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Wednesday, September 15, 2010



Photo Doug Kohen

Splashball - A First in Northern California

By Sophie Braccini

Splashball? It's all about kids, balls and water - how could it not be fun? "Splashball is to water polo what t-ball is to baseball," says Bill Brown, who created Miramonte High School's water polo program over 40 years ago. Brown is working with the Lamorinda Water Polo Club, Moraga Parks and Recreation Department and over 40 boys and girls to splash their way through the basics of water polo.

Boyd Lachance, the founder and executive director of Lamorinda Water Polo Club (LWC), says, "Splashball was born in Australia and New Zealand under the name Flippa Ball." LWP started one of the very first Splashball programs in northern California this past summer and is partnering with the Moraga Parks and Rec this fall to offer the program at Campolindo High School's Soda Aquatic Center for kids ages 5-9. ... continued on page S2

Quote of the Week:

"I left the meeting asking myself 'what happened?'"


Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

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Heritage Tree Status for Donna Maria Oak Denied

By Andrea A. Firth

Charlotte and Jim Smith were back before Orinda's City Council on Tuesday, September 7th, requesting that the 39-inch diameter Coast Live Oak at the foot of their property along Donna Maria Way be designated as a Heritage Tree. But a poorly written ordinance and the lack of consent from the adjacent property owner led the City Council to vote unanimously to deny the Heritage Tree designation.

The City Council's review of the Smith's Heritage Tree application—the only application that has been presented to the City for this tree distinction since the ordinance was adopted over 15 years ago—had been continued since May pending a survey to determine the specific location of the tree's trunk, which resides on the Smith's property, and the tree's protected perimeter (the area under the tree's canopy plus a 10-foot strip), which extends onto three nearby parcels. Heritage Trees are protected through

stringent standards on pruning, relocating, and removing and special requirements apply if grading or building is to take place near the tree. For example, no concrete, asphalt or impervious paving material may be placed within the protected perimeter of a Heritage Tree.

The question that challenged the Council was whether the Heritage Tree designation was confined to the owners of the tree or required the consent of all property owners impacted by the designation. "It's not the clearest ordinance in the world," said Orinda City attorney Osa Wolff, "It does not seem to anticipate this situation." Although she acknowledged that the Smith's are the owners of the massive oak tree and that the ordinance does not specifically state that the consent of other property owners is required, Wolff believed that the intent of the ordinance was to have the consent of all affected parties.

... continued on page A6

Lafayette Housing Element Still Not in Compliance

Land owner may sue for proposed downzoning

By Cathy Tyson

In a letter dated September 7, 2010, the City of Lafayette was notified that its Housing Element, which has been revised three times, is still not in compliance with state law. Administrators with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) stated that a number of revisions are still necessary to comply with State Housing Element law.

Lafayette, like all California municipalities, is mandated to have a plan to accommodate its fair share of low income housing; 361 units for the current planning period. The City submitted its Housing Element in December of 2009, and received comments back from HCD.

The City is required to not have barriers to development through zoning and show that there is sufficient land in place to allow low income

housing units. Planners prefer to locate affordable housing in the downtown, to preserve open hillside spaces, and locate housing closer to transit to reduce traffic impacts.

"We are pleased to note that unlike previous comment letters, this letter does not question the adequacy of our housing inventory," said Niroop Srivatsa, Planning and Building Services Manager, who is already working on a response. "Rather, it requires the City to provide an assessment of our land use controls and strengthen our commitment to facilitate the development of housing in the downtown. We hope to submit our revisions to HCD very soon. Lafayette's previous housing element was certified by HCD, and I am therefore confident that we'll resolve any concerns they might have." ... continued on page A3

Turtle Island - Not Your Usual String Quartet

By Lou Fancher



When David Balakrishnan brings his violin and the Turtle Island Quartet to Saint Mary's College on September 29, Jimi Hendrix will tag along. The Grammy-winning string quartet, known for its genre-defying mastery of everything from classical to bluegrass, swing to hip-hop, latin american music to jazz, and now, rock, easily defies description. Sometimes referred to as an "American string quartet," Turtle Island" ... read on page L1

Customers Enjoy La Boulange: Délicieux

By Cathy Tyson



On a busy Thursday afternoon, customers oogled the very attractive croissants, brioche and tarts that looked almost too pretty to eat as they queued up for lunch at Lafayette's newest café, La Boulange. Coffee, iced tea, pastries, salads and the very popular "La Combo" - any open face sandwich with a cup of soup or side of greens - seemed to be flying out the door; ... read on page A3

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Lafayette

Public Meetings	
City Council	Monday, September 27, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd
Planning Commission	Monday, September 20, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd
Design Review	Monday, September 27, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Arts & Science Discovery Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
 City of Lafayette: www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
 Chamber of Commerce: www.lafayettechamber.org

• Police Report •



Hot Pursuit, 8/22/10 A Walnut Creek resident led police on a high speed chase through Lafayette, Walnut Creek and Concord at speeds up to 80-100 miles per hour. The checkered flag came down as the "driver" crashed his vehicle and surrendered to authorities. Police were "shocked" to learn the driver was on parole until 2012 for Possession of a Controlled Substance for Sales. Parole clearly didn't stop the subject from going back into business as he was discovered to be in possession of 15 grams of individually wrapped bags of methamphetamine, scales, a pipe and \$103 in small bills. Meth Man was off to the Martinez Detention Facility for booking.

More Meth, 8/26/10 Lafayette Police conducted a routine traffic stop on Mt. Diablo at First Street and discovered the Lafayette driver had an outstanding local warrant for his arrest. The subject was arrested and his GMC Utility Truck was searched. Police discovered 2.6 grams of methamphetamine in two separate

baggies and the subject admitted to having the substance on his person. Bag Man was promptly offered a lift to MDF so he could enjoy some bread and water with Meth Man.

Stolen Van, 8/29/10 A 2005 Ford F150 van was stolen from the Union 76 gas station on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. The van had been parked and locked in a stall on the side of the business, the keys were removed and nobody had permission to take the van. A distinguishing feature of the van: the words "Creative Alterations" are written on both sides and on the back of the van. This could have a variety of meanings here in California.


Jewelry in the Glove Box, 8/29/10 A subject was stopped for a traffic violation at Deer Hill and Happy Valley and police learned he was on parole. A search led to the discovery of tools, gloves, ski masks and jewelry in the glove box. The driver and his passenger denied any knowledge about the jewelry and were transported to MDF. The jewelry was collected for safekeeping until the owner is identified. Who doesn't have an odd collection in the glove box? What's in yours?

Lafayette School Board and City Council Candidates' Event

Thursday, September 30, 7:00 p.m.

Sequoia Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd. The evening will also include a presentation on State Prop. 22, "The Local Taxpayer, Public Safety, and Transportation Protection Act of 2010."

Sponsored by the Lafayette Homeowners Council



The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applications to fill the following volunteer vacancies:

The Code Enforcement Appeals Board is the official hearing body for Code Enforcement actions within the City of Lafayette that are appealed. The duties of the board are to hear appealed Code Enforcement cases in accordance with Chapters 1-9 and 8-21 of the Lafayette Municipal Code.

The Lafayette Community Center Foundation is dedicated to renovating and expanding the Lafayette Community Center. The Foundation was formed in 1983 to oversee the capital improvements and renovations necessary to transform the old Burton School into an active recreation center designed to accommodate our community's diverse needs and to provide a beautiful place to learn, create and have fun.

The Creeks Committee encourages beautification of Lafayette's more than 16-miles of creeks and improves residents' awareness of creek maintenance and pollution prevention policies. The committee helps the City's staff ensure compliance with public education requirements under its Storm Water Permit.

Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority the Citizen's Advisory Committee follows the bylaws of the CCCTA Board of Directors and consists of members of the public from each of CCCTA's jurisdictions who have an interest in and commitment to public transportation. The CAC acts as a community advocate and liaison to transit users in their jurisdiction. Each Member is appointed by their jurisdiction for a two year term. The committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at 3478 Buskirk Ave., Ste. 100, Pleasant Hill, at 6:30 p.m.

Senior Services Commission is focused on enhancing the well-being of Lafayette's older adults by identifying their concerns and needs; providing information about resources; and promoting community programs and services that enable them to live meaningful lives.

Individuals interested in these volunteer positions may obtain an application on-line at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us or call the main office at 284-1968 and an application will be mailed to you. If you have questions related to these volunteer positions please call Joanne Robbins, City Clerk at 299-3210.

One Thing at a Time for Environmental Report

By Cathy Tyson

"We are not certifying the EIR (Environmental Impact Report) tonight," said Chair Thomas Chastain of the Planning Commission. Although at times it seems like a never ending process, the EIR - a component of the Downtown Specific Plan - is moving ever so slowly forward. The meager audience in attendance for the September 8 Planning Commission meeting indicated a certain lack of enthusiasm at this point in the process or that no action on the Final EIR was scheduled, only a presentation of an overview of the document.

The Draft EIR was released on January 26, 2010: "It identified



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the likely environmental consequences associated with the (Downtown Specific) Plan, and identified policies contained in the Plan to reduce potentially significant impact," said Ann Merideth, Community Development Director, in a staff report.

Merideth noted that the next step is to consider certification of the EIR before a Plan is adopted. To be certified, the EIR needs to meet the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations. Because the Revised Specific Plan will not be considered until early 2011, certification will be placed on hold until the Planning Commission completes its review of the Plan. A chicken and egg situation, to be sure.

"This is information that allows us to sharpen our discussion," said Chastain, referring to the environmental report as the Planning Commission continues to develop its recommendations for the revised Plan.

Indeed after this matter was addressed, the very next item on the agenda was the Revised Draft Downtown Specific Plan Review: Civic and Cultural District. Staff now recommends that the area be renamed the Plaza/Golden Gate Way Overlay or District, along with a host of other recommendations. It was last discussed by the Planning Commission in December 2009. The City Council is scheduled to receive an update from the Planning Commission on the progress of the Downtown Specific Plan at its September 13 meeting.

Road Closures for the Art & Wine Festival

By Cathy Tyson

Don't even think about parking on Mt. Diablo Boulevard, or at La Fiesta Square, Bank of the West, The Round Up, Uncle Yu's and the Hen House after 4:00 p.m. this Friday through 10:00 p.m. on Sunday for the Art and Wine Festival. Organizers need to make room for the multitude of artists' booths, beer, wine and food vendors, stages and the always popular kid zone. It takes a village to throw a party this big.

Crews of volunteers from the Chamber of Commerce will set up 65 barricades and 100 orange cones to help drivers take the hint.

Just like past Art and Wine Festivals, on Friday afternoon Mt. Diablo will be closed from Oak Hill to Dewing along with a portion of Lafayette Circle; in food terms - from Panda Express to Starbucks to Chow. Look for "No Parking" signs at 4:00 p.m. and "Road Closed" signs before 5:00 p.m.

A slight exception is that last call at Petars' parking lot will be 2:00 a.m. on Friday; the restaurant and bar will be open during the Festival, patrons will just have to walk there.

"We are leaving Fiesta Lane open on Friday night and will be



Doug and Marti Kohen with Jamie and Bob Johnson working the Lamorinda Weekly wine booth last year. Photo Andy Schreck

moving the barricade back to behind Chow around 6:00 a.m. on Saturday morning," said Jay Lifson, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce.

The event officially ends at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, and police will be on hand to gently encourage block party attendees to clear the streets - indicating that it's time finish your beer or wine and fork over the credit card on the fabulous painting you've been considering. Back to business, and parking, as usual on Monday morning.

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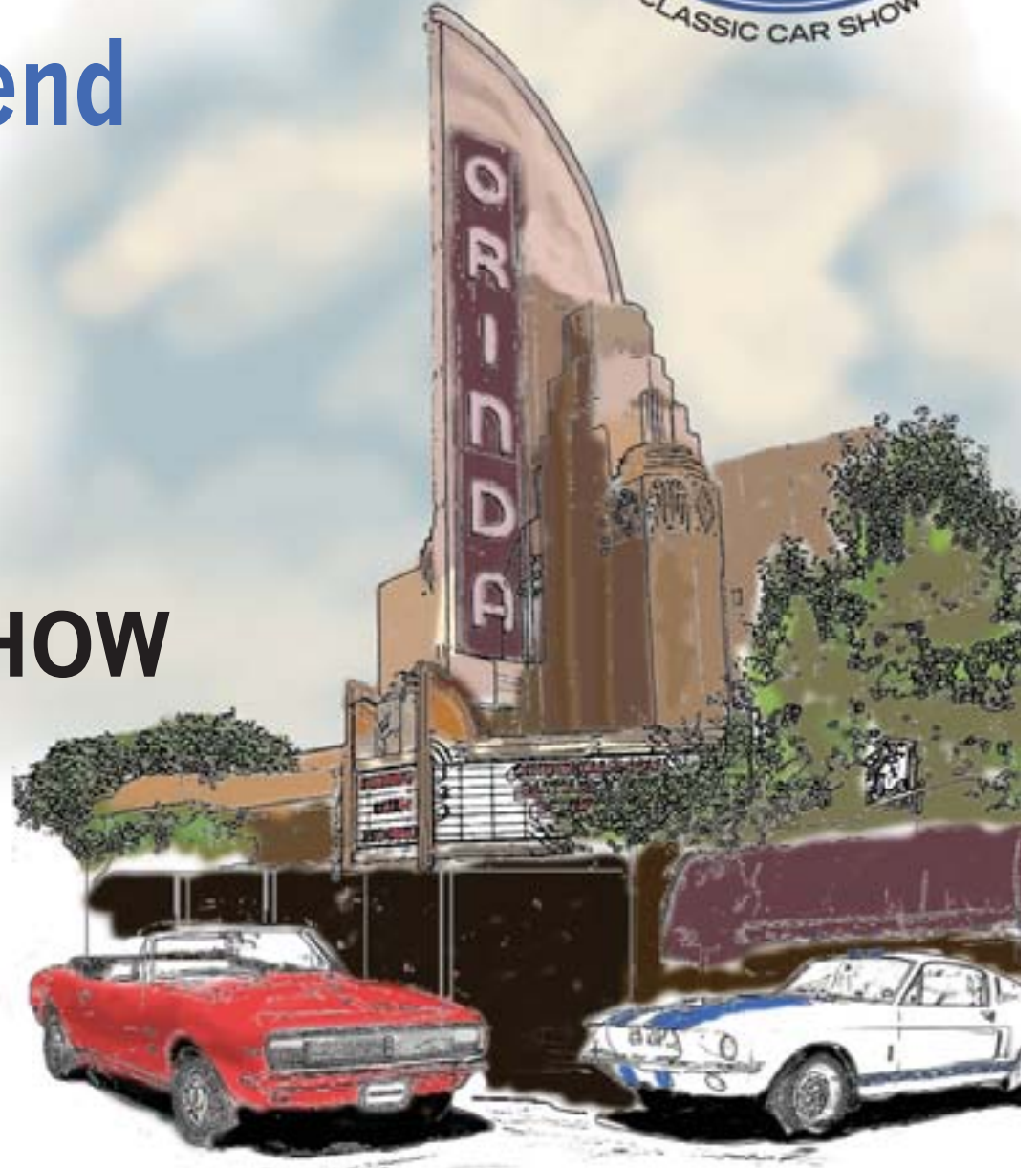
Friday Night Pre-Party,
September 24th, 7pm
“DANCING WITH THE CARS”
Saturday,
September 25th, 10am–2pm
ORINDA CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Cruise in a Classic!

Donate \$10 and choose your ride for the parade.

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

Join us as a spectator or to show your car or motorcycle! (see entry form below)



See vintage and custom motorcycles on display.



Event Schedule

Friday September 24th, 7pm

"DANCING WITH THE CARS" FRIDAY NIGHT PRE-PARTY
The presenting sponsor for this great event is Mechanics Bank. Come party in the streets of Orinda!! Literally!! We're tenting Avenida de Orinda for a fun-filled, sneak preview of the next day's car show. The evening will feature cocktails, dinner, music and a live auction. Proceeds of this event primarily benefit the Educational Foundation of Orinda.
2 cars in live auction! ... proceeds to EFO ...
Car #1-Red 1992 Toyota Paseo, Automatic Transmission, 105,000 miles
Car #2-Blue 1999 Saab 95, Automatic Transmission, 104,000 miles
Cars have been Orinda Motors Certified and meticulously detailed by Professional Automotive of Lafayette.
Cars have been donated to EFO for the auction...proceeds to EFO...
Cars will be auctioned at the Dancing with the Cars Dinner on the evening of Friday September 24th.
RSVP ASAP! Space is limited so don't wait. Please mail a check for \$100 per person payable to EFO to: Dan Hagelin, 104 Overhill Road, Orinda, CA, 94563. Or you may pay by credit card directly at www.orindaefo.org.

Saturday September 25th, 10am - 2pm

The show will be held in Orinda Village at Orinda Motors, 63 Orinda Way

- + 130 Classic Cars and Unique Motorcycles
- Arlan Ness Vintage and Custom Motorcycle Exhibit
- Orinda Idol Winners Performance at 12 Noon
- "Orinda Through the Years" Exhibit by the Orinda Historical Society
- Boy Scouts Food Booth featuring SAAG's sausages
- Loard's Ice Cream
- Raffle Prizes
- Ride in the Parade of Classic Cars at 2:00pm
- Buy a 2010 Car Show T-Shirt
- Music and lots more!!

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Proceeds benefit local charities: Seniors Around Town, Orinda Educational Foundation, Orinda Historical Society

6th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show Entry Form

Complete and mail this entry form and your tax-deductible entry fee check of \$50 for cars and \$35 for motorcycles made payable to Seniors Around Town to: Chip Herman, 2 El Caminito, Orinda CA 94563

Questions? Email ChipHerman@Earthlink.net Seniors Around Town Tax ID: 94-609-8323

Owner: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email Address: _____

Car/Motorcycle Manufacturer: _____

Year: _____

Model: _____

Body Style: _____

If you are new to the show, please provide some interesting facts or history about your car and/or motorcycle along with this entry form.

Would you be interested in participating in the "Parade of Classic Cars" after the show at 2:00pm? YES NO

Would you be interested in giving a ride in your car in the parade to someone who makes a donation to our charity? YES NO

Would you like to pre-order a commemorative "Orinda Classic Car Show '10" T-shirt? Please add an additional \$15 to your registration check. YES NO Shirt size: S M L XL XXL

I understand that by signing below, I release Seniors Around Town, Orinda Motors Inc., the event organizers and other sponsors from any and all liability and or responsibility for any and all damages that may occur on the day of the Orinda Classic Car Show at Orinda Motors (Orinda, CA), resulting directly or indirectly from activities at the event. I also understand that I am responsible for my vehicle and its contents. I verify that I carry automobile insurance on the vehicle that I am displaying at the event.

Signed _____ Date _____

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Customers Enjoy La Boulange: Délicieux

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Ester Schafer and Page Range with lunch at La Boulange.

On a busy Thursday afternoon, customers oogled the very attractive croissants, brioche and tarts that looked almost too pretty to eat as they queued up for lunch at Lafayette's newest café, La

Boulange. Coffee, iced tea, pastries, salads and the very popular "La Combo" – any open face sandwich with a cup of soup or side of greens – seemed to be flying out the door; it's fair to say that business is brisk.

Page Range and Ester Schafer came in to pick up lunch to go. Range was especially impressed with how "clean and fresh" the food looked; she also liked the clever menu items and welcoming decor. The ladies were looking forward to enjoying a caesar salad and hummus sandwich with avocado, cucumber, tomato and sprouts.

Groups of happy diners were enjoying the fall sunshine at the outdoor tables. From the looks of it, many of the female patrons had come directly from tennis. Many of the gals were diving into warm goat cheese salads with candied pecans.

"The food is wrapped like a gift," noted Jennifer Russell. Her daughter had been to a Boulange in San Francisco and encouraged her to give it a try. Russell had Prosciutto and fig on a walnut baguette; pal Marilyn Smith nibbled a Turkey and cranberry sandwich.

"Fantastic," said Katie Rambaud, "I really like the balsamic vinaigrette on the greens and my Portobello veggie burger with mushroom and melty brie. I wish there was a place this yummy in Moraga. It's like a little slice of France in Lamorinda."

Lafayette Housing Element Still Not in Compliance

... continued from page A1

Fair housing proponents have concerns that a portion of the twenty-two sites the City submitted to HCD are composed of a number of smaller parcels that would require all the property owners to decide to sell within the next five years - most have existing businesses. For example, at the corner of First Street and Mount Diablo the Taco Bell, the office building next door; the Great Wall restaurant and Hamlin Cleaners on Golden Gate way are together considered site twelve. While it's possible this may happen, many consider it highly unlikely.

"Lafayette's sham strategy of pretending that commercially zoned and used and unconsolidated sites will magically become affordable housing was not found acceptable," said Mike Henn, former Planning Services Manager. "I suspect that the most convincing final argument was the receipt of letters from property owners say-

ing: We're Not Interested. It is also revealing that the City was trying to fly the inventory under the radar, by not properly notifying property owners that their properties were being listed by the City as available for low income housing."

Attorney Allan Moore, representing The Dettmer Family Trust which owns approximately 80 acres near Pleasant Hill Road and Deer Hill Road, including the area known as the Christmas tree lot, is skeptical. "The city's response of July 2010 is wholly inadequate, unresponsive to the HCD letter and legally insufficient under the state housing laws," he said in a letter to HCD and the City of Lafayette.

Noting great respect for staff and City Council, Moore said, "Property owners have rights as well - this parcel was originally zoned APO (Administrative Professional Office) 35/units per acre - that's what the City decided. Then the City

changed its mind to downzone to open space use - it seems unfair. We really hope the City Council will listen to us, but we are exploring all options," said Moore.

He explained that the City has offered potential sites within existing commercial zones that are already developed with significant structures and ongoing businesses to satisfy Housing Element requirements. Concurrently the city is recommending downzoning the Christmas tree lot to an open space designation of Rural Residential on the 22-acre parcel. If developed, Moore suggests the vacant, undeveloped parcel that was originally zoned for multi-family housing would address a significant portion of the affordable housing requirement.

"The City's actions would constitute a 'taking' of all reasonable economic use of the Dettmer property and violate the Dettmer family's constitutional rights for due process and equal protection," said Moore.

Gordon Steele gsteele@rpm-mtg.com

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MORAGA Moraga Center (925) 376-7252	CONCORD Vineyard Center (925) 827-0330	SONOMA Marketplace Center (707) 996-4465	WALNUT CREEK Countrywood Center (925) 935-9300
NAPA Napa Town Center (707) 255-9375			

Civic News Moraga



Public Meetings	
Town Council	Wednesday, September 22, 7:30 pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, 1010 Camino Pablo
Planning Commission	Tuesday, September 20, 7:30 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd
Design Review	Monday, September 27, 7:00 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd
Liaison	Friday, October 8, 8:00 am Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
 Town of Moraga online: www.moraga.ca.us
 Chamber of Commerce: www.moragachamber.org
 Moraga Citizens' Network: www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

• Police Report •



surprise here, the Computer Technology Center. Estimated loss \$3,000. Sadly no leads at this time.

Movie money taken, 9/05/10 Officers responded to a burglary at the New Rheem Theatre that occurred just past midnight when the theater was closed. Unknown suspects entered the building by forcing open a second story window. Not one, but two cash registers were taken from the front counter – estimated loss \$150 in cash and \$500 in equipment.

No seat belts, 9/02/10 Police pulled over a 48-year-old Moraga resident with six children in the bed of a pick up truck, along with three children in the front seat not wearing their seat belts near Moraga Road and Corliss Drive. Although none of the kids had a seat belt on, the mature driver was wearing one. The subject told cops she was providing a quick lift to the pals of her daughter. She was ticketed for nine violations of parental duties to have a child between 7 and 14 securely fastened in a seat restraint system. While the cop remained at the scene of the crime with the kids, the mom went home and retrieved a van to transport the kids home.

Computers swiped, 9/02/10 At 2:30 in the afternoon police were dispatched to Saint Mary's College. SMC Public Safety Officers said someone had stolen two Apple Desktop iMac computers from, big

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Dollar Tree Still Undecided

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Planning Commission tried hard on September 7 to find common ground to either accept or reject the application of the Dollar Tree store, but could not. Agreeing to disagree, a sub-committee was created that will work on a text acceptable to a majority of commissioners. At stake is 9,000 square feet of retail space in the Rheem Shopping Center, formerly occupied by Blockbuster and small businesses.

"It is a matter of policy-making," said Commission vice chair Russell Driver, "the town is being taken off guard; it does not have a framework set to really reflect what most people who live in our town want to see happen."

In neighboring Lafayette, the city has established a set of references, defining a retail business district (RB) and a special business district (SRB). The regulation specifies elements such as "...to foster development of an especially attractive, high-quality retail shopping area, emphasizing pedestrian convenience (SRB)," or "...to create, preserve and enhance areas

with a selective range of retail and personal service establishments in attractive, compact locations oriented toward pedestrian comparison shopping (RB)."

In the absence of such a vision for Moraga, the commissioners struggled to interpret the Municipal Code and General Plan.

Although attendance was thinner than at the previous meeting, some powerful statements were made by members of the public.

Bill Snider, owner of Moraga Hardware in the Moraga Center, admitted that the commission probably couldn't do anything but approve the Dollar Tree's application, but he added, "You, as the planning commission, should be tired of big retailers that misrepresent themselves. Local business owners are the ones who give to MEF, to Kiwanis, to Rotary, etcetera. With this kind of retail, the money is not reinvested in the community."

Resident Hollie Lucas-Alcalay stated that she refused to roll over. "Having this store here will change the perception of potential home buyers coming to our com-

munity," she said, "and perception is everything."

Another speaker, Lynn Davis, researched the retailer and presented evidence of poor quality and even risks to the community. She cited the Consumer Product Safety Commission (www.CPSC.gov) that lists two pages of items recalled from Dollar Tree stores during the month of July, including such things as counterfeit extension cords recalled due to shock hazard, glue guns recalled due to fire hazard, and toy jewelry recalled for a lead poisoning hazard to children.

Commissioner Roger Wykle said that he could not support the application because, in his judgment, the store would not enhance existing usage and strengthen the character of the town and commercial centers, as is required in the General Plan.

Commissioner Stacia Levenfeld reached the same conclusion, stating that store would have an excessive negative economic impact on the community.

Opposing Wykle and Levenfeld were Commissioners Tom Richards and Dick Socolich, who

supported the Dollar Tree application – not on the store's merits, but rather because they didn't see any actual grounds on which to base a denial. "As much as I may not like it, I don't see how we can't support it," said Richards.

Commissioners Driver, Bruce Whitley, and Chair Jim Obsitnik wanted to amend the application to reach approval; Obsitnik wanted to remove all conditions of approval from the text, while Whitley and Driver looked to reinforce them so the store would be a better fit for Moraga.

Planning Director Lori Salamack, who hoped to see a resolution that night, and Commissioner Tom Richards, who said that the Commission owed it to Kimco to give them a clear response on what the Town wanted, were unsuccessful in their attempts to draw a compromise.

In the end a sub-committee was created, composed of staff and Commissioners Socolich and Whitley, and charged with crafting a text that could be acceptable to a majority of the Commission, which will next convene on September 20th.

Kimco Realty Came To Town

By Sophie Braccini

When John Walter, Director of Real Estate for Kimco Realty, introduced himself during the public comment period of a Moraga Planning Commission meeting in late August, there was a moment of stunned silence in the room. Kimco, which owns and manages hundreds of shopping centers and was said to have purchased the Rheem Center a few years ago, had never been represented at a public meeting.

Kimco was viewed as the distant evil that kept raising rents and driving small businesses away. Communication between the Town and the corporation were marginal at best; there were certainly no discussions of retail strategy. When not one, but three, Kimco representa-

tives came to the public meeting on the Dollar Tree store, many were taken by surprise. Kimco was there to defend its choice and present its retail strategy for the Center.

According to Armand Vasquez, Kimco's Regional Vice President of Leasing, the reason why his company has not been very present in the Town of Moraga until recently was because Kimco did not own the Rheem Center. "Until a few weeks ago we were the manager and not the owner of the Center," he said, "we would make a proposal for a tenant and a rate and it would be approved or rejected. Now we are co-owners with 'Big' and are making those decisions."

Kimco representatives explained their strategy for the Center

and how they have tried to attract the right tenants. "We had a liquor store contact us, we had a comic book store that sold drug paraphernalia, and we rejected them," said Walter, "We've tried to attract a Radio Shack, a phone company, and a men's clothing store; but for the retailers the demographics of Moraga do not add up."

Walter confirmed that a produce store is coming to the Center. The store belongs to a company that owns two others, one of them nearby at the corner of Tice Valley and Olympic Blvd. "That's where Rossmoor residents get their organic produce," said Walter. (Dropping by that store a few months ago, this reporter noticed a wide variety of produce, some of it organic, and such items as

milk products, grains and snacks.)

He also confirmed that a Mediterranean restaurant and a frozen yogurt shop would be opening at Rheem. "We are building momentum and traction in the Center," said Vasquez, "This center has always been treading water and been challenging, but we wanted to get it in our portfolio and make things work."

The Dollar Tree store would fill 9,000 square feet of empty space for Kimco. Vasquez would not release the details of the deal, but he stated during the Council meeting, "It's not a deal that we'd be proud of economically."

(Editor's note: OOPS! This article was originally the missing sidebar from last issue's Dollar Tree article, and can be viewed online in both issues.)

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What's Developing in Moraga?

By Sophie Braccini

As the candidates for Town Council begin to share their various visions of development in Moraga, we recently checked up on the status of some of the projects we've been hearing about (in some cases for years). Some have been approved by the Town, some are still in process; and some could be, but haven't been, proposed.

Approved developments – projects that have been approved by the Town, but not built

Moraga Country Club: A new club house will break ground soon.

Palos Colorados: After 20 years of negotiation the Town approved the building of 123 homes on a lot located east of Moraga Road, close to the Lafayette border. Richfield Investment Corporation, the developer, is in the process of applying for state permits with agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game and the State Water Resources Control Board. Breaking ground will depend not only on obtaining the necessary permits, but also on the developer's perception of the housing market.

Augusta Drive: 68 homes have been approved on lots running northwest from the Country Club. One home is currently under construction.

The Town Housing Element: Incorporating a six-acre area near the Moraga Center (across from the Moraga Commons Park and along Country Club Drive, by Aegis of Moraga) with a density of 20 units per acre (up to 30 units for senior housing), this development could, in theory, break ground in 2011. It represents up to 180 housing units that do not require a public process to be approved.

In process - developments currently navigating the Town's approval process

Rancho Laguna II: The Planning Commission's approval of the development of 27 homes on the north-west side of Rheem Boulevard between St Mary's Road and Moraga Road was appealed to the Town Council. The Council required modifications to the plan and the next hearing should take place on October 27th.

Hetfield: Six homes were proposed on the hill facing upper Sanders Drive, in the continuation of the portion of Hetfield Drive that ends at the creek. The Planning Commission approved the project; it has been appealed by a group of residents.

Bollinger Valley: 126 homes are proposed on a 186-acre property located 1/2 mile east of Saint Mary's Road, past the Bluffs. A proposal has been submitted to the Planning Department; Town staff is preparing a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Rheem Valley Estate: Located at the corner of Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard (home to 'The Rock'), this 17-home project was submitted to the Planning Department which determined that the project requires an EIR; the property owner has not yet funded the EIR.

Could be - development that is potentially possible

Moraga Center Specific Plan: The area located roughly between Camino Ricardo, Country Club Drive and Moraga Way is zoned to allow the development of homes, condominiums, offices and retail space. No plans have been submitted to the Town. The potential for new housing units is about 600.

There are other properties in Moraga that have not been developed. Some fall under 'MOSO' (the Moraga Open Space Ordinance) which restricts their development to one dwelling per 5, 10 or 20 acres, such as the Moraga Tennis and Swim Club property located along Larch Avenue.

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Gael Rail – Stay Out Late and Go Home Safe

By Sophie Braccini



The Gael Rail waits for customers at the BART station
Photo courtesy County Connection

The Gael Rail is returning to Lamorinda. The shuttle will run from 9:30 p.m. to 12:45 a.m. on Thursday and Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday from 6:30 p.m. to 1:25 a.m. between the Lafayette BART station and the Saint Mary's campus. Students travel free and a new service has been added – the shuttle will stop at Ascot Drive on request.

The route is the standard County Connection line along Moraga Rd and St. Mary's Road. The public fare is \$2. For non-students, the van will stop at any existing County Connection bus stop, but will also

make stops in between – simply wave to the driver and he will pull over at the nearest safe location.

"Additionally, those who do not want to drive the windy roads down to the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival can take the County Connection bus from Orinda, Moraga, and St. Mary's College to the Lafayette BART station where a shuttle will take them to the event," says County Connection's Marie Knutson, "and if they stay in town for dinner they'll be able to get home with the Gael Rail." For more information call 676-7500.

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Civic News

Orinda


Public Meetings

City Council Tuesday, September 21, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission Tuesday, September 28, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

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

• Police Report •



rock. Estimated damage for the window - \$400, estimated value of guitars \$1,500.

Possible tire slashed, 8/31/10 A 22-year-old Orinda man parked his car at the Theatre Square lot at 11:30 in the morning. He locked the car and was gone for approximately 15 minutes. When he returned, he noticed the car was listing to one side, and found a cut on one of the front tires. Police were unable to determine if there was a cut in the sidewall or if the slash was a defect in the tire.

Tools taken, 8/30/10 An unknown suspect entered the backyard of a home on La Espiral and removed unsecured un-itemized tools. Nothing was seen or heard, but \$2,000 worth of hammers and screwdrivers disappeared.

Cash call, 9/01/10 An 87-year-old woman living on Estabueno received a call from a young woman who claimed to be her granddaughter. She said she had gotten into an accident and was in jail in Canada for a D.U.I. and needed \$920 right away. The elderly woman sent the money – but alas later found out that her granddaughter was never in Canada and was never in trouble with the law.

Commercial burglary, 9/01/10 An unknown suspect broke a window at Alma Music on Brookwood Road and took five electric guitars. The thief used a very low tech method of entry – a large

Downtown Planning Workshop Set for 10/18

To provide all of Orinda's residents with the opportunity to help to determine the vision for Orinda's downtown, the City has planned two public workshops, says City Manager Janet Keeter. The first workshop will be held on Monday, October 18th, starting at 7:00 p.m. in Founders Hall at the Community Center. Professional facilitators from MIG Inc. in Emeryville will lead the "town hall style" meetings to allow residents to constructively discuss the merits of the recommendations presented in the downtown segment of the Planning Process Review Task Force Report. The second workshop is planned for early December. A. Firth




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Senior Housing Development Gets Downsized

By Andrea A. Firth



View of the storypoles for the proposed senior housing development at the corner of Irwin Way and Orinda Way from across the street. Photo Exhibit B of the Staff report from the Orinda Planning Commission meeting of 8/31/10.

During the last week of August, story poles—a wooden structure of 2 by 4's connected with strings dotted with multi-colored ribbons—were erected on the parking lot adjacent to the tennis courts at 2 Irwin Way, to provide a visual for the height and mass of the senior affordable housing facility proposed for the site (see photo). Eden Housing, which was appointed by the City to develop the housing project, has proposed a four-story building with 70 one-bedroom units that exceeds 50 feet in height in some parts. The Planning Commission then met in a workshop format on August 31st to discuss development standards for and rezoning of the 1.45 acre city-owned site prior to Eden submitting plans for design review.

Height and Mass—what's too big?

"Personally, I think it's massive," said Jeff Mills, one of four residents who attended the meeting. After viewing the story poles and

walking the property Mills found that the structure, with its hillside placement, towered over the street. "It's huge. It's blocking blue sky," he added.

Planning Commissioner Chris Kniel concurred, advocating that the current 35-foot building height restriction in the downtown district be applied. "In my opinion, [over 50] feet is not okay at all," said Kniel. "It's overbearing, way too big for the lot, and not in keeping with the character of Orinda," he said, adding, "We can't ignore the new input from the public regarding building height." Commissioner Carlos Baltodano was also concerned about a building height of 50 feet or greater and preferred the maximum building height be capped at 45 feet to be consistent with the adjacent Senior Village.

Planning Commission Chair Dean Orr, who visited the site four times before the meeting, acknowledged that upon first view of the

story poles the structure felt big. However, he noted that visual impact driving down Orinda Way going north was minimal. "You can't see it. It's incredibly well screened with substantial, mature screening," said Orr. The view that created the most concern for Orr, and several other Commissioners concurred, was looking at the story poles from the Citibank parking lot across Orinda Way. "I think this project as drawn, with the north and south wings going out to Orinda Way at four stories, is too big a change. Bringing it down a floor brings a massing that is more in line," said Orr, and he suggested that some of those units could be moved to the back of the property and be less visible from the street.

"We've heard what you are saying. We've all decided we've got to pull this back. It's just too tall," responded architect Sean Reynolds, a Project Manager with Dahlin Group Architecture Plan-

ning, which is working with Eden Housing to design the affordable senior housing facility.

After extensive deliberations, the Commission voted four to two (Kniel and Baltodano dissenting) to recommend a maximum building height standard for the site of 50 feet.

Zoning

Originally purchased by the Orinda Association, the parcel is zoned for public, semi-public use for buildings such as a library. With the old library vacant, the City began plans for an affordable senior facility on the site about 15 years ago and subsequently received \$2.5 million of in lieu fees as part of the Wilder development agreement to apply to the project. The Planning Commission voted to recommend that the parcel be rezoned residential medium density (RM), which is identical to the adjacent Senior Village, with an overlay district for senior housing.

What's next?

According to the City's Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu, the next step in the process will be the City Council's review of the Planning Commission's recommendations for the land-use amendments for the Irwin Way site; this is tentatively scheduled for the Council's October 19th meeting. In the meantime, Eden Housing is in the process of revising the story poles and their conceptual building plans based on the Planning Commission's recommendations and preparing to submit the plans for design review approval.

Heritage Tree Status for Donna Maria Oak Denied

... continued from page A1

Several residents of Donna Maria Way spoke in support of Heritage Tree status for the stately oak that serves as a focal point for their neighborhood, however, Michael Olson, speaking on behalf of J and J Ranch, LLC which owns the adjacent property at 24 Adobe Lane, did not agree. Olson and his partners John French and Peter Branagh have proposed building 13 single-family homes on the approximately 20-acre property that also includes the historic Moraga Adobe which they plan on restor-

ing and opening to the public.

"We absolutely love the tree and its location at the entrance of our proposed project," said Olson. "We have no plans to impact the tree," he added, noting that they would likely remove some of the asphalt that is located in the protected area under the tree, and this asphalt would be replaced elsewhere but farther from the tree's base. Olson stated that he would not have any problem with the Heritage Tree designation once his project has gone through the planning process with the City but ap-

plying that status now would significantly impact their ability to develop the property. Orinda's Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu estimated that Olson's project would go before the Planning Commission in approximately two months.

Following the Council's decision, Smith stated that he and his wife were disappointed with the outcome. "I didn't quite follow the logic of the city attorney as far as ownership of the tree," said Smith, who feels the City has missed an opportunity to have an active Her-

itage Tree program. Regarding the proposed location of the entrance to Olson's new development just beyond his driveway and oak tree, Smith stated that he would prefer that all three access points to the site, one other on Donna Maria Way and one from the south end of Dolores Way, be utilized to minimize the traffic impacts on the neighborhood.

The Council also directed City Staff to refund the Smith's application fee and move to revise the Heritage Tree ordinance to be more clear.

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Orinda's Disposable Income—It's Leaking

By Andrea A. Firth

Orinda recently commissioned a retail leakage study to determine the City's potential to attract new businesses. Bottom line: The retail spending potential to be captured in Orinda is significant, but it will require the development of new commercial space. According to the study prepared by Wahlstrom & Associates, it's simple economics: the retail demands of the 17,700 residents far outpace the supply of retail outlets in the city.

Only \$1 of every \$3 Orinda residents spend at retail stores stays in Orinda, leaking \$175 million of sales to Moraga, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, and other shopping destinations each year. "You do have significant spending leakages, and [the City] could economically support a number of retail options, but there is a very

small inventory of existing space," said Stephen Wahlstrom when he presented the study data at the September 7th City Council meeting. In addition, the available retail space is of insufficient size or inappropriate location to attract new apparel, sporting goods, grocery, and home furnishing stores.

Orinda has a retail vacancy rate of 14%, which represents about 30,000 square feet of space, said Wahlstrom. The vacant commercial space is concentrated in the former Phair's Department Store, which has long presented a re-use challenge, and within Theater Square, which has historically proven to be a poor retail location. However, he added, Orinda's existing retail businesses, which occupy just over 100,000 square feet of space—the approximate

amount of space within a single Target discount store—do pretty well, achieving total annual sales of \$80 million.

Council members Amy Worth and Steve Glazer both pressed Wahlstrom to define the economic impact on retail sales with the addition of residential units in the downtown districts. Wahlstrom stated that additional housing would increase retail sales but not significantly. He believed that due to the limited supply of retail outlets, additional residents in downtown would also spend two of every three retail dollars outside of Orinda. "You are doing very well with the retail space that you have," said Wahlstrom. "You can't increase sales significantly without expanding the space devoted to retail."

Orinda City Council Candidate Forum

Wednesday, October 13, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Library Auditorium

Sponsored by the Orinda Association

Poetry Contest—What does Orinda mean to me?

To help commemorate the 25th anniversary of the incorporation of Orinda, the City is sponsoring a poetry contest with five age categories: K-2nd grade; 3rd grade-5th grade; 6th grade-8th grade; 9th grade-12th grade; and adult (ages 18 and over). Send

your original poem, on the theme "What does Orinda mean to me?," no longer than one page double spaced, to the City Clerk, Michele Olsen, at 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563, or by email to molsen@cityoforinda.org by September 24th, 2010. All poems re-

ceived are public record and will be available to view on the City's website after September 24th. The winning poems will be announced at the October 5th City Council meeting and sealed in the City's time capsule on October 21st, 2010.

Crestview Residents Make Road Repairs Happen

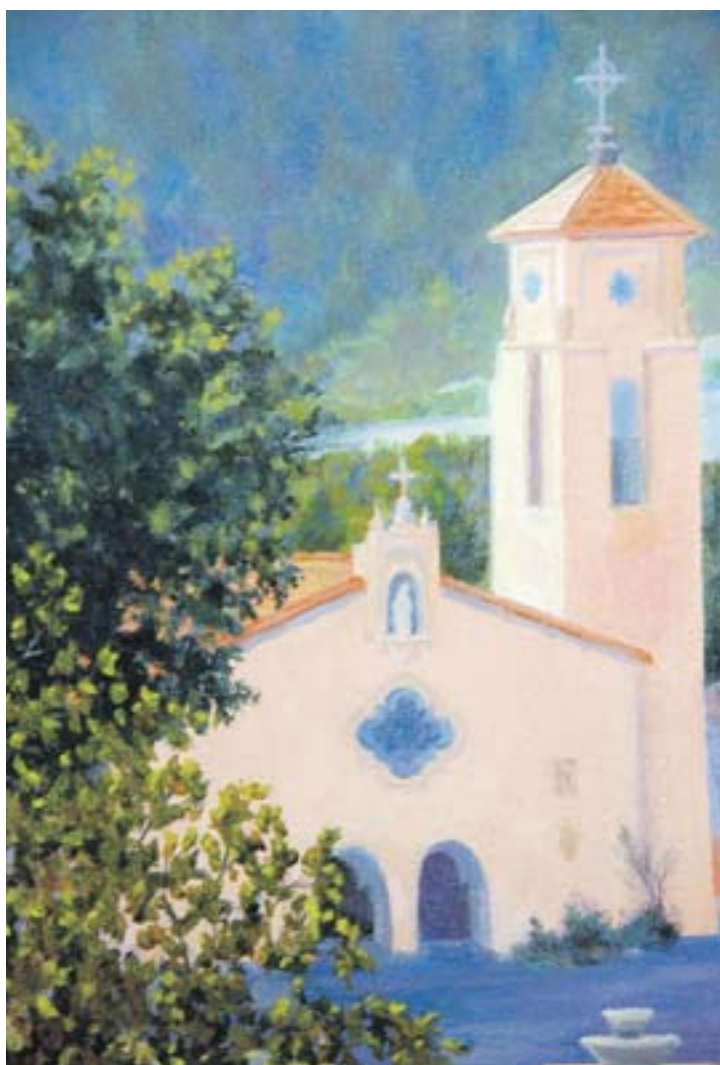


Diana Stephens was all smiles as she presented the City with a check for the \$58,000 raised by the residents of Crestview Drive to repair their crumbling road. Approximately 60 property owners contributed to the cause, and the road repairs are scheduled to start soon. Additional funding for the road-work project will be contributed by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (\$56,000) and the City (\$28,000). Pictured with Diana are Mayor Tom McCormick (L) and Chuck Swanson, the Director of Public Works and Engineering Services. *A.Firth*

Photo Ohlen Alexander

Local Artists Celebrate Orinda Silver Anniversary with Exhibit

By Andrea A. Firth



Santa Maria by Carmel DeWiess

Photo provided

Over twenty local artists currently have artwork depicting life in Orinda on display at the Orinda Library Gallery to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the City's incorporation. The month-long exhibit, which includes more than sixty works featuring landscapes, historic buildings, and community settings throughout the City, will culminate with a reception on Saturday, October 2nd from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This free event is open to the public and will have music by the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, wine (at \$5 a glass), and hors d'oeuvres.

"We are pleased to be partnering with the City of Orinda to put on this special event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the city's incorporation and to feature the work of our local artists," says Sue Severson, a trustee of the Orinda Community Foundation. "Orindans really enjoy and support the arts, and the Library Gallery is a great venue to showcase it," she adds.

Several well-known Orinda artists have work on display including Allison McCrady, Mary Spain,

and Rob Becker; neighboring artists such as George Ehrenhaft of Moraga and Margaret Lucas-Hill of Lafayette are participating too. The works, done in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and photography, capture all things Orinda including the ubiquitous hills in all seasons, color, and forms; landmark buildings such as Orinda Motors, Village Antiques, Loard's Ice Cream and Candies, and Santa Maria, St. Mary's, and Orinda Community churches; and everyday sights such as the BART station, the Orinda Theater marquis, and the more recent but oft-visited Starbucks. All the artwork is for sale, and the artists will donate a percentage of the sale proceeds to the Orinda Community Foundation.

"The Orinda Community Foundation was formed in February of this year in response to the city's declining revenues," says Severson. Historically, the City contributed about \$25,000 to community events and programs, but with the economic downturn that financial support was completely eliminated creating the need for private fundraising, she explains. The

Orinda Community Foundation will use proceeds from this event and other events held throughout the year to provide grants to support local events and programs.

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business briefs

Chicks and Love—Brunch Made to Order

At the Orinda Farmers Market

Kellie and Vanda have found the right recipes for the Orinda Farmers Market. They're breakfast flat breads, tomato and cheese flat breads or very addictive strawberry shortcake, and they are made every Saturday morning by a chef (Kellie) and a designer (Vanda). "Our motivation is to serve food fit for foodies at farmers' markets," says Kellie. "We make baked to order, artisan, thin crust flatbread. Our signature flatbread is the 'Farm Fresh Breakfast.' Our seasonal specialty is strawberry shortcake. We use only fresh selections of cheeses, meats, seasonal fruits and vegetables that are local, organic and preferably purchased from the farmers at the market." Vanda brings eggs laid by her own chickens to the market and is happy to share them with customers. The organic flat breads are prepared at home before getting to the market and they come in all kinds of shapes. The 'Farm Fresh Breakfast' flat bread includes fresh parmesan and mozzarella cheese, Aidell's chicken sausage, chives and olive oil and a sunny side up farm fresh egg on top. (This reporter could not resist trying one – the sensation was crispy and tender, the taste of fresh ingredients perfect for that fall morning in Orinda.) The menu includes vegetarian and meaty options, and sometimes a daily special such as salmon and cr me fraiche. Customers come by and order, and during the 10 minutes takes to cook their food they browse the market. "Sue Severson (Orinda City Council member) and I have been working to round out the prepared food offerings at the market, as she envisions a nice brunch destination for community members who may or may not be market shoppers," says Janice Faust, who manages the Orinda market, "we now have several choices for folks who would like to eat at the market: Tio Santos tamales, La Crepe a Moi (new in August and very popular), and Chicks and Love." Chicks and Love do parties and catering as well, the Orinda Farmers' Market is their first business location. Their web site is chicksandlove.com.



Kellie is busy preparing breakfast flatbreads
Photo Linda Gilson

Library and Learning Center Foundation present the Empowerment of Women Forum to be held at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center on Tuesday, October 19, 2010 from 5:30pm to 7pm. The Empowerment of Women Forum is designed to appeal to all women and will feature a panel of working women from both the profit and non-profit sectors, who will share their career experiences in the workforce. All women who are currently working and those who are looking to get back in the workforce are encouraged to attend. Professional development resources will also be available. The forum is free to attend and refreshments will be provided. RVSP to Barbara Gilmore at Barbara@lafayettechamber.org.

Infinity Salon Gives Back to Schools, 3449 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette - 299-6782

Infinity Salon of Lafayette is launching a fundraising initiative to benefit high schools in the Lamorinda area. Infinity Salon will donate 50% of the price of a haircut to the high school of the student's attendance; 10% of subsequent haircuts will be donated to the school. This applies to students currently attending Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte high schools. Call 925-299-6782 for an extraordinary haircut experience.

Hilton House Expands, 21 Orinda Way, Orinda, 254-1113

Hilton House Consign/Design & Estate Liquidations, Inc. has added a branch to its store. Owner, Cyndi Hilton, invites all to visit the new addition, a few steps from her main location in the same center, which features furniture and accessories. Hilton explained, "We needed the space for all the fabulous items we have to offer, and now both locations are more attractive for our customers."

Futures Explored Raises Money for a Good Cause 3547 Wilkinson Lane, Lafayette, www.futures-explored.org

Futures Explored is a non-profit organization providing life skills and work-related training to adults with developmental disabilities. The Lafayette day program provides training in both work-related and life skills to adults with mild to moderate developmental disabilities. Participants may need help in areas of personal or social skills, or in seeking and holding a job, or both. On Sunday, October 3, Futures Explored hosts a Wine Tasting, Silent Auction & Raffle at 3547 Wilkinson Lane. The event, "Cornucopia," will take place from 3:00-5:00pm and will feature some great raffle and auction items. General admission is \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. For more information call Barbara at 925-284-3240 x223 or go to the group's web site (above).

... continued on page L2

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Life in LAMORINDA

Turtle Island – Not Your Usual String Quartet

By Lou Fancher



Turtle Island Quartet rehearses during a recording session for "Have You Ever Been...?"

Photo Barbara Summer

When David Balakrishnan brings his violin and the Turtle Island Quartet to Saint Mary's College on September 29, Jimi Hendrix will tag along.

The Grammy-winning string quartet, known for its genre-defying mastery of everything from classical to bluegrass, swing to hip-hop, latin american music to jazz, and now, rock, easily defies description. Sometimes referred to as an "American string quartet," Turtle Island is more like an "Everything string quartet."

The ensemble's latest release, *Have You Ever Been...?*, opens an alternate universe for music lovers: one where highly-trained classical

artists, steeped in the improvisational traditions of jazz, embrace the genius of Hendrix.

Balakrishnan, in a wide-ranging interview, talks about his fellow quartet members, Turtle Island's history, his own compositions, winning awards, and the undisputed king of electric guitar, Hendrix.

Listening to Hendrix as a teenager in the 1970's inspired Balakrishnan to pick up a guitar himself. "Playing guitar taught me how to play the blues," he says. "When I went back to the violin, I found you can play more percussive sounds on it too. It made me widen the performance practice of my instrument."

Approximately forty years later, a Woodstock video of Hendrix's brilliant 1969 performance triggered a long-buried yearning in Balakrishnan's soul. "There's always pressure to repeat yourself when you've been successful," he says, about the period of time following the release of *A Love Supreme*, which won the group its second Grammy in 2008. "But I didn't want to do that. So I listened to (Hendrix's) *Electric Ladyland* without talking to anybody about it. I kept it under my hat – didn't even tell the band – because I knew everyone would jump on the commercial idea of it."

At the same time, Balakr-

ishnan was developing his *Tree of Life*, a one-hour collaborative work involving scientists and artists and based on Darwin's evolutionary theories. "I realized Hendrix and *Tree of Life* were my story. The connection lies in me, not in a marketing plan. It's a fortuitous combination: the two ideas grew up with each other." And with that, a CD was born. "You could say I've been writing the same piece all my life," Balakrishnan says, turning the conversation to process. "I limit myself to sounds through which I can draw lines of continuity."

... continued on page L8



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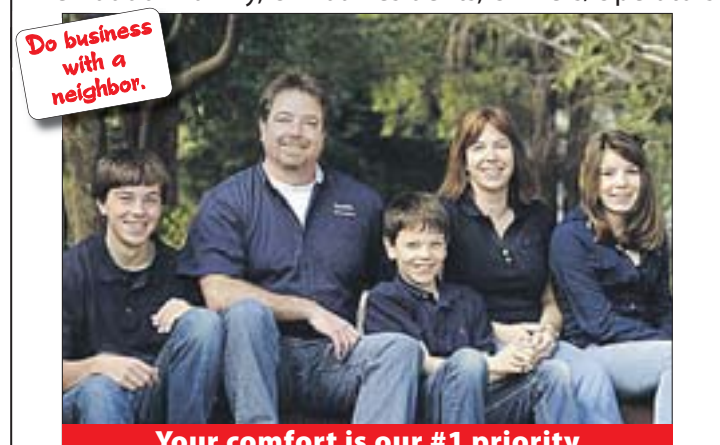
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Moraga Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors Meetings
Meetings of the MOFD Board of Directors are open to the public and take place on the third Wednesday of each month in the Board Room, Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.

Next meeting(s):
TONIGHT
September 15th, 7:00 p.m. (Regular Board Meeting)
October 6th, time TBA – Special Meeting
(go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for more information)

MOFD Presents District's Financial Overview to Tri-Agency Committee

By Lucy Amaral

Representatives from the City of Orinda, Town of Moraga and Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD), who make up the Tri Agency Ad Hoc Committee - MOFD Fire and Emergency Medical Services, met August 30 for a presentation by MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley. The Ad Hoc committee was formed as a fact finding entity to review fire operations, wherein each group would bring information back to their respective agencies. Its task nearing completion the committee will

meet for what could be the last time later this month.

Bradley presented a financial overview of the MOFD, which included the planning process, long range financial forecasts, staffing and funding equity between the two cities, as well as various revenue streams, expenditures and financial challenges.

Bradley also responded to specific items requested by the committee at the last meeting, including hydrant locations and water flow parameters.

Regarding water flow, Bradley said that some areas of Orinda may not be at the preferred maximum availability of 500 gallons per minute, but when coupled with water trucks from MOFD and the expected quick response time from the fire department, there is sufficient pressure to put out most home fires if they arrive before 'flashover' (where the structure is completely involved in fire).

"I am not advocating for 250 gallons per minute hydrants,

but the community needs to be informed about the risks prior to making infrastructure investments and decisions," said Bradley. "With that said, my preference would be to have adequate water and adequate pressure at all fires."

Representatives from the citizen's group Fire and Infrastructure Renewal (FAIR) spoke during public comment, offering their own analysis of Bradley's presentation, disagreeing with MOFD's financial figures, staff and response distribution as well

as the funding equity between Moraga and Orinda.

Discussion from the Tri-Agency members ranged from immediate disbanding of the board as no further action is needed, to scheduling additional meetings to learn more. It was decided that at least one more meeting will be held to hear the public's proposals and comments. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 9:00 a.m. in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library.

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Captain Vineyards – A New Commercial Winemaker in Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini



Sal and Susan Captain in their Moraga cellar

Photo Sophie Braccini

As Susan and Sal Captain sit in their Moraga home overlooking their vineyard set against the backdrop of acres of open space, they open a bottle of one of their newly-labeled Captain Vineyards Petite Syrah, and finally relax after a long day of work among the vine stocks.

This month the Captains achieved one of their goals: becoming an independent, commercial wine label, growing their grapes and making their wine in their own

bonded facility. Five years after putting the first plants into the clay soil of their home in the Bluffs, this is no small achievement, especially since they did most of the work themselves.

"It started with a lot of education," recalls Susan Captain, "my first class was Soil Science and Management at DVC." Since then, the math major has been continuously educating herself in Napa, at UC Davis, and by visiting numerous wineries. The Captains planted

3500 vines. As of today they have the largest vineyard in Lamorinda, with 2.5 acres planted. They have Cabernet, Petite Syrah, Petite Verdot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot grapes, and they are constantly working to improve the quality and the sustainability of their farm.

"We were the first Contra Costa Winery to become a Certified Green Business," says Captain with pride, "EBMUD noticed that our water use was decreasing dramatically and gave us an award; we

were the first private business to get it." Captain says that they have trained their vines to use less and less water, cutting their needs by 30% this year, after a dramatic 75% cut the year before.

When they saw that their grapes were turning into prize winning wines made by other wine makers they decided to do it themselves. According to Captain, growing great fruit is a necessity for great wine, but it is not enough. Their next job was to learn wine making. "That's my husband Sal's job," says Captain, "I registered him at the Napa Community College to learn wine chemistry. Being an engineer, he loved to learn all the nuts and bolts of the alchemy of wine." The meticulous Sal Captain brought additional benefits to the production. "When it comes to sanitation, for example, he goes overboard," says his wife, "the result is that we need very little sulfite in our wine."

When they were ready to take the next step, to the commercial level, Captain set about becoming educated on the compliance process. "I took a compliance class," she explains. "You have to know what it takes." Their first stop was with the Town of Moraga and it proved quite painless. "They were very supportive," she says. The total time spent navigating the administrative process to get their facility bonded and be able to sell under their own label was about a

year. But now it is done. The wine from their grapes is available for sale behind an artful and cheerful label created by local artist Anna George of Lafayette. "It depicts a pear and a glass of wine, two of Moraga's unique natural gifts," says Captain. Their five different reds can be ordered online at www.captainvineyards.com.

Lamorinda's Independent Wine Makers

As of today, there are three fully bonded, independent commercial winemakers in the Lamorinda Winegrowers Association - Parkmon Vineyards of Moraga, Deer Hill Vineyards of Lafayette, and Captain Vineyards. According to Dave Parker of Parkmon, a few others will be joining them soon. The Association's next project is to get a "Lamorinda" appellation for the wines (they are now sold as Contra Costa County wines). For that to happen the zone has to be declared an American Viticultural Area (AVA). "We are getting there," says Parker, "and the Captains having their own independent label and bonded facility is helping." "We won't be like a Napa," adds Deer Hill Vineyards' Bill Scanlin, "but more like a Livermore Valley, with a tour map and people coming and tasting our production." For now the wines are sold over the internet and by select local retailers, and can be found on the tables of local restaurants.

Lafayette's Dramatic Duo

By Lou Fancher



Meaghan and Diella Wottrich

Photo provided

In a time when family togetherness is on the endangered species list, Diella and Meaghan Wottrich have found a novel way to beat the trend. When the Diablo Theatre Company's *Annie* opened on September 10, the Lafayette duo strolled and strutted across the Leshner stage together—taking the quaint idea of a mother/daughter dance to a whole new level.

The musical, scheduled for a Broadway revival in 2012, follows the exploits of feisty orphan Annie and is based on Harold Gray's famous comic strip.

Meaghan, 11, appears as Emma, an orphan friend to title character Annie. "She makes sure

we don't get in trouble with the woman who runs the orphanage," Meaghan explains. Her mother plays the role of Cecille, the maid and seamstress to Annie. "She's sweet and kind, and dedicated to making things run smoothly," Diella Wottrich says.

They might be speaking of themselves: during an interview they coach and gently correct each other, sometimes overlapping in their earnest efforts to answer.

"I never really pictured myself doing this," Wottrich begins. "I was so shy." It's hard to believe this tall, head-turning woman, who speaks expressively and with good

humor, ever hid behind a parent's leg. Miraculously, the passage of time and opportunities to emerge from her instinctive shell led her to where she stands today. "Now, I feel like I'm not complete," she says, about the periods when she is away from the stage.

Meaghan, on the other hand, is 100 percent hooked and full of third-grade fearlessness. She's already well-versed in rules of the stage, having appeared with The Ballet School, Town Hall Theatre Company and with her mother in Contra Costa Music Theatre's *Oklahoma!* "Being onstage at the Leshner was just amazing," she says, leaning forward, her blue eyes wide with wonder. "If I looked, I could see people...but you aren't supposed to look at specific people."

Her mother, drawn to the twin magnets of music and dance, remembers seeing a Broadway production of *Annie* at the age of 11. "I remember thinking, 'Gosh, I would love to be on the stage doing that!'" After high school experiences in musical theater, she pursued degrees in psychology, married, and started a family; performing in Marin's community theaters and holding onto a "long term dream of having children who were interested in theater."

Now, spliced between work and children, Wottrich appears in East Bay productions. "I have an

agreement with my family that I do one a year," she says, "although this year, *Annie* came along after *Oklahoma!* and we just couldn't pass it up."

Like her mother, Meaghan is more than a one-trick theater pony. She's an avid soccer player, sharing a dedication to the sport with her father. "I like being goalie best," she says. "You have to always keep an eye on the ball." On stage, she's much the same, saying, "I concentrate on myself to do the right thing and I watch other people to make sure it's all ok."

They both learned more than just lines from their time on stage. "I've learned this before, but I keep learning that people who are mean in the play are actually really, really nice," Meaghan says. Her mother, practical, but no less magical, says she discovered "how much I appreciate that we have the same passion and this time together."

Asked about the future, Wottrich says, "I'd love to have a leading role opportunity...but this is just fine—ensemble roles—as long as I am dancing and singing."

Asked if she'd like a leading role, Meaghan nearly jumps out of her chair. "Yes, I definitely do!" she says. "I want to continue doing this for a long, long time."

Annie runs through October 2; for more information go to www.dloc.org.

business briefs

... continued from page A8

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

- Thursday, September 16, Entrepreneur's Club Meeting at 8:30 p.m. in the Chamber Conference Room.
- 15th Annual Lafayette Art & Wine Festival on Saturday, September 18 & Sunday, September 19, downtown Lafayette.

Moraga

- Chamber Meeting on Friday September 24th, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive.
- New Date for the Moraga Business Seminar: Tuesday, October 19, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Soda Center Saint Mary's College. The evening program and dinner are sponsored by Mechanics Bank. All Moraga businesses and Moraga Chamber of Commerce members are invited.

Orinda

- 3rd Annual Orinda Restaurant Tour on Tuesday, September 28. The evening will start with appetizers from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., will be followed by the "sampling" of downtown restaurants from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Dessert is from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. Meet at Orinda Theatre Square. Admission will be \$30 in advance & \$35 at the door. Online purchase for tickets is available now at www.orindachamber.org/OrindaRestaurantTour2010.htm Only 250 tickets to this popular event are available, so act quickly.
- Save the date for the Orinda Gala on Saturday, October 2, Dinner Dance and Art Auction at the Orinda Country Club.

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Laura van Duren Creates Art to Share

By Andrea A. Firth



Laura van Duren's Truth Scope

Photo Michael van Duren

The centerpiece of artist Laura van Duren's Not for Sale exhibit at the Mercury 20 Gallery in Oakland is an interactive installation called the Truth Scope. "I love the idea of creating art that people can interact with, that they can touch," says van Duren. The five-tier, funnel-like structure, which hangs from the gallery ceiling, is made of welded steel and covered with pages carefully selected from antique books about personal and political conflict. Van Duren was inspired to

create the interactive sculpture after hearing a presentation at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church (MVPC) by the founder of Not for Sale, a campaign devoted to ending human trafficking and slavery.

"The cause resonates with me in a personal way," says van Duren, who grew up with domestic violence and her own experience of fear, threats, and forms of entrapment. She invites exhibit-goers to step inside the scope and help her to complete the sculpture. Chalk is

provided for the viewer to share what he or she would like to be freed from by writing on the inside of the scope. Illuminated from the skylight above with birds that van Duren created in molds and resin suspended overhead as if in flight, the relatively small space inside the scope is evocative of the wide-open spaces in nature.

"This is the biggest thing I have ever made," says van Duren, who sculpted in clay for 20 years before venturing into welding. The Truth Scope took 12 hours to install and required a 17-foot long truck to transport it from her home-based studio in Lafayette. Van Duren also created a series of collage boxes for the exhibit that are displayed on the gallery walls. The recurrent use of cages, ladders, birds, and branches in the collages and scope provide the imagery for the themes of freedom, safety, and escape, says the artist.

"I'm constantly seeking what I can use from the environment for my art," says the self-described scavenger of the suburban landfill, who regularly collects branches and other natural materials from her yard to supplement her art supplies. "And I'm a big believer in the concept of reuse," adds van Duren, who often shops for clothes at Lafayette's Wayside Inn Thrift Shop.

Van Duren has lived with husband Michael and their three children (ages 22, 20 and 16) in Lafayette for 12 years and likes to share her art with the community, especially with young people. She

recently traveled to Peru with a group from the MVPC to help with the construction of a childcare center. She planned to teach art to the Peruvian children and work with the other young people on the trip to paint a mural on the inside walls of the center. Van Duren shipped boxes of art supplies to the location in advance. When the supplies never arrived, she scoured the remote village for paint. Only able to find white house paint, the resourceful artist mixed the colors herself and was able to complete the mural. "I'm definitely going back," says van Duren, who enjoys social justice work and sees service as part of her role as an artist.

20% of the sales from van



Artist Laura van Duren constructing the Truth Scope Photo Michael van Duren

Duren's exhibit will be donated to Not for Sale. The exhibit will run at the Mercury 20 Gallery through September 25th, for more information go to www.mercurytwenty.com.

Lafayette Care Home

A Residential Care Home for the Elderly

Lafayette Care Home features six private rooms in a beautiful setting. We pride ourselves in giving personal and individual care. Currently, we have two rooms available. Please contact Linda at (925) 451-6456 to arrange a visit.

Testimonial from Marian M.
"Our mother has been with the Lafayette Care Home for over 3 years, and we are more than pleased with the loving care provided. We highly recommend this exceptional care home."



Linda

Lafayette Care Home 3640 Baker Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549 (925) 451-6456 Lic # 075600841

GRAND MASTER WEI-CHUEH VISITS THE U.S. IN OCTOBER AND JOINS US IN THE CELEBRATION OF BUDDHA GATE MONASTERY'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Ten years ago, Grand Master Wei-Chueh, the founding abbot of Chung Tai Chan Monastery, adhering to his compassionate vow to enlighten all beings, sent five monks to establish Buddha Gate, the first overseas branch of Chung Tai Chan Monastery. This October, in celebration of Buddha Gate's tenth anniversary, the Grand Master will visit the monastery where he planted the seeds of enlightenment ten years ago.

It is with great joy and deep gratitude that we anticipate the Grand Master's forthcoming visit. We invite everyone to join us in participating in this momentous and auspicious event.

During his visit, Grand Master Wei-Chueh will preside over the Eight Precepts ceremony and transmit the Three Refuges and Five Precepts. We will dedicate the merits from observing the pure precepts toward peace and harmony in the world and for all sentient beings. These merits, derived from our pure practice, will be our best gift gleaned from celebrating Buddha Gate's tenth anniversary and are a means of offering our gratitude to the Buddha.

For the past ten years, the Dharma Masters at Buddha Gate Monastery have devoted themselves to helping

others to understand the wonderful truths of Buddhism, attain peace and purity of mind, and walk the path to enlightenment. They have offered free weekly meditation classes, conducted monthly Dharma ceremonies and special workshops in Buddhist concepts, as well as meditation retreats, senior retreats, children's classes and summer camps. Buddha Gate has also participated in community outreach programs such as blood drives, vegetarian food drives, and disaster relief. Both Buddhists and non-Buddhists have benefited tremendously from the programs at Buddha Gate.

Looking toward the future, we hope that more people will come to discover the truths of Buddhism, that all will learn to walk the Bodhi Path by practicing the six perfections of giving, precepts, tolerance, diligence, meditation, and prajna wisdom and thereby come to realize their intrinsic pure nature. It is the fervent hope of all those at Buddha Gate that Buddhists will deepen their practice and non-Buddhists will have the opportunity to embrace the Buddha's teachings. We will continue to practice unceasingly to fulfill the Grand Master's compassionate vow- "The mind is pure, the land is pure. The mind is peaceful, the world is peaceful."

Following is the itinerary:

Oct 1 (Fri.) 7:00 pm - Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale
Dharma lecture and Three Refuges Transmission Ceremony

Oct 2 (Sat.) 10:00 am - Buddha Gate Monastery in Lafayette
In celebration of the 10th Anniversary of Buddha Gate Monastery Grand Master will transmit the Eight Prohibitory and Fasting Precepts. (Full Registration)

Oct 3 (Sun.) 10:30 am - Buddha Gate Monastery in Lafayette
Three Refuges and Five Precepts Transmission Ceremony (Please contact Buddha Gate Monastery for registration.)

Oct 8 (Fri.) 7:00 pm - Chung Tai Zen Center of Houston in Texas
Dharma lecture, Three Refuges and Five Precepts Transmission Ceremony

Oct 9 (Sat.) 10:00 am - Texas Pagoda Chan Monastery in Shepherd, Texas
At the site of the future Chung Tai International Retreat Center Opening Purification and Consecration Ceremony

Oct 10 (Sun.) 1:00 pm - Middle Land Chan Monastery in Pomona (Southern California)
Opening Purification and Consecration Ceremony

*If you want to attend the ceremonies, please contact the monastery for more information.



Free meditation classes will start at the mid of October.

Buddha Gate Monastery
3254 Gloria Terrace
Lafayette, CA 94549 USA

Phone: (925)934-2411
Fax: (925)934-2911



"To be liberated is not to escape from difficulties; it is to use the power of wisdom and samādhi to eliminate the obstacles present. That is liberation."

—Grand Master Wei-Chueh's Dharma Dews



Buddha Gate Monastery

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Exclusive Early East Bay Release!
For current showtimes, go to
www.TheNewRheemTheatre.com



THE SOUND OF MUSIC


Saturday, September 18th
7:00PM

← and Q&A with Angela Cartwright after the screenings

Get your tickets today at www.TheNewRheemTheatre.com, the Rheem Theatre box office or call 925.388.0751

Please submit:
Events: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda's Religious Services



St. Giles Episcopal Church of Moraga
Worshipping at St. Mary's College Chapel. All are welcome at our services.
9 a.m. Sunday Service: Holy Communion - with St. Giles' Choir.
Child care is available all year.
1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. 925-376-5770

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH
24 Orinda Way, Orinda (next to the Library) - 254-4212
Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am
Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm
Reading Room/Bookstore M-F: 11 am - 5 pm
(across from the Orinda Theater)
www.christianscienceorinda.org

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way Orinda
Regular Worship Schedule
8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:15 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Celebrations Worship Service
Childcare available for ages 5 and younger
925-254-3422

Our Savior's Lutheran (ELCA)
1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette
283-3722 • www.oslc.net
SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE
8:30 Classic worship service
9:45 God's World Education Hour
10:45 Contemporary Service

HANDBELL ARTIST MICHELE SHARIK !
7 pm Saturday September 25

THE ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH
10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org
"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"
Join us Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Refuge Community Church
Sundays at 10:30 am
A NEW, non-denominational Christian church
Veterans Memorial Building 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette
www.refugecommunity.org
925-942-1000

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
A Loving Community
Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM
Active Youth Program, Sunday School, Nursery Childcare, 10 AM
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

Back to School!

Fall into Worship

Sundays at 9:00 am & 10:30 am
www.mvpc.today.org • 925.376.4800

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church
10 Moraga Valley Ln., Moraga, CA

If you would like your services listed, please email to info@lamorindaweekly.com or call 925-377-0977.
A one inch listing will cost \$20.

Not to be missed

ART

Superbly Independent: Early California Paintings through Sept. 19. Nearly 100 landscape paintings by three tenacious and talented early pioneer Western women painters: Annie Harmon, Mary DeNeale Morgan and Marion Kavanagh Wachte. Opening night lecture by art historian Erika Esau, Ph.D., author of Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia and California, 1850-1935, free admission. Exhibition admission: \$4 adults; K-12 graders free. Saint Mary's College of California, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. Gallery Hours: Wed. - Sun., 11am - 4:30pm. Main Telephone: (925) 631-4379. Website: www.hearstartgallery.org.

"Not For Sale" is Laura van Duren's solo show at Mercury 20 Gallery, Oakland, California September 2-25. This exhibition introduces van Duren's most recent sculpture, drawings and a large installation that explores the current state of slavery and personal responses to confinement. Address: Mercury 20 Gallery, 475 25th Street, Oakland. Hours: Thursday - Saturday, noon - 6pm. Gallery website: www.mercurytwenty.com. Van Duren is based in Lafayette. (See article page L3)

Moraga Art Gallery is presenting a new show, "Favorites," featuring local artists showing watercolor, acrylic and oil paintings, ceramics, photography, mixed media, jewelry and glass designs. The show runs through October 23 and features the work of John Diestler and fused glassworks by Nancy Slack. The Moraga Art Gallery is located at 570 Center St in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center next to CVS Drugs. Hours: Tuesday - Sunday, 12-5pm. Phone: (925) 376-5407.

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) presents "PIXAR: 25 Years of Animation," a major exhibition of over 500 works by the artists at Pixar Animation Studios, through January 9, 2011. Location: Oakland Museum of California, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland. Cso: \$12 general; \$9 seniors and students with valid ID; \$6 youth, ages 9-17. Free for children 8 and under and OMCA members. Free First Sundays. Website: www.museumca.org.

The Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek



is pleased to announce a new exhibit, "Fresh Paint," which opens with a Preview Reception on Sunday, September 26th from 3-5pm. Created by Bay Area artists, these works cover a wide range of styles, mediums and subjects. Also featured are fine craft and jewelry. Valley Art Gallery is a volunteer run, non-profit organization that has represented emerging and established artists of the Bay Area for over 60 years. Located at 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110 in downtown Walnut Creek.

The Orinda Community Foundation in conjunction with the City of Orinda will host an art show and reception to celebrate the City's 25th anniversary. The event will be held on Saturday, October 2 from 4-7pm at the Orinda Library and will feature a fine arts exhibit highlighting the works of over 20 local artists. All art work available for purchase. Hors d'oeuvres and wine will be served. Music provided by members of the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra. Proceeds to benefit the Orinda Community Foundation. For more information go to <http://www.orindasilverball.com>. (See article page L7)

Not to be missed

The entire Orinda Library Gallery will be the site for Moraga Art Gallery to celebrate its 10 Year Anniversary, when all its artists will display their artwork during the month of October. The show will start on October 3rd, with the gallery hosting a Reception on the 9th of October at the Orinda Gallery, from 3-5pm. The public is cordially invited to attend and help celebrate this milestone with the local artists. The Orinda Library Gallery is located at 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. Located at 570 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center, the Moraga Art Gallery is a cooperative, comprised of eighteen local artists.

MUSIC

The Orinda Library's "Listen to the World" Summer Music Series draws to a close with Ramana Vieira & Ensemble on September 29 at 7pm. Called the "Voice of Portuguese World Music," Ramana Vieira sings fado, the 15th Century Portuguese songs of love, loss and life. An American of Portuguese descent, Vieira sings in English and Portuguese, bringing her own brand of soul and passion to the ancient art. This program is free, open to everyone and takes place next to the fireplace inside the library. The Orinda Library is located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more information, please call (925) 254-2184 or visit the library website at ccclib.org.

Classical/jazz fusion trendsetters "Turtle Island Quartet" will perform at Saint Mary's College on Wednesday, September 29 at 8pm in the Soda Activity Center. From stages around the globe to the international airwaves, winner of the 2005 and 2007 Grammy for Classical Crossover, the "Turtle Island Quartet" is the most acclaimed ensemble of its kind. Their performance at Saint Mary's will celebrate the music of Jimi Hendrix and David Balakrishnan. \$20 General Admission; \$15 Seniors. Tickets: (925) 631-4670. (See article page L1)

Candlelight Cabaret: An evening of vocal jazz standards from the Great American Songbook. Friday, October 8th, 7:30-10pm, Fellowship Hall, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Come and enjoy wine, appetizers, great music, and the company of friends! Bring guests! Ticket price: \$30, benefiting Orinda Community Church.

The Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra will feature Marni Nixon, who was the singing voice of Audrey Hepburn and Natalie Wood, in a medley from The King and I, My Fair Lady and West Side Story. Also Copland's "Appalachian Spring, Schuman's "New England Triptych" and a world premiere by local jazz trombonist and composer, Doug Beavers. Come enjoy fascinating stories about the composers and their creations delivered by long-time music educator Timothy M. Smith, who is also the orchestra's dynamic music director and conductor. Sunday, 10/10, 7:30 p.m. Leshner Center for the Arts, Tickets: \$20-\$28 at the door, by phone ((925) 943-SHOW), or online at www.LeshnerArtsCenter.org.

THEATRE

Orinda Starlight Village Players present "Wind In the Willows," adapted by Charlotte Meyer from the book by Kenneth Grahame through September 25th. Performances are held Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30pm, Sunday, September 19th, at 4:00pm, and Thursday, September 23rd at 8:00pm. Call (925) 528-9225 or email info@orsvp.org.

Diablo Theatre Company presents the family favorite "Annie," the timeless tale of Little Orphan Annie in a show about hope and optimism with its chorus line of high-kicking orphan waifs, a too-cute dog, and a delightfully wretched Miss Hannigan. Playing Sept. 10 - 26. Tickets (\$29-\$42). Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek; (925) 943-7469; www.lesherartscenter.org; www.diablotheatre.org.

Come to Performers for Progress, a student run variety show featuring many talented Miramonte students on September 30th at 7:30 and October 1st at 7:30 in the Miramonte Theater. Tickets are \$6 for students and \$12 for adults. This fall, we will be raising money for SchoolBOX, an organization that supports schools in poor areas of Nicaragua. We will be helping the Segrado Corazon de Jesus school in Telica by remodeling part of their school, providing the students with school supplies and toothbrushes, as well as starting a soccer team. To learn more about Performers for Progress, visit our website at <http://www.performersforprogress.com> or email us at perforpro@gmail.com.

Town Hall Theatre's 2010-2011 Main Stage season opens October 2 with the exciting and frightening Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher from the Robert Lewis Stevenson novella. This unusual adaptation brings all of the tension and thrills of the legendary story with a cast of only six actors, each playing multiple characters that create foggy Victorian London in the heart of Lafayette through Halloween. For exact times, more information and to buy tickets contact Town Hall Theatre Box Office at (925) 283-1557, or purchase online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.

LITERATURE

For over 25 years, readers of the SF Chronicle have looked forward to their daily dose of Jon Carroll. Join us as he talks about his past, views of life, and the challenge of producing a thought-provoking column on deadline four or five days a week. Tuesday, September 21, 7pm, Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall.

BOOK SALE - Friends of the Orinda Library monthly book sale is Sat. Oct. 2, 10am - 1pm. in the Book Shop and Sorting Room (Book Shop is open until 6pm) The monthly sales offer quality books for all interests and all ages. This sale features a large selection of books for children at very low prices; of interest to teachers and parents. Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, (925)254-1358.

The Theology & Religious Studies Department of Saint Mary's College presents "Whatever You Did to the Least of These: Art, Ethics, and the Parable of the Sheep and Goats," a lecture by Saint Mary's College Professor Tom Poundstone. When: Monday, September 20, from 7:30 - 9pm. Where: Soda Activity Center, Saint Mary's College of California, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Cost: Free and open to the public.

KIDS PARENTS & TEENS

Outdoor Movie Nights at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Admission is free. September 17: "Kung Fu Panda" at 7pm.

The NorCal Kids Triathlon will take place on Saturday, September 25 from 2-5pm at Miramonte High School in Orinda. Sponsored by Orinda Motors. Register online today at www.norcalkidstri.org.

Ready to have some fun this year? How about building a vehicle powered by mouse traps or a creating a Rube Goldberg contraption to make toast or producing a comedic play? Come join an Odyssey of the Mind team. We are organizing teams of Moraga students (K-12) for the 2010 school year. Come join us at meeting on September 16 from 7-8pm at the Moraga Library to find out more about this international creative problem solving competition.

Growing Light Montessori School of Moraga in conjunction with Food4Thought will be hosting a Wellness Event on Saturday, September 25th, from 10am-3pm, at the Growing Light Montessori campus in the Moraga Shopping Center. Parents can come and hear experts speak on a variety of conditions, including allergies, asthma,

ADD/ADHD, autism, auto-immunity and other failure-to-thrive issues that may be affecting their children's lives. For more information and to get tickets (\$25 per person) go to www.food4thoughtca.com.

Join the co-ed teen crew of the SSS Sea Witch for two exciting Sea Scout events in September! Sept. 18th Redwood Rendezvous. This annual event takes place 8am - 9pm at the Port of Redwood City. Sept. 24 - 26th Clearlake Seaplane Splash-In. Departure from Martinez Sea Scout Base 9/24 at 5pm and return Sunday at 3pm. Sea Scouts is a non-profit co-ed youth maritime program. No experience is required. For more information contact Rolf Lindenhayn at lindenhayn@sbcglobal.net or 917-0573 or go to www.seascout.org.

OTHER

15th Annual Art & Wine Festival,



Saturday Sept 18 10am-7pm and Sunday Sept 19 10am-6pm, downtown Lafayette. Free Admission & Parking. <http://lafayettechamber.org/events/art-wine-festival>.

3rd Annual Orinda Restaurant Tour: Tuesday, Sept. 28 5:30 - 6:30pm appetizers, 6:30 - 8:00pm "Sampling" Downtown Restaurants and 8 - 8:30pm Dessert. Admission will be \$30 in advance & \$35 at the door. Only 250 tickets to this popular event are available, so act quickly. Tickets available at www.orindachamber.com.

Friday September 24th, 7pm, Dancing with the Cars, Friday Night Party. We're tenting Avenida de Orinda for a fun-filled, sneak preview of the next day's car show. The evening will feature cocktails, dinner, music and a live auction. Proceeds of this event primarily benefit the Educational Foundation of Orinda. 2 cars in live auction! Car #1-Red 1992 Toyota Paseo. Car #2-Blue 1999 Saab 95. For tickets go to www.orindaefo.org.

The 6th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show will be held on Saturday, September 25, 10am-2pm in Orinda Village at Orinda Motors, 63 Orinda Way. Featuring over 130 classic cars and unique motorcycles, food and music. The event is free, but those who make a donation of \$25 will have an opportunity to ride in one of the cars during the parade at the close of the show.

The 12th Annual Moraga Pear Festival will be held September 25 at the Moraga Commons from 10am to 4pm. Enjoy pear pies, live music, food, wine tasting, art and children's activities. Morning entertainment will be provided by local youth groups and from the Orinda Idol competitors. "Pacific Coast" will perform from 11-1 and the Dave Matthews Blues Band will perform from 1:30-4, thanks to a donation from the Moraga Park Foundation. This free festival is sponsored by the Town of Moraga.

The Contra Costa Master Gardeners are holding an Autumn Garden Sale that will have something for everyone! Saturday, October 2 from 9am to 2pm at the Contra Costa Times Visitors Parking Lot, 2640 Shadelands Drive in Walnut Creek. Garden art, bee boxes and birdhouses, as well as gently used decorative items for home and garden will be available for purchase. There will also be a plant sale with a huge variety of plants, many of which are recommended by EBMUD and UC Davis, an exotic collection of succulents, delicious winter vegetable plants, annual and perennial color, herbs and much more. Further details can be found on: <http://ccmg.ucdavis.edu>.

◆ **Not to be missed** ◆

OTHER

Chabad of Contra Costa, under Rabbi Yaakov Kagan, is once again hosting Jewish High Holiday Services for the Lamorinda community. No membership is required and no previous background is required to fully enjoy the services. Special Children's programs will take place at 11:30 am-12:30 pm each day. Rosh Hashanah Services will be held at Chabad of Contra Costa, 1671 Newell Ave., Walnut Creek. Yom Kippur Services will be held at the Renaissance ClubSport at 2805 Jones Road in Walnut Creek. For complete schedule of services and reservations visit www.JewishContraCosta.com or call Chabad at (925) 937-4101.

Salsa Dance classes at the Orinda Community Center will start Monday nights, beginning Sept. 13. There is no partner required and no experience necessary, \$15/class to drop-in. Beginning 7-8pm, Intermediate 8-9:30pm, Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, to register: (925) 254-2445.

Our Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group is having an excellent speaker on Friday morning, September 24th—Dr. Leslie Delaney. She will speak about her Pain Management Programs. Most don't know that there are over 20 million people with Neuropathy or that there are over one hundred different causes, including diabetes, and an array of treatments, many of which don't work. The support group members understand how your feet can hurt, tingle or burn so intensely and how difficult it is to keep your balance. For more information contact Carolyn Cash (925) 254-8195.

The next Lafayette Pub Trivia event will be held on Wednesday, September 29th, starting at 6:30 pm at Petar's in Lafayette. This month, we will be collecting donations for Susan G. Komen for the Cure, where we will anonymously donate the funds to individuals doing the 3-Day For the Cure walk in San Francisco, who have not met their required fundraising goals.

Lafayette Hiking Group, September 25 hike on Acalanes Ridge: From Pleasant Hill Road climb to the ridge and descend to Walnut Creek, past the newly acquired Lafayette Open Space property. From the ridgeline you can see Mount Diablo, the Carquinez Strait and the delta to the north. Moderately strenuous with hills, 5-6 miles. Leader Alison Hill. Meet in the parking lot out from Lafayette BART's main entrance at 8:30 am. Bring lunch, water, layered clothing, and good walking shoes. Questions? Email LafayetteHiking@comcast.net.

AAUW is inviting the Lamorinda community to attend the 13th Annual Restaurant Walk, A Taste of Walnut Creek, Tuesday, September 28th, 6- 9:00 p.m. The 2011 AAUW Tech Trek Scholarships will be funded by the proceeds from ticket sales to this event. The evening includes a progressive dinner tour and a chance to sample delicious cuisines at some of the best restaurants in downtown Walnut Creek. Ticket books are \$30 per person. Please send your check (made out to AAUW-OML) directly to Sandy Fox-Sohner at 27 Williams Drive, Moraga, 94556, before September 20.

Registration is now open for fall classes at Moraga Parks and Recreation (2100 Donald Drive, Moraga). Learn how to make Fresh Fruit Jam, practice Yoga, learn guitar or chess, and many more fun activities. Go online at www.moraga.ca.us or call (925) 888-7036.

Do you like working with people? Are you good with numbers? Contra Costa County

AARP Tax-Aide is looking for volunteers to become members of a team providing free tax preparation for individuals of all ages. Volunteers are trained by Tax-Aide and become IRS Certified tax counselors. Other volunteer positions are available. If interested, call LaVerne Gordon, District Coordinator, at (925)405-5135 for information and to apply. Orientation is in November 2010 and classes for tax counselors start in January 2011.

Contra Costa Rose Society, Wednesday, September 22, 7pm, monthly meeting with a presentation by Greg Lowrey. His topic will be "Planting and Care of Own-root Roses." Please join us for a fun evening. Free; the public is invited. Please call Cyndi at (925) 408-1256 or email her at cjreading50@yahoo.com for information, or visit our website www.ccrose.org. Monthly meetings are usually held on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 PM at The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek.

The First Annual Railroadiana, Mining & Western Artifacts Show & Sale Event will feature a broad spectrum of all types of historical western railroad, mining, Native American, cowboy and advertising artifacts from all over the western United States geared toward all levels of collecting interests. Show hours are Saturday, October 9th from 9am -3pm with a \$5.00 admission. Early entry during the show's dealer set-up is available. Call for details. Location: Walnut Creek Elk's Lodge, Creekside Hall, 1475 Creekside Dr. Walnut Creek. For more information, please contact: Jack Lucas at (925) 260-0287.

Las Trampas, Inc. is a non-profit organization serving adults with developmental disabilities in the East Bay. We are having our 1st annual "Walk n' Roll" on Saturday October 23 from 8:30am-12noon. This family friendly event is a 1mile or 5K walk/roll or run on the beautiful Lafayette-Moraga Trail. Fee is \$25 per person and includes: t-shirt, gift, refreshment and live entertainment. Register at www.active.com. For more information visit our website at www.lastrampas.org.

Save the Date! Empowerment of Women Forum. When: Tuesday, October 19 Time: 5:30 -7pm. Where: Lafayette Library & Learning Center Community Hall. We will feature a panel of working women, from both the profit and non-profit sectors, who will share their career stories with us. This forum will offer something for the current working woman as well as the woman who is looking to get back into the workforce. Come and enjoy an evening of shared experience. Information: Barbara Gilmore, (925) 284-7404. Barbara@lafayettechamber.org.

CLUBS

Montelindo Club general meeting and speakers, third Friday of the month, September through May. Meeting Place: Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Refreshments and plant sale at 9am, meeting at 9:30am. The meeting is free and welcomes guests and new members. Web Site:www.montelindogarden.com. Email contact: montelindogarden@aol.com. September 17 meeting: Charlice Daniels, founder of the Native Here Nursery in Tilden Park, will speak about preserving California's native flora and vegetation.

The Moraga Garden Club meets 9:30a.m. third Thursdays monthly through May. September 16: Lafayette author/photographer, and rose expert, Carolyn Parker, will bring roses from her garden, and talk about her recent projects, which include highlights from her new book about

◆ **Not to be missed** ◆

remarkable rose women. Copies of her book, R is for Rose, will be available for sale, and signing. Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Membership is now open: Linda (925) 376-2809.

The Lafayette Garden Club is happy to announce that grant applications are currently being accepted for funds generated by the 2010 Gardens for Gardeners Tour. Proceeds from this fundraiser have been designated to benefit area schools and Lafayette Seniors' garden education projects. Approximately \$8,000 will be available for distribution. The Lafayette Garden Club is a non-profit, volunteer organization which strives to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to encourage home and community beautification, to improve the knowledge of horticulture and to encourage civic planting and conservation programs. Grant applications should be consistent with the club's objectives. For more information or a grant application please contact: Janet Tittiger: 925-284-2380 or janet.t@comcast.net

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St. Moraga. Social hour 11 am, lunch 12 pm. The after lunch speaker will be Dan Ashley, the popular anchor of ABC News at 6 & 11 pm. Mr Ashley, who came to ABC News in 1995 has received a number of awards. His talk is entitled "Ratings and Responsibilities: The challenge of Television News." For membership information, call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

Moraga Juniors Women's Club is currently looking for new members who live in Moraga. MJWC is a non-profit philanthropic and social organization of women committed to improving our local community through volunteering and raising funds for local charitable organizations. We are currently assembling this year's list of prospective members and will be holding a new member social on September 29, 2010. Membership is open, and the club invites anyone to join without regard to race, color, creed, age, or national origin. Please visit www.moragajuniors.org and look for the "Join Us!" link.

On Tuesday, Sept. 21st at 9:30 a.m. the next general meeting of the Lamorinda Branch of AAUW will meet at the Serbian Church Cultural Center, 1700 School St. in Moraga. The featured speaker will be Dr. Paul Licht, Director of the U.C. Botanical Garden. AAUW is a national organization dedicated to equity for girls and women through advocacy, education and research. This is the perfect venue for learning in depth the various facets by which those goals are achieved by visiting the tables where members will answer any questions you may have and welcome you to join.

The Suburban Woman's Club of Lafayette meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Lafayette Community Center in the Elderberry Room at 11:30am. The next meeting will be September 16. We invite all women over the age of 55 to join us. Lunch is provided by the members. This month we have a speaker from the Contra Costa County Youth Development Services who is going to give us an insight into the Foster Youth Services. Information we should all be hearing.


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Pictured with Chip Herman (center) are Greg Sisk (L) and John Vanek of Orinda Motors, a supporter of the Orinda Car Show. Photo Andy Schreck

Two cars will be auctioned at the Dancing with the Cars dinner on Friday, September 24th, the pre-party to the Orinda Car Show. The cars, a Red 1992 Toyota Paseo (105,000 miles) and a blue 1999 Saab 95 (104,000 miles) have been donated to the Educational Foundation of Orinda. Proceeds from the auction will go to EFO, and the purchase price is tax deductible. The cars (shown in the photo) have been Orinda Motors Certified and detailed by Professional Automotive of Lafayette. To register to attend or participate in the auction by phone, contact Chip Herman at DancingWithCars@yahoo.com.

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- Lafayette Candidates' Positions on Growth and Roads
- September 11 Remembrance Event Planned
- Dad Band Debut at the Art & Wine Festival
- Lamorinda Reads Cutting for Stone
- Dollar Tree Application Still Pending
- 75th Birthday Party at the Round Up
- Orinda's Council Candidates-On the Issues
- Council Candidates Address the Issues

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Slippery Year Author to Read at Orinda Library

By Andrea A. Firth



Melanie Gideon, author of *The Slippery Year*.
Photo Jonathan Sprague

"The idea of slipperiness was born out of my realization that I had become an observer not a participant in my life," says Melanie Gideon, au-

thor of the 2009 best-selling memoir *The Slippery Year, A Meditation on Happily Ever After*.

"I had slipped out of my life, and I was on the outside looking in," says Gideon, whose book chronicles a year-long journey spent working her way back into her own life. Described as simultaneously poignant and hilarious, *The Slippery Year* is an entertaining and joyful read. "I'm not that funny or witty in person," admits Gideon, but she has found a way to translate what's amusing in the ordinary onto the page.

Gideon, who lives in the Oakland hills with her husband and 11 year-old son, had previously written two young adult fantasy novels, a genre that she loved reading in her youth. *The*

Slippery Year is her first venture into nonfiction and subject matter based on her personal experiences. "I had been writing dark fantasy fiction, and this voice just emerged from me like it had been waiting for a chance to come out," says Gideon.

The memoir is a collection of her observations of the everyday life events of a mother, a father, and young son. In contrast to another popular midlife memoir of today, Gideon did not travel to exotic countries to eat delicious food, pray at ashrams, and meet mysterious men; instead she focused on the ordinary things around her. "I didn't want to write a misery memoir," says Gideon, who finds humor in situations like the carpool line at school. "The small, mundane things in life are where the gold is."

The catalyst for her story was her husband's spontaneous purchase of a used, behemoth-sized camper van. Gideon first assumed that her husband was having a midlife crisis—replacing the more predictable Porsche with a family-style truck that has tinted windows, captain's chairs, and a toilet that requires emptying by hand. "I thought he was having a midlife crisis, but I was the one having the crisis," she says, adding, "He was taking risks and enjoying it, and I was sitting on the sidelines reluctant to be pulled in."

Today Gideon is more conscious to be present in the moment and does take more risks, although she admits that she hesitates with things that are physically adventurous. (It doesn't look like she'll be skydiving

any time soon.) She acknowledges that publishing the memoir was a risk in itself, "I have had to deal with a level of vulnerability. There was no hiding once the book came out." Recently released in paperback, *The Slippery Year* has also been translated and distributed inter-

nationally. Gideon's next book, a novel for adults called *Wife 22*, has an anticipated release date in 2012.

Gideon will be doing a reading and question and answer session at the Orinda Library on September 22nd from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Fabulous Foods for Fall

By Dr. Theresa Tsingis, DCMS

"For man, autumn is a time of harvest, of gathering together. For nature, it is a time of sowing, of scattering abroad."

Edwin Way Teale



Autumn isn't fall at all when it comes to delicious foods, it rises to the top of culinary lists. The colorful fruits, roots, tubers and vegetables of harvest time also contribute to make us healthier as we go towards winter. They're loaded with phytochemicals – pigmented antioxidants and vitamins that support immune system health during the change of seasons and influx of "germs." Taking vitamins is no replacement for treating your-

self to the produce we are lucky to have in farmers markets and grocery stores. As you can see below, there are many fabulous foods in fall. Venture into these when dreaming up "what's for dinner":

- Apples, pears, figs
- Beets – orange, red, yellow
- Carrots, Turnips, Parsnips
- Cabbage, Brussel sprouts, Broccoli
- Cranberries, Pomegranates, Persimmons
- Sweet potatoes or yams

- Pumpkins, winter squash (acorn, butternut, etc.)

A tasty and smart way to benefit from these natural foods is to combine several colors in recipes. Plenty of mouth-watering fall recipes exist and have wide appeal. Let yourself wander through websites and cookbooks and have some fun. Here are several recipe ideas:

- Tri-color beet salad with feta, toasted walnuts & oregano
- Figs braised with cabbage, apples & balsamic vinegar
- Greek stuffed cabbage with turkey meat & avgolemono sauce
- Pumpkin soup with shrimp*
- Cauliflower Marranca*
- Tunisian Vegetable Stew*
- Gluten-free Pasta Fagiolo (pasta & bean soup)
- Dr. T.'s Special Chard Saute' (See below)
- Pears Poached in Red Wine

Dr. T.'s Chard Saute'

(The contrasts of these ingredients appeal to even chard-avoiders.)

- 1 bunch Swiss chard, sliced in 1 inch ribbons
- 3 yams or sweet potatoes, diced in 1-in. cubes
- 3 leeks (whites) chopped, or 2 medium onions, large dice
- 1 apple, peeled & diced
- 3/4 lb. organic free-range bacon (pork or turkey)
- 2 Tbs. high-heat canola oil

Directions: Fry or microwave bacon til crispy, chop coarsely and set aside. Steam or microwave sweet potatoes for about 5 minutes; set aside. Heat oil in large skillet, add onions or leeks and saute til very soft and almost caramelized, then add chard, yams, apples and bacon. Saute' til fragrant and yams are cooked through. Serves 4.

Pears Poached in Red Wine*

From <http://www.whats4eats.com/desserts/poires-au-vin-rouge-recipe>

Note: The pears can be poached ahead of time, & stored in poaching liquid)

- 4 Bosc pears
- 3 cups red wine
- 1/2 cup sugar (or Xylosweet)
- Long strip lemon zest
- 1 cinnamon stick

Peel the pears, leave stem attached, slicing small piece off bottom of pears so they'll stand up straight. Add wine, sugar or Xylosweet, lemon zest & cinnamon stick to large saucepan and bring to a boil over medium flame. Stir to dissolve sugar completely then reduce heat to very low. Place pears in simmering wine & poach for 15-20 minutes, carefully turning from time to time. Do not overcook pears. Remove pears to individual plates. Bring wine to a boil again and reduce to about 1 cup. Strain the liquid, pour over the pears and serve.

The poet George Eliot wrote of fall, "Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking successive autumns." Enjoy your seasonal bounty and you will be healthier.

*For more info:

<http://www.whats4eats.com/seasons/fall-recipes>

<http://pnwmg.org/pdf/mgfallveg.pdf>

<http://epicurious.com>

"Moosewood Cookbook", Mollie Katzen, Tenspeed Press, Berkeley

"Moosewood Collective Cooks at Home", Moosewood Collective, Simon & Schuster, N.Y.



Dr. Theresa Tsingis, DCMS specializes in functional medicine, a branch of nutrition focused on prevention, medical research and therapeutic lifestyle change. Her practice, Lamorinda Nutrition, is located at 251 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette CA. Tel. 925.283.Well -or-drTsingis@comcast.net

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Editor:
The voters in Orinda have an opportunity to bring in new ideas to our City Council this November. Dr. Scott Zeller is a non-incumbent who is committed to preserving what is best about our town. He has no ties to developers. He instead will promote a "village" atmosphere in downtown while working cooperatively with small business. Scott is someone who considers the "semi-rural" nature of Orinda an attribute we must safeguard. There are forces in Orinda supportive of radically changing downtown. This will require amending our city plan which was wisely crafted by citizens with input from recognized urban planners. Multi-story buildings are proposed. Hillside views and existing merchants will be replaced by congestion and shadows. Dr. Zeller thinks we can do better. Scott and his wife Susan are Glorietta parents who treasure the excellent schools we have. Their son competes in OYA & OBA events. The boy doesn't want to see Europa evicted by development interests. Dr. Zeller will not be taking campaign contributions from real estate interests, developers, political action committees or businesses that contract with the City of Orinda. Can his opponents pledge to do the same? Don't bet on it. Scott is for transparency and eliminating conflicts of interest. I hope you will join me this fall and cast your vote for Dr. Scott Zeller for City Council. Consider withholding your other votes and by doing so send a message to City Council.

Dr. Bob Larsen
Orinda

Editor:
Today's economic climate is not conducive to business as usual. Creativity, leadership, and common sense are more important than ever, especially for those seeking to lead municipal governments. The residents of Orinda are fortunate to have such a candidate for City Council in Tom McCormick. Tom is currently serving as Mayor in the final year of his first term on the Orinda City Council. His business experience has provided the leadership to make tough decisions, like implementing an employee furlough program, in order to balance the budget. His creativity is seen in how he helped reorganize the administrative and financial departments to save the city \$75,000 without a reduction in service. He pressed for the "Art in Public Places" program at no cost to the city, and continued to make road improvements using State and Federal grant money whenever possible. Tom has also changed the tone of city staff. He has implemented various programs, including a customer service survey posted on the web site, to create a service-oriented philosophy in all departments. I have personally witnessed how he has improved the planning process so that it is easier and more user friendly to residents. Tom's common sense is on display as he is constantly reaching out to the community and other community leaders to elicit their involvement and creativity in solving the issues that face our city. In today's changing times, it is critical to have someone with Tom's understanding of our history in order to lead the city into the future. Please join me in returning Tom McCormick to the City Council this November.

Robert Jungbluth
Orinda

Editor:
Please join me in supporting Sue Severson for re-election to Orinda City Council. Sue, a former Orinda Citizen of the Year for her 9 years work on the Orinda Union School Board, is a tireless worker for all of the things that make Orinda a very special place. Over the years, our schools, our library, local transportation, the Boy Scouts, and now our city have been the lucky beneficiaries of her talents. Her emphasis on prudent fiscal management has helped keep Orinda in an elite group of California cities not currently facing fiscal disaster. But obvious challenges remain, and we need Sue's depth of knowledge, experience, energy, and commitment to guide Orinda going forward.

Carol Penskar
Orinda

Editor:
Most elected officials granted unsustainable pensions to employees. Now those agencies are laying off employees, cutting other services, and even considering bankruptcy. An exception was the Moraga Town Council, past and present, who managed taxpayer funds more responsibly and didn't grant these huge pensions. This has resulted in higher turnover in the police department but that is certainly better than cutting other services and potential town bankruptcy. I encourage the Town Council to continue to hold the line

Turtle Island – Not Your Usual String Quartet

... continued from page L1

Sounding anything but limited, he continues: "I like a wide swath. Honestly, what I do, is just play my violin, then go write it down." Moments later, he's on a reverse curve, saying, "I understand the need for good architecture. There's no reason for contemporary musicians to abandon the elements and principles of classical music." He's rather Beethovenian in his compositional constructions: outlining the overall form, calculating the

weight-bearing load on the listener's ear, eliminating excess. It's a far cry from the "play it and write" he first describes.

Testing the limits might be a Turtle Island signature. "This is the kind of music you choose by nature," says Balakrishnan. "Some people do one thing all the way. Others, find a wide-range and go for connections between things."

Mark Summer has been with Turtle Island from its debut 25 years

ago. "He's the premier crossover cellist on the planet," Balakrishnan says. "He's a cello, and a bass, and drums. He's a one man rhythm section."

Quartet member Mads Tolling appears to be an equally miraculous violinist. "Mads grew up listening to Keith Jarrett and Miles Davis. He has less of a fiddle style and more of the purity of the fine European players," Balakrishnan says. "And Jeremy," he says, referring to new member Jeremy

Kittel, "he grew up in the alternative tradition. He's special because he plays in an instinctive, grounded way."

String quartets and "down to earth" don't usually appear in the same sentence, let alone the same ensemble, but Turtle Island has never been usual. Their insatiable appetite for performing adds up to a blistering 50 performance gigs a year. Outreach is huge too, according to Balakrishnan. "It's about

sharing the craft with the community," he says. While bemoaning YouTube for "creating a glut, where, instead of things happening and then disappearing, they stay and stay," he applauds the online video-sharing site for its "immediate access."

To young musicians, he offers advice. "It's important you don't close off possibilities for your instrument. Don't run away from classical traditions, find your own

style, and go deep."

Like Beethoven's endings, finishing an interview with Balakrishnan isn't simple. He tosses out tantalizing, last-second comments, ("Half the importance of a string quartet is the composer, but people don't know it—" and, "I like a honking Hendrix chord; it stretches a listener's psyche,") before admitting he's late for lunch. It's a conversation cut short, leaving plenty of food for thought.

Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less.

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as it won't be long before the police being laid off by other cities will be seeking steady employment in Moraga.

Pete Williams
Moraga

Editor:
Citizens of Orinda, please join us in supporting Julie Rossiter for Orinda School Board. Julie's breadth of experience and knowledge make her the ideal candidate for this important role. Julie has children attending Orinda schools and understands the impact of the current financial crisis we are facing. She has spent years as an active participant in the classroom and the Del Rey Parents Club, serving as Treasurer of our fundraising drive for two years, Co-Chair of Operations on the school auction, Co-Chair of the annual parents gathering, Representative of the parcel tax campaign, and is the current Del Rey Legislative Representative to the Las Trampas Creek Council. She is also a practiced litigator who specialized in employment law. She knows how to roll up her sleeves and dig in to the issues at hand. She has significant experience solving difficult problems and is skilled at negotiating with others, in a positive, collaborative manner, and will be the advocate we need to build consensus and obtain results. In addition, she is a wonderful person – a kind, thoughtful, engaged mother, friend, wife and active member of our community – the type of person we want representing us and our children. Julie will focus on maximizing public and private sources of school funding, continuing to improve the curriculum and providing students and teachers with the resources needed to excel in today's society. Julie is endorsed by all five current members of the Orinda School Board: Jack Bontemps, Matt Moran, Pat Rudebush, Riki Sorenson and Pam West. We support Julie Rossiter for Orinda Schools and urge you to do the same. The Orinda School District, our children, and the community as a whole, will benefit from her experience, commitment and leadership. Sincerely
Seanna and Jeff Allen
Orinda

Dear Editor,
For several years I have, attended meetings and workshops related to the downtown revitalization plan. I am not a developer, and I have no financial stake in the eventual outcome, yet, surprisingly I was still able to find my way to these "insider" meetings and participate in the process. I am a twenty year resident of Orinda who has had the good fortune to raise a family here. I believe we have an obligation to plan well for future generations. Land is scarce in Orinda, and what little we have should be used wisely. Whether we like it or not the human race is expanding. Should Orinda completely ignore the changing demographics and pass the burden of building more housing to other communities? I think not. I did not come to Orinda to cut myself off from the outside world. The downtown areas on both sides of the freeway are in need of a facelift. The town looks tired and shabby. I like the idea of building residential units on top of retail. In England, where I am from, all the towns and villages are like this. Given the proximity to BART and the freeway, I think this type of housing will appeal to a variety of people including empty nesters, middle age, and young professionals. It would be a shame to let the building height issue derail this. Fear mongering from those opposed to change is rife with inaccuracies. They talk about turning Orinda into Manhattan with skyscrapers or the destruction of small businesses and life, as we know it, traffic nightmares, underhanded dealings by local officials, and greedy corrupt developers. Scott Zeller, who is their chosen leader, has surrounded himself with some who constantly rage against anything that is supported by government for the good of the community such as schools, libraries, and roads. They fill the editorial pages week after week with "the sky is falling" scenarios. They see corruption and conspiracy in every corner. I want people on the council who have a vision beyond their own backyard. I know one candidate I will not be supporting and that is Scott Zeller.

Valerie Sloven
Orinda

Editor:
I am beyond incensed at the recent Acalanes high school graduate who felt entitled to steal hard working peoples' tips from the tip jar and then drive off in a Mercedes sports car. Perfect display of entitlement and disregard for others' labor from a no doubt over privileged youth. Hide your change, boys and girls, at your lemonade stands.

Charlotte Crogran
Lafayette

Dear Editor,
There is lots of talk today about city employees being overpaid, underperforming in their jobs and city offices being overstaffed. Some of this, I am sure, is fueled by our still sputtering economy, and – doubtless – there are certainly employees (and individual cities) who fit this description in our public sector just as there are in private business; my guess would be in somewhat equal measure. I am a resident of Michael Lane in Lafayette and over the summer the City took on and completed the long-overdue task of fixing our dilapidated street and drainage problems. I can only speak for myself, but I believe most neighbors agree, that the City should be congratulated on doing an outstanding job in the planning, execution and post-construction work. It was handled in a professional fashion, including dealing diplomatically with the inevitable hiccups that we all expect in any large construction job, including a few cranky neighbors with specific needs and concerns. (I am afraid my hand is up for being one of the cranky ones.) I believe part of the reason the project was a success is that the City of Lafayette has hired very competent and able employees. I have no idea what anyone is paid, but I for one want top-notch people working in my city and enough personnel to manage and run this city well. I remember an old company slogan for a premium quality line of hand tools was "I would rather explain the price of quality than apologize for something less." Yes, of course a close eye has to always be kept on running a city – our City – in a lean and very fiscally responsible way, especially in these challenging economic times. The evidence points to Lafayette doing this. But I also want Lafayette to continue to be one of the real gems of the Bay Area to live in, and well-qualified and talented city personnel play a critical role in making it a reality.

Larry Challacombe
Lafayette

Editor:
On September 7th I, along with several other neighbors, I attended the Moraga Planning Commission meeting. I left the meeting asking myself "what happened?" The discussion was such a pendulum swing in opinion; I left feeling dismayed and disheartened at our city politics. Several individuals expressed concern with the Dollar Tree citing significant lawsuits against the Dollar Tree for selling merchandise containing illegal amounts of lead and cadmium, the impending reduction in our property values, limited tax dollar revenue to the city, and frustration over the Commission's acceptance of another LARGE retailer in lieu of the development of locally owned business. The commissioners opened their remarks stating that they agreed that the Dollar Tree was not a desirable addition to the community but that they were restrained by the framework of the Municipal Code. However, they proceeded to discuss how they could convince each other how to get to a "yes" vote. Really? After further discussion, the commission realized that for various reasons the majority of the commissioners were inclined to vote "no" on the acceptance of the application. After, formally voting the application down... the Planning Director (Lori Salamack) informed the commission that they didn't perform the vote correctly. Her direction was so confusing that the commissioners didn't feel comfortable voting no. Based on language... not principal or the framework of the code, the application was going to be accepted! After continued discussion everyone was so thoroughly confused the decision was passed to a sub-committee of 2 individuals to come up with acceptable language to again, get to a "yes" vote! Again, why is the planning commission trying to convince itself that it must be a "yes"? It can be a No... IT SHOULD BE A NO!

For all the reasons listed above and all the reasons we know in our heart. This is a cheap merchandiser whose revenue is generated primarily through expansion. It does not have a commitment to this community, it sells dangerous and sub-standard product and let's face it... It sells CRAP. Crap that will fill our landfills with things that won't degrade until our great-great-grandchildren have great-great-grandchildren. And when they leave, and they will leave, we will be left with an empty retail space ready to accept ANOTHER large retailer and we will never get back to a vision we all have. Diverse businesses that service Moraga and the surrounding community in a thoughtful way. We are a community of individuals who have high standards for the maintenance of our open space, the maintenance of our individual residence and the education offered at our schools. We need to have those same high standards when it comes to retail for this community. Sincerely,
Kathy Macchi
Moraga


Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to **letters@lamorindaweekly.com** and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

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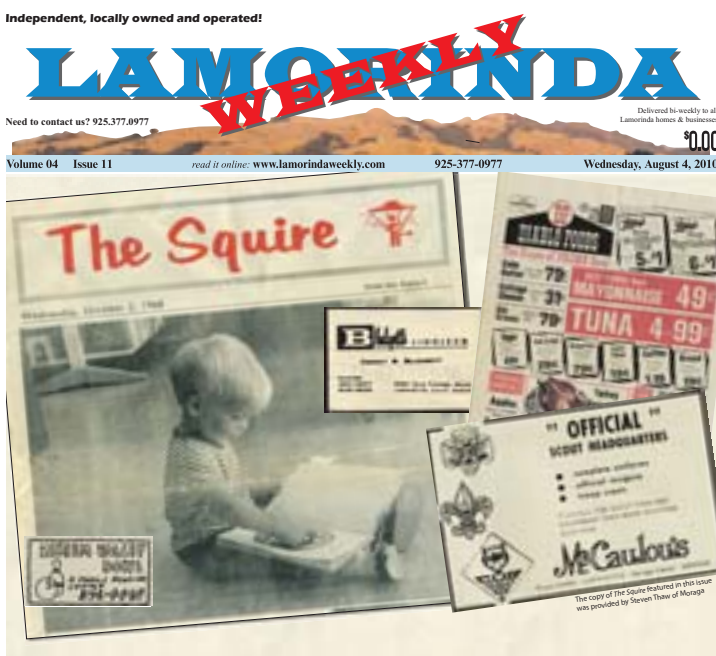
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Reader Connections to The Squire

By Cathy Tyson



Call went out with the story, "Blast from the Past: The Squire" in the August 4 edition of this paper looking for more information about the independent newspaper, The Squire, published approximately forty years ago.

This reporter was hoping someone had the inside scoop on publisher John Mustard. Unfortunately although 24,000 copies of the Lamorinda Weekly went out asking for input, only three responses were received; from a sportswriter, a

graphic artist and a delivery boy. Here are excerpts from those responses.

Jim Colhoun of Prudential California Realty recalls his contribution to The Squire, "I was a budding sports writer and editor of the Campolindo paper La Puma in 1969 and I earned extra money by writing for The Squire. I was paid at a rate of 25 cents per inch so you can't believe how long some of my articles were. I mean we are talking about 20-30 inches for a local Campo basketball game. They were starved for content and I needed the dough to go the Fillmore West on weekends. Anyway, every time I drive down Golden Gate Way in Lafayette, I have a fond memory of that little paper."

"What a blast from the past! I worked a couple of years for John Mustard, from issue one until he gave in," said Dian Overly who now lives in Rossmoor. "I was the graphic artist except for a short period when I cut off part of my

thumb and he had to hire someone else for a time. Anyhow, I have a couple of copies of The Squire someplace, my son was on the cover for one issue, with some friends up at the reservoir." She adds that she went on to work for the Sun for twelve years, and retired in 1992.

"I read your story on The Squire, and wow, did it bring back memories," said John Coleman who is now on the Board of Directors of EBMUD. "I delivered the paper once a week, I believe on Tuesdays, some 200 houses in Burton Valley. I started in 6th grade and did it through 8th grade (1972). If I recall correctly, I was paid either 1 or 2 cents per paper, not a whole lot of money. I delivered my street - Sweetbrier Circle and Sandalwood Court before school, then carried the remaining papers from Silverado to Reed Drive. The job was horrible, yet a great training experience for future endeavors."

Community Service

Moraga Rotary Installs New Officers

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Tony Schoemehl and Vickie Devlin

Photo provided

Rotary Club of Moraga has installed Tony Schoemehl as its President for the year beginning July 1, 2010. Tony is a long time resident of Moraga, and is a retired Delta Airlines captain and a former Navy instructor pilot. He takes the gavel from Immediate Past President Vickie Devlin. Other officers include Nora Avelar as President-Elect, Louise Schopke as Treasurer, and David Kruegel as Secretary. In addition, Debbie Roessler is serving as Assistant District Governor, helping the five Rotary Clubs in Lamorinda and Rossmoor.

At the District Installation dinner, Moraga Rotary received awards for Vocational Service, New Generations, Literacy Projects, Community Service, Disaster Relief, and International Service. Under Schoemehl's leadership since July 1st, Moraga Rotary has completed several successful service/fundraiser projects—the 4th of July refreshment booth at the Moraga Country Club for the evening fireworks, and the food service booth at the 2 1/2 day OMPA Swim Meet in early August. In late August, the Club provided food service for the LMYA soccer signups at the Moraga Commons. In the fall, the Club will conduct its third e-waste collection on Sept 25 at the Moraga Shopping Center and will donate a dictionary to every third grade student in Moraga schools.

Moraga Rotary is a local service club within Rotary International that meets for lunch Tuesday noon at the Soda Center at St. Mary's College. For information, please call Gary Irwin of Moraga Rotary at 925-376-7688.

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 with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Hospice Horseplay



Photo by Alana Koski

Lafayette teen Mikey Teare recently enjoyed a day with Blackie, a horse who came to visit through the efforts of SonRise Equestrian Foundation. Mikey is a patient with the Comfort for Care, a program of the Hospice of the East Bay that provides in-home medical care and support for children and teens that have life-limiting illnesses or conditions along with support for family and friends. Begun in 1995, Comfort for Kids works to keep families together and kids at home during the course of their illnesses. For more information go to www.hospicecc.org.

Outdoor Movie Night at Lafayette - Orinda Presbyterian Church

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Meet Your Orinda Idols of 2010!

(Results provided by Britta Glade)



The 2010 Orinda Idols were crowned on Sunday, September 12th after months of hard work by dozens of outstanding competitors. The winners of the Orinda Arts Council's 2010 Orinda Idol competition are:

- Grades K-2 Soloist Category:** Alex Meckles (Wagner Ranch)
 - Grades 3-5 Soloist Category:** Ryan Ford (Sleepy Hollow)
 - Middle School Soloist Category:** Madison Wheeler (OIS)
 - High School Soloist Category:** Steven Patton (Miramonte)
 - K-5 Group Category:** Jackie Patton (Glorietta) and Samantha Martin (Happy Valley)
 - Middle and High School Group Category:** Jacqueline Garrell (Miramonte), Katie Marino (Campolindo), Amrita Newton (Miramonte), Neris Newton (Miramonte), Paige Powell (Miramonte), and Sophie Woodlee (Miramonte).
- At left: Alex Meckles is awarded the K-2 winner's check (\$200) by OAC president Susan Garrell. The other K-2 finalists are (L-R) Hanna Biles, Lillian Storrs, Kiera Glenn, and Malin Glade. Photo Ohlen Alexander



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Zucchini Zone

By Susie Iventosch



Zucchini flowers in the early morning

Photo Andy Scheck

It's that time of year when gardens are burgeoning with zucchini – from fingerlings to the size of watermelons! But, still, the fact that our gardens are plentiful doesn't always translate to, "Oh, Mom, can we please have zucchini for dinner tonight!"

Remember when you hid your kid-sized portions of zucchini in anything close at hand—a napkin, a pocket or a pair of socks?

Over the years, I've discovered that no matter how enthusiastic I may be about our homegrown zucchini, the kids aren't buying it. Luckily, there are still a few ways most kids will eat this prolific vegetable.

Zucchini is actually rather nice stuffed with cheese, onion and garlic, or grilled with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. At our house, we hide the green stuff in pancakes—savory zucchini pancakes, while the Scheck family of Moraga makes zucchini pizzas on the grill. Both recipes make a delicious side dish to accompany any meat, or can be a meal all by themselves.

"We came up with this recipe because we had way too many zucchini in the garden this year," said Amanda, the Schecks' resident teenager. "I named the dish 'zucchini pizza' because the large round zucchini with all the toppings looked and smelled like the Boboli pizza I eat."

Amanda pointed out that she prefers her zucchini pizza with just Parmesan and soy sauce, because she doesn't care for the tomatoes adults are prone to putting on theirs.

Even though zucchini seems easy to grow, from time to time, gardeners do have trouble with their crop. When Lamorinda Weekly publishers Andy and Wendy Scheck discovered their zucchini beds were not happy last year, they consulted with Kenny Murakami of Moraga Garden Center.

"Kenny told me that zucchini have different female and male flowers," Scheck said. "Even though both flowers appear to look the same, the female flower is attached to the actual

zucchini, while the male flower has only the pollen."

Scheck said that due to a reduced honey bee population in his garden, Murakami suggested he pollinate the flowers manually by carrying the pollen from the male flower to the female flower using a Q-tip.

"This has to be done early in the morning, because the zucchini flowers show only early and close when the sun stands high," Scheck pointed out.

Sure enough, Murakami told me the bee shortage, caused by Colony Collapse Disorder, or even cooler summer weather that reduces bee activity, can make hand pollinating necessary in order to grow zucchini.

"You must strip the petals off the male flower and shake the anther, (the male part that holds the pollen), in the center of the female flower," he instructed. "It's best to do this early in the morning, because the male pollen loses its viability as it ages and it has a life span of just one to two days, in any case."

If a garden has lots of bee-attracting flowers, the bee shortage may not be as much of a factor, according to Murakami. He also indicated that there are several other reasons a gardener may have trouble growing zucchini, including "blossom end rot" and incorrect watering—either too much, or not enough.

Murakami did emphasize that for the most effective hand pollinating, the gardener should don a black and yellow striped shirt before heading out in the morning!

Scheck must have been wearing his bee suit, because this year they have zucchini growing out of their ears! Given the season can last well into October or even November, he's going to be making a lot of zucchini pizzas on the grill.

Zucchini Trivia

- Zucchini is actually the plural of the Italian zucchini, a diminutive of zucca, meaning marrow
- In France, Great Britain and New Zealand, zucchini is commonly called "courgette", meaning a small squash or gourd
- Zucchini, Cucurbita pepo, is a member of the cucumber and melon family
- Zucchini is a good source of Vitamins A and C
- Due to high water content, zucchini is best steamed or cooked without added water
- Store zucchini in plastic bag in crisper drawer for up to five days
- Color varies from nearly-black dark green to yellow and may even be striped

Trivia sources:

- http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Zucchini
- http://homecooking.about.com/library/weekly/aa081400b.htm
- http://homecooking.about.com/od/foodhistory/a/zucchinihistory.htm

Scheck Family Zucchini Pizza

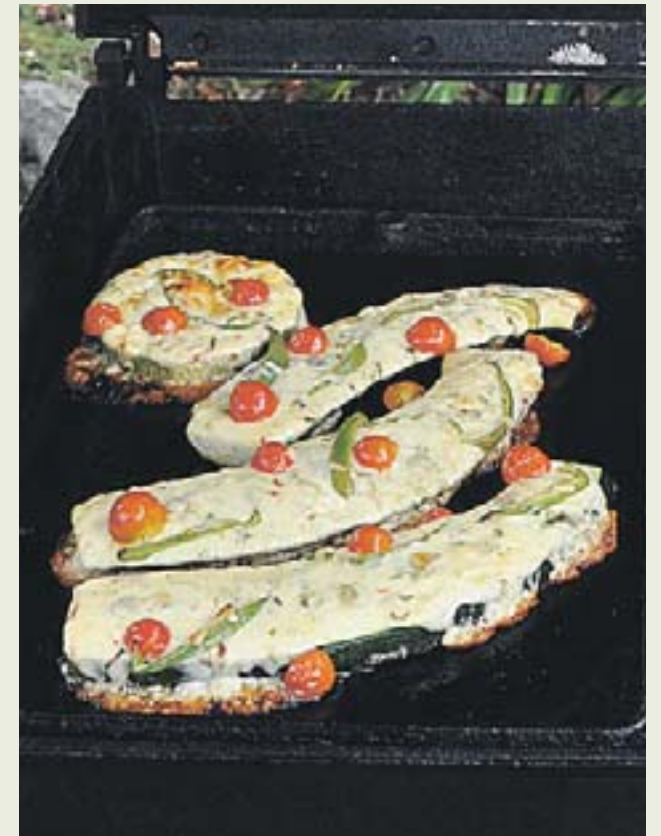
INGREDIENTS

- 1 large zucchini (or multiple smaller)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Several leaves of fresh basil
- Parsley or oregano
- Sliced pepper jack cheese
- 4 sweet 100, or cherry tomatoes, cut in half

DIRECTIONS

Cut the zucchini in 4 equally thick slices, or if the zucchini is big enough cut it in 1/2-inch rounds. Spread the minced garlic on the slices. Chop or snip basil, parsley or other herbs and distribute on slices. Place sliced pepper jack cheese on top, and decorate with tomato halves. (Pepper jack has enough spices and salt so you don't need to add any.)

If you have a cast iron plate for your grill, heat it up to 400°F and spray it with a little bit of olive oil spray. Place the zucchini on the grill and cook for about 15 minutes or until the cheese starts to brown slightly. You may also use your oven at the same heat. Oil a flat pan and place the zucchini on it. Bake for 15-20 minutes until the cheese turns brown.



Zucchini pancakes

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cups zucchini, grated (approx. six medium-sized zucchini)
- 1 small red onion, grated
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup flour (white or whole wheat)
- 1/2 cup seasoned breadcrumbs (can make your own by crumbling toasted bread)
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup milk
- 2-3 tablespoons butter or olive oil for frying

DIRECTIONS

Grate zucchini on the larger side of hand-held grater, or use grating tool on food processor. Wrap zucchini in cheesecloth or a kitchen towel, and ring out the excess liquid. Peel and grate onion. Place both zucchini and onion in large mixing bowl. Add garlic, salt, pepper, baking powder and paprika. Mix well. Stir in flour and breadcrumbs to integrate with zucchini. In a small separate bowl, beat eggs with fork, and add milk. Pour liquids into dries and mix well. Drop by large spoonful onto greased frying pan or griddle. Pancakes should be roughly 3-4 inches in diameter. Sauté at medium-high heat until cooked through and golden-brown on both sides. Serve warm as side dish or as a meatless entrée, garnished with freshly grated Parmesan or a dollop of sour cream or crème fraîche.



Another favorite garden recipe the Schecks enjoy in summer is their cucumber salad.

Cucumber Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 cucumbers
- 1 lb. plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Chives
- Black and hot red pepper
- Salt

DIRECTIONS

Cut the chive into a bowl and add the yogurt, oil, a little bit of salt, ground black pepper and hot red pepper and mix. Peel the cucumber and slice it into the bowl with a banjo cutter. Mix well and let sit for 5 minutes. Add several Sweet 100 cherry tomatoes on top before serving.

These recipes are 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



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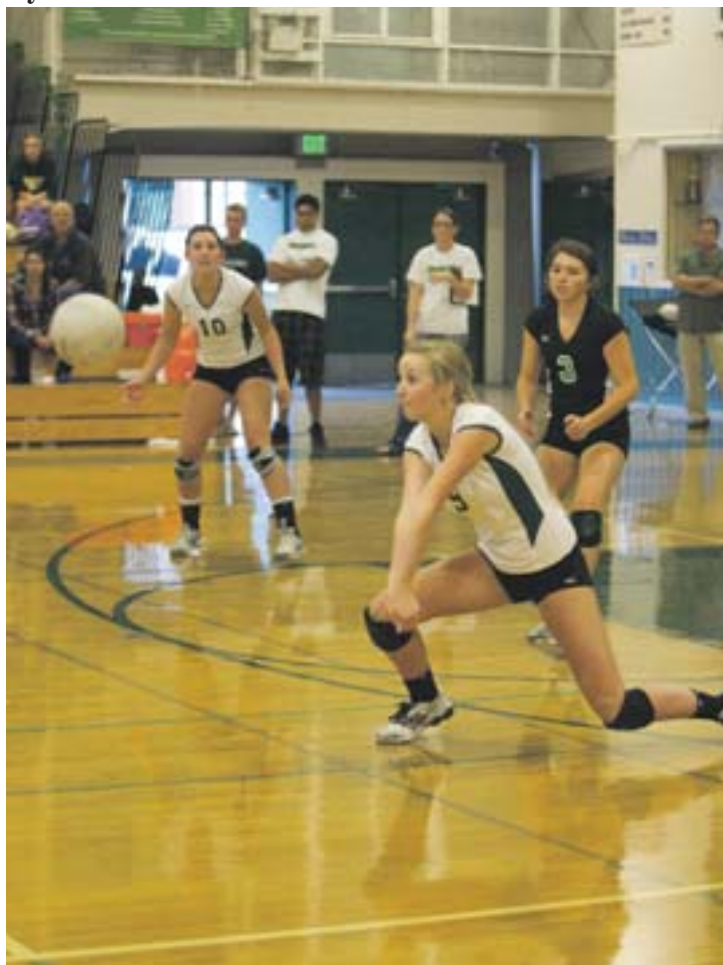
You can find most of the recipes published in the Lamorinda Weekly on our website

www.lamorindaweekly.com

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Lamorinda Girls' Volleyball Starts Season

By Alex Kozela



Miramonte team last Thursday

The girls' volleyball teams in Lamorinda are all beginning their respective seasons with different mindsets. Here's a look into how the local teams are preparing for league play.

Miramonte

Losing ten seniors over the last two years, it was a given this season would be a year of rebuilding for the Matadors. Yet that does not mean they will not be driven and competitive.

"What is great about this season's team is they are so incredibly hard working and dedicated to the team," head coach Shannon Ross said. "I get the sense every day that they want to improve and they are going to work extremely hard to do it."

Playing as a cohesive unit will be a must for a team that just lost the two-time defending Diablo Foothill Athletic League (DFAL) MVP Juliana Stivanicevic. The Mats also lost all-league first team honoree Lissa Gilbert. The Matadors, who finished with a 27-3 (12-0 DFAL) record last season but were eliminated in the third round of the North Coast Section playoffs, are returning fellow first team

member Sarah Vaccaro, along with standouts Kirsten Rutledge and Jane Siri. While Ross is pleased with the individual talent her players possess, she stresses that in order to get the most out of the new campaign the players need to focus on team effort.

The team has a 0-3 start but will look to grab its first victory at Granada on September 16 before playing at home on September 23 against Dougherty Valley.

"All the girls know that coming together as a team is the most important part of our success this season," Ross said. "I really think we are going to see big improvements from this team from the start of the season to the end."

Campolindo

Unlike Miramonte, Campolindo is returning ten players, including seven seniors, and is hopeful after finishing in second place in the DFAL last year.

Coach Scott Bishop has worked his players hard all summer – training three times a week – and has scheduled a tough preseason schedule that features teams such as Bishop O' Dowd, Foothill, and Amador.



Acalanes team last week

"You only learn from opponents at or above your skill level so that is what I have tried to do," Bishop said.

Captains Abbie Noland and Kim Condie lead a team that has advanced to the last three North Coast section playoffs and features four players who will enter their fourth season on varsity.

The Cougars, who finished last year with a 23-8 record along with a 10-2 mark in league play, also return Mary Vaccaro who took the last two years of high school volleyball off in favor of playing for the United States U-19 beach volleyball team.

Acalanes

After advancing to the NCS Division III semifinals and earning a 21-12 record in 2008, the Dons finished last season with a disappointing 10-16 (5-5 DFAL) record.

The team has begun the season with a 1-1 record, losing its first game 3-1 against Heritage in Brentwood on September 7, before defeating Liberty in the Deer Valley Tournament 2-1 last Saturday, September 11.

The Dons begin their DFAL campaign September 23 against

local rival Campolindo after games against Berean Christian and San Ramon Valley on September 14 and September 16, respectively.

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Boys' Water Polo Makes a Splash in Lamorinda

By Alex Crook



Acalanes and Miramonte in a game last fall

This fall is set to be another great year in the pool as Miramonte, Acalanes, and Campolindo all look to take this year's DFAL crown.

Miramonte is coming off of an outstanding year, after a 12-0 start turned into a 23-4 overall campaign, ending with an NCS championship win over rival Acalanes as the number two seed. Some key returners to the pool for Miramonte include senior utility Joey Fabian, who was chosen as an eighth team All-American and first team all-DFAL, and senior goalie Aleck Ryner.

"This year's Miramonte water polo team is a mix of veteran and young players who are improving rapidly in practice and have their sights set on testing themselves

against the other NCS teams and the top teams from other sections. Our seniors are doing a great job leading the team and encouraging the younger players to improve. We are all looking forward to a great season," says Miramonte head coach James Lathrop. The Mats have won an incredible 12 out of the past 15 NCS titles, and look to do it again this year.

Campolindo comes into 2010 looking pretty strong, returning two key seniors in goalie Peter Price and driver Jeffrey Strausser. The Cougars finished 15-10 last year, and took fourth place in DFAL.

"Our goal is to make it to the NCS finals," says Campolindo head coach Dan Reyes. Last fall, the sixth seeded Cougars defeated Cal High in the first round of the

NCS playoffs before being eliminated by De La Salle in the quarter-final matchup.

Acalanes comes off of a strong year, finishing out at 19-7 and barely missing out on an NCS title, as the top seeded Dons were edged by second seeded Miramonte in the championship game. The Dons lose last year's league MVP Nick Hoversten, but return a member of last year's first team all-DFAL team, senior Jake Kisner.

"I think our team should be pretty solid this year and we should win NCS division II," says Kisner on his team's high expectations for this year.

All three Lamorinda teams certainly have the potential of being DFAL champions. Stay tuned!

Photo Doug Kohen

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Last Season's Success Leaves SMC Men's Soccer Hungry for More

By Bryant West



Justin Grider (15) was named WCC Defensive Player of the Year last season. Photo Tod Fierner

Last year was an historic season for the Saint Mary's men's soccer team – a second place finish in the West Coast Conference and 10 wins led them to the program's first appearance in the NCAA tournament. All this success came in a conference that finished fourth out of 23 in the nation and had four squads make the big dance.

Adam Cooper acknowledged that one of the team's biggest weaknesses is inexperience – 15 Gaels were not on the team last year – he said that the team expects to return to the NCAA Tournament this winter. Cooper was named WCC Coach of the Year last season after the Gaels historic run, and said the tournament appearance last year makes his players determined to re-

peat the experience. "I think we got a taste of the tournament and that made us hungry to get back and really push to go further and do better. We've got to do the little things that will get us back there."

On September 3, Saint Mary's started the season in the right direction. The Gaels hosted the Saint Mary's Tournament and won their own show after a 0-0 tie against CS Fullerton and 3-2 victory over #9 Northwestern. While Saint Mary's and University of San Francisco both finished with 1-0-1 records in the tournament, the Gaels took the crown with more goals scored.

Sunday's win over Northwestern really was, as Cooper called it, a "tale of two halves." The Gaels scored all three of their goals in the first 18 minutes of the contest – junior Tom Mohoric, sophomore Jose Cabeza and sophomore Trevor Newquist each scored as the Saint Mary's energy powered past the lackluster Northwestern performance. Northwestern made a run in the second half – scoring twice and threatening late to tie – but the Gaels' defense stepped up and prevented a meltdown against the ninth ranked team in the nation.

"We've got a lot of young guys," Cooper said after the game.

"This year, we've got fifteen new players so incorporating them with the returning guys is one of our biggest priorities and the guys have done very well at adjusting so far."

But while the large number of newcomers is a weakness, Cooper says the veterans of the team are the Gaels' greatest strength. Four players received WCC Honors last season, including junior Justin Grider (Defensive Player of the Year and All WCC first team), senior Dylan Leslie (All WCC first team), Cabeza and Newquist (both All Freshmen Team) – and the experience will help the newcomers.

The Gaels were picked fourth in the WCC Coaches Poll before the season, earning one first place poll and finishing behind Loyola Marymount, Portland and San Diego. Portland is currently ranked 16th in the NSCAA/Adidas Division I Rankings with Loyola Marymount and Saint Mary's both receiving votes. But with the strength of the returners, Cooper has high hopes for another historical season. "It's like a shark sniffing the blood in the water," he said. "They sniffed it, they got a taste, and they want more."

Saint Mary's defeated #19 Cal Berkeley 2-1 on September 10 in double-overtime.



Photo Tod Fierner

New MCC Club Champion



Jerry Isaacs (left) took second place and Tom Tyson finished first in the MCC Golf Club Championship. Photo C. Tyson

Surprising even themselves, first and second place finishers Tom Tyson and Jerry Isaacs beat out a field of younger competitors to take the top spots at the Moraga Country Club Championship. "Who would have thought

the gray-haired guys were winners?" said Jerry Isaacs. "I haven't had this much fun since my honeymoon." Isaacs will be celebrating his sixtieth birthday in two weeks; Tyson describes himself as a "high-mileage" fifty-one-year-old.

Lamorinda Girls Hit the Trail

Submitted by Roxiene Maisano



Photos provided

The Contra Costa chapter of Girls on the Run (GOTR) moves to Tice Valley Community Park and will begin its season on September 20.

GOTR is a non-competitive, curriculum-based program dedicated to educating and building confidence in girls in the third through fifth grade. Participants meet twice a week for a total of 20 lessons. The girls improve their fitness while learning life lessons that

prepare them to navigate the often difficult pre-teen years. Each season culminates in the Lollipop 5K run in Golden Gate Park, where participants from all GOTR Bay Area programs run with a designated "running buddy."

Last spring, a Lafayette third grader came in first out of 400 runners.

To find out more, visit www.gotrbayarea.org.

Splashball - A First in Northern California

... continued from page A1

"Having little kids play Splashball is a wonderful way for them to learn to love the game, while having fun and strengthening their swimming skills," says Brown. "Fifteen or twenty different skills can be taught at this level," he adds, "like handling skills, shooting, catching, and passing." Kim Everist, the Campolindo girls' water polo coach who is working with the program, says that Splashball is also a good way to introduce kids to a team sport in a recreational environment.

"When I grew up in Lafayette, Louisiana, we had three sports to choose from, and two of them were football," says Chris Cooper, who now lives in a much closer Lafayette. "Our kids are so lucky to have so much to choose from," he says, adding that his six-year old son, Warren, loves Splashball. "What better thing could you do on a hot Sunday afternoon?" asks Cooper.

Four coaches and eight assistants are in the pool with the

children at all times. Recent Cal graduate Heather Stewart is one of the coaches. "It is so much fun to teach the little ones," she says, "the ratio of coaches/assistants to players is over 1 to 4; we want this to be safe." The sport is played in a shallow pool and the children sit on Swim Noodles. Stewart adds that she is amazed at how much enthusiasm the kids have. "They play at 120%," she says.

Cooper believes, "By the time the Splashball players reach the first level in water polo at age ten, they will definitely have an edge."

The Splashball season runs through November 7th and new players are still being accepted. Register at Moraga Parks and Rec, http://moraga.ca.us/production/moraga_parks_recreation.php. Lachance says LWP plans to offer Splashball again in 2011 with spring, summer and fall seasons. For more information about LWP go to <http://www.lamorindawaterpolo.org/>.

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

From Cubicle to Fitness Room

Swing-Easy Fitness Details Office-Based Golf Workout Program

By Lou Fancher

After successfully pedaling up Mount Diablo on a unicycle, what's an athletic, triathlon-type guy supposed to do next?

Steve Meagher's answer is a surprise: sit in a chair and write a book for golfers. Specifically, a self-published book titled, *Swing-Easy Fitness, The Premier Office-Based Golf Workout Program*.

"I played in a golf tournament with my brother," Meagher says, explaining how the idea for the book began. "He was a champion water polo player, and I'm a runner, but afterwards, we were really sore!"

Meagher, a physical therapist by profession, knew his aching muscles were the result of poor golf conditioning. As the founder of Site Solutions, a network of ergonomic physical and occupation therapists, he has spent the last thirteen years evaluating work stations and helping workers operate more efficiently and safely.

Meagher began to wonder: How can I help others who are stuck in an office during the day, but want to be sport warriors after 5 p.m.? His independent spirit and shoestring budget meant he had to do it on his own.

"I found BlurB," he says, "they have online self-publishing software." Working with Jacob Meggers, an East Bay graphic artist, Meagher's *Swing-Easy Fitness* is close to completion.

An early proof of the book shows Meagher, in easy-to-understand photographs, demonstrating exercises and stretches in an office setting. Accompanying text explains the movements, offering both basic and advanced options.

Beginning with simple Stretch and Strength Tests, a reader evaluates his/her physical fitness. Identifying individual weaknesses is a key aspect of Meagher's practical approach. The book then moves on to specific activities designed to address flexibility and strength for golf.

One obvious question springs to mind when reading the book: why not do these exercises in a gym? Again, Meagher is full of surprises: "I'm kind of intimidated by the gym," he says. "They're all gym rats at a club, you know, big and buff," he says.

Meagher started with office exercises for golf, but thinks there's room for other sports. "There are things you could do at your office to stay in shape for tennis, soccer, all kinds of things," he says.

Swing-Easy Fitness is both practical and fun. With pressure to skip lunch, take on extra assignments, and be available 12/7, office workers can use the program to stay competitive on the job and on the green. And suddenly, a stapler is the perfect iron; an office chair increases your swing velocity.



Photo April Stevens

To commemorate his 47th birthday, Orinda resident Steve Meagher set himself a goal—to ride his bike from the bottom to the top of Mount Diablo. An admirable goal, and many people make that bike trek each year, right? But Meagher's planned bike ride was unique, because his bike has just one wheel. Meagher set out early on the morning of August 29th to make his way of up the 12 mile climb. He was within a hundred feet of the top, with the grade of the hill at 17%, when he started to struggle to stay upright. But the large group of friends and family members who were waiting to celebrate his ride (and enjoy some birthday cake) quickly came to the rescue. With a little help from his friends, Meagher was propped up on his unicycle and he finished the climb in two hours and 12 minutes. *A. Firth*

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Lamorinda Soccer Finishes Second in Tournament

By Mary Gabrielson



The U11 Boys Lamorinda Soccer team opened up their 2010 - 2011 season with a bang by placing second the Diablo FC Summer Challenge Tournament on August 21st and 22nd. Their hard work at practices all summer paid off with their 10 - 0 victory in the first game. Down by one goal at half time the boys fought hard to win their second game 3 - 2. On a roll, they defeated the third team 5 - 0, qualifying them for the championship. This LMSC United team battled in the championship game, where they were narrowly defeated by River City United Pumas 3 to 2.

Back Row: Head Coach Jasko Begovic, Justin Pratt, Harrison Sturgeon, Lucas Rodriguez, Sam Pinto, Evan Gabrielson and Assistant Coach Tony Neto
Front Row: Kent, Aidan Jenkins, Tao Fox, Seppie Ortman and Alex Topping
Photo Mary Gabrielson

Lamorinda in Cooperstown

Submitted by Don Nimura



The Lamorinda Baseball Academy (LBA) Legends proudly represented the Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda (and Alameda) area with a 9-1 record at the Cooperstown Dreams Park Baseball Tournament, losing in the semi-finals 7-6 to the eventual champions, Santa Clarita (CA) Bulldogs.

After an undefeated trip through pool play the Legends beat Homer (IL) Heat 4-1, DeMarini (CA) Bombers 14-2, and NFWB (MI) Cobras 17-5 in the play-offs to reach the semi-finals.

The Legends finished in third place with a record of 9-1 (out of 104 teams), having played 48 innings, and notching 134 runs to their opponents 23. They recorded 30 home runs.

Back row: Tommy Nimura, Grant Young, Alex Vick, Nicky Fafoutis, Ryan Geisreiter, Tommy Henderson, Max Flower
Front row: Jake Berry, Reid Gibbs, Jack Eisner, Tyler Henderson, Patrick Ratchford
Photo by Mary McConnell

Rancho Colorados Tennis Team Takes Fourth at Nor Cal Sectionals

Submitted by Dawn Brightbill



Rancho Colorado's 12 and Under girls United States Tennis Association team went undefeated in its league this summer and earned a spot to represent Contra Costa County and compete in the Northern California Sectionals held on August 6-8, 2010, in Clovis, CA. It was Rancho's first ever entry into this age group for girls and the girls' finished fourth overall.

left to right Caroline Clark, Bridget Immel, Hannah Ross, Emma McDonnell, Katja Brewer, Sarah Shipway, junior coach Alex Neguescu and head coach John Sharpe. Photo Miriam McDonnell

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Lamorinda Schools

After the Dorm Drop – Mom Moves Forward

Submitted by Jamie Anderson

I was driving home after running a few errands and was caught off guard by a young mother, kneeling to comfort her daughter. They had stopped amidst all the activity of a busy intersection so that mom could give her daughter a hug. I watched her bend on one knee to administer her own particular brand of first aid and my heart swelled, followed quickly by my eyes, as I remembered 18 years of giving kisses that could make scrapes feel better. Or how the long way home seemed to provide just enough time to get to the nitty-gritty of the day. Or how eating cookie dough together really could make a broken heart feel just a little bit better.

I had to pull over and find a place to park and cry. Four days earlier, I moved my daughter into the dorms for her first year of college. I had shed a few tears already, but I didn't see this one coming. The scene was so sweet and so familiar; the surge of my own bitter-

sweet feelings was sure to make for unsafe driving conditions.

One of the obvious goals a parent would like to check off her list at this 18-year milestone is to proudly send one's child off to college. We parents have the unimaginably big job of keeping our young people safe, well nourished and educated, respectful of others, engaged in the world around them – if we did a really good job, they are nice, too. We have listened to our toddlers cry until 4:00 a.m. in the room next door, because they are supposed to sleep alone by that age. We have dragged ourselves out of bed at six to get ready for another day, exhausted and delirious. We have pretended we're not heart broken when we race home from work to pick up the 4th grader and he tearfully begs to be picked up after school, instead of from after-care, like his friends. We put on the smiling face to mask our own hurt, and cheerfully reminded him of how much he loves all the projects

he gets to make – because not going to work is not an option. And, once they were old enough to drive, we paced the hallway, checked the curb from the living room window for the twelfth time in eight minutes, willed the cell phone in hand to ring with the good news explaining a missed curfew.

With one last hug goodbye at the entrance to Rosecrans Hall, all of my work is supposed to be done and I'm supposed to go home, satisfied I met my objective.

The advice I have been receiving about how to best handle the intensity of this transition is the classic American strategy: buck up. I only listen half-heartedly because I'm going with a strategy that has served me, and my parenting, very well: break down. I'm going to let myself have this moment full of all its tenderness and loss. I'm going to pull over for these feelings because I know that attending to my own heavy heart helps me cheer more genuinely for my daughter's

independence and have faith that she will learn valuable life lessons through her struggles. My daughter will never know just how hard this is for me. She will never know that part of me traveled with her to Los Angeles. But my friends who know how to listen and trust that nothing needs to be fixed, changed or avoided, will know I've done the work that helps me parent her with a confident "You can do this." Because underneath all of my fear and sadness, I know that she can. As hard as it is to watch her leave this nest, I'm finding I can do this, too. Jamie Anderson is a communication consultant and educator. She is Vice President and program developer/facilitator of parent programs for the Institute for Collaborative Communication. Jamie believes that her most valuable credential is being the mother of two teenagers who are thriving. They give her ample opportunity to practice what she teaches while enjoying the benefit of warm and loving relationships.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

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Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, October 6, at 7:30pm

Lafayette School District
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Wednesday, October 13, at 7pm

Orinda Union School District
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, October 11, at 4pm

Moraga School District
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
Tuesday, October 12, at 7:30pm

Ask Dr. Harold

May I Have Your Attention, Please

By Dr. Harold Hoyle, Ph.D.

I was recently shopping at Diablo Foods and got into a conversation with a parent about their child and an interesting subject came up. How do good or shy kids get the attention they need? So here is an introduction to this issue and some tips to help your child get your attention.

Design problem

People enjoy attention from people they care about. Research has long shown that even when we believe that our kids do not want us to be there with them, they want to know we are there for them. Kids who have good behavior many times get attention only because of their good deeds and not because of who they are. That is how many children have explained it to me. At the same time, they see kids with bad behavior getting more time (translate that to attention) with their parents or other important adults. These well behaving kids often hear from adults, "I wish we had a world full of kids like you, keep up the good work," while the adults go spend time with the kids with behavior problems.

What it looks like

1) Your child may come up to you and show you something that seems quite simple and ask you to look at it. It could be a school project or something they drew or made. 2) Your child may be making a big deal out of what seems like a small issue. 3) Your child may continue to ask you to help them out on something that they have demonstrated they are proficient at.

What you can do

I will take the three examples above and give you the most common response and then a better response. In case one, kids often hear: "You know how to do that," or "Good job keep up the good work." Both of these ignore that the child wants to spend time with you. Undistracted time is the preferred mode. Imagine if your boss asked you to come into her office and help with a simple presentation slide and you stayed on your phone or laptop when talking to her. So instead of the above how about: "Hey let's see what you have here, Ok, talk me through what you were thinking about when you did this."

In case two, kids often hear: "Do not make such a big deal out of this," or "Why are you being such a

drama queen/king?" Again they want to spend time with you they just don't have the vocabulary yet to say, "Hey mom can you hang with me for a while I want to get your opinion on something?" So instead you could say, "Hey seems like this is a big deal to you, let me put the stuff I was doing aside and deal with your stuff."

In case three, kids often hear: "You need to do your own work", or "We already went over this and you know what to do." If they do know what to do and are just trying to get you to hang out with them a bit more then a better response might be: "Okay, I will bring my work over and we can work together", or "Hey, you want to go to the coffee shop and we can do our work together?"

It isn't always the case that shy or well-behaved kids are looking for time from you but many times when they are, we have turned off our antenna to them. Be more aware that they want to spend time with you and be with you.

And by the way, try the Fra' Mani salami, and Humboldt Fog at Diablo, it is the only way I can get my 14-year old to go to the store any more and he still sits in the car.



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Harold can be contacted by phone or email: 510-219-8660
hjhoyle@mac.com

Harold is licensed clinical psychologist and a lecturer and in the School of Counseling Psychology, Education, and Pastoral Ministries Santa Clara University. With his wife and two children he is a 14 year long resident of the Lamorinda area. He is a sought after speaker in the areas of parenting, education, behavior with adolescents and children. He has a local small private practice.

CP Launches its Anniversary Celebration with Flair

By Sophie Braccini



(L-R) Heather Plutt, Abigail Buckley, Shauna Silva, and Ashley Hastings dressed up for the CP 50th anniversary party.

Photo Sophie Braccini

More than 120 people gathered at the Moraga Ranch on September 11 to launch the year-long celebration of the 50-year anniversary of Camino Pablo Elementary School (CP). Since the

school was founded in 1961, many in attendance wore 60's attire that looked quite stylish.

The event committee, led by Lisa Crouch, reached out to the school's alumni; several parents

who were raised in Moraga and now send their kids to CP came to party.

The continuity of parents' dedication and support was the main theme of CP principal Debo-

rah Roden's speech; she has planned a whole year of events with her staff. "We will have a writing contest for the kids, with different age categories, we have made anniversary T-shirts that kids are encouraged to wear on Wednesday morning when they walk and bike to school, and each class will have its own way to commemorate the anniversary."

Abigail Buckley, who chaired the organizing team, was pleased with the turn-out. "We couldn't have done it without the support of the Bruzzone family, who gave us the usage of the Ranch to set the festivities," said Buckley.

"Our whole family has been very supportive for years of the entities that deserve acknowledgment, such as our schools," said Dave Bruzzone, "My son went to Camino Pablo; Mary, my wife, is a teacher assistant there. This is a great occasion for the community to get together, get reacquainted and meet new people."

Lafayette School District Returns Dollars to Taxpayers

By Jean Follmer

The Governing Board of the Lafayette Elementary School District took bold action on August 31, 2010, when it decided to refund approximately \$20 million of the District's outstanding municipal bonds.

Similar to refinancing a home to a lower interest rate mortgage, proceeds of new bonds are used to "pay-off" the older bonds and are sold at lower interest rates than the older bonds. Such action reduces both interest costs and debt service payments. The lower payments will result in savings to Lafayette taxpayers – about \$3.7 million

(16.6% of the refunded bonds) - over the life of the debt.

"When we were alerted to the fact that interest rates were significantly lower, we began investigating the possibility of saving the taxpayers money. I'm just thrilled that we can do something concrete for our taxpayers to show that we are good stewards of their resources. The Lafayette community has a long history of supporting our schools and it's nice to be able to give something back, especially in these challenging economic times," said Dr. Fred Brill, Lafayette School District Superintendent.

With municipal bond rates at historic lows and a high credit rating of "AA" (nearly AAA) from Standard & Poor's Ratings Services, the District was able to refinance at an overall interest rate of 1.80%. The original bonds were issued in 2001, with interest rates that ranged from 4.10% to 5.00%. Brokered through KNN Public Finance, the new bonds were awarded to Stone & Youngberg LLC, the lowest bidder, through an electronic bidding process involving 10 competitors.

As a result of the refunding, the average taxpayer (based on an

average assessed home value of \$626,762) will save approximately \$33 per year for the next 11 years, for a total of \$351. Although the refinancing will not impact the District's operating costs or help solve current budget issues, it does demonstrate the Lafayette School District's commitment to the Lafayette taxpayers who both approve and pay for school bonds. Other California school districts have recently come under fire for reallocating such bond refunds instead of returning the savings to taxpayers.

Coffee and Contributions at the Annual EFO Donation Day

Submitted by Sandra McGonigle (written by Jane Wisner)



Photo provided

Get your morning coffee and say hello to EFO! Friends Tuesday September 21st from the Educational Founda-

tion of Orinda will be out and about that morning spreading the word about EFO and all that it does for our schools. Look for us on corners, at local coffee houses including Geppetto's, Peet's and Starbucks, and at school car-pools collecting donations as we celebrate the new school year. Realtors are also doing their part offering donation baskets at open houses on Tour Tuesday, with yet another way to help our community.

Be sure to look for the balloons and friendly faces, knowing that your latte is doing a "latte" of good!

Books on Tape Go Gold

Submitted by Marie Ziser



Julie Sanders with Trust in Education's Budd MacKenzie Photo provided

Julie Sanders recently finished putting 73 children's books onto cassette tapes. Why? For her Girl Scout Gold Award project

Sanders, a senior at Campolindo High School, worked with Budd MacKenzie and Trust in Education

to provide books on tape for children attending schools in Afghanistan.

The books will be distributed to students in the schools sponsored by Trust in Education, and are located about twenty-five miles

south of Kabul in two different villages, Lalander and Tangi Sadan.

Working with a local librarian, Sanders developed a list of appropriate book titles and then raised funds to cover the cost of the books and cassette recorders. She recruited volunteers to help record the books onto cassettes, so that the children could learn to read English as well as listen to the correct pronunciation of the words.

Sanders raised enough money to not only cover the costs of the books, recorders, book bags and shipping, but to make a \$500 donation to Trust in Education. The books will be shipped this fall to Afghanistan. She says she is very grateful to her donors and volunteer readers.

Trust in Education (TIE) is a grass roots, non-profit organization founded in May, 2003, to provide health care, education and economic development programs in Afghanistan; for more information go to www.Trustineducation.org.

Submit stories to schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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Miramonte Principal Reflects and Looks Forward

By Lou Fancher



Miramonte Principal Adam Clark with students Robert Fluegge and Jason Lammert

Photo provided

If Adam Clark's first year as principal at Orinda's Miramonte High School was all about getting to know the students, faculty and parents, his second is about standing out.

"I'm out there," he says, naming his primary approach to directing the school's future. "If it's lunch time, I'm out there. In the morning, at all sports events and performances, after school—I'm out there. If you ask the students, they'll say, 'He's everywhere.'"

That physical presence means Clark knows his teachers struggle with the perennial lack of time and ever-changing student population. He sees the kids who slide to the edge of academic and

social acceptability. He hears the community complaints of favoritism to athletes. He speaks with passion to parents, Rotary clubs, city administrators and the media about Miramonte's student body.

Clark's first year has not been a clichéd bed of roses. Or, if it has, alcohol abuse, a tragic death and ongoing efforts to curtail risky behavior are the thorns in his side.

"The first issue, a huge issue here," Clark says, "was dealing with alcohol violations at weekend parties." After the death of one student last year, the Miramonte Healthy Choices Committee arranged an alcohol awareness forum, attended by Orinda Police Chief Bill French, Clark, and a

panel of legal and medical experts, to better inform parents and the community about the issue.

"Obviously, in high school, you're going to have risky behavior," Clark says. In response to subsequent accusations that athletes were allowed a separate, more-lenient code of conduct after the tragic incident, Clark stepped up his intervention. "I started working with athletes: mentoring them, holding meetings, speaking with them on their turf about how alcohol abuse can derail what we are trying to accomplish here."

Clark says school policy for first offenders is serious: suspension, which can be reduced only by attendance at 5-6 meetings with school crisis counselors and the student's parents. Last year, Clark reports that less than ten violations occurred. Of those, approximately fifty percent of the students did not repeat, meaning, to him, the intervention is successful. For repeat offenders, Clark says the police are called, the student is suspended, and the sessions with crisis counselors, while still required, do not reduce the student's suspension.

"But even if we have a kid who's fallen off the deep end, they're not just cast away," Clark promises. "My administration and I find those kids. We talk about those kids. We keep an eye out."

Asked about an alleged on-campus assault of a female student by a male student this summer, Clark says his understanding is that, since the male student is no longer enrolled at Miramonte, the school is not charged with addressing the specific incident. He calls the subject—sexual or physical violations—"serious," and states his belief that "invoking a student body that really cares about this place," is the solution.

Miramonte is not all about drama and drugs. Most of the time, Clark says, it's about aca-

ademic excellence and achievement. Last year, he learned "how engaging the students are—they're not only concerned about their own needs, but generally interested in me." He's moved by the fact that, when advising them about college, they ask him, "Where'd you go to school?" His proactive approach, developed as a middle school principal, has had immediate results. "My first couple of weeks on the job, I could tell. You know, kids are intuitive, often more than adults are, and they really know if you're genuine," he says. "Their reaction to me was the opposite of push back. It was *push in*."

Orinda, unquestionably an affluent community, isn't an excuse for Clark to settle into complacency. "Listen," he says, leaning forward intently, "we have kids going to Ivy League schools and kids to trade schools. All are equally important and my concern is that no students cut themselves short."

In an increasingly competitive academic environment, Clark will rely on two primary devices to distinguish the school. The first is future-thinking: technology. "We're on the cutting edge," he says. "We need to embrace how our kids learn and go with that."

Staff training is essential to the successful integration of technology into the classroom. Clark says the school is supporting the teachers' acquisition of knowledge and all departments have their own websites. And for students without cell phones or laptops of their own, the library is open extended hours and technol-

ogy devices can be checked out on loan.

At the end of the day, and likely at the start, Clark relies on a second tool for leading Miramonte: personal history. "Since the third grade, I've always worked. I've done a bunch of jobs, and while doing them, it hit me: I need to learn. I need credentials or certificates to do the kind of work I want to do." Forming a link be-

tween school success and his future, he developed concepts that lead him to go outside, amidst the students, at every opportunity. "My grandfather," he says, "he was a brilliant engineer. He always told me, 'Don't close any doors. Once they're closed, you're going to have a hard time opening them up again.' So that's what I tell these kids. Don't close any doors."

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Limited Fall Openings

Room for Rent!

Jeepeers, Peepers, Save us from the Creepers! Part 2
By Cynthia Brian

You own a second home, townhome, or condo which your twenty-something son is living in while he finishes grad school. He loves living alone, but the rent he's paying you can't cover the mortgage. In this recessionary economy, refinancing is out of the question because the bank says the area is "upside down." Instead of foreclosing, you decide to rent out a room. Both of you determine that the most desirable tenant would be a twenty-thirty something single male, non-smoker, gainfully employed, with no pets who is respectful, quiet, and not interested in bringing the party home. The free classifieds are the perfect place to find that perfect person. Or...are they?

It only takes a few navigational minutes to discover that posting an ad is fraught with peril. Forewarned is forearmed and it's not always what you think. As a caring mom who owns a beautifully designed and maintained townhouse in a college town, I enjoy renting to discretionary students. Before I post an ad anywhere, I know the rules. The Federal Fair Housing laws prohibit discriminatory advertising, regardless of how small or large the property. This means that I cannot advertise for a student, twenty-thirty something single male, non-smoker, gainfully employed because that would discriminate against non-students, women, couples, families, the aged, and the unemployed. California laws, where I reside, prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, source of income, disability, or age (CA GOVT § 12955). Every state has specific rules and we are wise to learn them.

There are exemptions. If the living situation requires shared bathroom, kitchens, or common room facilities, the homeowner may express a preference based on gender or sexual orientation. Another exception is when the owner lives in the home, the number and sex of occupants desired may be stated.

Once you've mapped the minefield of writing a legally acceptable ad, it's time to sift through the responses, many of which may prove to be scams. Here is an actual on-line posting with the name and city changed.

"I am a 30 yr old professional male moving to the area next week. My office is in San Diego so I would like something close by.

Just received work promotion making about 95K a year. I need an apartment or townhouse to share and yours sounds exactly right. My issue is I had a mortgage company in N. CA and lost everything, so my credit is shot. I'll pay you in cash.

I am heading down from San Francisco on Monday and could move in next week. Can we meet? Thanks, John"

What's wrong with this response? Although John could be for real, his initial correspondence shares too much information regarding his income and credit status. Wanting to pay in cash is a flaming red flag. He doesn't sound thirty or professional, and most likely would not pass a background check. Delete!

Here are a few helpful hints to protect you as you write your Room for Rent ad and schedule interviews.

- Know the rules of your state for landlords.
- Remain anonymous by not giving out exact street address in your ad. Cross streets allow the good guys to know the area you

are in while keeping your exact location protected.

- Hide your email address from readers and have the site forward emails to you.
- Provide four or more quality photos without people or recognizable street identification in them.
- Do not show links to other postings
- Click no preference on gender unless you are renting according to FHA exemptions.
- Conduct a phone interview, letting the person know that a copy of his driver's license is required.
- Ask for more information before meeting in person and send any pertinent rules for the home.
- Always have another person with you when you do meet the potential renter
- Have a renter application ready
- Require a credit and/or background check paid by the renter.
- Do not accept money orders, traveler's checks, or cashier's checks.
- Do not give out your bank information for money transfers from out of the country accounts.
- Trust your gut.

If you feel uncomfortable going this alone, there are realty companies that offer rental services for a fee. There are creepers crawling the web and the classified want ads seeking volunteers to be victims. Don't become one of them. If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is false. There are many outstanding and up-standing individuals looking for your specific location. The more diligent and specific you are in penning your post, the more successful...and safe you and your loved ones will be.

May you find the ideal tenant and save your home in the process.



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

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

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

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

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

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

to hear Gerna speak. He is teaching his class 'How to Give Your Kid a 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke!' on Wednesday September 29th at the Moraga Library located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556 from 6:30pm-8pm.

"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 or by calling our 24 hour reservation line at (877) 924-3726.

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 04 Issue 14 Wednesday, September 15, 2010



Native Garden Blossoms

Back Yard Makeovers: Edible and Drinkable

By Cathy Tyson



Bill and Mary Massarweh's upper level seating area, nestled next to their vineyard in Moraga.

Photos Doug Kohen

Change is good, whether it's a new outfit, paint color or politician. Who doesn't get tired of looking at the same old thing? Two Lamorinda families decided to take the plunge and remodel their less than ideal back yards. Both sets of homeowners are quite pleased with the outcomes; one chose a water-wise organic sustainable garden, the other completely renovated an aging patio, installed terraces up the sloping site and topped it all off with pinot noir grape vines.

The Drinkable

Bill and Mary Massarweh have a steep up-sloping lot in Moraga that backs up

to open space. When they moved there in 1979 it was "weeds, weeds, weeds," says Bill Massarweh. They have two boys, now grown, who entertained themselves in the backyard and beyond, venturing as far as Sanders Ranch. Between the kids and the unfenced yard that was an open invitation to deer, and the occasional lost cow, they kept the hillside portion of their property as the developer left it – littered with pine trees for a number of years. Finally "enough is enough" said Mary, it was time to pursue their vision of a bit of Tuscany in the back yard.

... continued on page OH4

Kurt Piper presents...

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Burton Valley Beauty

An expanded 1963 ranch style home in the popular Burton Valley neighborhood, this beautifully remodeled 4 bedroom 2 bathroom home offers 1914 sq. ft. of interior living space with a wonderful family friendly floor plan including brand new kitchen, spacious family room, living room and two separate dining areas.

Situated on a professionally landscaped .28 acre lot, the property has lovely curb-appeal created by its lush green lawn and flower beds. The private park-like yard is perfect to enjoy al fresco dining on the back yard patio surrounded by natural beauty...an ideal setting for entertaining and barbeques with friends and family.

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Back Yard Makeovers: Edible and Drinkable

... continued from page OH1

Photos right: Artistic circular staircase marks entrance to hillside garden.

*Below: Mary and Bill Massarweh
Bottom row: Table grapes grown with pinot noir vines, water feature and pomegranate from fruit tree.*



They had made some inquiries over the years with landscape designers but were not impressed. “They came up with ordinary designs - we never wanted to do anything ordinary,” said Bill. With the help of Owner /Designer Steve Lambert of Garden Lights the couple found a designer who shared their dream. Input also came from a cousin who suggested adding wine grapes and their son, now a landscape architect, who recommended a seating area high up on the hill and ideas to re-vamp the front yard as well.

Now the property has an incredible array of unique

plants, almond, pomegranate, peach, olive and lemon trees along with a dramatic water feature, fire pits and an outdoor kitchen united by a flagstone patio and spectacular walkway that winds up the hill.

It took seven months, with a month off during the rainy season, to completely transform the half acre property. Bill sums it up, “You can spend money on a painting that’s one dimensional – you look at it to enjoy it. In other words, the experience is one of ‘duality’ – you and the picture. With the garden there is no duality – you are in the picture, listening to the water, enjoying the

birds, smelling the flowers.” The Massarwehs absolutely love their garden.

Soon enough the couple will be enjoying their wine as well. The 200 pinot noir vines are expected to produce between ten and twelve cases of wine. Bill, who is President of the Lamorinda Winegrowers Association, notes that the southwestern exposure gives the vines plenty of sunshine. The 2008 inaugural vintage is bottled, the 2009 is aging in a French oak barrel, and the 2010 harvest is yet to come; the balance of the yard is fully developed, lush and ready for enjoyment right now.

... continued on page OH6

Location, Location and Views

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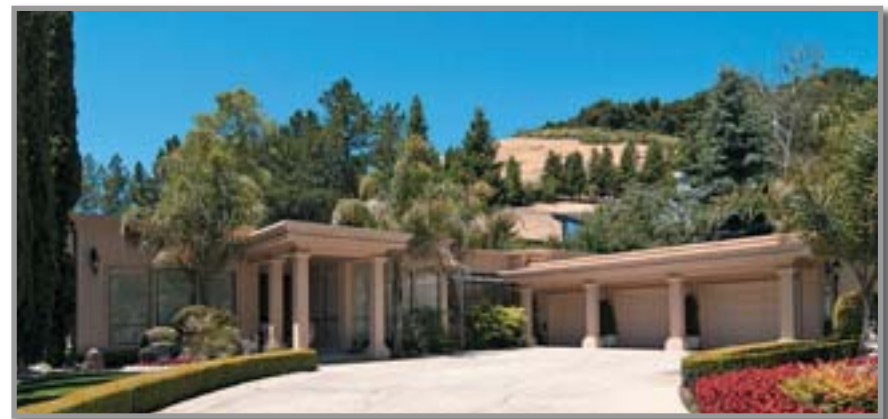
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Back Yard Makeovers: Edible and Drinkable

... continued from page OH4



Rows of organic heirloom tomatoes in Beth Ferree and John Eaton's backyard.

Photos Doug Kohen

The Edible

Beth Ferree and husband John Eaton have a flat and sunny one-third acre lot near the heart of Lafayette.

Although they loved the expansive back lawn that their children – twins, now in their late 20's – spent endless hours enjoying when they were younger, these empty

nesters were interested in something more productive that would use significantly less water.

"It was exhausting, a huge job," explains Ferree, recalling when she and her husband ripped out the original front yard and replaced it with natives and drought tolerant plants. All along the couple considered taking the back lawn out, but after surviving the front yard transformation, the task seemed daunting.

Hello Urban Farmers, goodbye lawn. The couple applied and was selected to participate in the Urban Farmers (UF) program – where the homeowner supplies the land and water and UF provides the labor and know-how to design, cultivate and harvest an organic garden – sharing the bounty with the collective. They tilled the lawn under and installed a multitude of three foot by fifteen foot beds with drip irrigation.

A cover crops of fava beans were planted to help break up the clay soil and add nutrients; their first season forty heirloom tomato plants were planted along with fruit trees, an herb garden, and a bee hive that the family pooch, Aslan, keeps an eye on. Although they are still working to naturally enrich the soil there is already a bountiful crop from the beds.

"We just love it. I feel like we are in Italy – it's beautiful, fun and the water bill is down substantially," says Ferree. "My kids think we've turned into hippies." She explains it really isn't that hard, Urban Farmers made it easy – but you can do it yourself.



Nearly ripe tomatoes



Buzzing bee hive



Beth Ferree with Aslan.

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August 2010	Lafayette	Moraga	Orinda
Days on Market	53	59	58
Average Sold Price	\$1,272,000	\$1,272,000	\$1,156,000
Number of detached homes sold	24	13	23

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Welcome to 5 Kenmore Court, Orinda



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Sustainable Lafayette Presents TomorrowLand

Take a peek into the future at the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival this weekend

By Sophie Braccini



Faucet by Grohe. Low-flow faucet. Available in several styles Photos Doug Kohen

What will the sustainable home of the future look like? Visitors to this weekend's Lafayette Art and Wine Festival will have a chance to gaze into the crystal ball by stopping by Sustainable Lafayette's TomorrowLand.

TomorrowLand is a home-like exhibit with a family/living room, kitchen, bathroom, outdoor space, and transportation zone; each area will be loaded with products, samples, and ideas that use energy, water, and waste more efficiently; all to ensure that the home of the future is far more environmentally-friendly than the typical suburban home of today. 'Sustainable Man' will be in the house to answer questions.

The TomorrowLand display will be front and center at the Festival, across from the Round Up. In each of the mock-home areas, techniques and materials will be displayed for visitors to look at, touch and ask questions about. "In the booth visitors will see different types of sustainable floorings and counter tops, a 'no garbage' kitchen, electronically monitored energy saving devices, ultra efficient smart appliances, built-in grey water collection, whole house energy management systems, sealed crawl space and many more real systems and props," says Sustainable Lafayette co-founder Steve Richard.

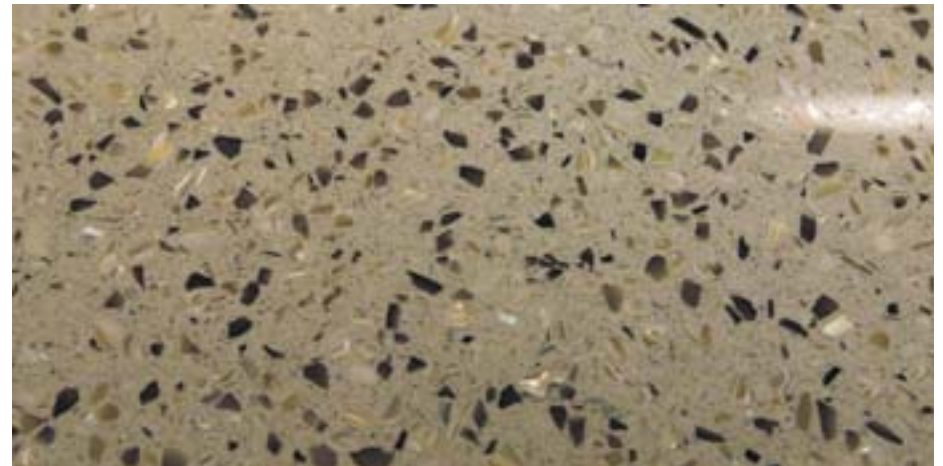
"It will probably take at least ten years for the rest of the world to catch up with all this, but everything is already available here in Lafayette," states

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jay Lifson, "we are lucky to have such innovative people in our community."

"We've done extensive research on how the concept is viewed all over the country," says Richard, adding that the display would not be possible without the sponsorship of Mechanics Bank. "Our bank has been sponsoring the Festival for many years," says office manager Debbie Cooper, "This year we wanted to support a local non-profit. Sustainable Lafayette, that brings awareness about sustainability to residents and businesses, is a perfect choice."

The project is the result of collaboration between Lifson, Richards, Cooper, and other partners such as Leila Douglass, of Douglass Designs, and James Wright of Net Zero Energy Architects.

In addition, Lafayette Tree and Landscape will create a 10x10 sustainable garden of the future with rain water collection, composting, smart irrigation, solar lights, solar oven, native plants and a wind turbine. A personal care section will present products that people will use routinely and that are already available today. "We have been working with local business owners to carry out the display," says Richard, "including Terry Ring Construction, Inc., C&M Party Props, Nerd4Rent, Dolan's Lumber, Moraga Hardware & Lumber, Diablo Foods, Open Sesame, Sharp Bicycle, Blodgett's Floor Covering, and Springwood Builders."



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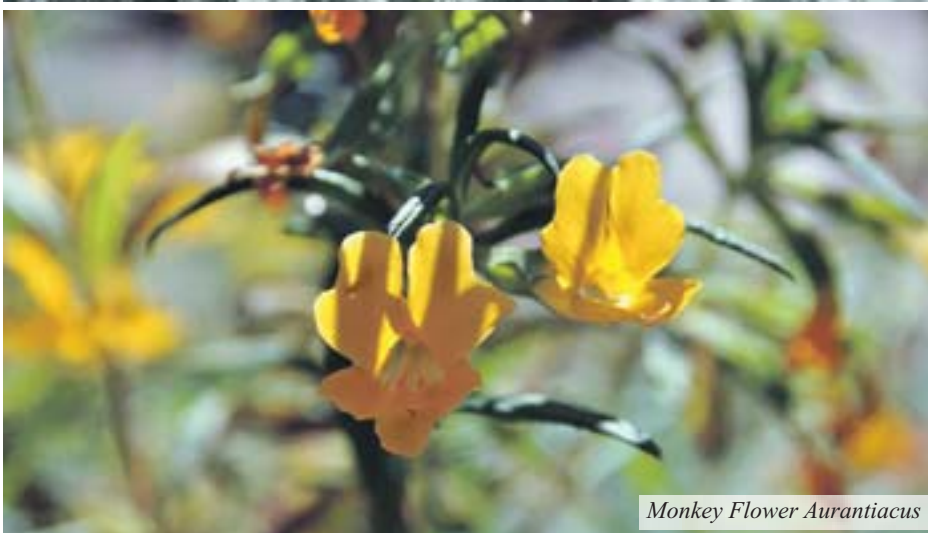
California Fuchsia (Zauschmeria) and Tancetum



Aster sp.



Salvia Regua and Aster sp.



Monkey Flower Aurantiacus



California Fuchsia (Zauschmeria)

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

LAFAYETTE Last reported: 17
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$615,500
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$2,795,000

MORAGA Last reported: 12
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$289,000
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,500,000

ORINDA Last reported: 10
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$499,000
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,753,000

LAFAYETTE

856 Acalanes Road, \$730,000, 4 Bdrms, 1972 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 8-11-10; Previous Sale: \$860,000, 11-22-06
 3300 Betty Lane, \$825,000, 4 Bdrms, 1739 SqFt, 1952 YrBl, 8-11-10; Previous Sale: \$640,500, 03-31-08
 3408 Echo Springs Road, \$2,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 4867 SqFt, 2001 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$2,700,000, 02-22-06
 3815 Happy Valley Road, \$2,795,000, 4 Bdrms, 4807 SqFt, 1938 YrBl, 8-11-10
 1111 Howard Hills Road, \$801,000, 3 Bdrms, 2811 SqFt, 1955 YrBl, 8-18-10; Previous Sale: \$1,395,000, 10-12-05
 3397 La Caminita, \$1,420,000, 5 Bdrms, 3260 SqFt, 1965 YrBl, 8-20-10; Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 08-22-07
 3101 La Playa Court, \$615,500, 3 Bdrms, 2096 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$55,000, 03-02-73
 681 Moraga Road, \$1,795,000, 4 Bdrms, 3797 SqFt, 1987 YrBl, 8-11-10
 892 Mountain View Drive, \$1,290,000, 5 Bdrms, 3214 SqFt, 1946 YrBl, 8-17-10; Previous Sale: \$36,000, 04-17-75
 3932 North Peardale Drive, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2558 SqFt, 1950 YrBl, 8-17-10; Previous Sale: \$425,000, 03-15-96
 945 Oak View Circle, \$640,000, 3 Bdrms, 1617 SqFt, 1955 YrBl, 8-6-10; Previous Sale: \$925,000, 05-02-07
 1188 Pleasant Hill Circle, \$875,000, 5 Bdrms, 2007 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$787,000, 11-19-03
 942 Raintree Place, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2710 SqFt, 1983 YrBl, 8-19-10; Previous Sale: \$530,000, 07-19-94
 3980 South Peardale Drive, \$1,620,000, 3 Bdrms, 2461 SqFt, 1947 YrBl, 8-19-10; Previous Sale: \$640,000, 10-03-95
 3370 Stage Coach Drive, \$1,729,000, 4 Bdrms, 4069 SqFt, 1989 YrBl, 8-17-10; Previous Sale: \$2,000,000, 06-27-06
 1231 Sunset Loop, \$929,000, 3 Bdrms, 2066 SqFt, 1950 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$810,000, 06-30-03
 1023 Timothy Lane, \$1,575,000, 4 Bdrms, 3955 SqFt, 1986 YrBl, 8-6-10

MORAGA

2059 Ascot Drive #211, \$289,000, 2 Bdrms, 1193 SqFt, 1971 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$142,000, 08-15-96
 63 Carr Drive, \$1,115,000, 5 Bdrms, 2660 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 8-20-10; Previous Sale: \$971,000, 12-05-03
 13 Doral Drive, \$740,000, 2 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$805,000, 07-11-08
 1054 Larch Avenue, \$529,000, 2 Bdrms, 1329 SqFt, 1930 YrBl, 8-6-10; Previous Sale: \$16,000, 09-21-70
 1265 Larch Avenue, \$800,000, 4 Bdrms, 1910 SqFt, 1967 YrBl, 8-17-10; Previous Sale: \$519,000, 05-22-98
 8 Merrill Drive, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 3260 SqFt, 1985 YrBl, 8-6-10
 716 Moraga Road, \$790,000, 4 Bdrms, 2218 SqFt, 1960 YrBl, 8-19-10; Previous Sale: \$275,000, 08-13-87
 265 Scofield Drive, \$1,095,000, 4 Bdrms, 2786 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 8-6-10; Previous Sale: \$520,000, 08-21-91
 157 Shuey Drive, \$723,000, 3 Bdrms, 1885 SqFt, 1964 YrBl, 8-16-10; Previous Sale: \$97,000, 02-28-77
 125 Walford Drive, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 2385 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$570,000, 07-30-01
 39 Wandel Drive, \$670,000, 3 Bdrms, 1498 SqFt, 1961 YrBl, 8-6-10
 48 Woodford Drive, \$750,000, 4 Bdrms, 1840 SqFt, 1968 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$640,000, 08-22-02

ORINDA

10 Alta Vista Drive, \$499,000, 6 Bdrms, 2560 SqFt, 1962 YrBl, 8-6-10
 139 Ardith Drive, \$951,500, 3 Bdrms, 1633 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 8-9-10; Previous Sale: \$939,000, 09-26-05
 11 Estates Drive, \$1,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 3252 SqFt, 1940 YrBl, 8-6-10
 28 Lost Valley Drive, \$945,000, 4 Bdrms, 2338 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 8-18-10; Previous Sale: \$350,000, 06-15-88
 20 Mira Loma Road, \$817,500, 2 Bdrms, 2110 SqFt, 1951 YrBl, 8-6-10; Previous Sale: \$869,000, 08-19-04
 12 Monterey Terrace, \$1,753,000, 4 Bdrms, 4234 SqFt, 1991 YrBl, 8-17-10; Previous Sale: \$899,000, 11-14-90
 42 Oak Road, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 2676 SqFt, 1998 YrBl, 8-13-10; Previous Sale: \$70,000, 04-30-96
 10 Penny Lane, \$1,635,000, 3 Bdrms, 3011 SqFt, 1960 YrBl, 8-10-10; Previous Sale: \$925,000, 11-17-99
 105 Rheem Boulevard, \$550,000, 3 Bdrms, 1788 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 8-18-10; Previous Sale: \$659,000, 02-06-04
 6989 Skyline Boulevard, \$1,010,000, 5 Bdrms, 3502 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 8-18-10; Previous Sale: \$649,000, 05-09-00



Lamorinda Home Sales recorded is also available on our web site www.lamorindaweekly.com. Go to "Archive" if you're looking for an older listing. You will find a link to the list under each issue.

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.

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

LAFAYETTE

3103 Del Oceano Drive, 94549, Aurora Loan Services, 08-19-10, \$712,914, 1757 sf, 4 bd

ORINDA

241 Courtney Lane, 94563, Chevy Chase Bank, 08-16-10, \$535,287, 2214 sf, 4 bd

Tips for Selling Your Home in the Fall

By Val Cook-Watkins

Summer is coming to an end which means the leaves will start changing, the weather will begin cooling and we'll all be spending more time inside our homes. It may also be the time of year when you begin wondering if you truly want to stay in your home. Many sellers think that fall is a bad time to put their home on the market but, as real estate experts will tell you, that's simply not the case.

Autumn is typically a

popular time of year for corporations to relocate associates, which creates a pool of buyers who need to make quick decisions about housing. They'll be serious about purchasing and, with fewer houses on the market and less competition for sellers, your house may get more attention than it would any other time of year. So what can you do to make sure your home sells before all the leaves fall off the trees? Here are a few helpful tips.

- Highlight the location. Bring the benefits of your location front and center. Establish a list of perks that your property offers, such as proximity to public transportation, schools, shopping, recreation or entertainment.
- Use the season for curb appeal. Autumn is one of the most beautiful times of year and by using that to your advantage, your home can stand out from others in the neighborhood. Leaves turning

shades of crimson and gold can add extra appeal to the total look of your home's exterior, but they can also get out of hand. Make sure trees and shrubs are properly groomed and that fallen leaves don't suffocate your front lawn. Add pumpkins, gourds or a fall display to your front porch to invite in potential buyers.

- Stage your home. Buyers need to be able to envision themselves living in your home before they will consider buying it. By de-cluttering, de-personalizing and thoroughly cleaning the entire house, prospective buyers will immediately imagine their furniture in the rooms and photos on the walls. Also, don't be afraid to liven up the home by bringing the outside indoors during this beautiful season. If your dining room is a sea of beige, set up a vase of twigs, leaves or acorns from your yard.

- Get everything in tip-top shape. Your buyer will most likely hire an inspector before closing, so talk to your Realtor about finding one who'll visit your home before you put it on the market to avoid any surprises. Pay close attention to elements around the home that are important in the fall. For example, make sure gutters are cleared of fallen leaves and that fireplaces are in working order.
- Know your home. Access to real estate information on

the Internet means that buyers are walking into your home more educated than ever. Take the time to review homes similar to yours on real estate websites

like www.californiamoves.com or www.realtor.com. Your agent will also be able to keep you aware of the conditions and price ranges of other homes for sale in your area. This will allow you to better negotiate with potential buyers.

- Hire a tech savvy Realtor. We're living in an age when nearly everyone owns a cell phone and 90 percent of home buyers use the internet during their home search. Instant information and communication have become the norm in our society, so Realtors are taking advantage of today's tech tools to reach prospective buyers quickly and effectively. A tech savvy agent will work with cell phone applications, Websites, digital cameras and much more to be able to connect you with the right buyer for your home.

Despite what you may have heard, this time of year offers plenty of opportunity to sell your home. By taking a few simple steps to make sure you and your house are ready to hit the market, you can better prepare yourself for what is to come. After all, the more welcoming your home is to possible buyers, the more welcoming it will be to offers.

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5 Kenmore Court
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Offered at \$1,095,000



68 La Cuesta Road
Live large in this spacious contemporary home. Experience sweeping views of romantic sunsets. Prime country club location nr town, Bart & great schools. Italian designer interior.
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53 Knickerbocker Lane
Beautiful Craftsman style remodeled 2005 on spectacular 1/2 acre, quiet cul-de-sac near commute. 4bd + office, 3340 sf, fab 3-car garage. Lovely built-ins.
Offered at \$1,525,000



105 Meadow Lane
Fabulous remodeled shingled house with vaulted ceilings & skylights. Lvl backyard, Sunset Magazine garden design winner in 2005. Grt schools. www.thekaufmans.com
Offered at \$1,565,000



136 Manzanita Drive
Spectacular newly built 4000 sf custom Santa Barbara style home seldom found in the area. 4bd/3.5ba of incredible design & custom appointments. A world of charm!
Offered at \$2,495,000



15 Van Tassel Lane
Splendid quality features in & out. Lux yet comfortable gated Sleepy Hollow 5bd/4.5ba estate home. Exquisite details, top quality amenities, grassy yards, pool & gardens.
Offered at \$2,695,000



1365B Camino Peral
Comfortable 2bd/2ba, 1281 sf with fireplace, washer/dryer, deck & 2 dedicated parking spaces. Near shopping, park, library and trails. Best schools!
Offered at \$339,000



1087 Sanders Drive
Classic Moraga rancher. Thoroughly updated, new kitchen, baths, dual panes, new doors, decorator colors. Lvel corner lot w/great curb appeal. Near top-rated schools.
Offered at \$749,000



20 Kazar Court
Special custom upgrades & pride of ownership! 4/2.5 cul-de-sac rancher w/hdwd floors, triple-paned windows, plantation shutters & great curb appeal. Patio & terraced landscaping.
Offered at \$899,000



1904 Russell Drive
Very special "Bluffs" 2675 sf home w/5bd/3ba. Level corner lot, stylish touches, remodeled kitchen and baths. Patio with pergola, master bath with steam shower.
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1014 Katherine Lane
New Yard! New Price! Updated 4bd/3ba rancher, .30 ac pvt corner lot, open floor plan for entertaining & everyday living, lg Trex deck. Best value in Lafayette!
Offered at \$949,000



612 Huntleigh Drive
Burton Valley beauty. Just remodeled 4bd/2ba rancher, move-in ready. Single level, hdwd floors, new dual panes, beautiful front & back yard landscaping.
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1176 Glen Road
\$100,000 price reduction! Absolutely charming 4bd in desirable Happy Valley Glen. Great neighborhood close to town. Top rated schools. 2nd office. Private yd with pool.
Offered at \$1,195,000



3407 Shangri La Road
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3724 St. Francis Drive
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