter, Martha Holistlaw, "Mom and dad were very involved in our community in addition to always being the host house for mine and my brother's friends through the growing up years." Their son William Mutch III commented that, "The sense of family first and education gave me something to pass on." The couple remained in Orinda until moving to Moraga Royale in 2008.

When asked what they enjoy doing for fun they both reply, "Spending time with family and doing some of the things we like...golfing, gardening and travel have been past loves." Mary Lou continues to be involved as a member of the Orinda Garden Club and is also thinking about joining the Moraga Royale Garden Club somewhere in the future. Dr. Mutch enjoys his leisure time and hearing about his grandchildren's careers and academic progress. "I have six grandchildren and our youngest plays football at Acalanes." Reflecting back on his brief stint playing football for UC Berkeley he says, "I worked during the summer taking ten Units, so they wouldn't let me play even though I took fall and spring classes. If I hadn't taken the classes I would have been eligible to play, which never made any sense to me." Mary Lou offers a quiet chuckle; "Somehow football and being a medical student just don't go together." This brings a smile to her husband's face...the doctor.

When asked how their lives were impacted by their parents and grandparents, both stressed the importance of a "good education." Mary Lou goes on to say, "They definitely are a good part of why we both earned our degrees." Dr. Mutch offered, "Education is the key and both of my children and all of our grandchildren have gone on to achieve a higher education, except for our youngest grandson who is still in high school and I expect he will follow along as well."

With that said Dr. Mutch offers one last comment with regards to the value of a being a grandparent, "My grandparents had an impact on me whether directly or indirectly by their examples and their modeling. Their wisdom and guidance influenced me greatly; I hope I have been able to impart the same to ours."

Contact us at 376-8900 for more information or to schedule a tour. Please join us in celebrating Grandparents Day, Saturday, September 19th from 11-1 pm at Moraga Royale, 1600 Canyon Road at the corner of Country Club Drive, Moraga.

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**LAMORINDA Community**

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

Editor:

MOFD, Where to Now?  
What's the difference between opera and local politics? In opera, a chorus of shrill voices too long on stage would drive an audience from the theatre. But in local politics they seem to gather a following. In opera, a seasoned voice capable of intimate nuance as well as gripping power (if you can find one) is highly prized. Why, I ask you, does the same not go for local political discussion?  
The bullies are screaming "Off with Their Heads!" when it comes to the MOFD Fire Chief and the Board of Directors. Where are the mature voices calling for review of the governance structure and improvement of agency-community relationships?  
How unfortunate is it that those who berate our fire/paramedic professionals have no sense of and no regard for the crisis of morale they are contributing to among those who serve our communities? How sad is it that those who come to work every day prepared to put their lives on the line for us have to endure a long running stream of insensitive vitriol containing 10% facts and 90% ear splitting, raging noise?  
In a few weeks the next MOFD Fire Chief will be hired. I heartily enjoin citizens of good will to meet with the new leader and seek to find a way forward which will show respect for and be of benefit to both our communities and to our emergency responders.  
Those who take the time to learn the breadth of the situation—all sides of the matter—are the rightful voices of counsel...if we can find them.

Jonathan Goodwin  
Canyon

To the Editor,

Excoriating elected and appointed board members and government officials for faulty oversight of MOFD's pension policy need not turn into a vitriolic attack on an outstanding public servant for exercising his legal rights. To do so, as represented in the September 9th issue of Letters to the Editor, is no more appropriate than attacking a taxpayer for taking a completely legal but controversial tax break, as I expect many members of our affluent community do with thoughtless regularity.  
Chief Nowicki has been a particularly outstanding member of a public service organization charged with protecting our properties and our lives at a moment's notice 24/7. I had the privilege of working with Pete when I served as a reserve firefighter in the pre-merger Moraga Fire Protection District. He was always an exemplary firefighter / paramedic, technical rescue leader and generally an acknowledged example to his peers in the firehouse. This was a firehouse community in the highest tradition of service to a community that demanded and got the best. Before Pete was selected for Chief of MOFD, he attended great fires and medical calls, saving lives and property as a matter of course. His elevation to Chief was inevitable given his expertise, superior intellect and incredible work ethic. What was a loss to first line fire-fighting and emergency medical needs was a major gain to the leadership of the newly consolidated district.  
To put this into perspective, Chief Nowicki has many of the same attributes as many of the very successful, high achieving, business leaders of the Lamorinda community whose intellect and work ethic he at least equals. A big difference is that his was a choice of public service putting his physical safety at risk for our benefit, not the economic risks that many comparable leaders chose as careers, that have rewarded them with the opportunities and safety of a Lamorinda lifestyle.  
Pete Nowicki deserves our gratitude and respect, and I believe an apology from Mr. Bill Schmicker. To the degree that this latter is not forthcoming, I offer it on behalf of my community.

Les Berkes  
Moraga

To the Editor:

I'm sure many readers have heard about the new playground at the Lafayette Community Park and all that it has to offer to children of various ages. What the planners failed to account for was security. I have been a Lamorinda resident for 10 years and my recent visit to the park was the first time I instinctually felt concern for the safety of my

children and myself in this area. My visit was early in the morning and the playground was empty. Considering that the playground is not visible from the parking lot, road or any neighboring homes, this is definitely not the type of playground I would visit in any neighboring communities.  
My gut feeling was validated that day and over and over again since then. The good news is that no one has been physically assaulted, but the bad news is that the lack of security in the parking lot has afforded a petty thief a great deal of opportunity. I am personally aware of 4 smash and grab incidences in the span of 11 days. Each of these incidences has involved a mother taking her children to enjoy the new playground. It seems fairly plausible that it is the same perpetrator or group. It's unfortunate that in Lamorinda, a self-described family suburb, a mother can no longer take her children to a local playground without safety and crime concerns. As a local mother of young children, I demand that the police ensure our safety at our playgrounds. Is this so unreasonable? Considering that the cost of the playground was \$55,000 less than anticipated, is it unrealistic to ask for security features such as video surveillance or other deterrents? It is unacceptable that mothers with children are being targeted in this community with so much success.

Sincerely,  
Sharon Mieloch-Garcia  
Lafayette

Editor:

In an insensitive attack on jobless and lower-income people, the Acalanes Union High School District wants to make a temporary property tax permanent.  
Recently, the district's board voted to put a tax-increase measure on the November 3 ballot. The measure, if passed, will make a \$189 property tax permanent. A two-thirds vote is needed for passage. The original tax is scheduled to expire in June 2011.  
Currently, the official unemployment rate for California is 11.9 percent. The unofficial unemployment rate is 20 percent (The New York Times, July 15, 2009).  
At a time when so many of our fellow citizens are unemployed, the Acalanes district should have asked for a temporary extension of the \$189 tax. At a future time, the economy may be better, and the proposed permanent tax may not be needed.  
In an election not too long ago, the Acalanes district received voter approval to extend a different tax for 17 years.  
The Acalanes plan to make the \$189 tax permanent comes at a time when Lamorinda residents have been besieged with other tax and fee increases. On April 1, the local sales tax went from 8.25 percent to 9.25 percent. Garbage-collection rates have gone up as much as 25%. The local water district recently hiked taxes 8 percent. The sewer district wants 4 percent more.  
In the last 18 months, Orinda residents got a 44 percent increase in the library tax. On March 3, the property tax for the Orinda schools went up 32 percent.  
By trying to make the \$189 tax permanent, the Acalanes district puts each homeowner closer to foreclosure.  
While good schools enhance property values, overtaxation can also lower such values.  
Voters in the Acalanes district should reject the plan to make the \$189 tax permanent.

Richard S. Colman  
Orinda

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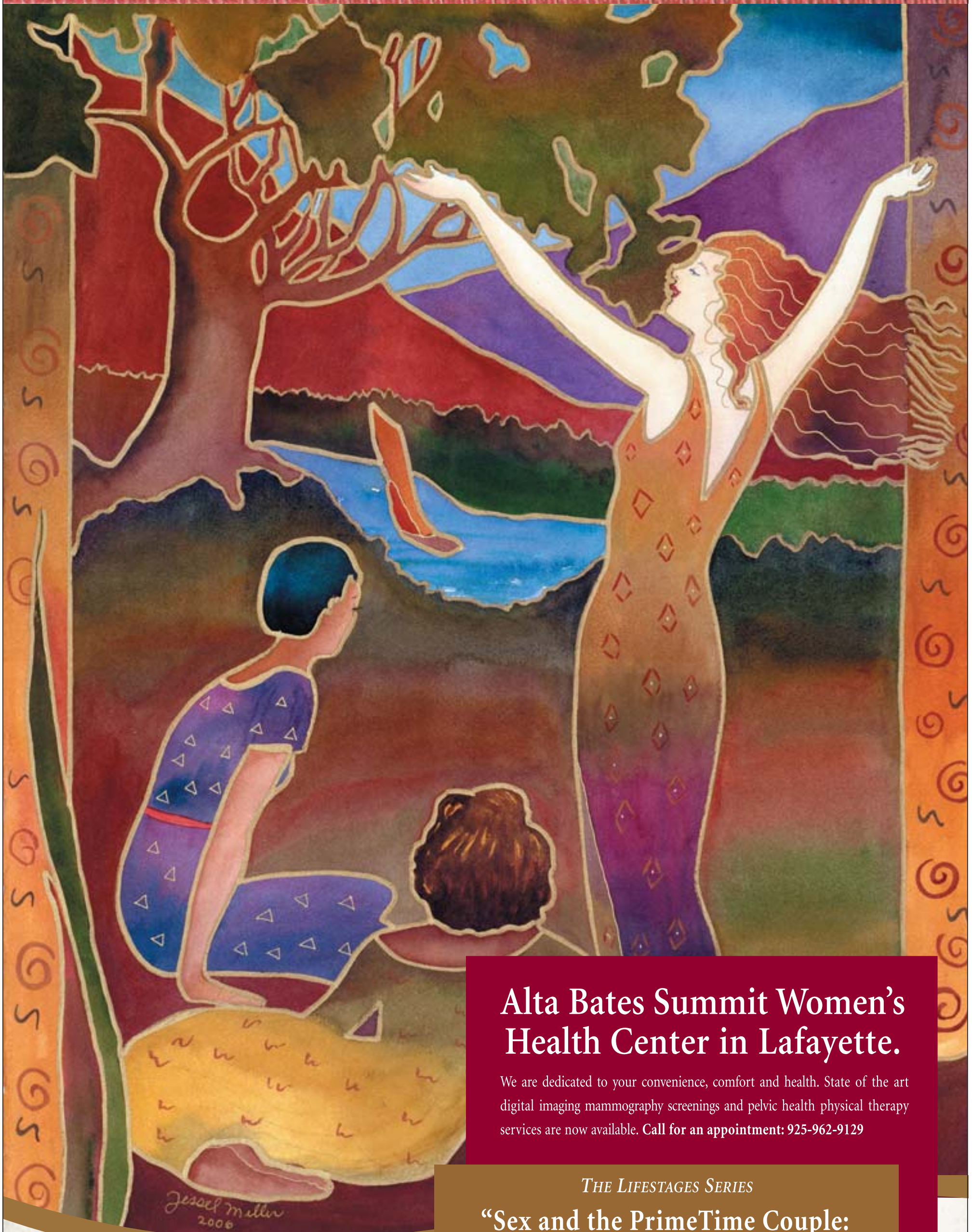
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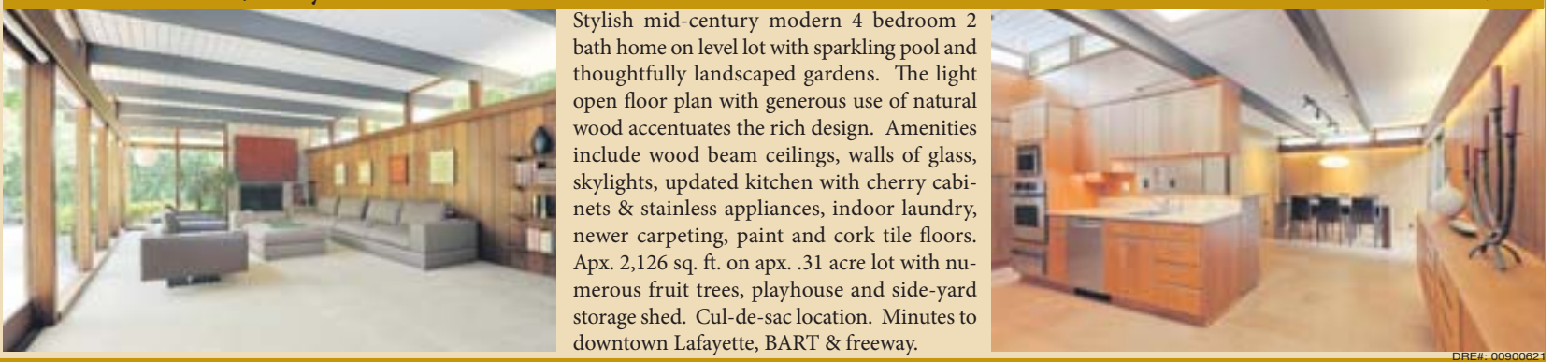


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# LAMORINDA Community

## It's Time to Dine in Orinda

By Andrea A. Firth



Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO) Volunteers cheer guests' donations at 2008 Orinda Restaurant Tour

Lamorinda food lovers should save their appetites for the second annual Orinda Restaurant Tour to be held on Tuesday, September 29th from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. Over 15 eateries from across the city will be providing tour

Orinda Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Candy Kattenburg. "We will have a trolley car available to transport diners to and from the two sides of the city."

The evening starts in Theater Square where Shelby's Restaurant and Lava Pit Hawaiian Grill will provide appetizers from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Over the subsequent two hours, diners are invited to stroll through the city and hop the trolley car to sample foods specially prepared for the Tour by each of the participating restaurants. Desserts will be offered from 8:00 to 8:30.

The Tour features a broad array of dining choices and variety of ethnic options from the all-American hotdog to German-styled comfort food along with Mexican, Thai, and Japanese fare. Participating restaurants not previ-

ously mentioned include Casa Orinda, Europa HofBrau, Kasper's Hot Dogs, Loard's Ice Cream, Petra Cafe, Peet's Coffee, Pizzeria Amoroma, Susan Foord Catering, and Yu Sushi. Tickets may be purchased in advance (\$30) through the Chamber of Commerce website or on the evening of the event at Theater Square (\$35). The Education Foundation of Orinda will receive \$10 from every ticket sold.

The Orinda Restaurant Tour is an extension of the Chamber's Shop Orinda Campaign and will be supported with manpower from Council Members Amy Worth, Tom McCormick, Steve Glazer, and Victoria Smith, Mayor Sue Severson and City Manager Janet Keeter. This will be an Orinda event that is not-to-be missed, according to Kattenburg.

## Starlight Village Players' at a Orinda Chamber of Commerce Mixer



Members of the Starlight Village Players' cast of *Harvey* mingled with local business owners and City Council members at the Orinda Chamber of Commerce Mixer on September 10th.

Pictured are (standing L to R) Beau Behan, Candy Kattenburg, Lori Worford (as Nurse Kelly), Kelly Hansen (as Mrs. Chumley), chamber members AJ Nisen, Rick Kattenburg (in back), Malcom Cowler (as Elwood P. Dowd), and City Council members Amy Worth and Victoria Smith.

Seated are Mayor Sue Severson (L) and Susan Chapple as (Veta Simmons).

A. Firth

Photo Ohlen Alexander

## Residents Opposed to Town Staff Move will get a Hearing

... continued from page 3



Hacienda de las Flores on Donald Dr. Photo Andy Scheck

The staff move itself was not discussed during the Council Meeting, but staff sought approval for the work at the Hacienda. According to Town Engineer Jill Mercurio, most of the construction is needed to repair the damage done by the fire that affected part of the building in March. "We took that opportunity to update some of the systems that had long needed maintenance, such as the alarm and

the electrical," added Mercurio. Segrest said the work that was requested to accommodate the return of staff is minor and reversible.

The budget to execute the repairs was approved unanimously. As for the move itself, Mayor Dave Trotter promised the residents that a hearing would happen shortly, possibly as soon as the next Council meeting on September 23.

## Sneak a Peek at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center

... continued from page 1



Reduced ceiling height in the children's library, pictured left to right: Don Tatzin, Steven Falk, Mike Zampa Photo Andy Scheck

Old Betsy, the 1926 Model T fire truck that has been relaxing in a garage for quite a few years, will soon boast a fine view of Golden Gate Way and be prominently displayed. "Gleaming in her resplendent red coat," said City Manager Steven Falk on a recent tour.

To solve "a problem that has vexed librarians since the time of Caesar," said Falk, will be the debut of a two-fold organizing system – the first of its kind in Contra Costa

County – an automated materials handling mechanism along with an inventory tracking system. When a patron drops off a book, an electronic reader sees a unique chip in each book, will check it in, and do a rough sort. Librarians can use a wand device to search for an individual magnetic tag to see if a particular book has been mis-shelved. "These are designed to deliver faster and better service, and more efficiently use librarian's time," said

Cathy Sanford, Deputy County Librarian. This velocity of circulation is expected to eliminate the need for two full time staffers.

The Children's wing on the main Mount Diablo street level is about the size of the current library. Lots of intimate reading nooks and special pint size bookshelves along with a dedicated cozy story corner are included. There's also a shaded outdoor children's activity deck with a very unique built-in art in-

stallation at just the right height for little guys. Good news for moms, gold fish and apple juice along with lattes and biscotti are not a problem here and throughout the library.

But wait, there's more - a special Zen inspired Glenn Seaborg garden, a drive-up book return, and the Lafayette Arts and Science Foundation headquarters. Finally there's a separate Community Hall on the corner of Mt. Diablo and First Street that will serve as an emergency center for the city in case of natural disaster, have rotating art exhibits, and be the new home for public meetings like the City Council and more. The space will be available for rental for special events.

You just have to see it to believe it. Project Architect Killefer Flammang of Santa Monica has designed a landmark building that captures the essence of library banners that adorned Mount Diablo Boulevard, it will truly enable community members to: imagine, learn, explore, create and read. Doors to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center will open to the public at 10:00 a.m. on November 14.



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**Life in LAMORINDA**  
 Lafayette Gallery Celebrates Ten Years Together  
 By Andrea A. Firth



Past and present members of the Lafayette Gallery reunite at an exhibit of their works on display at the Orinda Library through September. Photo Ohlen Alexander.

The Lafayette Gallery is celebrating ten years in the making with a special joint exhibition of work by past and present members at the Orinda Library through the end of the month and a unique anniversary exhibit on display at the Gallery through October 10th.

The Lafayette Gallery, a co-op of artists, was the brainchild of Kathy DeForest and Judy Miller. In the late spring of 1999, the Gallery's current space, a cottage on Lafayette Circle, had come available and artists were invited to become members of this novel art community recalls Linda Yoshizawa, a founding member. "I think the first twenty artists who came to the start-up meeting with a \$200 check defined the original membership," says Yoshizawa with a laugh. "It was initially a lot of work to get the gallery up and running," she adds describing the effort that went into cleaning up the space, adding lighting, and building pedestals and systems to

display the art. The Gallery opened its doors in September of that year for the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival and those doors have remained open and inviting to the public for the past decade.

"I'm sure that [the Gallery] has worked over these ten years because we are always revising to make sure that every member feels a part of this art community," says Yoshizawa.

The Gallery puts on a new exhibit every six to eight weeks, which provides a strong incentive for artists to produce new works, explains Yoshizawa. "It's not just about selling your work. It's about having a place to exhibit and get feedback," she says. Plus every member takes a monthly shift in staffing the Gallery and is responsible for some aspect of the operation. "We actually have 23 jobs. Everyone is active," she adds.

The Gallery currently has 23 members and includes artists who work in a wide variety of media in-

cluding printmaking, watercolor, collage, ceramics, acrylics, glass, photography, silk painting, and jewelry. The anniversary exhibit at the Gallery features an older and newer work by each of the members. "So you can see how we have grown," states Yoshizawa.

Several members have moved on to other venues and others have just moved away, but a core group of original members remains, which in addition to Yoshizawa includes Judy Miller, Susan Erickson, Jill Landau, Maggie Lucas-Hill, and Pat Prosek. Remarkably the Orinda Gallery joint exhibit features work by 22 past members who have shipped work in for the exhibit from Nevada, Oregon, and as far as Boston along with all of the current members of the Gallery.

"The fact that we have lasted this long, even in these tough economic times, shows that we need to have art," says Yoshizawa.

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**Beauty Ain't Just Skin Deep**  
 By Theresa Tsingis, DC MS

Even in a recession, millions of dollars are being spent in the quest to look wonderful. Ironically, some of the best skin and body care opportunities are addressed each time we eat. Nutrition influences energy levels, body shape, and skin quality, to name a few. Here are half dozen pointers that apply universally to helping someone look their best (note - consult your doctor or nutrition specialist before taking nutritional supplements or changing eating habits):

- 1) Avoid sugars and empty starchy foods
- 2) Eat foods with natural skin nutrients
- 3) Take Omega 3 Oils
- 4) Exercise regularly
- 5) Decrease acne and eczema
- 6) Lower stress

**1. Avoid Sugars and Empty Starchy Foods**

This is important to do for several compelling reasons. First, sugar and starch-laden foods form compounds within skin membranes called advanced glycosylation end products (AGES). These AGES can be likened to dry bread crust, and they age the appearance and function of the skin and body. Second, high empty carbohydrates cause a spike in blood sugar, which raises insulin, promoting acne growth. Third, the blood sugar spikes are followed by a sharp decline in brain blood sugar levels known to negatively alter mood. It's hard to look your best when you're feeling down in the dumps and your energy is low.

**2. Eat Foods with Natural Skin Nutrients**

Skin is plumped by water, collagen, and hyaluronic acid, to mention a few. Vitamin C and high Vitamin C foods (broccoli, peppers,

strawberries, oranges and Brussels sprouts) help with collagen formation. Soybeans contain natural weak estrogen-like compounds, and estrogens are thought to help skin quality. In addition, soy may increase production of hyaluronic acid, an interstitial fluid which fills out wrinkles. Soy beans themselves, in my opinion, are preferred, since they are less processed than soy products. Soy may not be advised, depending on medical history.

**3. Take Omega 3 Oils**

There are many types of fats, but only some provide true benefits, and at different life stages the amounts of each are important. In this article, I address only the general properties of omega 3 oils. They benefit skin, hair and nails, since as a natural component of cell membranes, they form a protective barrier against the elements. If you want shinier hair and stronger nails, omega 3s (sold as fish oils), could be the answer.

**4. Exercise Regularly**

Daily exercise promotes circulation, bringing oxygen to the skin, joints, and brain. Exercise lifts mood, and increases the skin's radiance. Skin nutrients are delivered and waste products taken away more efficiently when circulation is improved via exercise. Regular activity also increases positive neurotransmitter levels; those feel-good chemicals become look-good chemicals.

**5. Decrease Acne and Eczema**


Did you know that acne can increase from high skin insulin levels when blood sugar fluctuates? Higher bacterial growth on the skin occurs to encourage acne formation. Eczema can develop from stress, food allergies, intestinal con-

ditions, and other factors. A nutrition specialist can help determine underlying causes of acne and eczema to benefit skin and overall health.

**6. Lower Stress**

That special glow from inner happiness and confidence supercedes any amount of beauty treatments and vitamins. Stress hormones such as cortisol cause premature aging of the skin, so the idea is to lower the output of those hormones. These days, the stresses of life probably won't disappear, but coping in a positive way is a choice to make. Try some of the following to maintain balance, confidence and flexibility: deep breathing, meditation, a varied exercise routine, yoga, massage, and chiropractic care.

At Lamorinda Nutrition, we believe in beauty from the inside out. Improving your nutrition may solve not only health but also beauty issues. Give it a try and enjoy the results.



Dr. Theresa Tsingis, D.C., M.S. has a private nutrition practice at 89 Davis Rd., #180, Orinda. Tel. (925) 254-1080 Email: drtsingis@comcast.net

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**Are All Oil Changes Created Equal?**



Jeff Joyce

**Dear Jeff;**  
 I always look for coupons when my car needs an oil change, How do I know my car is getting the correct service my car requires?  
 Signed, Confused in Concord

**Dear Confused;**  
 Not all coupon oil changes meet factory service or warranty re-

quirements. With the complexity of today's automobiles, the correct oil grade is ultra critical. Most discount oil changes only offer one grade of oil that do not have proper certifications through API and ISLAC and is usually for older model cars. Correct oil costs more due to specific additives used for emission and performance needs of modern automobiles and light trucks.

**Dear Jeff;**  
 I have a Hybrid vehicle. Are there any special Hybrid service concerns I should know about?  
 Signed, Mr. Green

**Dear Mr. Green;**  
 Hybrid technology is certainly a sign of our transportation future. Unfortunately, not too many shops are properly trained to service these vehicles. Most hybrids require hybrid specific oils and fluids that meet low emissions capabilities. Always use



trusted facilities with trained technicians that offer the correct oils to keep your warranty in effect and keep your hybrid the best it can be.


**Dear Jeff;**  
 My owner's manual states my car requires synthetic oil, but do I really have to use it?  
 Signed, Frustrated in Fremont

**Dear Frustrated;**  
 There are many vehicles with high-performance engines that are indeed engineered to use synthetic oil for their engines. Synthetic oils provide longer drain intervals, superior oiling capabilities in cold start up and better adhesion to internal engine components. All these play a curtail role in protecting your investment.

Jeff Joyce has been the Manager of Express Oil Change & Tire Center since 2004. He can be reached at 925-254-8989 or jjoyce@orindamotors.com

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**Life in LAMORINDA**

**MOFD Continues To Narrow the Field of Prospective Fire Chiefs**

By Lucy Amaral

Six prospective Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Fire Chiefs finished the first round of interviews on September 2 after a day-long meeting with a panel made up of area fire chiefs, Moraga's police chief, MOFD staff and community representatives. The stakeholder panel then noted comments and recommendations which were delivered to Dr. Lawrence Bienati, who is assisting executive recruiters Avery Associates.

Bienati said at MOFD's Board Meeting held later that night that he should be able to narrow the field of candidates to four and then present them to the Board.

On September 10, MOFD Board President Pete Wilson said that the Board would be given the list on September 14 at a special closed-session meeting, at which time they would review the candidates and decide a time and place for final interviews before making their decision.

Several union contracts were also discussed and ratified during the Board meeting. Interim Fire Chief Pete Nowicki stated that in an offer to help with the current financial difficulties, the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees Union's Local 2700 offered to extend the contract of its members without contract improvements. The MOFD members of local 2700 currently consist of the district's four administrative assistants. Jo Bates, Business Agent for Local 2700, said in a letter to Nowicki that the union will agree to wage freezes, no enhancement of current level of health and welfare benefits and dental care, and it agrees to extend the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) through June 30, 2012.

The Board agreed to amend Fire Marshall Michael Mentink's MOU by adding two paid holidays (which brings him on par with battalion chiefs), and formally make him eligible for 'strike team pay,' which would allow MOFD to be reimbursed by outside fire departments if Mentink is sent elsewhere for duty. Nowicki said that these amendments do not count toward retirement calculations and that allowing for 'strike team pay' will save the district money.

The Board also approved an amendment to the Battalion Chief's agreement regarding 'backfill' hours. Nowicki said that by allowing certification class instruction time to be considered part of a Battalion Chief's backfill obligation, the district will save much needed funds. Nowicki said that bringing in outside instructors can cost between \$100 and \$300 per hour and using MOFD Battalion Chiefs to teach classes in-house to its firefighters would cost closer to \$63 per hour. Last year, Nowicki said that eight classes were taught at MOFD that fell into this category. "MOFD Battalion Chiefs are qualified to teach a majority of the classes that are appropriate for our District," said Nowicki. "We will be saving a great deal of money by using our own Battalion Chiefs as instructors."

It's all online!  
www.lamorindaweekly.com

**Fire Prevention: Do Your Homework**

By Sophie Braccini

The Station fire that has burned more than 160,000 acres in South California (71% contained as of September 10, 2009) is a good advertisement for wildfire prevention measures. In Lamorinda the fire season to date has not been worse than previous years but Moraga Orinda Fire District Fire Marshal Mike Mentink offers a reminder of what could happen: "This year the fuel (grass and bushes) is particularly dry which can make for very rapid fire spread, especially if the heated Diablo wind coming from the east is blowing," he explains, what we saw in Oakland was the loss of hundreds of homes over a 30 minute period. Even the five minutes it takes us to respond to a call can generate a lot of damage." Mentink says the very first level of defense is in the hands of the homeowners and is called fire prevention landscaping and home retrofitting.

**What are the dangers?**

"There are three ways for a house to catch fire," says Mentink. The first danger is from flying embers. "When the wind is blowing in our area, embers can be carried by the wind for up to two miles," he says. "Flying embers can collect in vulnerable places of a structure, like under a deck, and restart a fire hours after the main event took place," adds George Laing, Fire Inspector with Contra Costa County Fire, "flying embers are the number one cause in the spread of wild land interface fires." "Second is the vegetation," says Mentink. "If branches or bushes touch a home, flames can attack the structure. There needs to be a defensible space around a property so that firefighters can access and defend it." Mentink likes to remind residents that lives come before material goods and firefighters will not risk their lives to defend an empty house. "Every firefighter deserves a round trip," says Laing.

The third culprit is radiant

heat. Chances are, if your neighbor's house is burning and is close to yours, the radiant heat might affect your structure; there again a large defensible space will facilitate the firefighters' work.

**Enter the new high fire hazard maps.**

"As far as homes are concerned, a class-A roof is the single more important improvement that can be done," says Mentink. For the rest of the house, construction requirements for building an ignition resistant home can be a guide. This includes such things as double pane windows with tempered glass on one side, non-combustible gutters and ignition retardant siding.

This type of home building is required only in areas that have been identified as "high fire hazard" by the State. The maps defining these areas are now being approved in Lamorinda. "We worked closely with the state to validate their recommendation," says Laing, "these maps are computer generated using the fuel, weather and topography to determine the level of risk. It does not include elements such as the state of the roads that can have an impact on the evacuation capabilities." Laing reports that his Fire District is working with the Lafayette Planning Department on the map adoption process.

Mentink oversees the adoption process in Moraga and Orinda. In Orinda, the map is expected to be approved by the Fire Board at a hearing, probably in October. Moraga adopted its map during a public session of the Town Council.

"It is our objective to contact all the homeowners' associations in these areas and work with them to mitigate their risk," explains Mentink. The consequences of the new maps for homeowners will not be just that phone call from the MOFD. The very high fire danger status will have to be disclosed when selling the home and if new construction is considered it will

have to abide by fire prevention building standards. "In Moraga the only new area is the non-constructed Indian Valley property," said Mentink. The property owner, the Bruzzone family, challenged the State rating but couldn't have the maps amended.

MOFD plans to conduct outreach regarding evacuation procedures. "If worse comes to worst, some neighborhoods will be asked to evacuate," says Mentink, "families need to have a plan in place, know how to contact each other, decide on a place to meet, make decisions about their pets, know what to take with them and be ready to get out within less than five minutes."

If you want to start preparing, help is available: MOFD Open House on October 10th at Station 41, 1280 Moraga Way in Moraga; CERT training - neighborhood groups are being organized around CERT trained volunteers (<http://lamorindacert.org/>); Lamorinda Wildfire Forum, Wednesday October 7th, 2009 at 7pm in the Orinda Library Auditorium. The forum will focus on preparing for evacuation as well as things neighborhoods can do together; RSVP to [canyonfire@vfemail.net](mailto:canyonfire@vfemail.net).

**The Fire Marshal's list of things you can do this weekend to protect your home:**

- Move the wood pile at least 15 feet away from structure
- Remove vegetation that's close to the house
- Trim trees
- Remove dead debris from under shrubs (some, like oleander, contain oil that ignites easily and is plagued with abundant dangerous dead material underneath)
- Clean gutters now, don't wait for the rainy season
- Remove anything that can generate heat, such as patio furniture

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**Additional resources:**

**Links to download copies of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps for Lafayette, Orinda and Moraga:**

[ftp://rap.cdf.ca.gov/fhszlocalmaps/contra\\_costa/Lafayette.pdf](ftp://rap.cdf.ca.gov/fhszlocalmaps/contra_costa/Lafayette.pdf)  
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[ftp://rap.cdf.ca.gov/fhszlocalmaps/contra\\_costa/Moraga.pdf](ftp://rap.cdf.ca.gov/fhszlocalmaps/contra_costa/Moraga.pdf)

**State guidelines for vegetation management:**  
[http://www.fire.ca.gov/CDFFOFDB/pdfs/Copyof4291finalguidelines9\\_29\\_06.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/CDFFOFDB/pdfs/Copyof4291finalguidelines9_29_06.pdf)

**Diablo Fire Safe Council:**  
<http://www.diablofiresafe.org/>

**Personal Wildfire Plan from the county of Ventura:**  
[http://fire.countyofventura.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9hQO1rR\\_ezw%3d&tabid=231](http://fire.countyofventura.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9hQO1rR_ezw%3d&tabid=231)

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## • COMMUNITY Service •

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities.

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

### MCC Hosts Charity Kitchen Tour

By Ben Olsen



Featured kitchens

Photos Rich Anderson

The Second Annual Moraga Country Club kitchen tour will be held on Thursday, October 1st from 4 to 7pm. The event will feature five fabulous kitchen remodels and benefits Susan G. Komen for the Cure. The kitchens are a delight to see. The sizes and styles vary greatly and showcase the latest styles and trends. Wine and appetizers will be served at each of the homes.

Moraga Country Club provides a great venue for the event because all of the homes on tour are in close proximity to one another. It is fun for Moraga Country Club homeowners to see what others have done with a similar home, but it is equally fun for others to see these exceptional kitchens, and ex-

perience some of the finest homes in Moraga Country Club.

This year, all five kitchens were completed within the last 18 months – be careful, some were completed so recently that the paint might still be wet! Themes range from traditional to modern, and include a wide variety of materials.

Sue Olsen, a very active real estate broker in Lamorinda and in the Country Club, was inspired to put the first tour together in 2008 when she noticed that a large number of neighbors were visiting her open houses just to ‘get ideas’ for their own homes. While neighbors are always welcome at open houses, Sue realized that they were not always seeing the best tickets with the newest designs.



Tickets are \$20 per person, are fully tax deductible and are available at Across the Way, Moraga Country Club office or through the tour website at [www.MC-CHomeTour.com](http://www.MC-CHomeTour.com). Carpooling is encouraged. Take advantage of the large parking lot near the driving range on St. Andrews Drive to meet up with friends and tour together.

A raffle will also be held as part of the event. Prizes include Golf foursomes at Moraga Country Club, Golf and Tennis lessons, Pilates instruction at Star Pilates, a magnum of Opus One, a \$75 Amoroma gift certificate, design consultations and more. Raffle tickets will be 5 for \$10.

A special thanks to Moraga Women's Golf Association and the

Moraga Country Club Women's Nine Hole Golf Association for support and volunteers at this event. Thanks to Moraga Country Club for providing appetizers for the event, and thanks to R&B Cellars and Rick Curotto, Southern Wine and Spirits and Richard Canty, Sterling Albert Winery and Michele Strickland for donations of wine.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure®, the global leader of the breast cancer movement, has raised and invested more than \$1 billion since inception in 1982. As the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists, they are working together to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures.

### Art – A Delightful Moment at Town Hall Theater

By Sophie Braccini



Picture courtesy of Town Hall Theater

French writer Yasmina Reza's "Art" opened at Town Hall Theater (THT) on September 3. Set in three Parisian apartments, the play tells the very humorous story of three men whose friendship hangs by a thread when one purchases an expensive piece of modern art.

Serge, a dermatologist who sees himself as a budding art collector, just bought a very controversial and expensive painting. He wants to share it with his friend Marc, a more traditional thinking engineer. Serge's enthusiasm is met with more than skepticism by his friend. As for Yvan, the third member of the friendship triangle, his desire to please everyone will just make things worse. A reflection on human relations and mod-

ern art, the play is a joyous comedy offered up at THT by three very strong local actors.

In 1995, 'Art' premiered in Paris and went on to win the Molière Award for Best Author. Since then it has been produced world-wide and translated and performed in over 30 languages. The play has been an international hit. The London production received the 1996-97 Laurence Olivier Award and Evening Standard Award. It also won the Tony Award for Best Play.

Clive Worsley, Town Hall Artistic Director, had seen the play in San Francisco and wanted to bring it to Lafayette. "One reason I chose this play is because I felt that it was relevant to many of us. I've known people who have had simi-

lar difficulties in friendships and relationships over disagreements about art or musical tastes."

Reza scrapes human relations and their motivations to the bone. The wry humor that ensues surprised and totally delighted a Lamorinda audience at a recent performance.

"I think it's an incredibly funny play, although not all productions of this piece play towards that comedy. Which I think is a shame," said Worsley. The text is efficient and funny, the setting by Maya Linke is simple, almost symbolic, but efficient at transporting the spectators from one apartment to the next. Director Soren Oliver highlights the play's humor and sets a fast paced and precise tempo.

The three actors are very experienced. Serge is played by Garth Petal. He gives the character an almost naïve strength and vigor that adds to the charm of the

play. James Hiser is a powerful Marc, leonine and self-righteous, his abruptness contrasts perfectly with Yvan's vulnerability, played with disarming humor by Dennis Markam.

The conclusion can be seen as cynical, an ultimate surrender to social standards. The Lafayette production leans more toward a hopeful and poetic conclusion, leaving the audience feeling enriched by the experience, and maybe a little bit more tolerant.

The Town Hall Theater, located at the corner of School Street and Moraga Way in Lafayette, was recently renovated after a fire. "Art" is the first play of the 2009-2010 season and will run until October 3rd. It will be followed by Scrooge from December 3rd to the 20th and Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest in March 2010. For reservations call 283-1557.

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**Investing in the Wake of the Bernie Madoff Scandal**  
(7 tips for successful fund investing)

By Peter Eberle

With almost every asset class having suffered extreme losses recently and interest rates near historic lows, it is not surprising that savvy investors are looking towards "alternative investments."

However, in light of financial scandals such as the recent Bernie Madoff scandal, many investors are rightfully wary and more than a little skeptical. They know they are losing ground to inflation by parking money in cash accounts but they cannot stomach the volatility of the stock market, nor do they want to be swindled. What can investors, especially seniors, do to insure they are making a sound investment?

"Due Diligence" refers to the care a reasonable person should take before entering in an agreement or transaction with another party. This is true for all types of investments. Investment funds are a popular choice as they offer diversification of risk, often with a minimal investment. Before investing in a fund, consider the following criteria: investment objectives, track record, transparency, liquidity, fees, testimonials, and investment diversity, as well as your own investment objectives. Here are some due diligence tips when evaluating investment funds:

**Do you understand the fund's investment objectives?**

Having a basic understanding of the fund's objectives is of primary importance. Read the offering circular or prospectus carefully and know where your money will be invested. If you can't understand what the fund does, you should avoid investing regardless of the promised return or yield. Successful investors such as Peter Lynch and Warren Buffett invest only in companies and products which they understand. With so many investment choices what benefit is there in an investment that is overly compli-

cated or counter-intuitive?

**What is the fund's track record and who is managing your money?**

A track record speaks for itself, and should be available in the offering circular, prospectus or on the fund's website. Legitimate funds include background information on their management team.

**What is the fund doing with your investment?**

A trustworthy fund should provide transparency by way of documentation. Can you independently verify results and audit performance? Investors have a right to request copies of financial documents. Most legitimate investments will provide Audited Financial Statements by Certified Public Accountants.

**Is there liquidity? How long is your investment commitment?**

In order to return higher yields alternative investments will often require a minimum investment term. Similar to bank CD's, an investor may receive a higher interest rate for committing to a longer term. The time frame could vary from a few months to several years. Be certain that the term restrictions agree with your investment objectives and monetary needs.

**How is the fund manager compensated?**

A fund manager should be willing to answer the question, "How do you make your money?" Stay away from the manager who avoids discussing its compensation. Are the management and investors interests aligned? A fund manager should earn a profit share but it should be based on the performance of the fund. Be aware of funds with excessive front-end fees as they will affect performance significantly.

**Can you speak to current investors?**

Speaking to current investors is an often over-looked

avenue in gaining insight to a fund's integrity. Ask the fund manager for a list of investors in your area who share your investment objectives.


**Diversify, diversify, diversify!**

Diversification is the golden rule in investing. No matter what investments you ultimately choose, it's wise to follow the old adage "don't keep all your eggs in one basket."



Peter Eberle is a Vice President at SB Capital in Lafayette. He can be reached at (925)283-2500 or peter@sbcapital.com

**Lamorinda Home Sales continued**

	<b>LAFAYETTE</b> Last reported: 8	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$420,000
		HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,700,000
	<b>MORAGA</b> Last reported: 3	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$495,000
		HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,300,000
	<b>ORINDA</b> Last reported: 3	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$1,015,000
		HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$2,255,000

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

- LAFAYETTE**
- 4159 Canyon Road, \$1,250,000, 1 Bdrms, 2315 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 8-21-09
  - 40 Diablo Circle, \$1,035,000, 3 Bdrms, 2193 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-21-09
  - 3878 Los Arabis Drive, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3626 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-18-09
  - 3358 Mildred Lane, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1309 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 8-26-09
  - 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #32, \$420,000, 3 Bdrms, 1731 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 8-18-09
  - 754 Old Jonas Hill Road, \$930,000, 4 Bdrms, 2510 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 8-26-09
  - 848 Solana Drive, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1706 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 8-26-09
  - 1258 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3539 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 8-21-09
- MORAGA**
- 1977 Ascot Drive #6, \$495,000, 3 Bdrms, 1959 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-21-09
  - 288 Claudia Court, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3124 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 8-17-09
  - 5 Netherton Court, \$1,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 3123 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-19-09
- ORINDA**
- 18 Donna Maria Way, \$1,255,000, 3 Bdrms, 2317 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 8-18-09
  - 49 Rheem Boulevard, \$2,255,000, 4 Bdrms, 3791 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 8-21-09
  - 29 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$1,015,000, 3 Bdrms, 2321 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-19-09

**Lamorinda Foreclosures continued**

- LAFAYETTE**
- Camino Vallecito, 94549, Luminent Mortgage, 08-17-09, \$853,740, 1595 sf, 3 bd
  - Denise Lane, 94549, Aurora Loan Services, 08-10-09, \$669,967, 2422 sf, 4 bd
- MORAGA**
- Moraga Road, 94556, Residential Funding, 08-12-09, \$722,500, 1918 sf, 4 bd

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<b>PENDING</b>  916 Colina Ct.	<b>SOLD</b>  3218 Rohrer Dr.	<b>SOLD</b>  995 Hawthorne Dr.	<b>SOLD</b>  3367 Moraga Blvd.

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**Artists Bring Life to Local Shopping Centers**

By Sophie Braccini



Art behind empty storefronts at Rheem Shopping Center in Moraga Photo Wenda Pyman

In two Lamorinda shopping centers, the Rheem Center in Moraga and Theater Square in Orinda, artists are creating new life and attracting the community to areas that had been a bit desolated. It just took an artistic vision and some sound business sense.

Somber windows adorned with colorful artistic creations enliven the Moraga Rheem shopping center. Artists are hanging a show in the windows of empty storefronts adjoining the Moraga Art Gallery at 570 Center Street. "It's a great partnership for the artists and the Center as it helps promote the gallery while filling the ugly, empty spaces," says Wenda Pyman of the Moraga Art Gallery. "It already has made a difference ... as we were working (setting up the show in August), passersby frequently stopped to look

at the art and applaud our efforts," she adds, "the works cheer up the area and lifts the spirits of the viewers."

Artist Nancy Slack noted the difference as well. "Some people told me that they had never noticed the gallery before," she said, "it encourages shoppers to walk from one end of the shopping center to the other and can only be beneficial to the small businesses located between the anchors."

The displays will change every eight to ten weeks and continue until the spaces are leased. Kimco Realty Corporation, the owner of the Center, does not charge the gallery for displaying the art in empty stores.

Theater Square in Orinda has a reputation as being a challenging place for the businesses located in the

back portion of the center. But that didn't stop Allison McCrady from taking over a previous art gallery to displaying her work and the creations of some 20 artists. "It all happened organically," explains McCrady, "I have been an Orinda artist for ten years. At the beginning of 2008 the city asked me for a painting representing the city for a poster. The firm managing Theater Square invited me to display the original in their space, and I agreed. Other artists proposed to join in and I supervised the extension of the project."

In fact the scheme grew so well that McCrady now has two spaces in the Square, one of them being a framing studio she owns with a partner. "When I started to represent artists and opened the store 1 1/2 years ago, the recession just started, I really questioned my decision, knowing that art is not considered a first necessity item." But McCrady is as much a businesswoman as she is an artist. Before turning to art 10 years ago, she was an investment banker and she believes that the business savvy she developed then is what makes her succeed now.

"To succeed in any community you have to understand it well and adapt to its demands," she says, "when I started in the middle of a recession, I decided to cut my prices

and let my customers know it. My main goal is to allow people to enjoy art everyday, whether it's by coming to the gallery, or buying something that will make people feel good and fit their budget." She believes that this adaptability is one of the elements that have made her successful where others have failed.

"This location has been very good for me," adds McCrady, "the place is beautiful, people enjoy seeing the art, and the company that manages the Square has been very supportive; they want the community to visit the Square and the community is coming."

The Lamorinda Art Association Open Studio on October 17 and 18 is another way that artists in the three cities will enliven the community. The event will kick off at the Moraga Gallery, and McCrady's boutique will be part of the tour. For more information go to: www.laaopenstudios2009.blogspot.com.

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

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**business briefs**

**La Boulange to Settle in Lafayette Early 2010**  
A final contract has been signed with Bay Bread, the group that owns San Francisco French Bakeries and eateries called "La Boulange." Signing with a new tenant is all about retail strategy for Craig Semmelmeier, the retail real estate broker who found tenants for the Mercantile building along Mount Diablo Boulevard. Semmelmeier felt the property needed that kind of café business to complement and enhance the business dynamic of the building. La Boulange anticipates an opening at the beginning of 2010.

**New Marketing Director at Aegis, 950 Country Club Drive, Moraga**  
Aegis of Moraga made a recent addition to its management team. Virginia Sargent is the new Marketing Director, taking over for Candice Moses, a familiar face in the Lamorinda community. "I can't say I'm replacing Candice, but I'm thrilled to be following in her footsteps," said Sargent, who has entrepreneurial experience, as well as a corporate sales and marketing background. Sargent plans to continue the Aegis of Moraga tradition of supporting community activities, such as the annual Moraga Pear Festival, and hosting community meetings and events. Reach her at 925-377-7900.

**Chow Bella Offering Cooking Classes in Lafayette**  
Elaine Smit's business is booming, from catering to birthday parties to cooking classes. She will be expanding her range having secured a new location, Founders Grove in Lafayette, where she will manage cooking classes, birthday parties and special events this fall. "Located behind Lafayette Christian Church, Founders Grove is a beautiful building, recently remodeled by the church, now made available to the public for various events, such as weddings, receptions, meetings, etc. The kitchen is new, with great appliances, stove and three ovens. I couldn't have asked for a better location," says Smit. For more information and registration go to www.chowbella.net.

**News from the Three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette**

- Lafayette Art & Wine Festival on Saturday, September 19 and Sunday, September 20 in Downtown Lafayette
- Business Issues/Government Affairs Committee Open Meeting on Friday September 25 a: 8:00 a.m. in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

**Moraga**

- Chamber meeting on Friday, September 25, 7:30 a.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores

**Orinda**

- Orinda Restaurant Tour on 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, with dessert from 8:00 pm. to 8:30 p.m. The event benefits the Orinda Schools. Tickets should be purchased in advance for \$30.00 per person; tickets at the door will cost \$35.00. Purchase your ticket online at 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)

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## SCHOOL CALENDAR

### School Governing Board Meetings

#### Acalanes Union

High School District  
Board Room AUHSD Office  
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2009 at 7:30pm

#### Lafayette School District

LAFSD Office  
3477 School Street, Lafayette  
Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2009 at 7 pm

#### Orinda Union School District

OUSD Office  
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
Monday, Oct. 12, 2009 at 4:00pm

#### Moraga School District

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
School Auditorium  
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2009 at 7:30 pm

## Preparatory Checklist for Potential H1N1 Outbreak

By Jennifer Wake



With the uncertainty about the number and severity of H1N1 Swine Flu infections expected among school children this fall, Lamorinda school districts have been proactive. Letters from district superintendents blanketed parents' e-mails with ways to increase hygiene and reduce the spread of the virus should an outbreak occur. But how should parents prepare at home for a possible outbreak?

According to the Contra Costa Health Services Web site, preparations can include something as simple as talking with employers about possible telecommuting options to keeping basic food and medical supplies on hand.

The following is a sampling of items the Contra Costa Health Services suggests:

- Medicines for fever such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring
- Thermometer, tissues, toilet paper and disposable diapers (if needed)
- Bottled water, canned juices and fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte®
- Ready to eat canned meats, vegetables, fruits, soups
- Manually-operated can opener
- Crackers, dried fruit, nuts, peanut butter and jelly
- Baby formula or jarred baby food (if needed)
- Pet food (if needed)
- Garbage bags, flashlight with extra batteries, portable radio with extra batteries
- Learning materials, such as books, school supplies, and educational computer activities and movies
- Puzzles, books, crosswords, crafts and recreational activities that your child can do at home

For a more detailed list, as well as tips on how to talk to your children about H1N1, visit the CC Health Services Web site at: [http://www.cchealth.org/topics/pandemic\\_flu/school\\_action\\_kit/tips\\_for\\_parents.pdf](http://www.cchealth.org/topics/pandemic_flu/school_action_kit/tips_for_parents.pdf) or [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).

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## Lamorinda's New Buses – Working Out the Kinks

By Jean Follmer

After a competitive bid process, the Lamorinda School Bus Program (LSBP) contracted with a new school bus provider this year. First Student replaced Durham School Services for the 2009/10 school year. Durham drivers were given the opportunity to sign on with First Student and LSBP Manager Juliet Hansen says at least half the drivers stayed on.

Hansen said LSBP is making progress with the transition. "First Student is a new company for us and the change, overall, has been positive," she states.

However, LSBP is not without its challenges in the first couple weeks of school. Hansen says there were a number of calls from parents complaining about drivers not knowing the routes. "We had quite a few late buses, especially in the afternoons," she acknowledges.

A Lafayette parent shared that she had to flag the bus down to stop for her daughter on the first day of school. Hansen says bus operations have improved consider-

ably. "We're confident that any remaining problems will be resolved," states Hansen. (We attempted to contact First Student for comment and were advised that they do not



issue statements.)

The new buses are equipped with seatbelts and Hansen says that feature has drawn a positive response from parents. Hansen said bus drivers instruct the students on how to use the belts and direct them to buckle up when they are seated.

For more information on LSBP, visit [www.lamorindaschoolbus.org](http://www.lamorindaschoolbus.org). For late buses and emergencies, contact First Student dispatch at 925-926-0375.

### School Bus Safety Reminders

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), pedestrian accidents account for two-thirds of school bus-related fatalities.

Here are two quick tips to keep our students safe:

Set the alarm clock a bit earlier so drivers can slow down and keep our students safe. Motorists must be on the look-out for students approaching and standing at bus stops in the morning and students need to arrive at the stop early enough to avoid running across a street to catch the bus.

Don't be a "red light runner." As a bus prepares to make a stop, its yellow lights will start flashing. When the bus is stopped, its red warning lights will flash and the stop signal arm on the side of the bus will be out. The DOT says, "Motorists must come to a complete stop a safe distance from the bus and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the arm is retracted, and the bus begins moving before they start driving again." The only exception to this law is when a median or divider is separating the oncoming traffic.

Submit stories to

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

## 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 September 26th at the Moraga Library located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556 from 11:00am-12:15pm.

'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 October and November calendars are 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.

## Beyond Fit in College Admissions

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

The concept of "fit" in college admissions has so penetrated our community that, to use a youthful phrase, students and their parents are "all over it." By now, most seniors have considered factors such as region (east, west, north, south), location (urban, residential, rural) and type. Seniors should understand the differences between a small liberal arts college that is more focused on undergraduate teaching, a larger research university that houses several different colleges, and a specialty school like a music conservatory, art institute and military academy. Some liberal arts schools have names that include the word "university" and universities often house a "college of arts and sciences." Nomenclature is less important than the actual mission of the school—which is exactly what you need to know. This article goes beyond general notions of "fit" to help students focus on specific information they need to make informed decisions about where to apply. Juniors can use these suggestions over the next year. Seniors should focus on recommendations that are critical to their current college search and carry them out in some depth right now.

**Collecting Basic Information**  
Often the most difficult part of understanding something is deciding what questions to ask. Here are some important ones:

1. What is the academic profile of the typical freshman and how does your academic profile compare? Here you are trying to ascertain if the school offers the right amount of challenge for you and assess your chances of admission.
2. What percentage of the freshman class returns for sophomore year? Less than 70% is cause for concern. You want to know why students do not return. Concerned deans, attentive advisors, proper admissions decisions, and strong academic programs should be able to keep rates high.
3. What percentage graduate in four years? A six year graduation rate is commonly reported, but you

should learn the four year rate. Also, understand the factors that may influence these rates. A small concern is finding out that many students take a course in the summer quarter following their senior year and are not included in the four year graduation rate. A much larger problem is a low four year graduation rate linked to students' inability to get into their major classes.

4. What are the class sizes for specific years, required courses, and courses in your major area of interest?

5. What is the composition of the student body? Examine breakdowns by gender, minority group, and geography. Will you be happy with a student body that is 65% female? What about being one of the few out of state residents in your class? Remember that diversity tells you at least two things about a college: the institution is attractive enough to draw students from beyond its own region and a diverse campus offers students the opportunity to learn from each other.

6. Financial aid questions are always important. Carefully research the school's financial aid options.

**Tip:** CollegeBoard's 2009 College Handbook is an excellent resource to obtain some of the above information.

**How well does the college prepare students for life after graduation?**

What percentage of the student body applies to graduate school (professional schools like medical and law as well as masters and doctoral programs). How many of these are accepted and to which schools? How many and which companies recruit on campus? Which majors are most heavily recruited and into what type of jobs? What is the average salary range for these positions? An active campus Career Counseling and Placement Office will have this type of information.

**What is there to do for fun?**  
It is a truism that you learn as much out of the classroom as in it. Whatever college you attend, it is going to be your home for the next four years. It is important to know as much as you can about what activities are both on campus and in

the surrounding community. If you love rock-climbing, does the athletic center have a wall? Or is there an affordable gym nearby that does?

**What about the campus visit?**

It is better to see with your own eyes than rely upon the views of others. The campus visit is the most valuable experience you can have to evaluate a college. You may consider the visit as an educational insurance policy. Visiting can rule out a school or bring much needed passion and sincerity to your college application essay (in particular the question "Why our college?"). You will have the opportunity to evaluate what students wear, how they live, your reactions to them, the campus and the nearest town or city. Take time to observe and try to do some active participation: attend a class, eat in the cafeteria, visit the library, work out at the gym, and arrange an overnight stay if possible.

**University of California Update:** Budget constraints will limit UC travel this year. To provide students with timely information the UC is sponsoring UC Day: An On-line College Fair on Oct. 1 (9 a.m. to 7 p.m. PST). For more information visit [www.CollegeWeekLive.com](http://www.CollegeWeekLive.com).



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](mailto:elizabeth@doingcollege.com).

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## Unique Method Teaches Local Children Music through Immersion

By Jennifer Wake



Xiomara Di Maio works with student Chase Severson, 9, on piano while Ian Shields accompanies on percussion. Photo Jennifer Wake

Music is a natural element in the lives of millions in the world. In the United States, however, music for many families has become as natural as the polycarbonate CDs upon which it is recorded. Music teachers Xiomara Di Maio and Ian Shields are working to change that at The Di Maio-Shields Music Studio in Lafayette.

For Shields and Di Maio, music is part of life. "Music is not a hobby," Di Maio says. "It's part of everything."

Both experienced professional musicians, Di Maio and Shields teach the Suzuki method of music. The Di Maio-Shields studio focuses on developing students' mu-

sical ear, before teaching them the rudimentary skill of reading music.

According to the International Suzuki Association, the Suzuki Method is based on the principle that all children possess ability and that this ability can be developed and enhanced through a nurturing environment. "All children learn to speak their own language with relative ease and if the same natural learning process is applied in teaching other skills, these can be acquired as successfully," it states on its Web site.

Katherine Austin of Orinda, who has taught the Suzuki method for nearly 20 years, says, "Dr. Suzuki's contribution to the world

of music has been monumental because he has shown us a way – almost a Zen-like path – to develop each child's natural talent for expressive, eloquent, fluent and musical playing."

Lafayette resident Pam Severson's 9 year old son, Chase, has been working with Di Maio and Shields for the past three years, and now plays piano with ease. Even Severson's four year old daughter Kelsey is drawn to the piano. "It's very interesting. Every once in a while she'll go to the piano to tinker," Severson says. "When she hits the right note, it 'clicks' and she gets so excited."

"Sibling participation is important," Di Maio says. "They are also part of the learning process."

Like other families who participate in the Suzuki method, Severson's family listens to tapes all the time to facilitate interest and learning.

In addition to individual lessons, which are piggy-backed so students support each other, Di Maio and Shields facilitate group sessions and have guest artists such as Stanley School's Bob Athayde on Jazz Piano, master Latin percussionist/bandleader John Santos, and other luminaries who visit, teach, and inspire the kids.

"We're like the world's smallest music conservatory," Shields says.

Richelle McClain's 14 year old daughter Simone (who attends Bentley) has been going to the Di Maio-Shields Studio for the past 10 years. In addition to playing piano, she also plays the guitar.

"The method is very holistic," McClain says. "Because sound is so important, you listen to the tapes to develop vocabulary and syntax for how music is developed. Simone hears music in a much different way than I do."

"What we're doing is training the ear from the beginning," Di Maio says. "Sound before reading, sound before writing. We work on posture, back, feet; it's a beautiful sound they're going for. What happens in a performance is they are thinking ahead. They know what's coming and they play the music, rather than the notes."

"I majored in piano in college and I'm still nervous about performing," McClain says. "And after all my training, I could not play by ear. Simone is just comfortable. When she was seven, she started bringing a guitar to piano lessons. She now plays piano and guitar by ear."

"The confidence factor is so amazing," Severson says. "That's something I never thought would translate."

"What's great is the fact that they want to perform and play," said Lafayette resident Danielle Gallagher, whose 9 year old daughter Claire has been coming to the studio for the past three years.

For Shields and Di Maio, it's not about talent – a word Shields hates and believes is a barrier – it's about doing.

Their goal is simple: "I want them to love it," Di Maio says. "And to learn that music is a beautiful process."

## Troubling Students' Sleep Habits Spark "Back to Sleep" Campaign

By Jennifer Wake

Years back it was a punishment to be sent to your room. But Orinda "sleep guru" Robert deStefano says with computers, TVs, cell phones, and video streams on iPods, bedrooms have become a "jungle of connectivity" and, consequently, stimulation.

"It's a perfect storm of sleep-robbing factors, the least of which are the demands of our high-performance culture and perhaps more significantly our growing inability and lack of desire to unplug," deStefano says. "Eleven and twelve year olds are hooked into endless IM, MySpace and Facebook conversations. Kids as young as nine or ten go to sleep with their cell phones in

fear of missing a text."

According to the National Sleep Foundation, children ages 5 to 12 should get between 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night. Yet a report in the Journal of School Health states studies show school age children are averaging seven hours of sleep or less.

A former insomniac who taught himself techniques to break the cycle of insomnia nearly 10 years ago, deStefano hopes to entrain self-sleep skills at an early age for local students to use later in life.

"The 'now' benefits are huge," this father of two Miramonte students says. "Under-sleeping in kids is directly linked to child obe-

sity and diabetes, bad behavior and lower grades than those kids who get nine to eleven hours [of sleep]."

While tactics vary depending on the age of the child, deStefano says the strategy is consistent: employ transitional devices.

"Same as with adults, the children's bedroom needs to be the place that is focused on rest and sleep," he says. "And just like anything else, boundaries and rules are critical to a positive result."

DeStefano is planning several workshops, which will focus on promoting sleep music, lighting, aroma therapy and sleep-friendly room design, as well as the establishment of fun and effective pre-bed sleep ritu-

als to release stress, calm and promote deeper sleep. The parent training classes, which are open to the public, will be held at 11 a.m. on Sept. 23, 29, and Oct. 5 at the Oakwood Athletic Club (advance registration required by calling 283-4000 and asking for the activities desk). Additional classes will be offered at the Orinda Community Center in the future.

"As a nation, we're raising generations of chronic insomniacs," he says. "At some point we have to draw the line in the sand, and for me that time is now."

For more information, you can visit deStefano's Web site: www.learn2sleep.co.

## Turf Supreme with Trimec Used on Sports Fields: Is The AUHSD Putting Children At Risk?

By Sophie Braccini

During the summer of 2009, the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) dispersed on the Campolindo fields a product called Turf Supreme 16-6-8 plus Trimec. The District used what it calls a fertilizer that includes an herbicide with low level toxicity to remove clover (clover is linked to ankle and knee injury according to the District). Parents for a Safer Environment (PfSE) says research shows the product's active ingredients have health risks including potentially putting adolescents at risk for cancer later in life.

Although District administrators and PfSE reached an agreement a year ago to reduce the use of pesticides in the District, they continue to disagree about what is "safe" to use.

During the public comment period of the Sept. 9 AUHSD Board meeting, parents lined up to express their concerns about the usage of Turf Supreme over the summer, as well as the list of chemicals that will be used by the district in the future.

"Parents were not informed

of the use of Turf Supreme this summer, and many groups and teams practice on those fields," said Carol Shenon, a Campolindo parent.

"We do not have to send notices when school is out," AUHSD Associate Superintendent Chris Learned answered, "but we posted notices on the field as requested by law. According to the information I researched, this product has a low level of toxicity. The safety of the children is our first priority and we would never have used that product if we thought it posed a risk to their well being." Learned also noted that following the Sept. 8, 2009, verbal agreement with PfSE the District stopped using the three most dangerous products PfSE had identified.

The parents remain unconvinced. "Turf Supreme contains one chemical that is a known reproductive/developmental toxin and another that is a possible carcinogen and a suspected endocrine disruptor (a toxin that interferes with the hormonal systems of humans)," Shenon said.

"We have seen in the past that products that we felt were safe are discovered years later to be a major risk," added PfSE director Susan JunFish. "Adolescents are very vulnerable to endocrine disruptors that are attacking their developing hormone systems. We do not want to make the same mistake and discover in twenty years that we put our sons and daughters at risk for hormone-related cancers because we wanted to prevent ankle injury."

Shenon does not want to antagonize the District. "I don't want this to be confrontational," she said. "We can learn from our mistakes and work together to draft a policy that keeps students safe, will allow parents to stay informed, and if the administration changes, we will feel confident that the pesticide use rules won't."

Learned said that possible adoption of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy will be discussed at by the AUHSD Board at its early November meeting. He added that the District is favorable to reasonable

and practical solutions that take into account the District's limited resources.



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## • Lamorinda Schools •

### Local Singers Vie for Winner's Circle at Orinda Idol 2009 By Jennifer Wake



Soul Sisters: from left to right: Neris Newton, Amrita Newton, Jacqueline Garell  
 Photo Ohlen Alexander

Sequins, taffeta and even feathered boas adorned many of the more than 60 Lamorinda finalists and runners up who took the stage at the Orinda Theatre last Sunday to compete in the finals competition of Orinda Idol 2009. But the true sparkle came from within when these kids (who ranged in age from 5 to 18) belted out songs that put smiles on faces of the thousands who gathered that day to watch them.

Former Miramonte grad, long-time judge, and Spazmatics drummer and vocalist Matthias Montgomery and Bay Area Cabaret founder and judge Marilyn Levinson

said the caliber of talent in the annual competition keeps getting better.

"I was surprised just at the way these kids have put together acts and worked so hard to get the harmony right," Montgomery said. "We saw such young people this year who were way ahead of their years."

"You can tell music is a part of their lives," Levinson added. "They don't do this just once a year; they're out there performing and doing this year-round. It's a real commitment."

Finalists have spent the summer performing at local venues including the Orinda Farmer's

Market and 4th of July Parade. "I love that they give you so many performances during the summer and so much opportunity to perform and grow as a performer," said finalist Jacqueline Garell, who has competed in Orinda Idol since its inception in 2006.

It's a commitment for parents as well. Paul Ford, whose children Lindsay and Ryan were finalists, had been at the Theatre nearly 11 hours by the time winners were announced on Sunday. "It's really great," he said. "It gives kids the opportunity to work up their musical chops and work on something formative without the high pressure."

Katie Marino (who won in last year's Orinda Idol middle school category) says the competition has gotten a lot more fun to watch. "The first time, there were no kids, but now it's really growing." Sophomores and runners up Sofie Woodlee and Tara Baghdasarian, who have both been singing since they were little, advise other aspiring singers to try Orinda Idol for the experience, to practice more and get better.

For first-time Orinda Idol finalist Layla Wright, age 7 (almost 8), the experience was a thrill. "I was kind of nervous, but really excited at the same time," she said. "I would say [to kids who might be scared to try this], that if they really didn't want to do it, they didn't have to. But if they kind of want to - even just a little bit - to go for it."

#### And the Winners Are...

- K-2nd Grade:**  
Niamh Akazawa
- 3-5th Grade:**  
Joe Metheny
- Middle School:**  
Maritza Grillo
- High School:**  
Erika Henningsen
- Groups K-5th Grade:**  
Wicked Girls (Samantha Martin & Isabel Mueller)
- Groups 6-12th Grade:**  
Soul Sisters (Jacqueline Garell, Amrita Newton & Neris Newton)
- Audience Award:**  
Maritza Grillo



Wicked Girls: Samantha Martin is on the left (white dress) and Isabel Mueller is on the right (black dress).  
 Photo Ohlen Alexander

## • Living Longer & Loving it •

### Arranging for Military Funeral Honors By Cathy Tyson



Photo istockphoto.com

"The rendering of Military Funeral Honors is a way to show the Nation's deep gratitude to those who, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country. This ceremonial paying of respect is the final demonstration a grateful Nation can provide to the veterans' families," notes the Military Funeral Honors website.

For eligible veterans nearing the end of life or for folks planning ahead, Colonel Allan Cruz, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.), who is now President of the Lafayette War Veterans Board of Directors, suggests getting some of the paperwork together in advance to arrange Military Funeral Honors. Obviously this is a stressful time for families, even for those putting their affairs in order, but some find comfort in knowing the preliminary steps are in order.

There are various categories of qualification. Military members on active duty or in the selected reserve are eligible, as are former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment. Dishonorably discharged personnel are not eligible, according to Cruz. See <http://www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil/> for a complete listing of who is eligible.

It all boils down to obtaining a "proof of service document" whether that was for Grandpa back in World War II or for a service member having recently served in Afghanistan. The national archive website is best place to start looking for proof of service documents at <http://www.archives.gov>. In addition, veterans or next of kin of deceased veterans can use the online order form at [vetrecs.archives.gov](http://vetrecs.archives.gov).

The second step is simpler, once you have "proof of service papers," those documents should be delivered to the funeral parlor handling the service; they initiate and coordinate the request said Cruz.

At a graveside service, a special folded flag is presented to the family, three volleys are fired, and finally a bugler plays taps. As a courtesy, organizers generally notify local police about the shots, blanks of course, that are fired. It takes at least a week to complete all the necessary arrangements.

For further information contact Allan Cruz at [allanfpcruz@aol.com](mailto:allanfpcruz@aol.com) or via his cell phone at (925) 899-3488. The Veterans Memorial Building on Mount Diablo Boulevard is available for memorial services, for more information call (925) 283-1153.

## Not to be missed

**Lafayette Senior Services, on-going programs:**  
 Embracing Aging with Story and Movement - Every other Thursday, 1:00 -2:30 PM, 9/24  
 Positive Living Forum- On the second Thursday of each month, 10:30 - noon  
 Bi-Monthly Caregiver Support Group - Mondays, 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.

**Classical Music Recital, Michael Carroll, Piano** - Saint Mary's College Chapel in Moraga. Sunday, September 20 at 2:00 pm. Music of Brahms, Prokofiev, Chopin, Bach, Mozart. Free admission.

**A Grief Recovery Workshop for widows/widowers** will be held Sept. 22-Nov. 24, 7-9 pm at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. Find hope, support and successful ways to process this significant life event. Brochures and more information are available by calling (925) 283-9990, ext. 223.

**Falling Down is Often Life Changing** - Especially for Older Adults: Workshop by Supervisor Gayle Uilkema and Gennifer 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.

**Hearing Loss Association of America-Diablo Valley Chapter**, a volunteer nonprofit organization, has monthly meetings that provide information, education, support and advocacy for people who suffer from hearing loss. Join us at 7:00 p.m. on first Wednesdays of the month. Walnut Creek United Methodist Church, 1543 Sunnyvale Ave., Walnut Creek; Education Bldg., Wesley Room. Meeting room and parking at back of church. All ages welcome. Donations accepted. Assistive listening system available for T-coils and most meetings are captioned. For more information, visit [www.hearinglossdv.org](http://www.hearinglossdv.org).

**ART FROM OUT OF THIS WORLD TOUR** is an exhibit that explores the relationship between space, science, and art, and brings you both real and imagined images of landscapes from our solar system. Docent Heidi Donner, of St. Mary's College, will lead us on a private tour before the gallery opens to the public. This will occur on Friday, October 16, at the Hearst Art Gallery in Saint Mary's College, from 10 - Noon. The cost is \$7 for nonmembers and \$6 for Emeritus College members. To register contact Emeritus College (925) 906-9105.

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:** Ocho (because he looked like an 8-ball as a pup), a border collie-Australian shepherd mix  
**AGE:** 10  
**JOB:** Greeter and friend of the kids at Hank and Frank Bicycles in Lafayette; been going to work with owner Frank Dryer for ten years.  
**RESIDENCE:** Walnut Creek but vacations yearly in Mexico.  
**SMART / STUPID PET TRICK:** Opens UPS parts boxes.  
**FAVORITE RIDE:** Wake boards. "Seen enough bikes in my life time." Frank offered a photo taken with Ocho on a wake board, however, taken with a cell camera, it did not meet Dawg standards.

Photo Glenn Nosse



# Living Longer & Loving it

## One Stop Shopping for Senior Transportation

By Cathy Tyson



"Lunch bunch" regulars, from left Patricia Boudoin, Audrey Eatmon, Bill Brochier, Norine Helms, Eddie Carvalho, Bill Dodge, in front Rosalee Biasatti

Photo by Mei Sun Li

One of the findings of the recent Senior Needs Assessment Survey was the need for senior transportation services in Lamorinda. While many elders retain their drivers' licenses into their sunset years, many don't feel comfortable driving or relying on family members and neighbors for transportation assistance. Fortunately, seniors have a number of options available to get around town, via Lamorinda Senior Transportation: An Alliance of Transportation Providers. This coalition was formed three years ago to as-

sist in helping seniors live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. With a little advance planning, homebound seniors can get help in running errands, going grocery shopping and to medical appointments.

Mary Bruns, Program Coordinator, wants to get the word out that there are several options available for seniors, some free, and some at greatly reduced cost. "It's part of our job to get you where you want to go." Although she works for the City of Lafayette, there is one centralized number to call for the Lamorinda

Spirit Van (925) 283-3534 which also serves Orinda and Moraga. The Spirit Van takes clients to doctor appointments, on shopping trips, to lunch at the nutrition program at the Walnut Creek senior center and to concerts at the Lafayette Senior Center – all for a modest \$6. For those attending the lunch program the ride is free, but the meal costs \$2.

"Lunch Bunch" regulars enjoy a nutritious meal in a social setting; and participants seem to relish the company of fellow riders along with Eddy, the popular driver who looks after them,"

said Bruns. She adds they are continually building the lunch and errand clientele.

Errand rides, provided by volunteer drivers, are equally positive. Clients get a lift to Safeway, where the driver will wait for you, then perhaps head to the drug store and the driver will, once again, wait for you, and then on to the bank, post office and so on. This personalized service is a great boon to seniors who want to continue to live on their own.

In addition to the Spirit Van, via the generosity of volunteer drivers, Orinda residents can avail themselves of Orinda Seniors Around Town – a service that provides one on one, door through door service. For seniors that need a bit of extra help with grocery bags, the driver can provide assistance; (925) 254-0800.

Contra Costa Yellow Cab and DeSoto Company offers a 20% discount for Lamorinda seniors. A dispatcher at Yellow Cab confirmed they help clients in and out of the house, up stairs and with packages (925) 284-1234. Finally Senior Helpline Services Rides for Seniors, covers Contra Costa County providing rides to medical appointments during the week and rides to grocery shopping on the weekend (925) 284-6161.

"The more you stay home, the scarier it gets to try something new" said Bruns. "That's why we encourage buddy rides for first timers; the senior's adult children or caregivers are welcome to accompany riders on the Spirit Van. The goal is not only to provide a service, but to make seniors feel welcome and part of a comfortable and connected neighborhood group.

### Lamorinda Senior Transportation An Alliance of Transportation Providers

Call each program for information, opportunities to volunteer and to make tax-deductible donations. Volunteer drivers are always needed.

#### Lamorinda Spirit Van, 283-3534

The Lamorinda Spirit Van (283-3534) provides rides to lunch at the Walnut Creek Senior Center Monday through Friday; rides to errands on Tuesday (for Orinda seniors), Wednesday (for Lafayette Seniors), Thursday (for Moraga Seniors); and rides to medical appointments in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and Martinez on Mondays and Fridays. Rides are \$6.00 round trip. Please make your reservation one business day ahead of time by 1:00 p.m. (two business days ahead of time by 1:00 p.m. for medical/dental appointments.) Rides to lunch are free; the lunch is \$2.00; reserve your lunch by calling 280-7310 by 11:00 a.m. one business day ahead of time.

#### Contra Costa Yellow Cab and DeSoto Company, 284-1234

20% discount for Lamorinda seniors. A taxi is often an economical alternative to owning, insuring, fueling, and maintaining a car.

#### Orinda Taxi, 253-TAXI 253-8294

Gives a 10% discount and doesn't add a surcharge for short rides, will help with packages and provides personal service.

#### Volunteer Driver Programs

(Door through door; one on one service. The volunteer driver uses their own car.)

#### Orinda Seniors Around Town, 254-0800

Orinda volunteer drivers serving Orinda seniors.

#### Senior Helpline Services Rides for Seniors, 284-6161

Serving Contra Costa County seniors. Monday – Friday medical appts.

## Movers Gift Town with a Fifteen-Passenger Van



(L to R) Moraga Vice-mayor Chew, Mayor Trotter and Council Member Mendonca cut the ribbon with George Fisher

Photo Rob Lucacher

The Town of Moraga accepted the gift of a 15-passenger van from the Moraga Movers, organization of senior citizens. "We want to be perceived as positive contributors to this community," said Movers' President George Fisher. Mayor Dave Trotter and the Council thanked the group and came to celebrate with them at the ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 12. Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram will be a prime user

of the van, "The vehicle will be used by the Movers themselves for their field trips, and the town will be able to provide transportation for various recreation activities," stated Ingram. The van was purchased with funds the Movers raised amongst its members and the community. About half of the cost was donated by Joan Bruzzone. The town will be responsible for the maintenance of the van.

S. Braccini

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\*\*Actual annualized yield of 8.5% was earned by members from January 1, 2009 through April 30, 2009. Distributions paid in excess of the preferred return include the waiver of profits otherwise payable to the fund's Manager which has no obligation to waive such profits in the future. Past performance is no guaranty of future results.  
Fund participation is limited to California residents who meet certain income and net worth standards. Minimum investment is \$25,000 with substantial restrictions on withdrawal. An investment in the Fund is subject to certain risks which are outlined in the Fund's Offering Circular. Please contact the Fund Manager for an Offering Circular and review the Offering Circular before investing.

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ART

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 through October 31.

ing 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.

In a joint exhibition, the Lafayette Gallery will be honored with a show at the Orinda Library, 124 Orinda Way, Orinda, California, from Sept. 1st to 30th, 2009.

"Ten Years Together, Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Lafayette Gallery," runs through 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 found-

ing 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.

Lamorinda Weekly is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda, CA. Lamorinda Weekly, P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570-6133. Phone: 925-377-0977; Fax: 1-800-690-8136; email: info@lamorindaweekly.com

Not to be missed

Owner Anthony Ruiz at 283-7620 for more information, and check out Matt Granz' website at http://mattgranz.redbubble.com. Pablo Schurig will host an Art Show on Sep 17, 5:30pm, AMFA Gallery, 2 Theater Square Ste 130, Orinda.

Lindsay Wildlife Museum will exhibit the work of the internationally acclaimed wildlife artist Carl Brenders Sept. 19-27. Presented in cooperation with Pacific Wildlife Galleries of Lafayette, Brenders' work will be available for purchase, with a percentage of the proceeds benefiting Lindsay Wildlife Museum.

Artists' Open Studio. Featuring ceramics, paintings, and photography by Pamela Fletcher and Daniel Klapprott. Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26 & 27 from 11:00 to 5:00 at the woodviewArts studio - 3430 Woodview Drive, Lafayette.

The Monument Crisis Center will hold its annual art show Thursday, October 8, from 5 to 8 PM in its Concord facility. Cash donations will be gratefully accepted. This is your chance to view (and buy) art by local artists and help thousands of families and individuals at the same time.

MUSIC

Classical Music Recital, Michael Carroll, Piano-Saint Mary's College Chapel in Moraga. Sunday, Sept. 20 at 2:00 pm. Music of Brahms, Prokofiev, Chopin, Bach, Mozart. Free admission.

On Sept. 26th and 30th the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra will open its 2009-2010 season with Music That Tells a Story, showcasing jazz violinist Jeremy Cohen in his own electrifying compositions, Jeremy's Hot Fiddle Soup and Ellington Medley.

Not to be missed

Guitarist, pianist, vocalist, composer John Nilsen is returning to St. Mark's on Friday, Sept. 18, 7 pm. Currently one of the Northwest's largest selling musical artists, John's music has a lyrical, spiritual quality, both in the religious music that he performs, as well as in his original compositions.



Nicole Yazolino, a 2001 graduate of Orinda Academy, will perform at a recital on Saturday, Sept. 19 at 7:30 p.m. at the Veterans Hall at 3780 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette, California.

A concert of opera classics and favorites will be presented by Open Opera on Sunday, Oct. 11, 2009, 4:30 at the Orinda Community Center Park - 22 Orinda Way in Orinda.

THEATRE

Town Hall Theatre begins its new season with Comedic Powerhouse: YASMINA REZA'S 'ART' Sept. 3 - October 3. See story on page 11. For Tickets: (925) 283-1557 or online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.

Cal Shakes presents William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" Sept. 16-October 11 at the Bruns Amphitheater. Young lovers, human and fairy royalty, and an amateur MIDSUMMER CAST theater troupe reel through romance and spellcraft in one of Shakespeare's most hilarious and enchanting works.

Orinda Starlight Village Players present "Harvey" by Mary Chase through Sept. 26th at the Orinda Community Center Outside Amphitheater at 26 Orinda Way. Tickets are always avail-

able at the box office adjacent to the theater which opens half an hour before show time. Adult \$15, senior/student \$7.50. Phone: (925)254-5530.

LECTURES AND LITERATURE

"Sex and the Prime Time Couple: It Takes Two...and Men Change Too!" Noted psychiatrist, Jeanne Leventhal Alexander, M.D. Leads the event. Discussion, hors d'oeuvres and a raffle. Thursday, Sept 17th, 6:30-8:30pm.

On Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 7 p.m., the Orinda Library hosts a Fireside Chat with Maestro Lawrence Kohl of the Pacific Chamber Symphony of San Francisco. Maestro Kohl, an Orinda resident, will discuss the history and background of J.S. Bach's four Orchestral Suites, which the group will be performing later in the week at the Orinda Library.

Tuesday, Sept. 22 "Catholicism, Buddhism and Hinduism," 10 am, St. Monica Parish Center Peace Room, 1001 Camino Pablo, Moraga. Father George Alengaden SDB, professor, Dominican School of Theology and Santa Maria Parish, will lead participants in reflections and group discussions.

The Commonwealth Club in Lafayette Presents: Kevin Starr-California's Golden Dreams. Thursday, Sept 24, 6:30 p.m. This captivating storyteller will bring an unparalleled exploration of the cultural history of California in the postwar period of the 1950s.

Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4 pm, Mark Curtis, newsmen and author of "The Age of Obama", will offer a lively afternoon of timely political commentary. Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, Orinda.

Wednesday, Sept. 30-2 p.m. "Women Yesterday: living in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome" SF Museums of Fine Arts docent lecture based on the King Tut exhibit currently at the De Young Museum through March 2010.

BOOK FAIR - Friends of the Orinda Library - Saturday October 3 - 10 a.m.

to 2 p.m. Library Plaza and upstairs hallways. This big annual sale includes quality books for all ages and interests as well as lots of bargain books. Funds raised are used for books, computers and other library materials and programs. Orinda Library, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda (925)254-1358.

KIDS

Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Moraga Royal for a fun time celebrating Grandparent's Day! Enjoy a Jazz Band, Pony Rides, Local Wizard of Oz actors, Snow Cones, Games, Bar-B-Que, Petting Zoo, Face Painting, and Balloon Art. Everyone Welcome & FREE. Date: Sat, Sept 19th. Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Place: Moraga Royal, 1600 Canyon Road, Moraga.

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.

Need a tax deduction? Donate to the Acalanes Fall Sports Sale, to be held Oct., 3. Contact Sue Thoren at sthoren2@yahoo.com to make a donation of gently used sporting good equipment. Let us take that old tennis racquet, pair of skis, golf clubs, baseball bats, skates, etc. and give you a receipt for charitable donations.

Please join POISE (Parents of Orinda Individuals in Special Education) for the fall kick-off meeting. Enjoy meeting of gently used sporting good equipment. Let us take that old tennis racquet, pair of skis, golf clubs, baseball bats, skates, etc. and give you a receipt for charitable donations.

Wagner Ranch Elementary School in Orinda will host their 14th annual family fundraiser, The Round Up, on Sept. 26th from 11am to 3pm. We will be having a huge water slide, inflatables, games, a New to You Book Sale, Karaoke, BBQ and more.

OTHER

On Saturday, Sept. 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

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## Not to be missed

modern exotic cars, this year's event will feature special exhibits of classic and custom motorcycles as well as vintage race cars. The Show will be held in Orinda Village at Orinda Motors, located at 63 Orinda Way.

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



The 14th Annual Lafayette Art & Wine Festival is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday, Sept. 20, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., in downtown Lafayette. Food, wine, microbrews, 200 arts and crafts booths, a kid zone and three live stages featuring David Martin's House Party, Evolution-The Ultimate Tribute to Journey, The Sun Kings, The Unauthorized Rolling Stones, Annie Sampson, Zoo Station, Bob Athayde, Aja Vu, The Spazmatics, Pat Nevins with Amy Gabel, Red House, Jamie O'Neal. Free parking is available at the Lafayette BART station, Black Tie Transportation and our own Lamorinda Spirit will run a free event shuttle to and from the BART parking lots.

**Got e-waste? FREE to Recycle:** Televisions, Monitors, Laptops, Flat Screens, Cell Phones, Ink Jet Cartridges. \$5.00 Fee to Recycle: CPU'S, Telephones, Printers, Copiers, DVD Players, Fax machines, VCR'S-stereos, Video games. Supports Rotary of Moraga. On Saturday, Sept. 19th, 9am to 4pm, Moraga Shopping Center. If you are in need of a pickup of E-Waste for your office please contact us. One day only rain or shine. For more information call: C&T RECYCLING (510) 590-7510.



The 11th Annual Moraga Pear Festival will be held on Sept. 26at the Moraga Commons from 10am to 4pm. The day will include activities for all ages. At 9:30, a ceremonial tree will be planted to commemorate Arbor Day. Morning entertainment will include the "Supersonics" from Campolindo H/S, finalists from the Orinda Idol competition, the Willow Springs Church Rock Band and Spookie Flowers. The Desert Moon Band will perform from 1-4. Enjoy the pear pies, inflatable jumpies, art and wine tasting.

**Smithsonian Museum Day-** Saturday, Sept. 26 (10am-10pm). Free admission to Chabot, presented by Smithsonian Magazine. Visit

www.smithsonian.com/museumday to download your Museum Day Admission Card. Attendees must present the Museum Day Admission Card to gain free entry.

**Drop By and Share a Pint.** Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, working with the American Red Cross, is sponsoring a blood drive to help save lives in our local communities. Saturday, Sept. 26, at MVPC, 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. It's a chance to be a hero, and to give someone another birthday. Sign up online at [helpsavealife.org](http://helpsavealife.org) (Sponsor Code: Moraga925) or call Les Deane at 283-5648.

**Orinda's Restaurant Tour** will be on Tuesday, Sept. 29, from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. Tickets should be purchased in advance for \$30.00 per person; tickets at the door will cost \$35.00. Tickets Available: First Republic Bank Orinda (next to Loards Ice Cream), Orinda Chamber Office (under the Orinda Library) or online: [www.orindachamber.org](http://www.orindachamber.org). See story on page 8.

**Mount Diablo Challenge** - Sunday October 4, 2009 - a 10.8 mile timed bike ride, starting at Athenian School in Danville and climbing up Southgate Road 3,249 feet to the summit of Mount Diablo. 1,000 cycling enthusiasts compete and prizes are awarded for several categories in a ceremony at the summit with food and beverages for all. All proceeds benefit Save Mount Diablo's land conservation efforts. Registration cost is \$55.00. To register please visit [www.savemountdiablo.org](http://www.savemountdiablo.org) or [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). No Day-of registration.

**On Friday, October 2, 2009 The Suburban Women's Club** of Lafayette is sponsoring a 'Day at the Races' at Golden Gate Fields. Start checking the racing pages now and by October 2 you will be ready for a fun-filled day. The gates open at 9:00am; races begin at 11:00am. Tickets are \$35 and must be purchased by Sept. 17. Tickets include admission, parking and a buffet lunch. Proceeds from this event go to charity. For tickets and more information, call Dorothy Stuckert at 925 287 9322. We hope to see you there!

**McDonnell Nursery is offering an Aesthetic Pruning workshop** on Saturday, October 3 at 10:00. This workshop will cover pruning techniques for various plants with a focus on Japanese Maples. There is no charge for this workshop. McDonnell Nursery, 196 Moraga Way, Orinda. Please call or email to reserve a seat: (925) 254-3713 or [www.mcdonnellnursery.com](http://www.mcdonnellnursery.com).

**Lamorinda Wildfire Forum**, Wednesday October 7th, 2009 at 7pm, Orinda Library Auditorium. This meeting will be geared for Lamorinda residents who live in areas where wildfire could spread very quickly and where evacuation routes are limited. We will discuss ways families can decrease potential fire intensity and rate of spread, ways of preparing for evacuation as well as things neighborhoods can do together to achieve these goals. There will be ample time for discussion.

**The Moraga-Orinda Fire District** would like to invite you to attend our Open House event on Saturday, October 10th, from 10am - 3pm, at Station 41 - 1280 Moraga Way. Join us in recognizing Fire Prevention Week. Pick-up information, watch the live demonstrations, learn how to use a fire extinguisher, and talk with the firefighters about how to keep your family safe. Take a look at the emergency vehicles, firefighting and EMS equipment used to protect the citizens of Moraga and Orinda. We're having a carved pumpkin contest too! Bring in a carved pumpkin (no carving onsite) to enter the contest. Prizes will be awarded to the scariest, funniest, and most original looking pumpkins.

**Oktoberfest: Sunday October 11 - 2-6pm** at The Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga. Featuring family fun, live music, Bavarian dancers, waltzing, games, and European food and drink.

**St. John's Orthodox Church** of Orinda is having its Annual Middle Eastern Festival on October 10th and 11th! There will be wonderful ethnic foods, cultural exhibits, folk dancing and music and a variety of booths to shop at, not to mention activities for children including a bounce house! St. John Orthodox Church, 501 Moraga Way, Orinda. (925) 258-4255.

### POLITICS

**"Pray the Devil Back to Hell"**, a story of sacrifice, unity and transcendence that honors the strength and perseverance of the women of Liberia will be presented on Monday, Sept. 21, 7:00pm at Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. Inspiring, uplifting, and above all motivating, it is a compelling testimony of how grassroots activism can alter the history of nations. Suggested donation: \$7 to cover the cost of the film.

**An Insider's take on U.S. Intelligence Agencies:** The World Affairs Council proudly presents Paul Clarke, Retired US Air Force Intelligence Officer at the Lafayette Library, Sept. 24 at 7:00pm. Free admission. Dr. Clarke will analyze the organization and functions of US intelligence agencies and address the many myths and misperceptions which color our understanding of the US intelligence process. For more information, call (415) 293-4600 (World Affairs Council) or (925) 283-3872 (Lafayette Library) or go to [ccclib.org](http://ccclib.org) or [itsyourworld.org](http://itsyourworld.org).

### CLUBS

**Join Us in Improving Children's Literacy** in Contra Costa County through the Buena Vista Tutorial Program. This is an early-intervention literacy tutorial program that has helped over 2,750 elementary school children in Contra Costa County improve their reading skills in a private, differentiated learning environment. If you are interested in becoming a member, please attend our New Member Orientation Sept. 22 at 7pm at 2711 Buena Vista Avenue, Walnut Creek. For more information, please visit the Buena Vista Auxiliary section of the website [www.diablovalley.assistanceleague.org](http://www.diablovalley.assistanceleague.org) or email our new member team, Kristi Ives and Cindy Clark at [kkives@comcast.net](mailto:kkives@comcast.net). We hope to meet you soon.

**Good Friends. Good Fun. Good Deeds.** Sound interesting to you? Then the Moraga Junior Women's Club wants you! MJWC is a non-profit organization of women committed to volunteering in our local community and raising funds for local charitable organizations. We are currently assembling this year's list of prospective members, and would love to include you. For more information visit [www.moragajuniors.org](http://www.moragajuniors.org) and look for the "Join Us!" link.

## Big Band Ball Room Dance (again!)



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Bran New!

By Susie Iventosch

With the kids back in school, it's a great idea to have healthy breakfast treats ready for early mornings or to tuck into the lunch box. While some bran muffins can be dry, the use of shredded carrots makes these muffins moist and delicious. They are pretty darn healthy, too. There is very little oil and the use of coconut lessens the dependence on so much sugar for sweetening. Don't worry if you don't like coconut, it is really hard to detect in these muffins. In fact, if you weren't the cook, you might not even know it's there! Nuts are optional.

The mini-Bundt pans allow these muffins to cook evenly without making the tops too well-done. Across the Way carries the nonstick mini-fluted Bundt pans for \$13.99. They are located at 1480-G Moraga Road in Moraga and their phone number is (925) 376-3600.



Carrot-bran muffin

Photo Susie Iventosch

Carrot-Bran Muffins

(Makes 8-10 mini-Bundt pan muffins)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups milk
2 cups bran cereal (I've used anything from crushed bran flakes or All-Bran to Fiber One)
1/4 cup canola oil
2 eggs, beaten
1 3/4 cups shredded carrots (about 2 medium-large carrots)
1/2 cup raisins or currants
1/2 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped
1/3 cup unsweetened, fine macaroon or baking coconut
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
1/4 cup granulated sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
Optional additional spices: 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg, cardamom or cloves, or try all three!

DIRECTIONS

Combine cereal, eggs, milk and oil in a large bowl and let soak about 10 minutes. Then add carrots, raisins and coconut. Mix well. In a separate bowl, mix all dry ingredients together. Add the cereal mixture and stir just until combined. Grease or spray Bundt pans or line muffin pans with paper cups. Fill about 2/3 full and bake in 350 degree oven 18-20 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean when inserted. Plan on two baking sessions since the mini-Bundt pans bake just six muffins at a time. Susie can be reached at suziven@gmail.com

This recipe is available on our web site. Go to: www.lamorindaweekly.com

Susie can be reached at 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

Fuz Opens in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Fuz team (left to right): Chef/owner Stephen Dill, partner Max Karasani, and chef Jake Barnes. Photo Sophie Braccini

Stephen Dill is happy; he is living his dream, opening his first restaurant with the French/Japanese flavor that he's created as a result of years of culinary experience. "The French create subtle flavors and have mastered the art of making sauces to a science; the Japanese take fish cutting to a surgery level. They go well together."

For the past 14 years Dill was a Sushi Chef in San Francisco. He has traveled, practicing and learning, all over the world. The result is an innovative menu that offers both meat and fish entrees such as chili-lime chicken sauté and firecracker grilled Alaska salmon, along with innovative sushi rolls such as "Don't Ask" that has soft shell crab with avocado in the inside and hamachi, avocado, tobiko, green onion and spicy mayo on the outside.

Dill says he chose Lafayette to open his first business, with partner Max Karasani, because of the peaceful atmosphere of the town. "I've known this community for some time," he said, "it is family oriented, sophisticated and very friendly." Dill reports having a very good experience dealing with the city, county and police to set up shop. "Everyone was most helpful and every time I needed advice, someone was ready to support me," he states.

Now Dill and Karasani's job is to please the new community they wish to serve. Dill pays close attention to his ingredients and makes sure that the fish he buys is wild when in season, and has been harvested young enough to minimize the mercury content. Karasani highlights the happy hour drink deals, starting at 3:00p.m., and other offerings at the full sports bar.

The restaurant opened on August 28. "We are still in a phase of soft opening," says Dill, the grand opening will take place at the end of September."

At the same time, Dill will start another interesting feature of the business: a 6-week series of cooking lessons that will take participants all over the world. "We want to show people how to cook healthy and tasty meals in half an hour," explains Dill. The course will cost \$500 and is open to adults and motivated teens. After completing the six classes to become "Fuz certified," students will have the opportunity to spend a day cooking with either Stephen Dill at the sushi bar or with Jake Barnes, the young chef in the traditional kitchen. For details go to http://www.fuzrestaurant.com/.

Fuz is located at 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette; phone 299-9930.

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# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

## Lamorinda Synchronized Swimmers

Local Girls Compete Internationally

By Sonja Bowman



Jane Homma (in front) performs with sister Heidi Homma (back) Photo provided

Nine Lamordina athletes swam with the world-renowned Walnut Creek Aquanats this year, making a splash in national and international competition.

Alena Faulkner (Lafayette, 16), Jane Homma (Orinda, 17), and Raena Sumiyoshi (Moraga, 16) were on the Walnut Creek Aquanats Junior/Senior A Team this year. These athletes were coached by Kim Probst - 2008 US Olympic synchronized swimming team captain.

In April the team traveled to Federal Way, Washington. They competed in the Speedo Junior National Championship earning first place for their "Bollywood" routine. The team finished second place in the overall championship, just shy of the gold by 0.2 points.

In late June, the younger Aquanats in the 11-12 and 13-15 age groups traveled to Gainesville, Florida to compete in the Esynchro

Age Group National Championships. Joanna Langer (Lafayette) swam with the 11-12 team and brought home a bronze medal. Next, Heidi Homma (Orinda, 14) added her golden touch with a hat trick in the water: she won gold in the figures, trio, and solo competition. Also competing in the team event were Tori Yee (Orinda, 13) Grace Moran (Orinda, 13) and Marisa Tashima (Lafayette, 13). The girls added more gold medals with a first place finish in the team competition.

This was only the beginning for Yee, Moran, and Tashima. From August 3th through 9th, the girls competed in Serbia at the Comen Cup. The Walnut Creek Aquanats had the distinction of representing the US in this competition. The three girls swam as part of an eight member Aquanats team in this competition and earned an impressive fifth

place with their "Chopstick" routine. Tammy McGregor, a 1996 US Olympic Gold Medalist and the 2008 US Olympic head coach, coached the group of girls. McGregor, a Northgate High School graduate, had tears of joy as she watched her team compete. McGregor said, "I am very proud of this team. They trained less than a year together. Most of the girls on my team are 13 years old and most of the girls on the other teams are 15. The possibilities are endless for these young, world class athletes."

While the younger girls were swimming in Serbia, Heidi Homma was in Boulder, Colorado competing for one of the ten spots on the 13-15 US National Synchronized Swimming team. She earned a spot and had the honor of training for the next two weeks with the 13-15 US National Team and the Mexican National Team.

## Campolindo and Acalanes Host Waterpolo Tourney

Submitted by Elena Toohey



The Campo Girls' Water Polo team Photo Doug Kohen

The 2nd Annual Acalanes Invitational hosted by Acalanes and Campolindo High Schools on September 11th and 12th included a field of 16 Varsity teams and 10 Junior Varsity teams, mostly from the North Coast Section. The top three Varsity finishers were all from the Acalanes High School District: #1 Campolindo, #2 Las Lomas, #3 Acalanes. Acalanes, coached by Misha Buchel, beat Los Altos for the 3rd place finish. Campolindo, coached by Kim Everist, and led by seniors Kerstin Henshall, Daphne Nunez, Lizzie Peiros,

Madeleine Smith and Alex Toohey, showed great teamwork in their victory against Las Lomas in the final game.



Kimi Klein (12) shooting on goal Photo Doug Kohen

## Lady Cougar Commits to Southern Utah

Meghan Ringer to Play NCAA Division I

Submitted by Dan Ringer

Campolindo's Meghan Ringer, a 6-1 senior forward, capped a successful high school basketball career by making a verbal commitment to Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah.

Ringer averaged 10.9 points and 6.9 rebounds per game last season for the 22-6 Cougars, and shot 45 percent from the field.

Ringer credits Campo coaches Clay Kallam and Mike Miller, and summer club coaches Pico Wilburn (Bay Area Lady Warriors), Kelly Sopak (Cal Stars/Miramonte High School) and Mark Anger (EBX) for helping her develop her game.

Ringer finally settled on Southern Utah, which is now coached by former St. Mary's College player and coach J.R. Payne. Ringer will sign her National Letter of Intent, which confirms her scholarship, in early November.



Megan Ringer Photo Steven Forshay

## Family Competes in Triathlon

Six-year olds and Mom Spend Summer Racing

Submitted by Ron Modafferi

On August 8, 6 year old twins Mia and Vincent Castillo of Moraga participated in the California Kids Triathlon in Woodland, Ca. This triathlon, one of the largest triathlons for kids in the US, is geared for kids from 4-17 years of age. Mia and Vincent were entered in the 4-6 year old age group. Their age group completed a 25 yard swim, 1 mile bike ride and a 1/4 mile run. They both completed the race without any mishaps, finishing in the middle of the pack of 60 entrants in each girl and boy category.

Over the Labor Day weekend, Mia and Vincent's mother, Adrienne, competed in the Mount Shasta Tin Man Triathlon held at Lake Siskiyou. This Triathlon is a 740 yard lake swim, a 10 mile road bike ride, and a 4.5 mile trail run. Adrienne placed 1st overall of 139 women racers with a time of 1:16:43.



Adrienne Castillo with kids, Mia and Vincent, prior to the start of the swimming portion of the triathlon. Photo Ron Modafferi

## Running Fast and Going Far

Diablo Valley Track and Field Club Wins Four Medals

Submitted by Sally McKay



Team walking in the opening ceremony Photo Sally McKay

Diablo Valley Track & Field Club (DVTFC) captured four medals at the 2009 USATF National Junior Olympic Championships held in Greensboro, North Carolina, July 27th to August 2nd. Ian Stuertz was a double medalist, finishing 7th in the Midget Boys (11-12 yr. age group) pentathlon with 2,116 points overall and he placed 5th in the Midget Boys high jump at 4'9" (1.45 meters).

Adler Faulkner took 4th place in the Youth Boys (13- 14 yr. age group) 800 meter run, with a time of 2:04.08 which was less than 0.5 seconds off the Pacific Association record.

Amy Hollshwandner, Kelli Berge, Haley McKay and anchor Amy Ingram captured 8th place in the Youth Girls (13-14 yr. age group) 4x800 meter relay setting a new DVTFC club record of 10:20.34.

In addition to the DVTFC medal winners, other National Junior Olympic qualifiers competing in Greensboro, NC included Grace Brown in the Bantam Girls (9-10 yr. age group) 400 meter run, and 800 meter run capturing a new 800 meter DVTFC record with a time of 2:36.89), Raea Gragg in the Midget Girls long jump, and Amy Ingram in the Youth Girls high jump.

The athletes were coached by Darrin Neutz and Harlan Lopez.

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# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



## Gaels Dominate Eastern Washington Eagles

Volleyball Continues Hot Streak

By Alex Crook

Saint Mary's women's volleyball expanded their hot streak to five straight victories against Eastern Washington last Thursday, September 10th, at home in McKeon Pavilion.

The Gaels entered the match coming off a sweep of San Jose State the previous night, while the Eagles looked to bounce back from a defeat in the desert to Arizona.

In set one Saint Mary's took early control off of an Eagle's error, cruising behind junior outside hitter

Megan York's five kills. While Eastern Washington did put up a fight, they had no chance to take the set and Saint Mary's recorded the win, 25-13.

In set two, Eastern Washington started to find their groove, but it was not enough for the win and Saint Mary's again held them off for a 25-23 victory. A kill from Gael's senior outside hitter Lauren Jaeckel acted as the trigger putting Saint Mary's up 16-14, and the Gaels took the lead for the rest of

the set. After an Eagle kill from Hayley Hills, Saint Mary's caught a break with a close shot down the line, and then finished off set two, 25-23 for a 2-0 overall lead.

Eastern Washington found their rhythm in the second set and opened the third with incredible intensity. Set three started with a seemingly endless rally that was awarded to the Gaels. Hills' block early in the set stood as Eastern Washington's first lead of the set, 3-2. The Eagles and the Gaels then

battled back and forth, trading points, until Eastern Washington went on a 5-0 run to give them the lead, 13-17. In response, SMC coach Rob Browning called timeout for the first time that evening.

Out of the timeout, the Gaels capitalized with a 4-0 run of their own, to pull to 18-17 and the match saw another timeout, this one from Eastern Washington. The battle continued and the teams traded match points until freshman outside hitter Lauren Corp finished the

set and the game with two kills, 29-27. Corp and junior middle blocker Shannon Lowell led the victors with 10 kills each on the night.

Saint Mary's improves their record to 7-1, with the only loss coming in a season opening invitational tournament to then ranked #6 California, while Eastern Washington drops to 3-4 on the year.

Prior to this season, the Gaels were picked to finish third place in the West Coast Conference (WCC) which, according to

Browning, is always a battle. Having made the NCAA Tournament last year, Browning anticipates, "they continue to believe in themselves.... if we do that, we'll do great."

Saint Mary's defeated San Diego State on the road Sunday to expand their win streak to six games. The Gaels return to action against Berkeley at Haas Pavilion on Friday, September 18th and travel to Stanford on Saturday, September 19th.



Shannon Lowell (10) and Kapua Kamana'o (14) Photo Doug Kohen



Lauren Corp (1) in foreground, Alita Fisher behind Photo Doug Kohen



Megan York (8) Photo Doug Kohen

## One Girl, Two Sports; a Rare Feat

Saint Mary's Senior plays Volleyball, Tennis

By Mikaela Cowles



Alita Fisher (12) with Megan York (8) and Lauren Corp (1) last Thursday playing Eastern Washington Photo Doug Kohen

Diving for digs on the volleyball court wasn't enough for Alita Fisher. She is the rare division 1, two-sport athlete. She moves from the volleyball court to tennis court and back again.

This senior Gael arrived on full volleyball scholarship in 2005, as the team's designated defensive specialist (libero). She has led the Gaels in both her sophomore and junior seasons in digs. Although averaging an impressive 3.76 digs in the West Coast Conference (WCC) last year, something was missing in Fisher's life. She says tennis is "something I've done my whole life and I would feel sort of empty without it."

In eighth grade Fisher quit the constant search for national rankings in tennis, and left the competitive training to others.

While at Bellarmine Preparatory High School in Tacoma, Washington, Fisher earned four varsity letters in both volleyball and tennis. In 2004 and 2005, she was named the Most Valuable Player of the Narrows League for volleyball. Playing tennis just for fun, Fisher won the Washington State 4A doubles championship in 2003, 2004, and 2005, along with the Narrows League and District Championships.

Last year Fisher approached head volleyball coach Rob Browning about joining the tennis team. Fisher laughed as she recounted his two stipulations, "He told me if I play tennis there were two conditions: we have to go out and get some doubles going, and he would teach me how to serve." Speaking with her teammates, Fisher

found them "all super excited."

Fisher recalls the women's head tennis coach Lisa Alipaz telling her, "that exceptions could be made and volleyball would remain my first priority." Fisher said, "I just went out and hit tennis balls and played. I was really excited to be doing just that and I wanted to see how much I could improve from the beginning to the end of the season." So far she has not had the chance to earn points for the Gaels on the tennis court, but looks forward to someday having the opportunity.

Fisher finds time to add in an extra sport to the juggling act of being a student athlete. As a kinesiology, sport and recreational management major, she works hard both on and off the court. Fisher said, "My social

life was kind of lacking. I get some if it by being on two teams with my friends."

What isn't lacking is her performance on the volleyball court this season, which she attributes to her mental game. Fisher said, "I sort of entered training camp and this season with a different mind set, because this is my last year and there's no point in wasting time on negative emotions." Fisher earned her fifth game in a row of double digit digs. The proud and beaming Browning said of Fisher, "She's just really good at what she does."

With no specific idea where her life is headed, she has considered pursuing a Master's degree so she could keep playing tennis and, "after that I want to travel, because I've never really gotten the chance."

**Send sports stories and ideas to:**

**sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com**

or call 925-377-0977

For up to date schedules see: <a href="http://www.smcgaels.com">www.smcgaels.com</a>		
Fri, Sep 18	WSOC California	Saint Mary's Stadium 4:00 PM
Sun, Sep 20	WSOC UNLV	Saint Mary's Stadium 1:00 PM
Thu, Sep 24	WSOC Nevada	Saint Mary's Stadium 4:00 PM
Fri, Sep 25	MSOC UC Davis	Moraga, CA 4:00 PM
Fri, Sep 25	VB CSU Bakersfield	McKeon Pavilion 7:00 PM
Sun, Sep 27	WSOC Stanford	Saint Mary's Stadium 1:00 PM
Wed, Sep 30	WSOC Fresno State	Saint Mary's Stadium 4:00 PM
Fri, Oct 2	MSOC Gonzaga *	Moraga, CA 4:00 PM
Sun, Oct 4	MSOC Portland *	Moraga, CA 2:00 PM

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# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

## Acalanes Football Loses at Home, Wins on Road

By Justine Sgalio



Mike Leamy (7) and coach Mike Ivankovich

Photo Andy Scheck

In a rebuilding year, the Acalanes Dons varsity football team looked to start the season with a win. While the Dons, under new head coach Mike Ivankovich, put in a strong showing they could not produce a victory against the Aptos Mariners on Friday, September 4th, losing 21-19, but bounced back with a 35-20 win against Justin Siena on Friday, September 11th.

Acalanes started their opener with solid defense and offense. They held the Mariners scoreless in the first quarter and got on the board first with a touchdown. Junior wide receiver Trent Baker grabbed a 32 yard touchdown pass from junior quarterback Michael Leamy with 1:35 on the clock. A good point-after (PAT) gave the Dons a 7-0 lead.

The Mariners stormed back with 10:30 to go in the second quarter, tying the game up off running back Evan Mehl's touchdown. The Dons were not quiet for long, as senior running back Bo McSwine scored on a 15 yard touchdown run just minutes later. The Dons failed on the extra point attempt but still expanded their lead heading into the locker room, 13-7.

The third quarter remained scoreless through the six minute mark until a long Aptos drive re-

sulted in a touchdown by Mariners running back Zach Powell. The successful PAT allowed the Mariners to take a one point advantage, 14-13, leading into the fourth quarter.

Acalanes tried to come back offensively, but were slowed by two penalties and a fumble that recovered by the Mariners. Mistakes did not keep the Dons from getting the ball back, however, as Baker quickly grabbed an interception. Their momentum was checked by yet another fumble, recovered by the Mariners, with just over four minutes to go in the game.

The miscue cost the Dons, as Aptos quarter back Miles Norton made a short run in for a Mariner touchdown, pushing the visitor's lead to 21-13 with just under two minutes to go.

The Dons did not throw in the towel. Acalanes offense answered back on the next possession when Dons senior running back Nate Boone scored on a six yard touchdown run, cutting the Mariner lead to 21-19. The Dons attempted a two point conversion to tie the game, but were unsuccessful. Acalanes then attempted an onside kick, but were unable to regain possession and therefore the lead.

"You always want to win," said Acalanes head coach Mike Ivankovich. "But it's high school football. Everyone wants to be successful. You have to come out and get it done on that night. I don't think we didn't get it done, I would just say they got it done a little bit better than we did."

Despite multiple penalties and being down at halftime, the Dons came away with a 35-20 win over Justin Siena Friday night for their first win of the season.

"Our kids worked so hard," said Ivankovich. "It was a team effort. Everyone was executing their assignments and playing physical. We just wore the other team down."

The Dons came back strong in the second half, scoring 28 unanswered points—seven in the third quarter and 21 in the fourth.

"It was a huge improvement from last week," said Ivankovich. "We tried to focus on playing physical; not worrying about the score or our individual plays, but being a physical football team. We did that on Friday night and I'm really proud of our team. We overcame a lot of adversity."

The Dons head to Albany to take on St. Mary's High on Saturday at 1:30 p.m.




Kick by Ben Ewing, 7:0

Photo Andy Scheck

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## Campolindo Quarterbacks: A Family Affair

By Lucy Amaral



Tommy Stephens, varsity quarterback (8)

Photo Doug Kohen

Campolindo High School is experiencing a unique phenomenon, two brothers starting as quarterback. "We've had brother pairs come through before," said Campolindo football head coach Kevin Macy. "But never at quarterback. To shine at quarterback is so hard; it's the toughest position. And Tommy shines. Then, to have Brett follow behind and shine, that's really rare."

Tommy and Brett Stephens, varsity and freshman football quarterbacks respectively, have stepped into the spotlight and are establishing a legacy for the Campolindo Cougars. The first game of the season, Tommy led the varsity team to a 44-15 win over Albany. Brett scrimmaged with junior varsity (JV) against Albany and helped nab a 40-8 win. He started his freshman season on September 17 against Liberty High School.

This year may be off to a strong start, but the varsity football team is young by anyone's standard. According to Macy, 21 of the 22 starting varsity players last year graduated out, leaving only Tommy as a returning starter. "We have an inexperienced team and it's nice to have a returning quarterback," said Macy. "Tommy has great knowledge of the game, not just his own position, but he understands the other positions and can help. It's like having an extra coach."

Looking at the years spent playing football, Tommy, 17, might seem to have started late. A soccer player for many years, Tommy didn't start playing football until he joined the MOL (Moraga Orinda Lafayette) flag football league in the

sixth grade. As a freshman Tommy started at the quarterback position, but after a few games was called up to JV. As a sophomore Tommy returned to the JV quarterback position but again, after a few games, was called up to varsity where he has remained since.

Macy said that Tommy's quick progression may be attributed to the fact that he is an all around good athlete and knowledgeable about the sport, but that's not what sets him above the rest. "Tommy's strength is his vision. Most high school quarterbacks will pick one receiver and stick with them," said Macy. "Tommy can see the whole field, he'll find a second, even third receiver in a progress. That's not your typical high school quarterback."

Brett, 14, has been following in his brother's footsteps, playing

MOL football and being named freshman quarterback. Brett did not receive this position because of his brother's success, but because he loves the game and, according to Macy, is talented. "At this stage he's got a lot of polish, a strong arm and does not get flustered in the pocket at all," said Macy. "Those are things you can't coach."

But wait, there's more. The next Stephens in line is 12-year-old Jack. His football career started in the third grade with MOL and now his current seventh-grade team is being coached by none other than brother, Tommy.

Is Jack destined to be a quarterback, too? Their mother Kim Stephens is not sure. "He's finding out what works for him," she said. "They put him in the quarterback positions and he's fine, however at the moment, he likes the line."



Brett Stephens, freshman quarterback

Photo Doug Kohen

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