

Civic News




Peter & Darlene Hattersley
DRE# r00445794
DRE# 01181995



Abt 3281 Sq Ft.
100 McMahon Court, Martinez \$949,000



Abt 1293 Sq Ft.
1310 Creekside Dr. #204, Walnut Creek \$448,000



Abt 13 Acres
117 Secluded Place, Lafayette \$750,000

925.360.9588 925.708.9515 WWW.THEHATTERSLEYS.COM



Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council Tuesday, March 2, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Special Tri-Agency Meeting with MOFD and Town of Moraga
Wednesday, March 3, 7:00 pm
Garden Room, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

Planning Commission Tuesday, February 23, 8:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Mayor's Community Liaison Meeting
Monday, March 1, 8:15 am
Community Room, City Hall, 22 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Orinda: www.cityoforinda.org
Chamber of Commerce: www.orindachamber.org

• **Police Report** •



Police report will be back next time.



Residential and Restoration Painting Services

Meticulous attention to detail
40 years of satisfied customers
Licensed and Insured

David Collins, Orinda
925-254-6882

Adult Softball Sign-ups

Lamorinda (Men's), and Orinda Coed Softball Leagues play during the summer months on Orinda and Moraga fields. All games start at 6:30pm, on weeknights determined by your division. Playoffs are in August. If you would like to enter a team, or as an individual, please call Tom Boyden, City of Orinda Adult Sports Coordinator, at (925) 253-4216.

Quality work - "Do it right the first time."

MARK
ROLANDELLI
CONSTRUCTION



Building Contractor • Remodel & Addition Specialist
34 years exp. Kitchens, Bathrooms, 2nd stories, Ins. work
You name it, we do it! 925-935-3100

Mayor McCormick—Tough Road Ahead

By Andrea A. Firth



Mayor Tom McCormick

Photo Tod Fierner

"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times," stated Mayor Tom McCormick as he addressed over 150 people at the annual Mayor's Luncheon jointly sponsored by Orinda Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. McCormick used the Charles Dickens' quote to characterize the current state of affairs in Orinda, which has some of the best schools in the State and resilient property values despite the economic downturn (the best of times) while it also carries the distinction of having some of the worst roads in the Bay Area and a flagging downtown commercial district (the worst of times). "We have many challenges to make Orinda an even better place to live, but they are not insurmountable," said McCormick.

Before launching into his plans for Orinda in 2010, McCormick first acknowledged the commitment and good work of the City staff, which has been faced with a 4% pay cut and a cap on benefits due to the City's dwindling revenues. He also recognized the hard work of his fellow Council members, and thanked his parents for encouraging him to pursue public service. McCormick's parents have both served as elected officials; his mother has served on the Dublin City Council.

McCormick covered a number of topics related to the City's operations, from the healthy volunteer ethic, to community safety issues and plans for the 25th anniversary of the City's incorpora-

tion, but the City's limited budget dollars and significant infrastructure needs dominated his speech. "Believe it or not, Orinda government is considered a poor government [as compared to other cities]," stated the Mayor. "We have limited dollars to spend on road and infrastructure repairs and other necessary services."

While not advocating a wholesale change in the way Orinda operates, McCormick emphasized the need to increase the City's revenues. "Our revenue is not going up," said McCormick. He explained that only 7% of the property tax generated in Orinda actually finds its way to the City budget. Orinda receives approximately \$5 million in property tax revenue, its single

largest source of operating revenue, which represents 45% of the City's \$11 million annual budget.

The short-term solution to increasing revenues, raising taxes, will not be pursued at this time according to the Mayor. He focused on longer-term solutions to increasing the City's revenues including the creation of a user-friendly planning process and the revitalization of the downtown district—initiatives that have been integral to his first three years on the Council.

"A revitalized downtown will generate more revenue for the City," stated McCormick. He outlined the recommendations of the City's Planning Process Review Task Force, which has already streamlined the process for residential remodeling and development. He advocated for allowing the downtown building height to increase to 55 feet to allow for retail on the first floor and housing on the top three floors. He shared architectural renderings by Orinda resident Peter Hasselman that depicted a new vision for Orinda's downtown. While he acknowledged that the City and the Council have not sanctioned these plans, McCormick sees opportunity in the ideas.

"You live in a community that really cares," stated McCormick on a positive note. "The great thing about Orinda is that the residents are smart, well educated, involved, and willing to share their opinions."

Orinda Police Chief French to Retire

By Andrea A. Firth



Chief Bill French in his office

Photo Tod Fierner

After almost 26 years with the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office and serving the last three years as the Chief of Police in Orinda, Bill French is preparing to retire. French's last day on the job

will be March 30th. French will be departing as the cities of Orinda and Lafayette evaluate potential new police service delivery options in the wake of the rising costs associated with the contracts they main-

tain with the Sheriff's Office. "I know the community is concerned about the cost of police and fire service," notes French, but he adds, "The product the Sheriff's Office provides the community is second to none. I hope the relationship continues."

In his tenure as Orinda's top cop, French has focused on crime, particularly burglary, identity theft, and robbery, and on curbing underage alcohol use. French and the 14 officers and two city staff that he commands have had to manage a couple of crime sprees in the city over the past few years. In the summer and early fall of 2008, French's team worked with the police in Lafayette and the County Sheriff's department to break up a ring of thieves that had committed up to ten burglaries a month in Orinda during the height of their crime

spree. "We were very active and worked well with east and central county departments to stop this group," says French noting that Orinda typically experiences four or less burglaries a month, many of which occur at construction sites. "I also knew coming in there was going to be a focus on teen alcohol use. It was and remains a priority for the department," says French. "Our policy is zero tolerance."

City Manager Janet Keeter anticipates that Chief French's replacement will be on board before he departs at the end of March. "The Sheriff's office has provided me with four qualified candidates," states Keeter, "I am putting together an interview process that will include a number of oral boards consisting of community partners and professional technical individuals."

Buying. Selling. Investing. Real Estate.
We have two words for you: **Coldwell Banker.**



The Bay Area
**REAL ESTATE
LEADER**

For the expert representation you deserve, contact Coldwell Banker, Lamorinda and the Bay Area's real estate leader.

5 Moraga Way | Orinda | 925.253.4600 • 2 Theatre Square, Suite 211 | Orinda | 925.253.6300



RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE