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Wednesday, January 5, 2011



Golden Retriever Midas was trained by his owners, Eric and Cathy, to retrieve newspapers from their driveway. Photo Andy Schreck

Quote of the Week:
"There should be room for change."
Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Our New Year's Resolution:

Coming soon to a neighborhood near you—Wednesday delivery of the Lamorinda Weekly!

It has been a constant source of frustration to publish a newspaper on Wednesday and hear that some households don't receive it until the following week. How many times have you read about an interesting event on our pages after it's over because your paper didn't arrive in a timely manner? Our resolution this New Year is to change this unfortunate situation. We are converting our delivery

method from the U.S. mail to a local home delivery service that will place the paper on your driveway every other Wednesday. If you live in Lafayette, our next issue will be delivered to you on Wednesday, January 19. We plan to begin home delivery to Orinda and Moraga in February. Please call (925) 377-0977 or email home-delivery@lamorindaweekly.com if you have any questions.

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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The California Independent Film Festival Finds a Home in Moraga

13th Annual Festival Opens January 28th

By Andrea A. Firth

The California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF) is entering an auspicious year in 2011—the 13th annual festival will be held at the New Rheem Theatre in Moraga from January 28th through February 3rd.

"It's definitely lucky 13 for us," says Beau Behan, the Program and Promotion Director for the CAIFF, displaying his wide, warm grin—a smile that moviegoers in Moraga have come to know over the past six months. In June the CAIFF Association took over the management of the theater, which was teetering on the brink of permanent closure; Behan was appointed General Manager, and the Festival was relocated.

After moving to a couple of different East Bay locations when the Festival got started in the late 1990's, then eight years in Livemore and last year in Orinda, the CAIFF hopes to have found a permanent home in Moraga. "We are excited to introduce the town to the world of independent film, and to show everyone that this art deco theater house is a true gem," says Behan.

Over 80 films will be screened during the week-long festival, which is expected to attract two to three thousand moviegoers. The star-studded event includes independent, foreign, and mainstream movies, along with shorts, documentaries, and instructional films. "The Festival tries to cover everything," says Behan,

"We cover a number of film genres. It's international. And we provide many opportunities for the attendees to interact with and ask questions of the filmmakers and actors. There is something for everyone."

Main Events—What's Not to be Missed

Opening Night. Get your camera ready to see celebrities and filmmakers up close and personal on the red carpet. The CAIFF opening night event will feature cast and crew members from the film *The 5th Quarter*—an inspirational drama, which centers around a young man's drive to succeed following the tragic death of his brother, starring Aidan Quinn, Andie McDowell, and Ryan Merriman.

... continued on page L1

Putting Money in your RecycleBank



By Sophie Braccini

Beginning in January it pays to recycle in Orinda and Moraga, as the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority launches a one-year pilot program called RecycleBank that offers a financial incentive for recycling. Residents who sign up and diligently use their brown recycling containers will ... read on page L1

Digging Deep January 2011



By Cynthia Brian

Every year at this time I spend hours of coaching sessions helping clients create goals for the upcoming year. The beginning of a new year excites one to give birth to new ideas and design a vision for the future. Unfortunately by February 1, statistics indicate that most people have abandoned their goals.

... read on page OH4

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Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council Monday, January 10, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission Monday, January 17, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review Monday, January 10, 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 •



Police Blotter will be back next time.

Road Repair a Top Priority for New Mayor

By Cathy Tyson

A city council member since 2002 and mayor in 2005, Carl Anduri will once again be wielding the gavel as Mayor of Lafayette for 2011. His top priority this time around is to come up with a plan to fix local roads and find a way to fund that plan. "This will require a community solution," he said, explaining that the Council has wrung all the savings possible out of the current budget. The amount going toward road repair every year is just not enough to solve the problem, "It requires an additional revenue source," said Anduri.

He continued, "It's just not fair to those living on failed roads. We have got to come up with a solution." His ambitious

goal is a plan that will address all 97 failed roads over a ten year period – leaving roads that just require regular maintenance.

As noted in the September 29th issue of this paper, in the aptly named, "Want Roads Fixed – Need More Money," article, Engineering Services Manager Tony Coe made it clear: "Unless a new revenue source is found, the road repair backlog will never be solved."

Anduri also wants to help define what city government supports and values during his tenure as mayor. He wants to encourage life-long learning via the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, the Recreation department, and the Senior

Center, and communicate those opportunities to residents.

Environmental concerns are another priority. Now that the city has an Open Space Task Force and its first success with the Acalanes Ridge Open Space, he feels it's important to continue focusing on the environment and sustainability. He points out that virtually all the hillsides that residents enjoy are vulnerable to building because they are privately owned.

The new mayor is also passionate about providing housing for all generations. One project already in the pipeline is the 46-unit Eden Housing complex for seniors. Its design has already been approved; once financing can be

obtained, the project can finally break ground. He would also like to look into a way to provide services for seniors, potentially through a private non-profit organization.

"Big family news this year is we had our first granddaughter," said Anduri. He and wife Sharon have two grown children and have owned a home in Lafayette since 1980 – with an 11-year work-sponsored intermission in the far east when, as a lawyer with Morrison & Forerster, Anduri had the opportunity to open offices in Tokyo and Hong Kong for the firm. Since 2000, Anduri has been the President of Lex Mundi, a global network of 160 law firms in over 100 countries.

Report Defines Parking Situation Downtown, Suggests Solutions

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

Big surprise! There aren't enough parking spaces, especially at peak times, in downtown Lafayette. City Planning staff took on the formidable task of counting every single parking spot in order to define the problem and suggest ways of providing real solutions. Developing a complete set of parking recommendations is helpful to alleviate parking congestion, but it's also an important component of the Downtown Specific Plan.

Information gleaned from staff efforts was used to prepare the Downtown Core Parking Inventory and Parking Occupancy Survey as well as a Parking Demand Assessment. Key findings and recommendations were scheduled to be presented to the Planning Commission on January 3 (after press time) and are included in a staff report for that meeting.

To many drivers, it may not seem like there are over 5,400 on and off-street spaces

in the downtown core. With 81% of those spaces located in scattered off-street parking lots, and only 328 spaces, less than 8% of the total, available "without restriction to the public" according to the report – it's easy to see why drivers are frustrated.

In analyzing parking demand, "The problem is not how much parking the downtown core contains; it's where the parking is located, how accessible it is and how it is regulated or restricted," noted the report.

Results of the Parking Occupancy Survey clarify some of the issues, finding that metered street spaces are largely underutilized. A significant majority, 80%, of the employees that responded to the mailed survey said that they parked in the same lot as their place of business. Ironically, over half of the employers that responded said that parking is an occasional or significant problem for customers.

With parking regulations that were adopted in 1977 and parking standards that define the number of spaces required for different land uses last updated in 1989, staff recognizes these regulations need to be updated and fine-tuned. For example, a bakery has a different parking ratio than a coffee shop.

Recommendations that will be presented to the Planning Commission identify the need for additional parking but suggest solving the old problem in a new way. Currently each property is required to provide all parking on-site. Staff now recommends that the City examine parking challenges on a block-by-block basis rather than parcel-by-parcel. This goal, in theory, will make it easier and more economical for individual property owners and could spur development.

Other concrete recommendations to solve the problem include increasing the supply, accessibility and usage of off-street parking. This goal is broken down into small actions: topping the list – pursue opportunities to acquire land for public parking. Also, work with owners of underutilized parking lots to allow the public and employees to park there; work with owners of adjacent properties to connect parking lots; and work with banks to use lots after hours.

Additional suggestions include considering the creation of a Downtown Core Parking Improvement District to update the City's parking regulations and more. To see the complete report, go to the city website at www.lovelafayette.org, click on Agendas, Staff Reports under the Planning Commission heading, then follow prompts to 2011 Commission Agendas and Staff Reports.

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New Name Wanted for Senior Services

By Cathy Tyson

Calling all wordsmiths! Lafayette Senior Services announces the "Give Us A Name!" contest. They are looking for a new and improved name instead of the current moniker for their city department as well as their online newsletter.

We think "Lafayette Senior Services" may say it all but doesn't

say it beautifully or well," said Manager of Senior Services Mei Sun Li.

With tempting prizes like "The Works Plus Wash" care of Lafayette Car Wash, a pair of tickets to any play at Town Hall Theatre and a gift certificate to Powell's Sweet Shop, organizers want to encourage entries. The contest is free

and multiple suggestions are permitted. The deadline is Tuesday, February 22nd; the first place winner will be announced at the Wind-song Harp Ensemble concert on Friday March 25th. Entries can be submitted in person, via mail or online at Seniors@lovelafayette.org. Feel free to call with questions, (925) 285-5050.

Crime Prevention Advice

By Cathy Tyson, with Traci Reilly

There's nothing like a home robbery to spoil anyone's good time. Traci Reilly, Chairperson of the Lafayette Crime Prevention Commission, offers suggestions to stay safe. "Get to know your neighbors. Be the eyes and ears of your neighborhood. Work with the Lafayette Police Department and report any suspicious activity immediately by calling (925) 284-5010," said Reilly. She emphasized that crime prevention is a neighborhood concern.

If you plan to be away overnight, the Crime Prevention Commission recommends following these simple suggestions:

Call and notify a nearby neighbor that you trust. Let them know when you will be gone.

Ask a neighbor to pick up your mail and newspapers. If you

prefer, you can stop your mail by filling out a form at the Post Office, but we suggest that you don't stop your newspaper. While it is uncommon, we have experienced local burglaries that occurred due to newspaper vacation stops. Unbeknownst to the newspaper delivery person, the "do not deliver list" could get into the wrong person's hands. It's best to have a trusted friend or neighbor collect the newspapers for you.

Lock all doors and windows, and set your alarm if you have one.

Call the Lafayette Police Department ahead of time to request a "Vacation check." The police will periodically check on your home during your absence. They can be reached at (925) 283-3680 during business hours.

Residents should also be

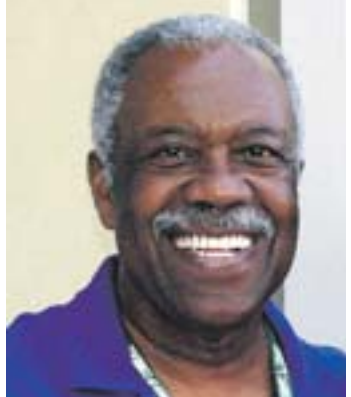
aware that Lafayette has a relatively new door to door soliciting ordinance, aimed at curbing solicitors with a criminal background. Any-one sixteen years or older who is selling items or services door-to-door must obtain a permit from the Lafayette Police Department. Reilly feels this is an important tool that will help prevent crimes in our neighborhoods.

Look for a permit, visible at all times, from legitimate solicitors who have passed a background check. They are required to avoid homes with a posted "No solicitors" sign.

"Crime prevention is a partnership, one between the residents and the Police Department. It is important that we all play an active role. We are the Police Department's eyes and ears," said Reilly.

Lafayette's Business Person of the Year

(Information submitted by Jay Lifson)



Larry Duson Photo provided

Bank of the West Branch Manager Larry Duson has been named Lafayette's Business Person of the year for 2011.

According to Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jay Lifson, "Larry (Duson) is the only chamber member to serve twice as president. He would probably step

up and do it again if asked. He has been our ambassador to dozens of businesses over the years."

Duson has had a long and prosperous career in the banking business, and has been the manager of the local Bank of the West branch in Lafayette for over ten years. "It is hard to believe that one of the kindest, gentlest people you will ever meet was once the 'axe man' for banks that needed to be closed or restructured," says Lifson, "Larry has set a very high bar for those of us who wish to excel in customer satisfaction. His desk is the 1st stop when you enter the bank. Don't think you can just come in and do a deposit. He will waive you over, ask how you are, and introduce you to the other bank customers he is visiting with."

"Our honoree must be in-

involved with a successful business, participate in local organizations or causes, give their time, and most importantly, be someone who models excellence and brings our community together," Lifson continues, "We are a lucky community to have leader like Larry. Larry Duson has also served as the Lafayette Rotary Club's president and has been involved with many of the charities that his bank is associated with."

The Chamber and community will celebrate Duson's honor, along with Mayor Carl Anduri's "State of the City" address and the introduction of the Chamber's 2011-2012 Board of Directors, on January 28th at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa. Reservation forms can be downloaded from the Chamber website, www.lafayettechamber.org.

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Civic News Moraga



Public Meetings	
Town Council	Saturday, January 8, 8:00 am Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive Town Council Goal Setting Workshop
Town Council	Wednesday, January 12, 7:30 pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, 1010 Camino Pablo
Planning Commission	Tuesday, January 18, 7:30 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd
Design Review	Monday, January 24, 7:00 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd <i>Monday, January 10, has been canceled</i>
Liaison	Friday, January 14, 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 •
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From Queen in Sebastopol to Mayor of Moraga – The adventures of Karen Mendonca

By Sophie Braccini



Karen Mendonca Photo Clay Serrahn

Karen Mendonca was 16 years old when she was crowned Sebastopol's Queen of the Festa do Espirito Santo in 1970. The pretty teenager led the procession that Americans of Portuguese descent have held annually for 100 years in Sonoma County to celebrate the merciful Queen Isabella of Portugal, who gave back so much to her people in the late 13th century. This sense of community involvement and leadership has been the signature of the woman who was elected Moraga's mayor for 2011.

After a successful career in higher education and with the support of her husband of 27 years, Clay Serrahn, Mendonca stepped up to her new role as mayor with a calm and assured demeanor and set an ambitious to-do list on behalf of the little town she has made her home. "I have no personal agenda other than what is best for the town," Mendonca states, "I hope to be a positive facilitator for the Council to make progress toward our goals." (See our Dec. 22 issue for a list of Mendonca's goals, <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0421/Moragas-New-Town-Council.html>.)

On the day that Mendonca was elected to Moraga's top Town Council post, her family was in

the audience. Her mother and sister still live in Sonoma County where she grew up. This proximity allows the Mendoncas to maintain their strong family ties.

Mendonca's parents came from immigrant families and were in the first generation to be born in America. Her father's family came from the Azores, a volcanic Portuguese archipelago located some 1000 miles off the Portuguese coast. The family settled near Sebastopol, where a large Portuguese community still resides. Mendonca's mother is of Austrian descent (from what is now Slovenia). "My parents were always giving back to their community," says Mendonca, "it was just their way to live their lives."

Mendonca was the first in her family to go to college. She started close to home at Santa Rosa Junior College then transferred to the California State University (CSU), Chico, to get her Bachelor's Degree, her K-12 teaching credential and first Master's Degree. Since she wanted to teach, counsel or administer she got a second Master's Degree in Counseling and Educational Psychology at the University of San Francisco.

Mendonca started work at Santa Rosa Junior College as a counselor, but when Proposition 13 passed, many such positions were cut. For a while she taught 8th grade math in Sebastopol. "It was a lot of fun teaching where I grew up," says Mendonca, "and I was on the same faculty as my former third grade teacher." She continued counseling part-time in Santa Rosa until she was of-

ferred a position as Assistant Director for Career Development at CSU Stanislaus.

In that post she was offered many opportunities for career growth, including executive fellowships, and she decided to complete her PhD at U C

generous women," remembers Mendonca, "all of them infused with an incredible passion for what they were doing. They all knew they had a special place and a purpose to fulfill."

From 2000-2004, Mendonca held appointments at the CSU Monterey Bay campus, first as Associate Vice President for Budget and Planning, then as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. "Clay and I had a commuter marriage, seeing each other only on weekends," she says, "so when I had an opportunity for early retirement, I took it."

Mendonca wanted to give back to Moraga, where she and Clay had a home since 1991, and it was not long before she applied for a seat on the Parks and Recreation Commission. She says she soon started receiving calls from residents asking her to run for Town Council. "I was not really willing to do it," says Mendonca, and it was her mother who convinced her. "She said, 'whatever they throw at you, you can handle it, and you could really help,'" Mendonca recalls.

"I come from a very tight knit community with a culture of long term friendships," says Mendonca, "and to this day I'm in touch with friends from both elementary and high school. Clay and I love Moraga because it is a very similar community. It has so much potential and the residents also are the same type of generous people who want to give back."



Karen Mendonca Photo provided by Sebastopol Holy Ghost Society

Berkeley. "I did my research in the Graduate School of Education's Program in Policy and Management Research," she says, "it was a terrific program that combined policy, law, micro-economics, finance, management, and political science."

Mendonca's dissertation studied the careers of female presidents of universities across the United States. Mendonca interviewed many of these 43 Presidents (1991). "They were very

Moraga Royale Supports Rescue One

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Fire Chief Randall Bradley (holding the new Lifepak 15), Linda Borelli, Gene Gottfried, and Dianne Wilson Photo Andy Scheck

"I was astonished when Dianne (Wilson) gave us a check for \$2,700.00," said Rescue One Foundation Board Member Linda Borelli. Wilson, the executive director of Moraga Royale, an assisted living facility, spearheaded the facility's Christmas tree auction to benefit Rescue One. "This will be a great help in our fundraising efforts," stated Borelli.

Established in 1977, the Rescue One Foundation receives and administers contributions in support of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) paramedic program; over the last 33 years, Rescue One has contributed \$300,000 worth of equipment to MOFD.

Rescue One's latest purchase is a new monitor/defibrillator called the Lifepak 15. MOFD is the first fire district in the East Bay to get the newer, lighter unit. "This unit checks 15 different vital signs and transfers the information directly to the emergency room even before the emergency vehicle reaches its destination," explained Borelli. "Rescue One was very proud to finance one of these units for MOFD a month ago. We hope to get a second unit in the near future, and Moraga Royale's donation will help us get there."

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Bye, Bye Mosquitoes

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Matt Patera, Cameron Patera, and Tristan Westernoff construct a bat house. Photo Jennifer Patera

The unnerving buzz of mosquitoes at dusk in the park could become nothing but a fading memory in Moraga. Not due to massive spraying in creeks and puddles – Moraga still abides by its Integrated Pest Management (I.P.M.) rules – instead, bats have been invited to dinner...and they love to dine on mosquitoes.

Dan Bernie, Moraga's Superintendent of Parks & Public Works, has been seeking opportunities to have bat houses installed close to locations where mosquitoes pullulate. Matt Patera, a junior at Campolindo High School,

was up to the challenge. The Eagle Scout candidate built and installed two bat houses in the fly-paths of bats near Moraga's parks.

"We have plenty of mosquitoes and larvae at the parks," says Bernie "we've spotted bats roosting naturally at the southern end of Rancho Laguna Park; they fly their way up the creeks and help us to stay away from pesticides."

Every year, to get his projects completed, Bernie sends his to-do list to Scout Masters and to Brian Murphy of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, who is always a resource for scouts looking for in-

teresting projects to complete.

"My friend Kevin Gustafson, who built owl boxes for the Town of Moraga, gave me Brian Murphy's number," remembers Patera, "I've always had an interest in nature, birds in particular, and have read many books about them." The 16-year-old student immediately liked the idea of bat houses. "They are very useful little mammals and I've never been afraid of them. The variety we get around here does not bite; they are very small and are only interested in insects. It was a great opportunity to contribute to Moraga."

Each of Patera's two houses can accommodate up to 2000 bats; the bat houses took just a few days to build, with the help of few friends from Boy Scout Troop 212 and his younger brother.

"The young man is an outstanding kid," adds Bernie, "he took the project from start to finish, set the plan, raised the money for his project and completed it by inventing a new way to install bat houses under bridges, which is both ingenious and simple."

Murphy was also impressed by the mounting brackets that Patera invented and that were manufactured by his uncle, the owner of V&O Machine. "Thanks to Matt, U.C. Davis Agricultural Advisor Rachel Long, who works with bats in the Central Valley, is planning on installing bat houses like Matt did on a pedestrian bridge over the American River,"

said Murphy.

"This is a first small step," says Bernie, who would like to see more bat houses in places such as the Hacienda de las Flores, "if other people catch on to the idea and do the same thing near their homes, or under the overhang of their roofs, they will come."



A Bit about Bats

Bats have a certain reputation due to their sharp fangs, pointy ears and dark wings; and then there's the vampire thing. But actually, bats are very helpful creatures.

Dave Johnston, a Senior Wildlife Ecologist with H. T. Harvey & Associates and an adjunct professor at San Jose State University, specializes in bat ecology. "Lactating females eat their weight in insects every night," he explains. "The concept of using bats to control pests is a good one; I've been working with farmers in the northern Sacramento Valley to install bat houses."

An additional benefit of having a bat house in your garden is bat guano, which is an effective fertilizer with high levels of phosphorus and nitrogen, and is almost odorless.

"Mexican free-tailed bats are the most common in our area," says Johnston. "They are highly social mammals that like to cluster up." The average Mexican free-tailed bat is about 3.5 inches in length and weighs less than half an ounce.

If you find a live bat you should not try to touch it, recommends Johnston. "Bats carry rabies in the same proportion as any other wild mammal," he adds, "it's very rare, about half of one percent."

Johnston believes that bats are the last frontier in mammal studies. "They are so complex and exploit all kinds of habitats," he says, "one of the reasons that we do not know them very well is because their nocturnal habits make it difficult to observe them."

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Civic News



Orinda

- Public Meetings**
- City Council** Thursday, January 13, 4:00 pm
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, Orinda City Hall, 22 Orinda Way
Special meeting (Strategic Planning Workshop) of the Orinda City Council
 - City Council** Tuesday, January 18, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way
 - Planning Commission** Tuesday, January 11, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

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

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Mayor Victoria Smith Looks Forward to 2011



Photo Ohlen Alexander

By Andrea A. Firth

As she enters her seventh year on the Orinda City Council, Victoria Smith will serve as Mayor of the City (her second time in the post) throughout 2011. In this article, Smith provides her outlook on some of the key issues facing Orinda over the next year.

When starting your first term as Mayor (in January 2008), you identified fixing Orinda's crumbling roads as the City's primary focus. No immediate solution has been forthcoming. What next?

I worked hard, along with many, many others, to pass two road bond measures; unfortunately, although the majority of Orindans voted for them, we were unable to achieve a 66% vote. Ultimately, I think we will need to turn to a tax measure to come up with the \$100 million dollars that we need to rebuild our roads; whether the time is ripe for that in the current economy, or whether we need to wait for our citizens to feel more economically robust, is an open question. In the meantime, we continue to pursue federal and state grants, and to improve our coordination with the utility companies in order to maximize the dollars available to all the agencies that work in our roads to make more road repairs.

Given the condition of the State's economy, do you feel this will negatively impact the City's financial picture over the next year or longer?

We have done a good and prudent job at the City in cut-

ting costs and expenditures in accordance with our flat revenue over the last two years. Although we had furloughs last year, we were able to avoid them in the current fiscal year. What we can't control is the fact that the State may be motivated to look for all revenues, which it will try to appropriate from the local governments; if that occurs, then services in Orinda will be reduced.

Orinda shares fire service with Moraga through the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD). What do you feel is the best way for Orinda to maintain fire service?

I support the local fire and emergency services provided by the MOFD. In talking with citizens, I have heard over and over that the reasons that Orinda joined with Moraga several years ago to form the MOFD are still valid and are key values for Orindans; paramedics on each truck and local ambulance service. Those who have called for Orinda to break away from the MOFD and contract with the Contra Costa Fire District have ignored that fact that ConFire is in serious financial difficulty, is now closing a Walnut Creek fire station 50% of the time, and is talking about closing a Lafayette fire station. We are fortunate to have local control over our own fire tax dollars and services, and I encourage all concerned citizens to take their ideas for cost-effectiveness and service improvement to MOFD Board meetings and to work with their locally elected fire board officials and staff to review these issues.

In 2008, the downtown revitalization initiative was focused on keeping sales tax dollars in Orinda. Given the results of a recent sales tax leakage study which found 2/3 of Orinda's retail dollars are spent outside of the City and the commercial vacancy rate is low, what do you feel is or should be the focus for revitalizing downtown?

All Orindans would like to see additional shopping and

dining opportunities in Orinda. For me, the focus is not on a tremendous increase in sales tax revenue—although we would certainly like to see an increase—but on planning for a downtown that will provide services and businesses that our citizens would like to patronize.

Residents' views are divided regarding the City task force's recommendation to allow increasing the building height in parts of Orinda's downtown districts above the current 35-foot limit. How do you feel about an increased building height up to 55 feet?

I attended both of the Downtown Planning Workshops that were facilitated in October and December, and was impressed by the passion and creativity expressed by the many, many residents who participated. I look forward to more outreach to the community over the coming months and to hearing the results of the workshops at an upcoming council meeting. I want to see the community have a continuing dialogue and reach a collective vision for what the downtown has the potential to become over the coming years.

The affordable senior housing development proposed for the old library site on Irwin Way is moving forward slowly. Do you feel this a positive development for the city?

The senior housing project at the old library site has been in the planning stages for the last decade, and I believe that it is a great project for that site. It's important to understand that about half of our annual paving budget is money that we receive only if we are working to be in compliance with the housing requirement that the State imposes, so our road repair money is directly contingent upon building affordable housing. Beyond that, I think it is simply the right thing to do, to plan for an accessible senior housing project when we know that there are older Orindans, as well as Orinda families with older relatives who would like to move to Orinda, but who can't live on their own in a single-family residence any longer.

Are you looking forward to serving as Mayor again?

We are so fortunate to live in Orinda, in such a beautiful, safe and neighborly community. I am looking forward to the opportunity this year to give back to the community, which has given so much to me and to my husband and sons. I want Orinda to preserve the great things about Orinda that drew us all here, and at the same time to make thoughtful improvements so that we will always continue to be proud of this East Bay jewel that we live in.

Smith's Vital Statistics

- Resident of Orinda for 22 years
- Husband, Wick, attended Miramonte High School (Class of '73) as did sons Will ('03) and Daniel ('07)
- Has an undergraduate degree from Cal and JD from Hastings Law in San Francisco
- Registered Assistant Scoutmaster, Boy Scout Troop 237
- Manages a real estate law practice based in Orinda
- Served two years on the Planning Commission
- Currently serving her second term on the City Council and second time as Mayor

Some of her favorite things about Orinda: "The Farmer's Market, the Library, the 4th of July Parade, the December Chamber of Commerce/Hospice Tree Lighting event, our 'green' city hall, having our own bookstores in town, each Eagle Court and Gold Award Ceremony marking the achievements of our teenagers, and the interesting variety of restaurants that we have in town."
 A. Firth

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Orinda Recruits for Committees and Commissions

By Andrea A. Firth

While predictions for most job markets continue to be gloomy for 2011, the City of Orinda has a number of openings on its committees and commissions. These are volunteer positions that require only a part-time commitment; meetings are generally on a monthly basis. [See ad on this page]

“With a limited budget, we depend heavily on the volunteer work of our citizens to provide creative and thoughtful solutions to issues facing us as a city,” says Mayor Victoria Smith, whose first post at City Hall was as a Planning Commissioner where she was able to apply her skills as a real estate attorney. “We are very fortunate in Orinda to have a great many residents with expertise in their professional lives that they can lend to the city,” adds Smith, noting that each commission and committee has its own area of expertise and responsibility.

The City is particularly interested in resident volunteers with financial, recreational, planning/architectural, or artistic expertise, says Smith. For example, many parents in Orinda have been coaches for sports teams and others are avid landscapers and gardeners, and this experience is helpful to serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission. “We need architects and those with arborist, landscape or city planning experience to apply for the Planning Commission. On the Finance Advisory Commission we need individuals who are experienced with budgets and investment,” she cites as other examples.

Commission and committee terms are three years long and members are limited to two terms, explains City Clerk Michele Olsen. There are no specific prerequisites for any of the committee and commission posts, says Olsen, but all appointees must complete a state-

ment of economic interest. Potential conflicts will not necessarily preclude a resident from serving on a commission or committee but may identify the need for a commissioner or committee member to recuse him/herself from certain discussions and votes.

“The talent we have in this community is amazing, and we want to continue to tap into that,” says Olsen. “We are looking for people who are excited to part of the public process.” She encourages interested residents to go to the City’s website to review the descriptions of the various commissions and committees and then complete the Statement of Interest form which should be submitted to the City Clerk by Friday, January 21st.

The City Council will hold a public meeting on Saturday, January 29th to interview all qualified candidates, and appointments will be made at that time.

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The City of Orinda is seeking applications from *resident volunteers* to serve on the City's:

- Planning Commission (3)**
- Parks & Recreation Commission (3)**
- Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission (2)**
- Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (3)**
- Finance Advisory Committee (3)**
- Art in Public Places Committee (1)**
- Public Works Aesthetic Review Committee (1)**
- Audit and Finance Committee (1)**

Effective February 2011, there will be vacancies on the Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Finance Advisory Committee, and one vacancy on the Public Works Aesthetic Review Committee, Art in Public Places Committee and Audit and Finance Committee.

Statement of Interest forms are available from the Orinda City Clerk's Office, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563. If you have any specific questions regarding the recruitment, please contact Michele Olsen, City Clerk at 925-253-4221 or molsen@cityoforinda.org. Application forms may also be downloaded from the City's website at www.cityoforinda.org.

Completed Statement of Interest forms must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by **Friday, January 21, 2011 at 5:00p.m.**

Qualified applicants will be invited to interview before the full City Council on **Saturday, January 29, 2011.**

Michele L. Olsen
City Clerk

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San Diego Jan. 19 - 7:30 PM - CSNCA

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Cougars Win West Coast Jamboree

Submitted by Tina Brier



Campolindo High School girls' varsity basketball team captured first place in the West Coast Jamboree (Amber Division) held at Miramonte High School December 27-29.

Back row (from left):
Meggie Nelson, Annie Shurtz, Annelise Ito, Ashley Ewing, Laura Hickey;
front row:
Chloe Hull, Erin Nakahara, Mallory Brown, Ruthie Shapiro, Amanda Forshay, Annie Ward

Photo provided

Miramonte Girls' Soccer Wins Tri-Valley Classic

Submitted by John Fuller



Goalie Mali Tehaney paced Miramonte's defense 23 saves in the final two matches. Photo Brian Fessenden

The Miramonte girls' soccer team claimed the Silver Division Championship at the Tri-Valley Classic in Danville. The ninth annual Tri-Valley Classic hosted teams from around the Bay Area, Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

In their first match, Miramonte played Antioch High School. Miramonte jumped out to a lead in the second half, when sophomore midfielder Coco Pearce scored off a cross pass from freshman forward Megan Reid. The game ended in a draw, 1-1.

In the second contest, the Mats overpowered Deer Valley to win 5-0. Reid, Pearce, sophomore Sophie Fuller, and junior midfielder Katherine Fearing spearheaded the scoring in game two. Victory against Deer Valley helped preserve the opportunity of claiming the Silver

Division crown.

Day two pitted Miramonte against a strong team from Los Angeles, Alemany. Miramonte buckled down and played a solid defensive match. Freshman goalie Mali Tehaney recorded 10 saves. The final score was another draw, 0-0.

Miramonte played their fourth and final match against Santa Cruz. The Mats opened up the scoring on a set piece as Pearce crossed the ball to Tasia Robbins who slammed it between the posts for a 1-0 advantage. Santa Cruz countered in the 66th minute off a deflected ball. Miramonte freshman midfielder Li would score off a corner delivered by Pearce with four minutes to go in the match. Tehaney and a strong defense preserved the victory and the Silver Division Championship for Miramonte.

Soccer Team Captures State Cup Title

Submitted by Elaine Gebhard



Bottom row (from left): Alex Dusauzay, Anna Dissman, Coach Bree Lisle, Caroline King, Claire Cimino; 2nd row: Julianna Ruotolo, Cynthia O'Neill, Gali Salinas, Danielle Dusauzay, Kaylee Johns, Tori James; 3rd row: Sam Bell, Delaney McKee, Ashlin Billich, Julia Rossi, Sabine Silva, Claire Matranga, Emily Dutton (not pictured: Lauren and Lindsey Conley) Photo Bill Cimino

Heritage Pride won the NorCal State Cup Girls U12 Silver Division Soccer Championship on Saturday, December 18th in Woodland by defeating Walnut Creek Fury 3-0. Heritage hails from Pleasant Hill, but Pride consists of 10 girls from Lamorinda. It was a highly emotional match, as each team has walked away with two victories and two losses in their last four meetings.

Pride came out on the offensive and led the first half in terms

of possession time and shots on goal. Pride took a 1-0 lead at the half. It was well into the second half, when Pride finally wore down their defense and came up with their second goal. The Fury mounted a late rally and had some tough shots on goal. Pride sealed the win with a final goal with only minutes to go.

After the game, Coach Bree Lisle said "These girls have worked so hard and I'm so proud of each one, and how far they have

come on and off the field as a team. I have never coached a team that gets along so well and really does play for each other."

The semi-final State Cup game played in Oakland the week prior Pride stormed back to defeat Diablo Futbol Club. It looked like DFC Black had the match wrapped up with a score of 3-0. With less than 15 minutes to play in the game, Pride staged a miraculous comeback and scored four goals in 10 minutes to win.

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LAMORINDA SPORTS 2010 Publisher's Pick



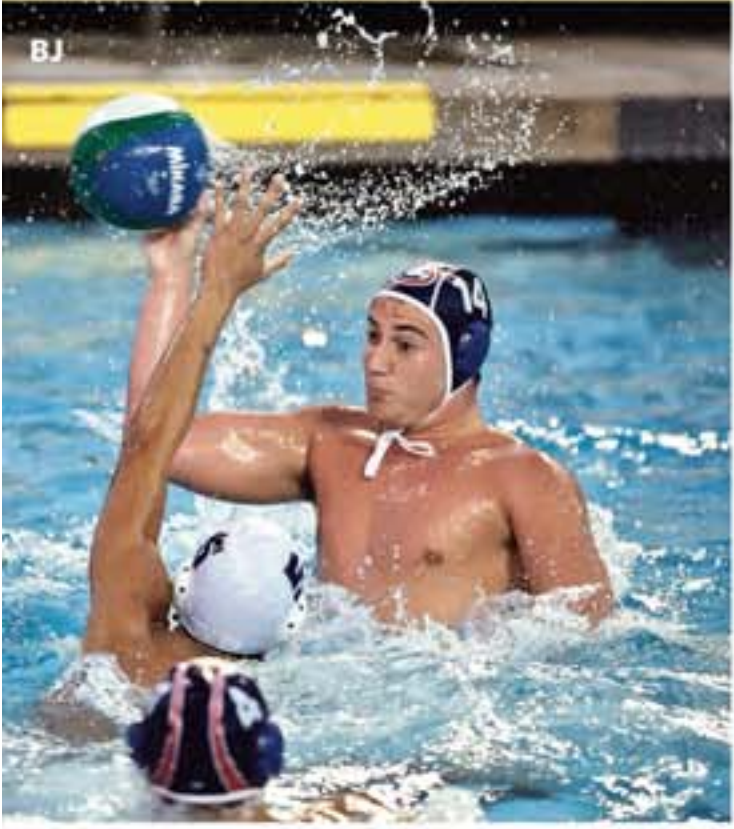
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**Tod Fierner (TF)
Jordan Fong (JF)
Bob Johnson (BJ)
Doug Kohen (DK)
Ohlen Alexander (OA)**



LAMORINDA SPORTS 2010 Publisher's Pick



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

Lamorinda Schools

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

Ask Dr. Harold

Recovering from Holiday Overload

By Dr. Harold Hoyle, Ph.D.

So I hope you survived the holidays. With all of the added events and schedule changes this can be difficult for kids and they can often get out of control. And let's face it, the situations we put them in during the holidays are the out of control part. So here is a little advice on starting to build back up those social skills or manners that went away during the holidays.

Behaviors

Think for a minute about what behaviors you would like your kids to be able to do better in the coming year. When you consider behavior you must consider three aspects. First, consider your child and his/her developmental level. Is the behavior one that is in his skill set and age group? If it isn't a skill he has, time to start teaching. If it isn't in his developmental level, time for you to learn to have realistic expectations. Second, consider the environment. Just like adults, some environments are more comfortable and less stressful for kids. Without telling them how they are, you can teach them to let you know if they are hot, tired, or hungry. These are the three most common culprits. Third, consider the state of mind or emotion of your child. A child who is "bored" needs a different skill taught than one who is angry.

Emotions

When we first get our emotions, they show up without notice and we don't know what they are or where they came from or what they are called. Our job as parents is to fill in those blanks. The younger your

child is the more you can help her label what is going on. As they age you need to help her find out what she is feeling on her own. You then move to teaching her some strategies for what to do about how she is feeling. For example, when I am angry I take a walk or go talk to someone. Triggers and cue are the next area to attend to. We all have our difficult situations and internal indicators as to when our emotions are getting out of control. Help your child to identify early on if she is getting upset or bored and then what strategies she can use to interrupt the cycle that ends up with everyone getting emotionally stressed.

Strategies

The main strategy for parents to help our kids is to help them identify what is going on with their behavior and emotions. If we can do this, we can help our kids to know the process they go through to get stressed out or lose control of their emotions or behaviors. Then and we can help them plan better to manage their emotions and behaviors.

Teaching manners is a strategy that has become the field of social skills training. In concept, though, our parents taught us social skills by teaching us manners. Manners are expectations for behaviors that can be very important. Manners are the social expectations that your kids can learn how to manage. They are our first social skills, they are not a surprise, and they are expected even when we are tired or hot or bored.

Once children see the consistency in expectations from us, they can start to learn and build on their learning to meet the expectations. What to do if all of our strategies fail? Remember you are still the parent and they are still your wonderful and beautiful children. Claim victory and move on to the next strategy. If you run out of strategies, start over. If we start building skills with our kids now that we want to see at the next family get together, we just might get there.



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Harold can be contacted by phone or email:
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hjhoye@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 private practice.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Acalanes Union
High School District
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, January 12, 7:30pm

Lafayette School District
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Wednesday, January 12, 7pm

Orinda Union School District
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, January 10, 4pm

Moraga School District
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
Tuesday, January 11, at 7:30pm

Registration for Lafayette students entering Kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year will take place January 25-26; Orinda's registration will be February 7-10; and in Moraga, registration will be March 3-4.

Lafayette – January 25-26
at the following schools and times:

Burton Valley Elementary
9-11am and 1-3pm
561 Merriewood Drive, 927-3550

Happy Valley Elementary
8:30-11:30am and 1-3pm
3855 Happy Valley Road, 927-3560

Lafayette Elementary
9am-noon
950 Moraga Road, 927-3570

Springhill Elementary
9-11am
3301 Springhill Road, 927-3580

Information regarding registration requirements and attendance areas is available at www.lafsd.k12.ca.us.

Orinda – February 7-10 from 9am-1pm at these schools:

Del Rey Elementary
25 El Camino Moraga, 258-3099

Glorietta Elementary
15 Martha Road, 254-8770

Sleepy Hollow Elementary
20 Washington Lane, 254-8711

Wagner Ranch Elementary
350 Camino Pablo, 258-0016

Information regarding Orinda registration requirements is available at www.orindaschools.org.

Moraga's registration schedule will be included here as soon as it becomes available.

Brownies Deliver Books for the Barrios

Submitted by Suzy Pak and Karen Zemelman



Front row: Sami, Jessica, Megan, Emma, Olivia, Sarah, Lauren
Back row: Sidney, Jane, Megan, Ellie (not pictured: Katie) Photo provided

Brownie Troop 33039 (3rd grade, Springhill Elementary School) recently took a trip to Books for the Barrios. The troop was inspired by a field trip the second grade classes attended last year and decided to hold a book and toy drive at Springhill. Before the winter break, the girls delivered and helped sort the donations at the warehouse in Concord. Their boxes will serve over 1,100 children in the Philippines. The girls are excited to work with Books for the Barrios again and would encourage others to do the same.

Orinda Academy Students Donate Toys

Submitted by Laurel Evans



Photo provided

Orinda Academy students were hard at work before their winter break bringing in and collecting toys to donate to the Bay Area Crisis Nursery and A Better Way. The students brought in dozens of gifts and

have also been helpful in packing up and delivering the gifts to the organizations. These gifts will be given to over 300 families in the Bay Area.

Girl Scouts Bring Bears

Submitted by Kimberley Winter



Photo provided

Girl Scout Troop 618 recently went to Elizabeth House in Oakland and hosted a Build-A-Bear Christmas party for the kids there. It was the most memorable and meaningful event the troop has had in eight years. From left: Julia, Danielle, Ava, Haley, Hannah, and Maddie.

Troop 30709 Earns Silver Award

Submitted by Claire Phillips



Photo provided

The five Girl Scouts of Lafayette Troop 30709 were recently awarded their Silver Award, the highest award given by the organization to girls age 11-14. The five Scouts (pictured above, Sarah, Natalie, Nikki, and Anna; not pictured, Sierra) received the award for a community service project benefiting Children's Hospital of Oakland in which they raised funds and collected materials to assemble over 360 toiletry kits for parents who unexpectedly must stay at the hospital with their children.

Submit stories to schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda Weekly

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- Letters to the Editor
- Decorating for the Holidays-Just Do It
- Moraga Police Blotter
- Moraga's New Town Council
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Life in LAMORINDA

The California Independent Film Festival Finds a Home in Moraga

13th Annual Festival Opens January 28th

... continued from page A1



Left to right: Derek Zemrak, Sam McAlpine, Beau Behan, Casey Pirkle, Scott Byer, Leonard Pirkle Photo Andy Scheck

Iron Filmmaker is Back. The popular Iron Filmmaker event will showcase the efforts of up-and-coming local writers, directors, videographers, and actors. Last year, Lamorinda filmmaking teams came out on top taking first and third place honors in this contest, which challenges filmmakers to create a 3-minute movie on a specific theme in 24 hours. Contestants are encouraged to go to the CAIFF website to register to participate; the first 30 entries will be accepted. Films must include the "secret ingredients" that all participants will be given at the kick-off meeting on the morning of Saturday, January 22nd, and must be submitted by 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 23rd. All of the Iron Filmmaker films will be shown on the big screen in the main theater on Saturday the 29th starting at 10:00 a.m.

The Gala Slate Awards. On Sunday the 30th, film enthusiasts are invited to attend the CAIFF Gala Slate Awards. Brunch will be

served on the stage of the main theater and films will be recognized in a variety of categories. (Fans can attend the brunch and/or the award ceremony alone). Actor Lou Diamond Phillips, well known for his portrayal of Ritchie Valens in the film *La Bamba*, will be presented with a Maverick Award. And Shirley Jones, the star of several films including the musicals *Oklahoma* and *Music Man*, will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award. Most middle-aged (and older) Lamorinda moms will fondly recall watching Jones as the multi-tasking, singing, bus-driving mother of five in the television sitcom *The Partridge Family* and probably wonder today where she got all the energy! The film *Oklahoma* will be shown in the main theater following the awards ceremony.

Try a Short. Throughout the week, the Festival will also showcase a number and variety of movie shorts, films from three to thirty minutes in length. "Shorts are the

nucleus of independent film making. It is often the vehicle for inde-

pendent film makers getting started," says Behan.

The Closer. The final night of the Festival (Thursday, February 3rd) will feature the winning Shorts Showcase and the film *Mayor Cupcake*—the story of a hard-working cupcake-maker who is inadvertently elected mayor of a small town burdened with debt. Moviegoers will have another chance to catch the celebrity buzz and ask questions of the film's star Lea Thompson, who gained film fame in the *Back to the Future* series and on the television sitcom *Caroline in the City*.

"The whole community is rallying behind us. I think it is going to be a great success worthy of its 13th year," says Behan, who is keeping busy with the final preparations leading up to the Festival. "I hope the Festival will provide another opportunity to put Moraga on the map," he says, revealing his ubiquitous smile and adding, "We have found a home."

California Independent Film Festival 2011 Main Events—What's Not to be Missed

- Saturday, January 22nd 10:00 a.m.—Iron Filmmaker Kick off
- Sunday, January 23rd 11:00 a.m.—Iron Filmmaker Submission Deadline
- Friday, January 28th
5:00 p.m.—Opening Night Red Carpet Reception
6:30 p.m.—*The 5th Quarter* in the main theater
- Saturday, January 29th
10 a.m.—Iron Filmmaker Showcase
- Sunday, January 30th
11:30 a.m.—Gala Slate Awards and Brunch
2:30 p.m.—*Oklahoma* in the main theater
- Thursday, February 3rd
5:30 p.m.—Closing Reception
7:45 p.m.—*Mayor Cupcake* and Winning Shorts Showcase screening

For the complete CAIFF 2011 line up go to www.caiff.org. Tickets for all of the films and showcases are available online at the CAIFF website or at the theater. Advance purchase is advised for the opening night screening of *The 5th Quarter*, the Slate Awards, and closing night film *Mayor Cupcake*.

Putting Money in your RecycleBank

By Sophie Braccini



It all goes in the brown container: mixed paper, plastic bottles, cans, cardboard; (from left) Bart Carr, Janna McKay, Emily Carr, Paul Morsen. Photo Sophie Braccini

Beginning in January it pays to recycle in Orinda and Moraga, as the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority launches a one-year pilot program called RecycleBank that offers a financial incentive for recycling. Residents who sign up and diligently use their

brown recycling containers will get points they can redeem at local stores or contribute to local schools; success will be measured by neighborhood, not by individual bin.

When Paul Morsen, the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority's (CCCSWA)

Executive Director, noticed a decline in metrics for the recycling of residential waste, his team immediately started looking for ways to encourage residents to do more. "When we heard that RecycleBank, a company that monitors the weight of recycled materials and provides rewards for improvement, was looking for a pilot program participant on the west coast, we started a discussion with them," says Morsen.

The objective of the pilot program is to increase brown-bin recycling by 20% (by weight) within a year. Recycled material is measured and recorded for each recycling route so performance can be benchmarked and measured over the course of time. Recycling trucks will use a special GPS system to identify which homes have taken out their brown containers. If a home is signed up for the program, the customer will be credited with points according to the increase recorded on the respective route. So registering is not enough, residents must improve their total recycling performance to be credited with points.

This week, RecycleBank is mailing information to homes

in Orinda and Moraga. By mid-January, residents will receive a registration card with instructions for registering at www.recyclebank.com. Residents will also be able to go to this website to monitor and use accumulated points.

... continued on page L3

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Community Service

Kiwanis See's Candies Fundraiser a Big Success

Submitted by Bob Reynolds and John Haffner



Some of the many Kiwanis members who assisted with the candy shop, from left: Tim Freeman, Linda Zoccoli, Karen Reed, and Dick Ayres.

Moraga Kiwanis has just concluded a very successful effort to bring See's Candies to Lamorinda for the holidays. The response was extraordinary. The net proceeds from this fundraiser will go to community service and charitable organizations. These included local causes such as the Moraga Education Foundation, the Education Foundation of Orinda, Lafayette Partners in Education, the Monument Crisis Center, and the Food Bank.

Many of the people that came through our doors said "Thank you, Kiwanis for providing this service to our community." Moraga Kiwanis would like to extend a big thank you to Lamorinda - Thank you for your support of our efforts to pro-

vide a better place to live and to raise our children.

Moraga Kiwanis plans to be back again next year, offering See's finest holiday California candies to all in Lamorinda. More importantly, we look forward to putting our funds to work in our communities.

The club also extends special thanks to CVS, Kimco, and the Moraga Farmers Market, which generously provided us space for this fundraiser.

Moraga Kiwanis meets every Thursday at 7:15 a.m. at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. Guests are always welcome. For more information, go to www.MoragaValleyKiwanis.Org.

Posh of Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini

What would a cosmopolitan woman with the looks of a model and an artistic taste in fashion do in Lafayette when she decides to create a new career for herself? Roya Bayat's answer to this question was easy: Posh, a retail apparel store for women. Located at the corner of Mount Diablo Boulevard and Brown Avenue, the little cottage she opened five weeks ago is filled with sophisticated, and very feminine, outfits and accessories that should easily find a market in Lamorinda.

Bayat was raised in Iran and lived in different countries including Turkey and Italy. "I love living in this country because I don't feel like a foreigner here," she says. "People can be very friendly in other countries, but if you have a foreign accent you will never be considered one of them. It is not the same here - people embrace you, where ever you come from."

Bayat used to be a fashion buyer. She is the mother of two young children and is also an artist - some of her paintings and sculptures are displayed in her store. "I cannot really make a living with my art," she says, "but opening this store is a great

way to combine my love of fashion and contributing to my family." Bayat says that she loves making women beautiful.

Her worldly education shows in the choice of unique clothes she sells. "I fly to New York showrooms at least once a month to see collections and order interesting things," says Bayat, "from my previous job as a buyer I know all the distributors in person." Her favorite creators are from New York, Italy, France, Los Angeles and sometimes Spain. "I like clothes that are fashionable, luxurious and at the same time, comfortable," she says, "something you can wear to go pick up the kids at school and look marvelous in."

The result is an assortment of diverse outfits, from some that exude simple elegance to others that are more romantic or bright.

"I have chosen a place that's still quite affordable and I keep my operating expenses low," says Bayat, "I want people here to have access to unique fashion that's not outrageously expensive." The store is small, and Bayat puts only a few sizes on the racks, while holding the rest in her storage room - she carries sizes 2 to 10



Roya Bayat in her new shop, Posh Photo Sophie Braccini

(for some items) - priced from \$8 accessories to a few hundred dollars for pieces of clothing.

"I feel fortunate to have found the cottage, with a façade on Brown where the business owners are so friendly, and the opposite front on the plaza that's so charming," says Bayat, adding that she feels blessed to

have been warmly welcomed in the neighborhood.

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Music group at Terzetto with teacher Carol Alban (standing left with flute) and Terzetto owner Roos Pal (standing right) Photo Sophie Braccini

A unique idea occurred to Terzetto Cuisine owner Roos Pal when she met Carol Alban, a fellow Moragan and music teacher: offering a free musical experience to children in the restaurant, while their parents have dinner. "Tuesday night is our Kids' Night, with a special .99 cent children menu, and I had been thinking for a while about adding some activities for children," says Pal. "Sometimes it is hard for parents to bring kids to a restaurant; they deserve to have a relaxed dinner, too!"

When flutist and music professor Carol Alban came to the restaurant to find a venue for a benefit concert for Haiti, the two women started talking and the idea of musical evenings for kids formed. "This is a free-format group lesson for children age 7 to 17," explains Alban, "There is a piano, along with keyboards and guitars; some of my students come with their instruments, others do not know anything about music. We explore together, we play, we have fun and by the end of the evening we can all play something together." The musical Tuesdays are scheduled for the second and fourth Tuesday of each month (in January, it will be on the 11th and the 25th), starting at 5:30 p.m. "We've done it twice already and had 9-10 children participating," says Pal, "they liked it because there is no competition, no pressure, and they just have fun with music." Alban's way of teaching is about teaching the children the joy of playing: "I think that each Tuesday will be different, depending on who comes," said Alban, "I want to give them all the pleasure of creating music together." For more information about Alban, go to: www.myspace.com/carolalban.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

- Lafayette**
- No Mixer in January for the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Save the date of February 9 for the first mixer of 2011 at Wells Fargo Bank, 5:30- 7pm.
 - Shop Lafayette Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 1, 12:30pm in the Chamber Conference Room
 - Green Committee Meeting on Wednesday, January 19 at noon in the Chamber Conference Room. BYOL (Bring your own lunch).
 - Entrepreneur's Club on Thursday, January 20, 8:30am in the Chamber Conference Room
- Moraga**
- Chamber General Meeting on January 28, 7:30 - 9am). The first General Meeting of the year will be held at the Hacienda, 2100 Donald Drive. Roos' muffins and delicious coffee will be served.
- Orinda**
- Orinda Chamber Luncheon on Friday, January 28, 2011, noon-1:30pm at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda. RSVP highly recommended - to purchase tickets online go to the Chamber's web site at orindachamber.org. The cost is \$30.00 per person. The guest speaker is Tom Franier - co-owner of Semifreddi's Bakery. He will be talking about "Slow Capitalism."

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Putting Money in your RecycleBank

... continued from page L1

"The way to redeem the points is two-fold," explains Bart Carr, Senior Program Manager with CCCSWA, "business partners offer rebates (see side bar for a sample list), or residents can decide to give their points to local schools, filling up the schools' bank."

For schools, the process will consist of applying for grants from RecycleBank to get specific projects financed. "The projects need to have a tie to helping the environment," adds RecycleBank publicist Melody Serafino.

"This program meets the requirement of the Board of the Authority to deliver a measurable output; an actual increase in recyclable material," says CCCSWA Board of Directors Chair, and Orinda Mayor, Victoria Smith, "Residents will receive rewards if they increase the amount of recyclables they leave out on the curb each week; our goal is to have each household increase their recycling by 200 tons annually."

"RecycleBank is well developed on the East Coast and the Mid-West," says Morsen, "they have registered remarkable success where recycling was only budding. They were looking for a west coast community to determine if the program could further improve

performance in communities already considered to have good recycling rates."

Morsen explains that Orinda and Moraga were chosen because the two communities together create the critical mass of 10,000 homes that's needed to evaluate the project, and because Orinda, with its hills and intricate topography, is one of the toughest areas to service—"If the pilot works there, I feel confident that I'll be able to go back to my Board and ask for the extension of the program to our total area of service," he states.

Morsen explains that his agency's motivation is not to break recycling records, or even to reach the 75% recycling rate claimed by San Francisco. "Our objective is to save money for our users by diverting more from landfills: we (and therefore our clients) are charged by the ton of garbage going to the landfill; the more we divert, the less you pay." Right now Lamorinda recycles the State-mandated 50% of its waste, but Morsen anticipates that the legal requirements will go up in the years to come. "We are very excited about bringing a new program into Orinda and Moraga to explore the opportunity to reduce and reuse household waste," concludes Smith.

Oyama Sushi Opens in Lafayette

By Roslynn Aragonés Stenzel



Oyama Sushi chefs Tommy Zhang and Peter Wang display the special of the day made with spicy salmon and mango. Photo R. Aragonés Stenzel

Just in time for the new year, Oyama Sushi is open for business on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Mountain View in

the former Quizno's space in Lafayette.

The definition of Oyama is mountain which means good luck

in Japanese. The good luck seems to be working as Oyama Sushi has had a steady flow of business since opening on December 11.

Sushi chefs and co-owners Tommy Zhang and Peter Wang together bring over 15 years of sushi-making experience in the Bay Area to their new restaurant. Both from China, they are good friends who have a passion for making sushi. "Making sushi is an expression of ourselves as artists," says Zhang.

They describe their expansive menu as Japanese fusion; offering daily specials, appetizers and over 40 different types of Maki Sushi Rolls and Nigiri, as well as serving traditional dishes including Udon, Tempura, and Teriyaki.

Zhang and Wang want their customers to enjoy the dining experience by offering food with the best quality and freshness in a

beautiful atmosphere where customers feel comfortable, relaxed and at home. Speaking of high quality and freshness, Zhang orders the fish each night, and it is delivered every day from local Japanese fish companies.

They say the welcoming response from the community has been phenomenal. During construction, many stopped by to check on the opening; so much so that they decided to open earlier than expected.

Oyama Sushi is located at 3651 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette. They're open seven days a week; Monday - Saturday, 11:30 - 2:30 p.m. for lunch and 4:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. for dinner, and Sunday 4:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. For more information call (925) 283-6888 or visit www.oyama-sushi.com.

Reinventing Yourself in Retirement

By Sophie Braccini



Roberta Dillon (pink sweater) with her class Photo courtesy R. Dillon

Roberta Dillon does not believe anyone should drift lazily and aimlessly toward retirement; to take full advantage of this potentially rewarding time of life one must make a plan - she firmly believes that some serious soul searching is in order. That conviction sent her on an exploration of her own when she found herself prematurely retired from corporate America. Her quest led her to create a class, first taught at the College of Marin, which is coming to Saint Mary's College as part of the Lifelong Learning program. It is called "Celebrate Retirement - The freedom and the frustration," and is scheduled to begin on February 22, meeting for seven Tuesday evenings.

"When my job was eliminated, I fought it for a while," said Peter Boam, who took Dillon's class, "the class was a way to accept retirement, confirm what I wanted to do, and make a plan to get there." Boam added that the phrase "freedom and frustration" embodies what he felt when his position, as Director for Communication and Compliance with Harley Davidson in Los Angeles, was eliminated.

"How Peter (Boam) felt, the 'what now?' is what many people experience, once the newness of the situation wears off," says Dillon, "men who were powerful suffer the most. They've lost a large part of their identity and their 'work-family.' They have to rein-

vent themselves and discover how to manifest their dreams."

Dillon learned these lessons the hard way, through imposed experience. She didn't think that she was anywhere close to retirement when she was unexpectedly retired from her vice president position in the financial industry a few years ago. "I knew I would get another job," she said, "but then, I didn't!" She remembers that the frustration and fear sent her into a tailspin. She traveled all over the country in an effort to retool herself and ended on a journey of self-discovery. In Atlanta, she took a class called "Celebrate Retirement" and gained so much from the experience that, after discussing the possibilities with the instructors, she decided to teach her own version at the College of Marin.

Dillon finds that each participant comes to the class at a different stage in life and from a variety of circumstances. Some have yet to retire and want to more effectively plan for it, while others have been retired for years and want to expand their horizons; still others have been thrust into this stage of life. Some people are so bitter about what has happened to them that they can't share anything at the beginning of the class, they just listen and take notes. "Sharing is optional," she says, "but by the end of the class most everyone opens up and contributes to the group."

"I was totally unfocused when I got my severance package and I was not the only one," says Boam, "one person in the class decided that she wanted to live in Thailand, another was a financial adviser who wanted to do more with food preparation." Boam added that both the group setting and the methodology used by Dillon were huge time-savers in getting the next phase of his life on track.

"I see myself as a facilitator," says Dillon, "we work with a manual that includes exercises, but each group has a different personality and each class has a life of its own. I am just there to steer the boat."

According to Dillon, "Celebrate Retirement" is a class that offers the tools to take the fear out of retiring and starting a new life. Boam, who was a radio broadcaster earlier in his career, is now a high school sports announcer for both football and basketball. He also launched his own web site and does voice-over gigs. "We had a lot of fun," said Boam, "I would recommend it for anyone in transition, at whatever stage of their lives."

Registration for the class ends on February 11. Contact Grete Stenersen, Lifelong Learning Director, by calling 631-4162 or emailing gsteners@stmarys-ca.edu.

RecycleBank's Participating Businesses

"While Recyclebank has national chain stores in place with whom they partner, the Orinda and Moraga CCCSWA representatives, Vice Chair Mendonca, Board Members Trotter and Glazer, and myself, worked hard to include local Orinda and Moraga businesses and restaurants in the mix of vendors who will offer rewards in our communities; we see this as a win-win for our residents and for our local businesses." says Orinda Mayor Victoria Smith.

Initially, RecycleBank points may be used at Lava Pit, Diablo Foods, Lindsay Wildlife Museum, California Shakespeare Theater, Curves, Lamorinda Pizza, Loard's Ice Cream, Mountain Mike's Pizza, Orchard Supply Hardware, Ristorante Amoroma, Terzetto Cuisine, Chillers, Geppetto's Caffe, Orinda Books, Shelby's, Casa Orinda, and McDonnell Nursery. Check the RecycleBank website, www.recyclebank.com, for updates on participating businesses.

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Take the Body You Have; Make it the Body You Want

By Edan Rubin

"New Year's resolution time, I want to fit into those old jeans!" "Boy, the holidays really did a number on me; I've got to get in the gym!" "Man it would be great to just drop these ten pounds and tighten up." "I really just want to look and feel better." Particularly around this time of year, sentiments such as these are all too common. Whether the goal is five pounds or 50, getting stronger, slimming down, achieving better health, or most commonly some combination, we all love the idea of working out and getting results. And why not? The idea of transforming our bodies is very exciting and can be highly motivating. There's no question that most of us have the desire to change for the better; that desire is a great start, and it's critical for success. Unfortunately, the more critical part, namely the tools and knowledge of how to make those changes, is something that most of us simply lack.

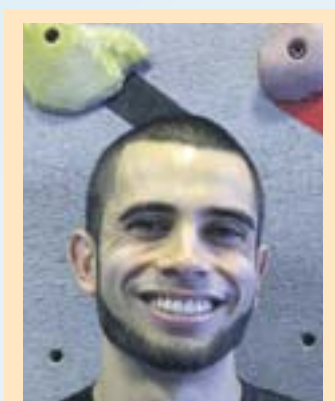
How many of us have (or know someone who has) ambitiously joined a gym or started a new fitness program and been unsure of what to do, or even why we're doing what we're doing? We often wander into the gym, spend some time on the treadmill or exercise bike, maybe use a few weight machines, and call it a day; ultimately we exercise inefficiently or even counter-productively. We don't really know how to work out and consequently, we have no idea what kind of results to expect. This sort of aimless, unguided exercising almost invariably leads to frustration and loss of motivation, and causes us to believe that changing our bodies is simply too hard, that the time we spend isn't good enough and we're just not in complete control of our results. In reality however, all we're missing is the understanding of what to do, and why to do it.

Perhaps the simplest, most fundamental (yet often overlooked) principle of fitness is the importance of elevating the heart rate. Getting our heart rate up is the sin-

gle most important part for an effective workout. It's critical for better cardiovascular health and burning calories, and plays a vital role in other workout principles, such as the necessity of both weights and cardio training. Similarly, it can be used to improve our fitness throughout our daily lives, particularly for those of us whose jobs involve minimal movement.

Parking farther from the office and walking, skipping the elevator for the stairs, always taking phone calls standing up, getting out of the chair every hour for a brisk two-minute walk are all practical, effective habits to implement during the work day that really add up. Not only do these help us burn extra calories, they increase our metabolism and keep muscles and joints from stiffening up. Ultimately, small changes like these go a long way in improving our health habits and better preparing us for our workouts.

We all want to look better, feel fitter and be healthier; it's natural and for most of us, it's downright necessary. The body we want is waiting for us; how long will we wait before making it a reality?



Edan Rubin is a UCLA graduate and a certified personal trainer of the National Strength and Conditioning Association. He currently lives in Orinda and provides personal training both in-home and at Forma Gym in downtown Walnut Creek. He can be reached at 925-948-5972 or at edanrubin@gmail.com.

Stress Without Strain in 2011

By Dr. Theresa Tsings, DCMS

At this time of year many people are experiencing significant levels of stress. Situations such as the loss of a job, illness, relationship difficulties and other significant disappointments present themselves all year long and must be dealt with but seem even more challenging during the holidays. The purpose of this article is to explore options for diminishing or relieving the very real stresses we face and to experience more peace in our lives. Below are four simple and effective coping skills:

1. Put it in Perspective - It's my opinion that high stress levels result from both the *reality* of and the *perception* of the stressful events. As Coach Charlie Widemeyer (who suffered with ALS) once said, "Pain and suffering are inevitable - but misery is optional." Emotions stemming from stressful events are part of human experience and shouldn't be denied or ignored, however a chronic negative outlook intensifies and increases the stress response. The phrase "Thoughts are things" applies here. Negative inner dialogue triggers a physiological change, activating the brain and nervous system via a "Fright, flight and fight" mechanism. The stress hormones produced raise blood pressure and heart rate, decrease digestion, imbalance blood sugar, and damage brain cells. Conversely, positive, calm thoughts and coping mechanisms diminish the physical experience of stressors in the environment. Therefore,

as stressful events unfold it's advisable to pause briefly to reflect on positive things in your life and remind yourself that the current situation is a passing event not tied to your entire existence.

2. Deep Breathing - This is perhaps the most effective measure that can be undertaken in any moment of the day to reduce stress. During a commute, a challenging meeting, in the heat of one's daily grind and in its aftermath, a routine of focused breathing is a restorative and centering exercise. Breathing is something we do anyway, so why not do it in a way that makes life easier and the body healthier? Deep, slow abdominal breathing is free, unnoticeable to others, and slows down the stress-cortisol system, sending an "It's all right" message to the brain and body. Note: breathing deeply will also improve libido and mood, as it activates the part of the nervous system that controls pleasure centers.

3. Eat well and Exercise - When eating healthily, brain blood sugar stabilizes, which is critically important for clear and stress-free thoughts and emotions. Exercise improves circulation to the body, resulting in improved brain function. Good nutrition and regular exercise can correct many imbalances, lead to reduction of distress and illness, restore vitality, and consequently add more joy to everyday events. And a great by-product of this is losing weight. How to fit it into a busy life? Put it on your schedule,

then as George Carlin said, "Always do whatever's next" and begin to integrate it into your life gradually until you find the right levels for you.

4. Connect with Others - For some it seems that friends and family should not be "burdened" with stories about one's stress, especially at this time of year when one is expected to be cheerful and happy. Yet these connections and sources of support are essential to living life in a positive and balanced way. It is a truly beautiful gift, unique to each of us, to both receive and lend support, a personal declaration of love and faith in the human spirit. "In the progress of personality, first comes the declaration of independence, then a recognition of interdependence," wrote Henry Van Dyke. The wonder of connection with others is that just a little attentiveness and honesty can open the heart and reduce the stress that would otherwise intensify with isolation and oneliness.

I hope during this new year that stress eases up for everyone. In the meantime, let these suggestions help you to experience "stress without strain!"



Dr. Theresa Tsings, 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- drTsings@comcast.net.

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3. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20237163> - Increased sympathetic & decreased parasympathetic nervous system activity correlated with metabolic abnormalities.

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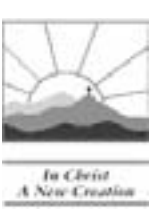
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Not to be missed

ART

The Lafayette Gallery is presenting the Heart Throb Exhibit.



Bursting Through by Judy Bolef Miller
There will be a "meet the artists" reception from 6:30-8:30pm on Friday, February 4. Gallery Hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-5pm. Located at 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Admission is free. For more information please call (925) 284-2788 or go to www.lafayettegallery.net.

The Orinda Library Gallery will showcase over twenty images of Orinda from the early 1900's as part of the exhibit New Images of Old Orinda - 1901 to 1920's sponsored by the Orinda Historical Society (OHS). The newly discovered photos of Orinda were taken between 1901 and the mid-1920's by Edward I. deLaveaga. The opening reception for the exhibit will be held on Friday, January 7th from 4:30-6pm. For more information, contact the Orinda Historical Society at (925) 254-1353. (Read the article in our Dec. 22nd issue on our web site at www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0421/Next-Up-in-the-Library-Gallery-New-Images-of-Old-Orinda.html.)

The Moraga Art Gallery ushers



Trail to Valle Vista by George Ehrenhaft
in a new show, 2 plus 2 = 1, shorthand for "Two Artists, Two Visions: A Singular Experience," on January 11, 2011. The exhibit brings together paintings in various media by Orinda's Beryl Glen-Reiland and watercolors by Moraga's George Ehrenhaft. An opening reception-- Saturday, January 15 from 3-5pm will feature live music by Andrea Farrell, a classical guitarist and singer. All are invited to the Gallery located in the Rheem Shopping Center, 570 Center Street, Moraga, to eat, drink, look and listen. For more information call (925) 376-5407.

MUSIC

The Performing Arts Society's Tuesday evening concert for January will open with Cesar Franck's Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano, followed by Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E-flat Major Opus 31, no. 3. The free concert concludes with John Marvin's Pieces for English Horn and Piano and Elliott Carter's Pastoral for English Horn and Piano. January 11, 8pm. Located at the Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek. For more information go to www.ccpas.org.

Not to be missed

CLUBS

Moraga Movers will start the New Year with a luncheon at St. Mary's Soda Center on January 10 at 11am. The speaker is Jane Hoffman from the John Muir Hospital Garret, a shop taking used items for sale to fund special needs at the hospital. Members and guests can call (925)376-6622 for reservations. Lamorinda residents age 55 and older may also call.

SMC Jan Term Speaker Series: Tuesday, January 25 at 7pm, Robert B. Reich, the Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley and former U.S. Secretary of Labor, will explain why it's so difficult for us to get out of the gravitational pull of the Great Recession and why American politics is becoming angrier and more polarized. In his view, the two are related. Professor Reich's most recent book is the bestseller "Aftershock: The Next Economy and America's Future." He blogs at www.robertreich.org. Soda Activity Center, Saint Mary's College of California, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga.

"God's Outrageous Universe: Studies in Faith & Science" Retired nuclear physicist, Dr. Roland (Rollie) Otto will speak about "Dark Energy", "Dark Matter" and "Gravity" Jan 9, 16, and 23rd from 9:45-10:30am at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda. Info: Lisa @ 925-254-3422 or www.Godsoutrageousuniverse.org.

The Truth About the Litigation Explosion is the subject for the First Friday Forum meeting January 7, 1:30pm, in the Sanctuary of the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. The public is cordially invited. For further information call (925)283-8722 or go online, LOPC.org, News and Information.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

The Contra Costa Jewish Day School invites prospective families to a School Tour for Kindergarten - 8th grade on Wednesday, January 12, 9:30-11:00am at the school, 3836 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette (next to Temple Isaiah). For further information and to RSVP please contact Amy Wittenberg, Admissions Director at (925) 284-8288 or amyw@ccjds.org or visit www.ccjds.org.

Stop Ear Infections Once and For All Homeopathy Every Day Study Group, Thurs., Jan. 20, 6 - 7pm, Conference Room, Floor 2, 43 Quail Court, Suite 215, Walnut Creek. Natalya Golovanov, ND, and Myra Nissen, CCH, RSHom(NA) discuss common approaches to homeopathy for ear infections and strep throat in children. Fee \$9.00. Contact: Myra Nissen, CCH, RSHom(NA) (925) 826-3858; www.homeopathyeveryday.com.

OTHER

The Living Lean marathon invites you to come exercise for a cause at Orinda's Theatre Square. Saturday January 15, \$40 per person (ALL proceeds donated to SHELTER, Inc.) SHELTER, Inc. is an independent, charitable, non-profit organization founded in 1986 to alleviate Contra Costa County's homeless crisis. Their mission is to help homeless families obtain homes, prevent families from losing their homes, and purchase and maintain affordable housing.

Workshop at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, for free Facebook strategies. Wednesday, January 19, 8-9:30am. Topics include time efficient strategies and tactics you can use to leverage Facebook to help achieve your 2011 business goals. Reservations are recommended due to limited seating. Email your reservations today at workshops@lafayettechamber.org.

CLUBS

Moraga Movers will start the New Year with a luncheon at St. Mary's Soda Center on January 10 at 11am. The speaker is Jane Hoffman from the John Muir Hospital Garret, a shop taking used items for sale to fund special needs at the hospital. Members and guests can call (925)376-6622 for reservations. Lamorinda residents age 55 and older may also call.

Montelindo Garden 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 and garden accessory sale at 9am meeting at 9:30, and speaker at 10:30. The meeting is free and welcomes guests and new members. Web Site: www.montelindogarden.com. email contact: montelindogarden@aol.com. On Friday, January 21, our speaker will be Laural Roaldson, owner of Laural Landscapes in Walnut Creek. Her topic is "Maximizing Your Yard Without the Lawn."

Lafayette Garden Club meets at 9:30am, second Thursdays monthly, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. The topic for Jan. 13 is "The 10 Worst Mistakes You Can Make In Your Garden and Why, Good Design is a Must." Our speaker Jill Appenzeller is a passionate gardener, author and landscaper designer. Her articles have been featured in many national and local publications and on HDTV.

CRAB FEEDS

American Legion Post 517's Crab Feed & Raffle to Benefit The Boys State & The Fisher House of Palo Alto will be on Sunday, January 9 at The Veteran's Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette. Friendship Hour: 5pm; Dinner: 6pm. Tickets are \$40.00. For information and ticket sales call 510-919-1074 or 510-407-7032 or email: andyb@pveventgroup.com.

Knights of Columbus Council #7683 16th annual Crab Feed, Saturday, Jan 29 in St. Monica's Peace Room in Moraga. Appetizers and no-host cocktails will be served at 6pm. Dinner at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$50. Contact Karl Anderson at (925) 283-3679.

Crab Feed & Dance, Saturday, February 5, 6-11pm, Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Music provided by popular DJ. Dinner & Dance \$37.50; Dance only \$10. For non-crab lovers: Chicken available by special advance order request. Dinner tickets MUST be purchased in advance. For info. & reservations call (925) 672-6799.

Soroptimist International of 24-680's annual Crab Feed & silent auction, Saturday February 12, 5:30 pm, Lower Court Oakwood Athletic Club, Lafayette, \$40 per person. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Soroptimist International's mission is to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. For tickets & information: (925) 285-7797 or si24-680@soroptimist.net.

Please submit:
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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Lower Court
Oakwood Athletic Club, Lafayette
\$40 per person
tickets must be purchased in advance
casual dress

For tickets & information:
925.285.7797
siz4-680@soroptimist.net

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Soroptimist International, founded in 1921 is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with over 93,000 members in 121 countries. Our mission is to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world.

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Crab Feed & Dance

Saturday, February 5, 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Bring your appetites & dancing shoes.
Music provided by popular DJ.
Dinner & Dance \$37.50; Dance only \$10.



For non-crab lovers: Chicken available by special advance order request. Dinner tickets MUST be purchased in advance.

For info. & reservations call (925) 672-6799.
Holy Trinity Cultural Center,
1700 School Street, Moraga.

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Crab and More Crab!

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

Dianna Davis-Condon has been a staple on the local foodie scene, providing gourmet meal delivery service and teaching cooking classes to kids and adults alike. The former Viking Home Chef instructor has a growing contingent of protégées from budding junior chefs at the Del Rey School to adults who have discovered a love of cooking. In October, she branched out with her own catering and event planning business, to add to her list of offerings.

sun, but Mediterranean and Latin are her favorite cuisines. She has a 19-page menu from which to choose and she says that people seem to love her “Mexican-influenced Spanish Paella”, chicken enchilada casserole and her three lasagna options—beef, grilled veggie or turkey sausage.

My favorite so far is her crab cake recipe, which she has gladly shared with readers along with the Crab and Brie Phyllo Turnovers. But, from perusing her amazing menu, I am anxious to try the Parmesan Polenta Rounds, Greek Pastisio (lamb, beef, penne pasta and Béchamel sauce), Slow Braised BBQ Pork Pull, Five-Cheese Potatoes Gratin, and her Italian Chocolate Pudding Cakes!

Dianna Condon Cuisine is a full-service catering and event planning company that will continue to offer culinary instruction to all ages. In late January, after the flour has settled from a busy holiday schedule, Condon hopes to resume her “Gourmet Meal Delivery Service” where she will offer low-fat and low-sodium menus, in addition to regular fare. These meals will be available at Living Lean in Orinda’s Theater Square.



To learn more about Dianna Condon Cuisine, or to order a meal for home delivery service, please call or visit her website. For meal delivery, 24-28 hours notice is requested. Phone: (925) 255-5104
www.diannacondoncuisine.com
Email: info@diannacondoncuisine.com

“My goal is for people to be as fit and healthy as they possibly can in order to fully enjoy the gifts that each day brings,” said Condon, who not only cooks for a living, but also teaches “The Bar Method” workout.

“Cooking food, entertaining and making life’s small pleasures look as beautiful as possible are my passions,” she added. “I am excited to begin this new adventure of full service catering and event planning while maintaining my commitment to teaching culinary skills and fitness.”

Condon says she cooks just about everything under the

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suziven@gmail.com.



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

Crab Cakes Dianna

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups fresh, coarse bread crumbs from French bread (process to the size of a pea)
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 pound fresh Dungeness crabmeat, picked over to remove bits of cartilage/shell
- 2/3 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 eggs, separated



Crab Cakes Dianna

Photo Susie Iventosch

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large mixing bowl, toss bread crumbs with 2 tablespoons olive oil.
2. Add all ingredients except eggs and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add egg yolks and stir to combine.
3. In bowl of stand mixer whip egg whites until they hold stiff peaks. Gently fold into crab mixture.
4. Form into balls approximately 3 inches in diameter (1 inch if making appetizers), and then slightly flatten tops and bottoms.
5. *Heat remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large ovenproof skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add crab cakes, cook until golden, and turn over. Transfer to oven to finish cooking, about 8 minutes more. Makes 8 large or 24 minis.
6. Serve with a Remoulade Sauce or Spicy Yogurt Sauce
*To save one step, you can simply brush crab cakes with olive oil and bake at 424° for 5-7 minutes per side, skipping the sauté step.

Crab and Brie Phyllo Turnovers

Melt 1 stick of butter and cool slightly. Lay out 1 piece of Phyllo dough with the long side perpendicular to you. Brush some melted butter on the short ends (parallel to you) at the top and bottom - about 2 inches. Cut the dough in half, the long way, and then each of the halves in half. You should have four strips. At the base closest to you, place 1 teaspoon of brie and one teaspoon of fresh crab. Begin folding each piece like a flag. Place each triangle on a parchment lined baking sheet. Repeat to make as many as you like. Brush each triangle with melted butter. Bake at 400 for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with your favorite Remoulade or Susie's Spicy Yogurt Sauce!

Remoulade Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 roasted red pepper (fresh or 2 pieces from a jar)
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 sour cream
- 1/4 cup celery, rough chopped
- 1/2 cup green onion, finely sliced
- 1/4 cup Italian flat leaf parsley, rough chopped
- 1/4 cup horseradish
- 1/2 lemon, zested and juiced
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon
- 1 tablespoon Tabasco
- 1 tablespoon fresh garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Add all ingredients to a food processor and blend until fairly smooth Chill until ready to serve (at least one hour).

Spicy Yogurt Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- 2 teaspoons prepared horseradish (more or less as you like)
- 2 teaspoons Louisiana Hot Sauce (more or less as you like)
- 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese (or 1/4 cup prepared blue cheese dressing)

DIRECTIONS

Place crumbled blue cheese in a medium bowl. Mash with fork until almost a paste. Stir in horseradish, hot sauce and yogurt. Mix well. Chill until ready to use.

LAMORINDA's Restaurants

... updated January 5, 2011 ...


American	French	Hawaiian Grill	Italian	Japanese	Mexican	Seafood	Steak	Tea	Thai	Vietnamese
Bistro, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7108	Chevalier Restaurant, 960 Moraga Road, Laf, 385-0793	Lava Pit Hawaiian Grill, 2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori, 253-1338	Giardino, 3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-3869	Asia Palace Sushi Bar, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-0809	360 Gourmet Burrito, 3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-1270	Yankee Pier, 3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-4100	Casa Orinda, 20 Bryant Way, Ori, 254-2981	Amarin Thai Cuisine, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf, 283-8883	Little Hearty Noodle, Pho & Pasta, 578 Center St., Mor, 376-7600	
Bistro, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7108	Chevalier Restaurant, 960 Moraga Road, Laf, 385-0793	Lava Pit Hawaiian Grill, 2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori, 253-1338	Giardino, 3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-3869	Asia Palace Sushi Bar, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-0809	360 Gourmet Burrito, 3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-1270	Yankee Pier, 3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-4100	Casa Orinda, 20 Bryant Way, Ori, 254-2981	Amarin Thai Cuisine, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf, 283-8883	Little Hearty Noodle, Pho & Pasta, 578 Center St., Mor, 376-7600	
Chow Restaurant, 53 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 962-2469	Fuz, 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-9930	La Pit Fire Grill, 3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 385-0658	La Finestra Ristorante, 100 Lafayette Cir, #101, Laf, 284-5282	Blue Ginko, 3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9020	El Charro Mexican Dining, 3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-2345			Royal Siam, 512 Center Street, Mor, 377-0420		
Ranch House, 1012 School St, Mor, 376-5127	Hawaiian Grill	Postino, 3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-8700	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Metro Lafayette, 3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-4422	El Jaro Mexican Cafe, 3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-6639			Siam Orchid, 23 Orinda Way # F, Ori, 253-1975		
Terzetto Cuisine, 1419 Moraga Way, Mor, 376-3832	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-9687				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
The Cheese Steak Shop, 3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-1234	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
BBQ	Indian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Bo's Barbecue, 3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7133	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Burger Joint	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Flippers, 960 Moraga Rd, Laf, 284-1567	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 400 Park, Mor, 376-8888	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 76 Moraga Way, Ori, 254-8888	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Café	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Ferrari- Lucca Delicatessens, 23 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 299-8040	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Geppetto's cafe, 87 Orinda Way, Ori, 253-9894	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
La Boulange, 3597 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-1001	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Rising Loafers, 3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf, 284-8816	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Susan Food Catering & Cafe, 965 Mt. View Dr., Laf, 299-2469	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
California Cuisine	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Artisan Bistro, 1005 Brown St., Laf, 962-0882	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Metro Lafayette, 3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-4422	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-9687	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Chinese	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Asia Palace Restaurant, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-0809	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Chef Chao Restaurant, 343 Rheem Blvd, Mor, 376-1740	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
China Moon Restaurant, 380 Park St, Mor, 376-1828	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
The Great Wall Rest., 3500 Golden Gate Way, 284-3500	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Hsiangs Mandarin Cuisine, 1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori, 253-9852	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Lily's House, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf, 284-7569	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Mandarin Flower, 581 Moraga Rd, Mor, 962-7839	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Panda Express, 3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-0288	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Szechwan Chinese Restaurant, 79 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2020	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Uncle Yu's Szechuan, 999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf, 283-1688	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Yan's Restaurant, 3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-2228	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Coffee Shop	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Millie's Kitchen, 1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf, 283-2397	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Squillirel's Coffee Shop, 998 Moraga Rd, Laf, 284-7830	Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		
Village Inn Cafe, 204 Village Square, Ori, 254-6080	Italian	Ristorante Amorama, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662	La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191	Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-0124				Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206		

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

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 04 Issue 22 Wednesday, January 5, 2011



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page OH4

Exploring a Custom Wine Cellar

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Doug Kohen



Vickie and Jeff Martin

Photo Cathy Tyson

About seven years ago when Vickie and Jeff Martin were remodeling their Moraga home, they thought the odd space that lead to their basement and a furnace could be converted into a wine cellar. By rearranging the area, and cannibalizing some subterranean space under a stairwell, they were able to create a custom wine cellar that officially accommodates 1,200 bottles. The ever-growing collection has spilled over into an adjacent tasting area; Jeff jokes, "we need to start drinking more."

They wanted to give the space an old world look, reflected in the dark wood and wrought iron leaf details. A cooling system keeps the cellar at a constant temperature of 56 degrees just right for storage. A variety of decanters and a lovely antique cabinet, purchased locally, along with overflow wine bottles and a sink round out the space.

Jeff is the primary wine enthusiast of the family, having been interested in wine for the past twenty years. Son Tyler shares his fascination; he's a wine and viticulture major with a concentration in enology at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo; he hopes to go into the wine business. Younger brother Cole, a sophomore business major at University of Colorado, Boulder, is not a wine fan at this point in his life. ... continued on page OH3

Happy New Year!!!

*Wishing you a happy
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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

LAFAYETTE	Last reported: 4
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$385,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$960,000
MORAGA	Last reported: 6
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$342,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,187,000
ORINDA	Last reported: 16
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$540,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,115,000

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

LAFAYETTE

871 Acalanes Road, \$720,000, 4 Bdrms, 2291 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 12-9-10
 1363 El Curtola Boulevard, \$680,000, 4 Bdrms, 2460 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 12-10-10; Previous Sale: \$366,000, 05-22-97
 1516 El Sombro, \$880,000, 4 Bdrms, 2186 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 12-10-10
 3280 Marlene Drive, \$385,000, 3 Bdrms, 1160 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 12-1-10; Previous Sale: \$157,000, 01-10-90
 131 Marsha Place, \$950,000, 5 Bdrms, 2493 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 12-1-10; Previous Sale: \$937,500, 11-21-00
 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #3, \$410,000, 2 Bdrms, 1332 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 11-30-10
 3876 Quail Ridge Road, \$960,000, 4 Bdrms, 2694 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 12-1-10

MORAGA

475 Chalda Way, \$342,000, 2 Bdrms, 1170 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 12-10-10; Previous Sale: \$127,500, 10-31-88
 195 Miramonte Drive, \$405,000, 2 Bdrms, 1514 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 12-8-10
 1904 Russell Drive, \$1,187,000, 3 Bdrms, 2675 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 12-3-10; Previous Sale: \$425,000, 01-09-97

ORINDA

18 Berkeley Avenue, \$420,000, 3 Bdrms, 1353 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 12-8-10; Previous Sale: \$759,000, 03-29-05
 50 Ardilla Road, \$1,115,000, 4 Bdrms, 2273 SqFt, 1928 YrBlt, 12-1-10; Previous Sale: \$365,000, 12-28-89
 11 Bates Boulevard, \$810,000, 4 Bdrms, 1789 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-30-10; Previous Sale: \$495,000, 12-08-99
 19 Calvin Drive, \$540,000, 4 Bdrms, 1642 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 11-30-10; Previous Sale: \$540,000, 06-14-10
 56 Donna Maria Way, \$740,000, 3 Bdrms, 1610 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 12-2-10; Previous Sale: \$975,000, 07-19-05
 18 Francisco Court, \$650,000, 2 Bdrms, 1189 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 12-10-10; Previous Sale: \$702,000, 10-30-09
 5 Glorietta Court, \$690,000, 5 Bdrms, 2538 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 12-3-10; Previous Sale: \$890,000, 04-22-03
 2 Harran Circle, \$350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2128 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 12-7-10
 148 Ivy Drive, \$1,015,000, 4 Bdrms, 2337 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-30-10
 73 La Cuesta Road, \$835,000, 3 Bdrms, 1963 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 12-10-10
 28 Los Amigos, \$585,000, 4 Bdrms, 2275 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 12-3-10
 58 Lucille Way, \$900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2638 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 11-30-10
 294 Orchard Road, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 3375 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 12-10-10
 314 Overhill Road, \$1,051,500, 3 Bdrms, 2406 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 12-6-10; Previous Sale: \$1,095,000, 09-09-03
 214 Rheem Boulevard, \$457,000, 4 Bdrms, 1420 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 12-6-10; Previous Sale: \$300,000, 04-11-96
 60 Southwood Drive, \$810,000, 3 Bdrms, 2019 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 12-10-10; Previous Sale: \$835,000, 05-23-03

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

LAFAYETTE

630 Francis Drive, 94549, HSBC Bank, 06-14-10, \$580,000, 2180 sf, 3 bd
 708 Wee Donegal, 94549, Aurora Loan Services, 11-19-10, \$771,913, 2190 sf, 4 bd

ORINDA

403 Dalewood Drive, 94563, Bank of America, 12-02-10, \$1,203,187, 6502 sf, 4 bd

Exploring a Custom Wine Cellar

... continued from page OH1



Photo Doug Kohen

Vickie focuses her attention on their property in Sonoma that's planted with chardonnay grapes, "I oversee the Vineyard Manager," she explains. Their grapes are sold to the Schug Carneros Estate Winery and end up in Carneros Chardonnay. Oddly enough her favorite wines are Sonoma County chardonnays.

The Martin's are on a number of winery and retailer mailing lists, so the wine keeps accumulating. "It's a buyers market, some limited releases just aren't selling like they used to," he said. Two favorites are Shafer Vineyards Hillside Select and Saxum Vineyards – known for their Rhone blends.

His goal for the new year – get more organized, "It's the bane of anybody who collects – most don't have a good grasp on their inventory." While the cellar is organized by type of wine, chardonnays here, cabernets there, then arranged alphabetically by producer within those categories, it's difficult to determine which vintages are ready to drink and which should age longer.

Some folks enjoy collecting stamps, snow globes or Pez dispensers – perhaps it's the lure of finding something rare and unique. For the Martin family, collecting and sharing their delicious drinkable bounty with friends and family is its own reward.

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January 2011 - Digging Deep

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian-Goals for the Garden

"The doctor can bury his mistakes but an architect can only advise his client to plant vines." - Frank Lloyd Wright

Every year at this time I spend hours of coaching sessions helping clients create goals for the upcoming year. The beginning of a new year excites one to give birth to new ideas and design a vision for the future. Unfortunately by February 1, statistics indicate that most people have abandoned their goals. Resolutions can be set and accomplished all year long when you make SMART goals. SMART stands for

SPECIFIC

MEASURABLE

ACHIEVABLE

RELEVANT

TIMELY

Recently while I was working with a regular client, she asked me if I would help her set her garden goals for the year. Of course, I was delighted and after writing my own garden goals, I felt the exercise would be worthwhile for the loyal readers of Digging Deep. Last year I modeled this gardening column after my motto, Read, Plant, Grow. This year I propose Explore, Experiment, Experience.

Now that it is winter, the inclement weather presents the perfect opportunity to design our dreams. There is little manual labor to be done outdoors. It's time to exercise our brains, explore the possibilities, and decide how we want our landscapes to serve us for the future.

Let me begin by describing the steps to SMART goals. When creating SMART goals for your garden, always ask yourself, "what do I mean by that?"

1. SPECIFIC-Planting rosemary, thyme, sage, basil, and oregano is specific, while wanting an herb garden is not.

2. MEASURABLE-Planting rosemary, thyme, sage, basil, and oregano the third weekend of May is measurable. Your actions must be calculable so you know when you have achieved success. We can not measure "wants".

3. ACHIEVABLE-Planting rosemary, thyme, sage, basil, and oregano the third weekend of May so that I'll have a bounty of flavorful herbs for my 4th of July barbecue is achievable. Be realistic about what you can truly accomplish. Success breeds success. When we set

goals that are reachable, we feel competent.

4. RELEVANT-Planting rosemary, thyme, sage, basil, and oregano the third weekend of May so that I'll have a bounty of flavorful herbs for my 4th of July barbecue to enhance the tasty enjoyment and continued health of my family and guests is relevant. To be relevant, the goal must really matter to you. If you don't have a good reason for doing it, you'll drop the goal after a few weeks of attempts.

5. TIMELY-Planting rosemary, thyme, sage, basil, and oregano the third weekend of May so that I'll have a bounty of flavorful herbs for my 4th of July barbecue to enhance the tasty enjoyment and continued health of my family and guests plus savor a summer of palatable satisfaction provides an end point. Even if you want to have a goal forever, put an end date to a cycle, then start anew when accomplished.

What's on your list of things that you've always wanted in your backyard but never had the time, money, or inclination to accomplish? A sampling of suggestions besides planting your herbs may include creating, adding, building, buying, cleaning, or planting

- A butterfly garden
- A cutting garden
- A vegetable plot
- A barbecue box
- A meditation meadow
- Attractions for birds, bees, and hummingbirds
- Pathways to paradise
- A perennial patch
- Play structures
- Swings from giant trees
- Relaxation regions
- Benches and outdoor sitting rooms
- Space, mood, and spotlighting
- Ponds, waterfalls, fountains, and water features
- Compost bins or piles
- Succulents and cactus
- Endemic, natural specimens
- Fruit orchard
- Vineyard
- Seasonal bulbs



A scarlet tipped chartreuse cymbidium paired with blush bergenia blossoms brighten an indoor hall.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Narcissus mingled with Russian Sage brighten the winter landscape with beauty and perfume.

- Fire pit
- Outdoor kitchen and dining area
- Trellises and arbors
- Sculpture scenario
- Aviary
- Hillside wine cellar
- Rock wall
- Patio, deck, retaining walls
- Rain garden
- All weather furniture
- Hammock hanging
- Sport court
- Animal enclosures
- Junk pile
- Library of garden books

One of the items on my agenda for the year is to enrich my vegetable garden with compost, mulch, legume planting, and crop rotation. The date for each task is chronicled and I have written down in my gardening journal the specifics, how I will measure, achieve, be realistic, and time my endeavors. My reward will be a healthy harvest of delectable freshness that I'll be able to share with family, friends, and colleagues.



Purple Lilac Vine is a colorful winter blooming vine for fences, walls, and arbors. (Hardenbergia violaceae)



Beets ready to harvest along with winter greens.

Hard work, sacrifice, and commitment deserve applause. Create SMART garden goals and celebrate your diligence. Use the winter months to pause, relax, and reinvent while you become the architect of your dreamscape. Plant purple lilac vines (*Hardenbergia violaceae*) to cover those fences and walls that you want hidden in winter.

Writing your garden goals will enable you to realize your vision one step at a time. As Lewis Carol wrote in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will do." With SMART goals for your garden desires, you will create a road map to greener success harvesting happiness. Dreams are goals with timelines. Dream big and always write down your SMART garden goals. Then sit back, stay warm and relish the downtime of winter with a delectable cup of rose hip tea.

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for January

"Let nature be your teacher." - William Wordsworth

The narcissus perfume the chilly air with intoxicating scents, the sprouting mushrooms are fungus umbrellas for the garden fairies and tired rose bushes beg for branch reduction. With the merriment of the holidays now memories of a bygone season, we forge into the future with high hopes of a brighter economy and hospitable weather. With only a few things to do in the garden in January, perhaps you can settle in for a long winter's nap.

- **RECYCLE** your Christmas tree through the waste services program.
- **CUT** your final bouquets of roses and blooming perennials for indoor enjoyment.
- **PROTECT** plants from freezing by covering with tarps, blankets, or plastic.
- **PRUNE** your roses, berries, geraniums, fruit trees, crepe myrtles, and other woody perennials before the end of the month. This is the time for severe cutting.
- **SHARE** your rose canes with garden friends. After cutting the canes 12 inches or shorter, dip in a rooting solution before planting.
- **COMPOST** kitchen scraps, ashes, coffee, tree, and all organic materials.
- **READ** garden magazines and bulb catalogues.
- **DREAM** about the garden environment you've always wanted.
- **VISIT** winter gardens in other areas to gather ideas.
- **MOVE** Christmas azaleas and cactus to a patio or porch.
- **DECLUTTER** your shed or garage in anticipation of spring action.
- **SHARPEN** your tools, clean, oil, and store.
- **PLANT** color spots of cyclamen, azaleas, bergenia, and pansies.
- **MOVE** potted conifers outdoors in preparation for the next holidays.
- **PLAN** your garden. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Write SMART goals.
- **BUY** new rubber boots for those muddy slopes.
- **HARVEST** beets, potatoes, and turnips before the freezes.
- **ENJOY** the beautiful blossoms of cymbidium orchids in your home décor.
- **CELEBRATE** 2011 in style and with substance by being organic.

Remember, don't be intimidated by last year's mistakes. Failure is fertilizer. Throw your "malfatti's" on the compost pile and grow a new garden.

Explore, experiment, experience. Happy New Year!
Happy gardening to you!

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Cynthia Brian

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Village Associates Celebrates Ten Years in Lamorinda

By Lou Fancher



Top Row: Jeff Snell, Dan Weil, Clark Thompson, Steve Smith, Charles Levine
 2nd Row: Kurt Piper, Marianne Greene, Dexter Honens II, Hal Kaufman, Patty Battersby, Ignacio Vega
 3rd Row: Joan Evans, Karen Murphy, Margot Kaufman, Ashley Battersby, Margaret Zucker, Terri Bates Walker
 4th Row: Sue Layng, Linda Ehrich, Carol Stevenson (Office Manager), Pamela Halloran
 5th Row: Ann Ward, Joan Eggers, Joan Cleveland, Tara Rochlin
 Bottom Row: Ben Olsen, Sue Olsen, I. Bruce Maxon
 Not pictured: Linda Friedman, Debbie Johnston, Art Lehman, April Matthews, Judy Schoenrock, Ann Sharf, Lynda Snell
 Photo Andy Scheck

Village Associates is celebrating its 10th anniversary, but for founder Ignacio Vega, there's no looking back.

"The reason we came about is that a group of agents didn't want to become a part of a larger conglomerate," Vega said, reluctantly describing the real estate company's origins. "It really started off as casually as this: the core group decided to form their own agency. But really, I don't want to talk about how we started. The fact that we are still here ten years later is the real story."

Properly redirected, the interview turned to an exploration of why, according to Vega, the agency retains a 33% market share and has the number one highest dollar volume in Contra Costa County.

"In real estate it's all about relationships and knowledge," he said. "The core group of agents has had their lives, their families, right here, since the beginning."

Kurt Piper, a Village agent with 18 years in real estate, pointed to experience: "On average, our associates have 20 years of experience, which is a pretty impressive statistic. There's something to be said for that."

And Vega has a lot to say about his co-workers. "People seek us out as the local experts. Buying a house is not a commodity. It's not something you do on e-Bay. It's a life, a lifestyle. You add value if you are viewed as a local expert."

Both men believe the knowledge-bar has been raised by the internet.

"Today, a client profile is someone who is way more educated and aware about the [real estate] environment. They're so far down the stream and knowledgeable that as an agent, you had better be equally informed," Vega said.

Piper agreed, adding that in today's hi-tech world, "most buyers have already seen the property online before they set foot in the house. Because of this, the photos, descriptive text and virtual tour accessed online should be properly displayed so the buyer is excited about visiting the property."

With the internet offering easy communication between sellers and buyers, might some people forego using an agent? Vega and Piper jumped on this subject immediately.

"Buyers and sellers will hire a friend or a friend of a friend who is a newer agent or a part-timer and in some cases, when a transaction is at a critical stage, this agent can't draw on past experiences to give their client timely advice. I feel the experience of our Village Associates can save our clients money and lead to a less stressful or smoother transaction," Piper explained.

"For sale by owners, discount brokers, and companies trying to generate sales on a website, aren't that effective. Inevitably you have to be on the ground. You have to know the community," Vega said.

"And there's nothing like being in the car with someone, pointing things out, answering every question."

Village Associates hasn't simply sold to the community; they've invested in it. Each year the company supports local events: Lafayette's Art and Wine Festival, Orinda's Classic Car Show and Parade of Trees, and Moraga's Treeline Triathlon.

"We don't advertise it, but every year we deliver 75 food baskets—literally laundry baskets

stuffed with everything you need for a Thanksgiving dinner—to Children's Hospital in Oakland," Vega said. Social workers distribute the food to families temporarily staying in Oakland because their children are in the hospital.

Vega is perhaps most proud of the company's durability. "It's important to notice: we've gone through a couple of economic cycles and we've survived the extremes," he said, noting the unprecedented economic environment from 2003 to 2007. "The boom mentality created impressive wealth for an extended period of time. Since then, the whole upsetting of the economy has affected us, no doubt, but much less so than other areas."

As for the future, Vega is certain of one thing, saying, "I have no growth plans. I have one office and that's as far as it's going to go. You can dilute your image by spreading yourself out. Your mission changes when you try to expand. Suddenly you're doing things other than focusing on your core, which is serving this community."

On September 18, 2020, when the company celebrates a second decade in business, Vega and Piper expect they'll be doing the same job they do today: delivering in-your-hand, instantaneous information and working in real time, all the time.

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We hope the next decade will be as positive as our first. We're grateful for the support we've received from our family, friends and neighbors along the way. And for that, we extend our sincere gratitude.

Thanks to everyone, from each of us.



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