



Photos Andy Scheck

# War Breaks Out in Moraga



Roger Boling loads the cannon

By Cathy Dausman

**W**ar broke out on the grounds of St. Mary's College March 19, but it was a brief and bloodless event. One hundred re-enactors, members of the California Historical Artillery Society, brought Civil War history to life on the college grounds. Soldiers, signalmen, sharpshooters, surgeons, nurses, and others explained their Civil War roles to the visiting public.

The four hour encampment highlighted the conclusion of the Hearst Art Gallery's "Lee and Grant" exhibition, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. Poor weather cancelled outside skirmishes and

a Fife and Drum performance, and moved the cannons and drills to the Soda Center plaza.

"It would have been impossible for the [St Mary's] Lacrosse team to follow the Army of Northern Virginia onto the field if the planned battle had taken place," said organizer Heidi Donner. Still, Donner estimated the event drew a crowd of over 1,000.

Cannon shots fired on the hour echoed through the hillside and set off a few car alarms. But in the end, neither Blue nor Gray triumphed; the victor was most likely the rain.

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**Quote of the Week:**

"How does it feel to be a cheapskate?"  
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**LAMORINDA**

## Quick Change at the Orinda Theater

By Andrea A. Firth

**T**he sight of the blank marquee over the Orinda Theater puzzled residents who ventured by Theater Square on Friday, and speculation that the theater was closing fueled local rumor mills. The statement "closed pending new ownership" posted on the theater's website seemed to seal the movie house's fate. But by 7:00 p.m., the Orinda marquee was burning brightly, the movie Sucker Punch was playing on the main screen, and business appeared back to usual.

"It all happened very quickly," says Derek Zemrak, President and founder of the California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF). The non-profit CAIFF Association took over operation of the New Rheem Theater in Moraga in June of last year, and these same operators will now

manage the Orinda Theater under a different for-profit entity. "Basically we will run it as a seven-

Rheem and three at Orinda.) "You

won't necessarily see the same

movies running in both locations." ... continued on page A6



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### 5th Annual AUHSD Film Festival Coming Soon

By Rebecca Eckland

On April 15th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., students from Campolindo, Miramonte, Acalanes and JM Intermediate schools will be featured on "the red carpet" of the Fifth Annual Lamorinda Acalanes Union Film Festival ...read on page C9



**Life in Lamorinda C1-C7**

### Klippert to Speak at Moraga Library



By Sophie Braccini

Zoë Klippert has lived in Moraga for close to 40 years. She was an original member of the prestigious San Francisco Chamber Singers (now Volti San Francisco), and among other jobs was a contract editor for the ... read on page L2

**Our Homes D1-D8**

### Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Monet's Masterpiece Makeover



In my youth, when I still considered myself a farmer as opposed to a gardener, I viewed the magnificent oil, "The Artist's Garden in Giverny" painted in 1900 by Claude Monet, now hanging in the Musee d'Orsay in Paris. It was love at first sight, partly because ... read on page D4



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# Lafayette

## Civic News

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Monday, April 11, 7:00 pm  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

#### Planning Commission

Monday, April 4, 7:00 pm  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

#### Design Review

Monday, April 11, 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](http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us)

#### Chamber of Commerce:

[www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org)



## Police Report

Prime time crime, 3/14/11 Criminal Minds burgled a flat screen TV from a Lafayette home. They kicked in a door and boosted the set. Law & Order took the call and recorded \$500 in stolen goods and twice that amount in damages.

Put this on my bill, 3/11/11 Eating out can be very expensive when two of your credit cards are stolen. A Lafayette diner discovered this when she received a call informing her that over \$17,000 had been charged to her account in Modesto and Stockton. The greedy thieves then attempted purchases in Walnut Creek but were denied; police are reviewing store videos to ID the perps.

Delivery and pickup, 3/14/11 A Silverado Drive resident reported the recent theft of a UPS parcel valued at \$46 from her front porch.

In broad daylight, 3/7/11A mid-afternoon burglary on Windsor Drive caused \$400 in damages to the home. The intruder stole \$200 in jewelry. After the home alarm was set off, the burglar set off on his merry way. No leads yet.

School of hard knocks, 3/13/11 A thief garnered \$425 in an afternoon purse heist from a vehicle parked along School Street. The vehicle was unlocked.

## City Housing Element Conditionally Approved

By Cathy Tyson

Just last week the Department of Housing and Community Development in Sacramento conditionally approved Lafayette's draft Housing Element that was submitted back in January. A number of earlier drafts had been submitted that were not in compliance. Like all municipalities in California, Lafayette is required to provide a plan to accommodate its fair share of low income housing. For the current planning period, that is 361 units. City administrators prefer to locate those units in the downtown core, close to shopping, services and transit.

The January draft of the Housing Element spells out reasoning behind

that preference: "Affordable housing projects require funding from outside sources, whose criteria now almost universally require development projects be located near a variety of services. Projects not meeting the location requirements do not get funded. Therefore, to locate multifamily housing away from services into the more rural areas of the City would actually produce the opposite effect: it would mean affordable housing would NOT be built."

"(City Manager) Steven Falk and I are extremely happy to receive the letter from the State Department of Housing and Community Develop-

ment stating that our element will comply with State housing element law when adopted and submitted to HCD. I am proceeding immediately with the adoption of the revised element," said Niroop Srivatsa, Planning and Building Services Manager.

"The element now includes sufficient programs to encourage redevelopment of underutilized sites," said Glen Campora, Assistant Deputy Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development in a letter to Srivatsa. The letter goes on to outline six conditions necessary for approval - from adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan to ensuring sufficient capacity

of suitable sites for the development of emergency shelters.

Not everyone is thrilled with the conditional approval. "The result is disappointing but not surprising," said Mike Henn, former Planning Services Manager. "Affluent cities like all the Lamorinda cities provide no more than lip service to the State Fair Share housing requirements. A small staff of State planners in Sacramento, responsible for over 500 cities and counties, have no idea if a city's representations are honest. The State law is fairly toothless, in that it provides for no real penalties and there is no enforcement."



## MAYOR ANDURI HOSTS COMMUNITY MEETING: "HOW BAD IS YOUR ROAD?"

## Cell Tower in a Bell Tower Conundrum

By Cathy Tyson

Who knew adding eight feet to a bell tower could be so controversial? St. Anselm's Episcopal Church on Michael Lane already has a tall, slender bell tower that conceals Verizon Wireless telecommunications antennas. T-Mobile, another wireless provider that is in the process of being acquired by AT & T, wants to join the party. With conditions, city planning staff recommended approving the project. Rather than constructing new structures, the City encourages co-location.

After a false start with an unpopular fake tree design on Glenside Drive, T-Mobile proposed locating transmission antennas within the St. Anselm's bell tower and increasing its height, currently at 48 feet, to 56 feet.

... continued on page A8

## Harp Concert Hosted by Newly Re-Named Senior Services

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

The Windsong Harp Ensemble provided a heavenly concert for seniors recently. In addition to music, the winner of the "Give us a name" contest for Lafayette Senior Services was announced. "Lafayette Lively Seniors," which will eventually be shortened to "Lafayette Livelies" was the winning entry submitted by Amy Goodheart. In addition to bragging rights she won an overnight stay at the Lafayette Park Hotel and dinner for two at Yankee Pier.

Six women with six very large double action pedal harps, led by Jessica Siegel-Tonti of Harps Etc., enchanted seniors with their soothing, ethereal music. The theme of the show was, "Everything I need to know about life, I learned from a harp." The musicians took turns prior to each piece sharing a life lesson they had learned. Samantha Garvey was first up, "If you're going to make a mistake, make it loud." She explained that then you'll notice and learn from it. Next, "If you don't have blisters you aren't working hard enough." Siegel-Tonti clarified, "We're not getting blisters, we're really getting calluses - we're tough broads."

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# Council Backs Measure B

By Cathy Tyson

It was unanimous, City Council members were all in favor of approving a proclamation in support of Measure B – the Lafayette School District Parcel Tax Measure. Council Member Don Tatzin, who is the liaison to the school district, described the state funding situation as “grim.” Calling the district an “efficient organization,” Tatzin explained that only twelve administrators serve 3200 students – and that the district has already cut \$2 million from the budget.

“I strongly support Measure B,” said Mayor Carl Anduri. “Everyone has an obligation – this is an investment in the future.”

The Lafayette School District is seeking an emergency, temporary \$176 parcel tax on the May 3 ballot, for a term of four years. Seniors 65 and over will be exempted. Without the funds generated by the tax, the district will

be forced to make further significant reductions in staffing. Even with the generous support of Lafayette Partners in Education, PTAs and Parent Clubs, and already having cut \$2 million from the budget, the District will be forced to cut basic educational services.

Noting that he can’t do much about impacted university programs, something he’s familiar with as a parent, Council Member Brandt Anderson supports this effort.

Council Member Carol Federighi, who volunteered at local schools when her kids were younger, commented that Measure B “helps all of us.”

A number of parents and their children, not usually in attendance at City Council meetings, echoed the sentiments of the Council.

For more information, go to [www.yesonmeasureb.net](http://www.yesonmeasureb.net).

# Recycling More Costs Less

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

Because she was concerned about the cost of an additional recycling cart, Traci Reilly started digging. While rates for trash pick-up differ across Lamorinda – the cost of having additional recycling and yard waste bins is standard. It seemed unusual and counterproductive to Reilly that adding a second recycling bin for bottles, cans and newspaper cost roughly twice as much as getting an additional yard waste bin - \$10.09 compared to \$5.67.

After looking into it Bart Carr, Senior Program Manager with Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, changed the fee for an extra cart from \$10.09 per month to \$5.67. The change is slated to start during the April to June billing cycle.

“I’m thrilled. Waste Management and Allied Waste have agreed to lower the price for ad-

ditional recycling carts and our City Council members who sit on the Board have signed off on it. I was impressed with the speed at which this all occurred,” said Reilly. “Hopefully this will encourage more recycling without being financially penalized.”

Trash fees are based upon the size of resident’s blue garbage carts – the smaller the cart, the smaller the bill. However residents in some municipalities pay more than others. The waste fee for a 64 gallon cart in Orinda is \$60.78 while in Moraga it’s \$47.20, and \$49.95 in Lafayette. In nearby Walnut Creek it only costs \$35.59 for the same service. Factors that go into rate calculations include labor, fuel equipment and more. Regular massive garbage trucks just can’t fit on Orinda’s narrow, windy roads – so a smaller more nimble truck is used – necessitating more trips to the landfill.



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# Moraga

## Civic News

### Public Meetings

#### Town Council

Wednesday, April 13, 7:00 pm  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
1010 Camino Pablo

#### Planning Commission

Monday, April 4, 7:30 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

#### Design Review

Monday, April 11, 7:00 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

#### Liaison

Friday, April 8, 8:00 am  
Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



## Police Report

**Indecent Exposure, 3/23** A 22-year-old Saint Mary's College student was arrested for allegedly exposing himself to two five-year-old children while he was working in the child care center at 24 Hour Fitness. He was booked into the Martinez Detention Facility. Residents with additional information are encouraged to call Lt. Jeff Price at (925) 888-7049.

**Full circle karma, 3/21/11** On Monday of last week, this reporter was walking her dog down a quiet residential street when she spotted a visa card in the gutter. Hmmm - rather unusual. After asking neighbors and fellow dog walkers to no avail about ownership, I dropped it off at the police department. On the same day, my son, home from college on spring break lost his wallet. Just a couple of days later, a young man and his dad found the wallet on the street near Campo with cash, drivers license and debit card and came by our house to drop it off. Thanks again, Henry!

**Kids with booze, 3/19/11** Cops observed four juveniles running away from the back of the Rheem Center and possibly leaving a bottle of Captain Morgan rum on the ground. The foursome was later found inside of Burger King, where none of the kids admitted that the booze was theirs. However an empty bottle of Malibu Rum and a homemade "bong" was found inside of one of the kid's backpacks. Parents were called and kids were picked up.

**D.U.I., 3/17/11** Just after midnight cops pulled over a car for failing to signal when turning onto Rimer Driver from Camino Pablo. The 45-year-old, who clearly should have known better, had an open bottle of beer in his lap. "You caught me drinking one," he said. Surprise, surprise - he showed objective signs of alcohol intoxication. Turns out he had a suspended driver's license for a prior D.U.I.

**Teenager scammed, 3/10/11** A 17-year-old reported that he was looking for a used Apple laptop and found a willing seller in the United Kingdom. The young man sent \$500 as requested but the product was never delivered.

**Speeding teenager, 3/10/11** It was just before 8:00 a.m. when a 16-year-old was pulled over for speeding on Calle La Mesa. Possibly late for school? She was issued a citation and was offered the option of participating in the Moraga Police Department's Juvenile Diversion Program, Start Smart, in lieu of the citation. Way cheaper insurance with the S.S. option. In addition, she will be contributing several hours to community service.

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# Moraga Bans Outdoor Pot Plants

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council recently acted to ban medical marijuana dispensaries in town. While the issue was on the table, Police Chief Robert Priebe suggested adding a related ban. "Marijuana plants when grown outdoors, especially as they mature prior to harvest, often produce a strong, distinctive odor that can be detectable and offensive beyond the border of the property on which it is grown," said the Chief.

A resolution that not only bans dispensaries but also prohibits the outdoor cultivation of marijuana was approved by the Council on March 23.

Since the State passed the Compassionate Use Act of 1996 (which became the Medical Marijuana Program in 2004), individuals that have a Medical Marijuana Identification Card could not be asked by police to pull their home-grown supply. However, the legislation permits local jurisdictions to regulate against additional criminal activities. On that basis, many cities have passed ordinances prohibiting not only marijuana distribution facilities, but also the cul-

tivation of the plant.

"We will not be patrolling looking for violations," said Priebe. "If we come across a violation during the normal course of business, or if we receive a complaint, we will act."

During its pre-examination of the ordinance the Planning Commission raised concerns about the indoor cultivation of marijuana, suggesting that could have adverse impacts on neighboring properties in the same way as outdoor cultivation - especially related to vented release of odors and possible criminal activity. Priebe did not support that position. "My comments on the marijuana ordinance dealt with my reluctance to get into a situation where the Town has to inspect and monitor residential ventilation systems," said the Chief, "That is actually a code enforcement issue, not a police issue."

In addition, the Planning Commission expressed concern about the exclusion of criminal penalties as an enforcement option. That option was examined by the Council as well, but the Town Attorney did not recom-

mend that path because other cities that passed such terms have been challenged in court for consistency with the two State laws on medical marijuana. However, Moraga's ordinance does include a provision that allows the Town to recover the cost of enforcing the ordinance, including but not limited to staff time and expenses.

The Council voted unanimously in favor of the ordinance, although Council Member Howard Harpham noted, "It grieves me that we can't protect our children," he said, "with great misgiving I'm going to reluctantly say yes, and I am outraged at the complicity of the medical profession in this issue."

### Moraga Police on the Cheap

Moraga Police Chief Robert Priebe recently announced that the Moraga Police Department is #1 in Contra Costa County as far as cost per capita is concerned. In Moraga, residents pay \$122.61 per person for their police services; the cost is \$164 in Clayton, \$223 in Orinda and \$416 in Kensington, among others. "What people do not get as a result of our budget are specialty items like a K-9 officer, a dedicated traffic officer, or a school resource officer," said the Chief, "Also, because our staffing is minimal, we can't always provide a dedicated detective position. We make our equipment last longer than most agencies and are always aware of costs and looking for efficiencies. We are still providing the services we always have, but cutbacks have required that our management staff, me and the lieutenant, have to do work previously handled by civilians in addition to our regular duties." Priebe believes that the main reason why his department's cost per capita is the lowest in the county is the very low retirement and benefits cost as compared to the other agencies. "That, along with our willingness to share responsibilities and an unorthodox approach to police management allows us to maintain full services at a lower cost," he concluded.

S.Braccini

# Hacienda Foundation Receives Champion of the Community Award

By Sophie Braccini



Jay Ingram, Hacienda Foundation VP Sharon Metcalf, President Claire Roth, and past president Judy Dinkle in the recently renovated Ladies' Lounge at the Hacienda de las Flores. Photo Sophie Braccini

Claire Roth was caught completely off-guard when she was told she was going to Sacramento on March 11 to receive the Champion of the Community Award on behalf of the Hacienda Foundation. Roth, the Foundation's president, was not aware that Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram nominated the Foundation to the California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS). As for Ingram, he thought that the Moraga non-profit would compete with parties coming from same-size jurisdictions, and he was pleasantly surprised to hear the Foundation won one of only 10 awards given in the state regardless of size.

Founded in 1946, CPRS is a non-profit, professional and public interest organization with more than 4,000 members. The Champion of the Community Award goes to an individual, agency, community organization, foundation, business or educational institution chosen based upon their significant efforts to influence and improve the quality of their community through parks, recreation and community services. "The Hacienda Foundation of Moraga brought com-

munity-wide events back to the Hacienda, truly creating community," said Ingram, "To observe a small board of dedicated individuals that do so much for the community has been a true joy." Ingram said that in 20 years in the profession he has never seen such a dedicated and creative group.

The Hacienda Foundation was created in 2006, but saw its operations really take off in 2009. Its mission is to "Enhance, Protect and Preserve the Hacienda de las Flores." Ingram believes the Foundation has made a real difference in the town's perception of the Hacienda. "The building was always considered the jewel of the community," he says, "but it was too much of a 'hidden jewel.' Many residents didn't know it existed, or where it was, and they never came here."

Ingram recalls that at the last Breakfast with Santa, organized by Parks and Rec, he heard a father enticing his kids out of the car on the cold winter morning, "You know this place," said the father, "it's where we come for Cinco de Mayo and Oktoberfest." Right then, Ingram knew that the Foundation was fulfilling its mission and making the Hacienda a real community center.

To support the yearly events that attract hundreds to the grounds of the Hacienda and have become Lamorinda traditions, the Foundation mustered hundreds of volunteers. The 12-member Board also took charge of major renovations to the public property.

Using labor provided by the Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club, the Foundation renovated most of the lower level of the community center, including the Dance Room, Fireside Room, and Ladies Lounge (where brides prepare for their special day.)

As the Foundation starts preparing for the next Cinco de Mayo, new renovation projects are getting underway to the unisex bathroom, the floors throughout the ground floor, and La Sala.

Other improvements are needed for the facility - some of them are of very large scale, such as a drainage upgrade to the grounds around the Pavilion which is needed to fully develop the potential of that elegant building. The area that once served as the Town's corporation yard has been vacated; it offers direct access to Moraga Road and will be fitted out as an overflow parking lot.

With so much to do, the Hacienda Foundation is continuously on the lookout for help. For more information, go to haciendafoundation.org.

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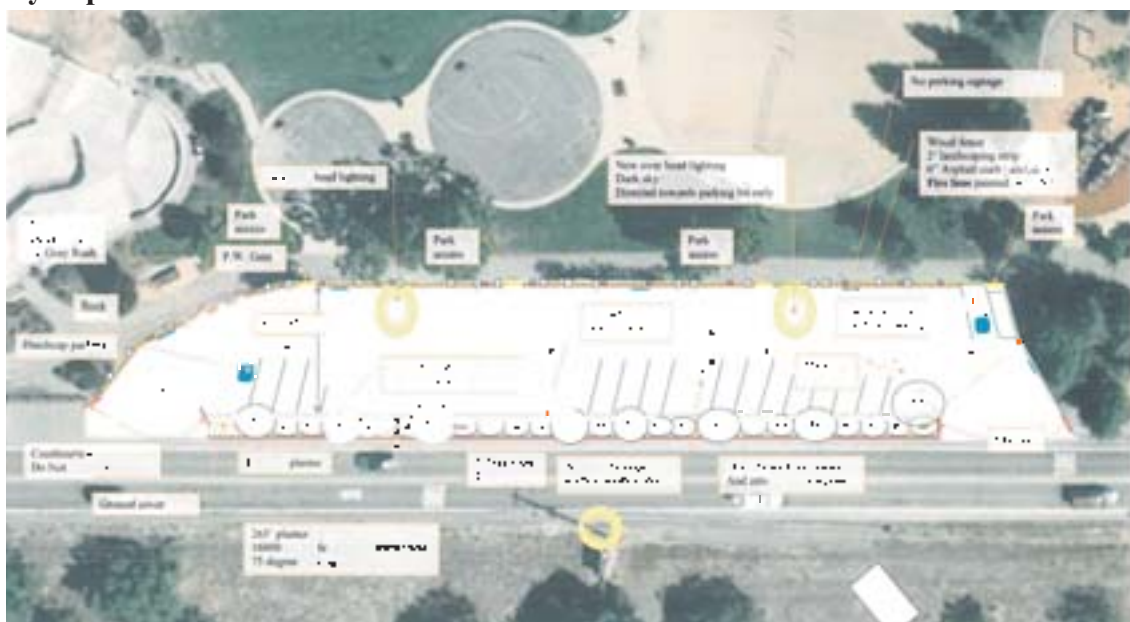
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## More Parking at the Commons: How and with what Money?

By Sophie Braccini



Town map of a new parking area

Image provided

John Haffner and David Kruegel agree on at least one issue: there is not enough parking at the Commons. The Parks and Recreation Commissioner and the President of the Friends of the Moraga Library, respectively, both asked for creative solutions during the Moraga Town Council meeting on March 23rd.

The occasion was a presentation by Town Engineer and Public Works Director Jill Mercurio of a plan to construct parking stalls along Moraga Road by the skate park. Mercurio sought direction on a conceptual design from the Council, so she could go back to the cities of Lafayette and Orinda, which will

each be asked to contribute 25% of the cost.

Right now there are about 14 parking spaces in the dirt between the road and the park. The new plan proposes 29 spaces, at an angle with Moraga Road, with an eight-foot planting strip providing a visual shield. Since the parking would pri-

marily serve the skate park that was built with, and is jointly maintained by, Lafayette and Orinda the cost would be shared by the three jurisdictions.

“Two months ago we asked the two cities for their positions,” stated Jill Keimach, Moraga Town Manager. “They both indicated that they were in the middle of a budget cycle and had already made cuts. They asked that we come back with a

final plan before July.” Keimach recommended that after the Council decided on a final plan, no more staff time be spent on this project until Lafayette and Orinda make their decisions. Estimated construction costs are \$254,000; Moraga would pay half (because the parking would also serve special events), using Quimby Act Park Development Impact Fees.

... continued on page A8

## Moraga Still Seeking Volunteers

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga's Traffic and Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) and the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC) still have one empty chair each. The Town of Moraga relies heavily on volunteers for many functions to keep its expense per capita the lowest in the area.

TSAC meets once a month to examine traffic issues, and interact

with residents that want safety-related concerns to be addressed. After considering all aspects of a question, with the help of staff and whatever experts are needed, the committee makes recommendations to the Town Council.

AFC meets five times a year to conduct independent review and oversight of the financial activities of

the Town. This committee is charged with the responsibility of evaluating the independent auditor, reviewing operating and capital budgets, overseeing the reporting process, internal controls and financial planning.

The positions will remain open until filled. Visit the Town's website for more information, www.moraga.ca.us.

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### 712 Ironbark Court, Orinda

This sophisticated Orindawoods home is located on a cul-de-sac and close to the greenbelt. It has been graciously updated and is beautifully light and bright with oak trees in the yard. 3bd/2.5ba and an easy layout for everyone. Pool, tennis courts and Bart shuttle all included in HOA's. Great schools! Great location! Great price! **\$1,175,000** Debra Trevarthen



### 176 Crestview, Orinda

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Square footage, acreage, and other information herein, has been received from one or more of a variety of different sources. Such information has not been verified by Alain Pinel Realtors. If important to buyers, buyers should conduct their own investigation.

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# Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 pm Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 pm Founder's Auditorium Community Center, 28 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, April 13, 6:30pm Community Room, City Hall 22 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

## City Reviews Budget

By Andrea A. Firth

Orinda's City Council has begun the process of reviewing the City's biennial budget plan, starting with an evaluation of projected revenues, and it looks like lean years ahead. Orinda's General Fund revenues, just under \$10 million, are estimated to increase a modest 1.7% a year over the next two years.

Revenues

Property tax revenue, which represents approximately 40% of Orinda's income, is projected to decline .25% this year—the first decline in property tax revenue that the City has experienced in memory according to Finance Director Emily Hobdy. Orinda typically sees a 6% to 7% increase in property tax revenue from year to year. Overall, property tax revenues for Contra Costa County are estimated to decline by 3.3% this year due to the poorly performing real estate market in East Bay cities.

The City's lease and interest income has also taken a hit in the past year. The City lost its tenant for 2,000 square feet of office space on the first floor of City Hall and is currently seeking a government or not-for-profit organization to rent the space. Interest income is down following the required sale of some investments in order to comply with the City's new investment policy.

On the plus side of the balance sheet, building inspection fees are predicted to increase by 5% a year due to activity at the Wilder development, and planning fees could also increase in fiscal year 2013 as plans move forward on the Pulte development. As the budgeting process continues, Council members Dean Orr and Steve Glazer indicated they would prefer the City take a more conservative approach to these projections.

Special Budget Requests

The City Council was also presented with several requests to fund special projects including the downtown planning process and General Plan update and a traffic study for Moraga Way. The Council made no decisions regarding the special budget requests. "We need more information on the Moraga traffic study," said Mayor Victoria Smith adding, "The requests are otherwise meritorious, but will have to be balanced." Glazer questioned the need for the Moraga Way traffic study, which has an estimated cost of \$60,000, when the City had already conducted a traffic study of Moraga Way in 2001. "What justifies the expense if the study is less than ten years old," said Glazer. He also expressed skepticism regarding further funding of the downtown planning process, which he feels does not have uniform support among residents.

What about the Roads?

Richard Nelson, Chairman of the Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Committee (CIOC), reminded the Council of the CIOC's recommendation that the budget for the City's road repairs should be increased by an additional \$1 to \$2 million annually to avoid further deterioration of the City's residential streets. "It's a tall order," acknowledged Nelson adding, "but you have got to start saying no." Nelson indicated that the special funding requests outlined were one place where the Council could say no and potentially channel these limited monies back to the roads program. Nelson also suggested that the City designate any growth in property tax, over what is projected, to infrastructure projects. "If the Council shows it is finding ways to increase road spending, then the public will be more willing to support a measure."

## Quick Change at the Orinda Theater

... continued from page A1



The theater's marquee went blank last Thursday Photo Ohlen Alexander

This is not the Orinda Theater's first near death experience, and the previous theater management team had been in place for just two years. But Zemrak, who is also an independent filmmaker, confidently optimistic about turning the historic, art deco theater around. "It all comes down to programming. The key is to program the right films for the market," says Zemrak adding that tickets sales at the New Rheem Theater have risen 63% since the CAIFF Association took over the operation.

Zemrak and his colleagues are not completely new to Orinda's movie scene. The California Independent Film Festival was held at the Orinda Theater in 2010 after moving from Livermore, and then moved to the Rheem Theater in January of this year. He acknowledges the fact that the two theaters will no longer be in competition is another benefit to the new set up.

"There was a great energy there [Friday] night. We're really happy to welcome them back to the Orinda and are looking forward to continuing our excellent relationship," says Orinda resident Laura Abrams, who is a founding member of the Lamorinda Film & Entertainment Foundation (LFEF)—a nonprofit organization that has worked to pre-

serve the legacy of the Orinda for several years and supports some of the theater's other entertainment options such as the Orinda Idol competition and the recently launched International Film Showcase.

Hosting special events at the theater is important to the community and to the success of the theater, according to Zemrak. "Our track record shows that we work well with the community. We still want continue to explore and support these types of events." Currently, there are no plans to change the venue for the California Independent Film Festival says Zemrak, noting the tremendous success and support the CAIFF experienced in Moraga.

"Having seven screens is a great plus for the Lamorinda area. It provides us with great flexibility, so we can give people movie options," says Zemrak as he monitors the scene from the lobby of the Orinda Theater on a rainy Saturday afternoon and calls in to see how things are going at the New Rheem Theater. "There are about 40 people [at the Orinda] now, and there are 300 people over at Rheem," says Zemrak, "In a year, both theaters will be booming. We have a model that works for both theaters. It's only going to improve both venues."



### Police Report

Home burglary, 3/22/11 A clever thief entered a home on Oak Road via the crawl space underneath the home. He must have left above ground because along with jewelry and checks he had a couple of TVs.

Car briefly stolen, 3/13/11 A maroon Chevy Tahoe was parked at McDonnell Nursery and left unlocked with the key left behind on the floorboard. When the owner returned to the car around lunchtime the vehicle had vanished. On Star was called and the would-be thief decided to just park the car on Moraga Via, where the cops found it unoccupied.

Burglary, 3/10/11 Lucky thieves got away – at least for now – with \$13,825 worth of merchandise, jewelry, laptops and a 42" television from a Claremont Avenue home. Suspect(s) entered via breaking the front door. Oddly enough, an alarm company alerted authorities to the crime. A little late to the party.

Drunk in Public, 3/09/11 A middle aged white man was observed by police sitting on a sidewalk near Camino Pablo with a beer can next to him. Upon noticing the police eye-balling him, the gentleman decided to walk toward the BART station. The pair got a proper introduction on the platform of the BART station, where it was determined the fellow was indeed drunk. Arrest ensued.

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Photo M. Olsen

Orinda's City Council recently recognized the work of three residents volunteers who served as committee/commission chairs.

Pictured from L, front row: Gary Moore, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Sandy Roadcap, Citizen's Infrastructure Oversight Commission, and Shannon Fuller, Parks and Recreation Commission. In back from L: Council members Dean Orr, Victoria Smith, Sue Severson, and Steve Glazer.

**Orinda in Action Day—Call for Volunteers**

By Andrea A. Firth



Orinda resident Steve Harwood, who emceed last year's Orinda in Action Community Day, thanked some of the many hard-working Girl Scout troops that participated. Photo provided

The third annual Orinda in Action Community Service Day will be held on Saturday, April 16th from 9 a.m. to noon. Orinda's spring clean-up day needs the able bodies of Orinda's young and not-so young to take to the streets, parks, and creeks to clean up the winter's debris and trash.

Orinda in Action Day coordinators are actively soliciting residents to suggest clean-up projects and to register to provide the time and muscle to get these projects done. For how to, see below:

**How to Register**

Send an email to orindainaction@gmail.com with names and ages, if children. Meet at the Library Plaza the morning of April 16th for your clean-up assignment. Wear comfortable, protective work clothes. Bring gardening gloves and tools, such as rakes, brooms, clippers, and shovels. The first 300 registrants will receive a free T-shirt.

**Got a Project?**

The Orinda in Action Day coordinators are actively seeking proposals for beautification projects around the City, at a park, in your neighborhood, or along your drive to work. Volunteers will be matched to the projects and supplies will be provided. Forward project proposals to orindainaction@gmail.com.

**Recycling!**

Orinda in Action Day will also provide several opportunities for residents to recycle. In front of the Community Center and the Rite Aid parking lot, there will be a Goodwill truck accepting donations, an electronic recycling drop-off center, and the Food Bank of Contra Costa County and Solano accepting food donations.

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Photo Cathy Tyson

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**Cell Tower in a Bell Tower Conundrum**

... continued from page A2

In order to lengthen the bell tower to accommodate their antennas, T-Mobile needs a land use permit and a variance for the height increase. Although historically height restrictions, especially in the downtown, have been a lightning rod of controversy, height limitations do not apply to belfries.

The old adage - where you stand depends upon where you sit - became clear as three distinct factions arose. Reverend John Sutton of St. Anselm's supports the project, "We have seen a downturn in pledges - this would help us a great deal," he stated. Other church members came forward to illustrate the good works that the church performs along with supporting a number of charities.

Neighbors in the Michael Lane Homeowners Association were less than thrilled, citing "significant aesthetic impacts," said Abby Fateman, "we are losing views and losing property value." In their opinion, the

tower is already very prominent and there is concern about negative health impacts associated with cell towers, along with the perception that health fears negatively impact property values.

Adding to the debate, the Michael Lane Homeowners Association wants T-Mobile to contribute to a traffic calming project along Michael Lane as a means to offset project impacts. Planning Commissioners did not see a "nexus" or connection between the two.

A T-Mobile representative pointed out the benefits to the city - notably improved wireless coverage, and keeping a financially viable church in the community to continue serving its flock. She described a willingness to address potential health concerns with regular compliance reports to the FCC and potential increased seismic safety, that the building Inspection Department may require to increase the height.

While church supporters and neighborhood residents are free to express all of their concerns, the Planning Commission is barred from taking into account monetary or health impacts of the proposal when making a decision. The FCC regulates telecommunications facilities and their emissions - this factor is not within the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission.

Still, scale and proportion of the tower were issues. Calling it a "rectangular silo - no offense to the church," Commissioner Rick Humann was in favor of sending the project to the Design Review Commission for it to address cosmetic issues, adding that this might ease neighbors' concerns.



Photo Cathy Tyson

Commissioner Mark Mitchell agreed, noting a "need to fine-tune the aesthetics."

Although a final decision was slated for last week's meeting, Commissioners voted to send the project to the Design Review Committee. After the project passes muster with Design Review it will come back to the Planning Commission for final action.

Ultimate approval will depend on a majority of Planning Commissioners. Two clearly expressed their point of view, "Ditch the industrial look to be satisfactory," suggested Vice Chair Jeanne Ateljevich. Commissioner Chastain was also doubtful, "I don't have faith that the DRC can make it better."

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**More Parking at the Commons: How and with what Money?**

... continued from page A5

Some safety questions were raised at the hearing. "There are concerns with public access and public safety," said Haffner, who asked the Council to consider other parking areas. Left turns from the existing parking area are prohibited; the new plan could allow them.

Ellen Beans, of the Moraga Citizens Network, suggested that the bike lane be eliminated along the parking area, as a safer alternate bike path already exists inside the park, for north-bound traffic. Chief of Police Priebe called the idea brilliant. He was not opposed to authorizing left turns with the new park-

ing configuration.

"The Park's Master Plan calls for 201 parking spots," said Kruegel, "there are 38 available in the Park today, and no additional parking for the Commons was planned when the Town adopted the Moraga Center Specific Plan. We urge you to approve these."

"Parking at the Commons is a big problem, we need to chip away at this problem whenever we can," said Council Member Mike Metcalf. The Council asked staff to present the plan (as shown) to Orinda and Lafayette and come back with their responses.



# Letters to the Editor



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

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



**Editor:**  
The letter on March 16th regarding Jerry Brown and redevelopment failed to mention the way redevelopment works. An area is declared blighted and the property becomes part of a redevelopment project area. A bond is floated to fund the construction. This bond plus interest is paid back over 20 to 45 years using the increase in the property taxes being generated by the property improvement. In the meantime, we will have added more citizens, homes and businesses needing essential services. It's our property taxes that pay for essential services: emergency responders, fire fighters, police services and schools. Since only the original property tax rate at the time of a property being declared part of a redevelopment project goes to paying for our city's essential services, many cities with redevelopment projects are falling short of money to pay for essential services. Hence, fire stations are being closed, teachers and police are being laid off. The bond debt must be paid first and foremost or the investment rating of the city is put in jeopardy. In addition, by law 20% of the redevelopment bond money has to be used to construct low income housing.

Tish Gleason  
Orinda

**Editor:**  
Over the past two years there have been various articles and letters regarding the funding of MOFD by the taxpayers of Orinda and Moraga. Orinda's Revenue Enhancement Task Force and later FAIR and other individuals claim that Orinda taxpayers are paying over a million dollars per year more than they should in funding MOFD. MOFD, Ellen Dale and now former MOFD director Gene Gottfried counter that those analysis have been "thoroughly discredited". If I remember correctly, Orinda left Con-Fire and formed MOFD because the Orinda taxpayers were told by their city leaders that they were paying more than was coming back to serve them. Is this not happening again? Who has "thoroughly discredited" the notion that we are not again paying too much? The City? MOFD? Gene Gottfried? We hear others calling for a city task force to clear the air and discover the facts. I agree that this would be much more fruitful than listening to various parties tossing allegations back and forth in the press.

Rusty Hay  
Orinda

**Editor:**  
I think it is pretty obvious that many roads in Lafayette (and the rest of Lamorinda) need work. I personally will vote against any measure that is too general in nature. What I would support and I there are others like me, would be a measure that is also a business plan. It would spell out which roads would be repaired, the approximate cost of the repair and the time line. I do feel that we need more taxes to deal with our issues in this state. On the other hand, I am fed up with vague measures that end up allowing money to be directed at things other than the problem we thought we were voting for. We have lived in the area since 1980 and have supported, among others, three bond issues for the 4th bore. In every one of these, a study was done and 'consultants' were paid multi-hundred thousand dollars. Start putting straight forward measures on the ballot, clear about how the money will be used and we will all be surprised at the level of support.

Leonard Dorin  
Lafayette

### Lafayette Measure B

**Editor:**  
A longtime Lafayette resident, I have taught for 9 years at Happy Valley School, and my children grew up attending Lafayette schools from kindergarten through high school. I write to you as citizen, educator, and parent. Over the years I have witnessed firsthand the strength of our schools: small class sizes, curriculum strong in core academics and the arts,

and a supportive community that regards the education of its children as a sound investment. After two years of significant reductions in state funding, and corresponding efforts to meet those shortfalls, we have reached a point where the current structural deficit threatens to impact our students as never before. I support Measure B because it is an effort to provide emergency, stable funding to help retain those programs that make Lafayette schools special. Funds provided by this measure will be directed to the schools, not the administration. They will not bring back what has already been lost, but without them, our students will experience a much different program than my children did. It is particularly sad for me to see, as a teacher, how the decline in funding has already impacted our students. I know that without Measure B, the immediate effect on the quality of Lafayette schools will be dramatic and alarming. When the schools falter, the desirability of the city soon follows. Please help support Measure B.

Sincerely,  
Kim Stern  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
Preserving important Lafayette Elementary academic programs in these difficult days is critical. As a past school board member I have seen how important it is to come together as a community to maintain the highest quality coursework possible. Once a program is lost it is impossible to regain it. Measure B will allow us to keep our schools in the top 10% of the state. Measure B can't possibly fix all that ails the state but it can help maintain the excellence we have all come to expect in our community by allowing us to keep our funds local. Measure B will allow us to maintain the best of the best. None of the money will go to the state funds. Instead it will go 100% directly into the classroom which is where it belongs. As those of us who no longer have children in the classroom we remember how important this is and we also know that good schools protect our property values. So I hope you will please join me in voting Yes on Measure B.

Sincerely,  
Judy Carney  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
Why YES is the only answer: If we are a young family, our most important question is: where are the best public schools? If our children are in school, we ask: are our children getting the highest quality education from premier teachers? If we are seniors wishing to downsize, we ask: who is most likely to purchase this home where we raised our children? This cycle continues every generation and that is why we all chose Lafayette. Measure B is key to ensuring Lafayette continues to be the answer, because:

- 100% of Measure B funds stay in Lafayette (invest locally!)
- 100% go directly to elementary and middle school classroom instruction
- \$176 per parcel means just 50 cents a day (less than half the cost of a small coffee!), or less than \$15 a month
- Best News: Measure B is a temporary fix to an emergency situation, and sunsets in four years.

Measure B is not a tax, it's an investment...in our homes, our children, our community. Great public schools are the proud legacy each generation has left for the next in Lafayette. We cannot take and not give back, because Lafayette citizens have never done this. We need to sustain this legacy. YES, these are challenging economic times. YES, California, and Lafayette, public education have been dealt a huge blow. This is why YES ON MEASURE B is the only vote that sustains our long-term investment. Whether we are young families or retirees, YES we can give \$.50 a day not only to benefit our children but in our own personal interests. Giving back is its own reward.

Kathy Merchant  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
My wife and I have lived in Lafayette for over 20 years. We have raised three sons here and all of our grandchildren are now attending Lafayette schools. When my children attended our Lafayette public schools, the schools were funded by property taxes. As a result of various state legislative changes, now only about 14 cents of every property tax dollar comes back to the School District. I am deeply troubled by the lack of support currently provided by our state for the education of our children. As a former CEO of an international corporation, I have seen first-hand how critical it is to educate our students so that they may compete in a global society. According to a recent report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United States has fallen from the top of the class to average in the world education rankings. The report, which examines the knowledge of 15 year olds, ranked the United States 14th out of 34 OECD countries for reading skills, 17th for math and 25th for science. According to the report, the United States needs to "make the choices needed to show that they value education more than other areas of national interest." I cannot agree more. While the state struggles to solve its financial crisis, we need to act locally to support our schools. It is our responsibility to support and educate our children so that they may ensure the future of our country. Please Vote Yes on Measure B.

Most sincerely,  
Rick and Janet Cronk  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
How does it feel to be a cheapskate? According to the US Census Bureau,

Californians enjoy the 8th highest per capita income in the US. No surprise there, we've always known that the good life abounds in the Sunshine State, right? Unfortunately we are putting the future of our state in great jeopardy. California ranks near the bottom in terms of per pupil spending - Education Week ranked us 42nd, behind most of the poorest states in the Union including Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama. And we are dropping fast - in the last 3 years, the Lafayette School District has been forced to cut \$1,100 in annual funding per student. In case you are wondering, there is a direct correlation between classroom

spending, test scores and earning potential. If passed, Lafayette's Measure "B" will provide emergency funding to preserve core math, science, art, and music curriculums. 100% of Measure "B" funds will be spent on classroom instruction, none on administrative overhead. All for a paltry \$.50/day per Lafayette household. Please invest in the future - the same way that our parents and grandparents invested in us and vote yes on Measure "B" - or risk being called worse than a cheapskate.

Kevin Cornish  
Lafayette

... continued on page A10

### Join our Public Forum

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

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- Plastic bags, plastic film wrap, Styrofoam, paper or plastic cups, paper towels, Kleenex or other facial tissues, plastic utensils, sharps, metal or plastic hangers, mirror glass and disposable diapers.
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## Letters to the Editor

... continued

Editor:  
While I have strongly supported the Lafayette schools in all prior ballot measures, Measure B will not get my support. Measure B, the May 3 Lafayette special election for a new added parcel tax to support the elementary schools is grossly unfair. First, it categorically exempts seniors with only the check of a box on a form, ignoring the fact that seniors in Lafayette are among the most affluent anywhere. Lafayette seniors statistically have more assets than any other age group in Lafayette. By granting this exemption, potentially 28% of homeowners won't pay the tax – over 1,100 seniors have already opted out of supporting the schools. The tax also treats my parcel, with a small single family home, the same as the parcel that has Safeway on it or the parcel with a 50 unit apartment building on it – even though many or even most of those units will hold families using the schools. All of us, including seniors, commercial property owners and apartment building owners benefit from increased property values in part because of good schools in Lafayette. It's time the Lafayette Elementary School District addressed these gross inequities and came up with a fair funding mechanism. One which will provide stable funding, not repeated ballot measures – the last one was only 3 years ago and raised an existing parcel tax by 235%. Besides, we all know from experience that no tax is really "temporary", as we are told this one is. Vote No on B.

Bill Whiteman  
Lafayette

Editor:  
As a lifetime "booster" of education, it's distressing to witness an outpouring of support for one more unwarranted local school tax! This, knowing that that advocates of Measure B are applying intense pressure to pass a new parcel tax, just a few years after a previous unjustified one. That one passed, largely because of voter manipulation concocted by a consultant who specializes in applying strategies which prompt voters to react in less-than-logical ways. And, the same consultant is driving strategy for this one. Sadly, the recent outpouring of "Weekly" letters favoring the measure - all, powerfully stress the "superb quality" of local school efforts...and, need to preserve same, via a new, tax.

Facts are, that "quality" in today's "education context" only represents student abilities to answer test questions based on State-prescribed standards. But, said tests in today's "dumbed-down" education environment, are far from the quality and content of historical US education standards. Numerous studies by respected "education organizations" (American Legislative Exchange Council, American Council of Trustees & Alumni, Intercollegiate Studies Institute and others) reveal a multi-generation slide in US (and CA) "education quality, to near 3rd World standards.

Then, there is the CA Teachers Union factor regarding mandated "education costs"...that is, the State dictate of 20 students per teacher. Admittedly, our local district has upped a number of classes beyond that. But, the same agencies who study such matters, have universally demonstrated that the "20 figure" ensures no better results than the 30 or 40 size which has historically obtained in the US (and CA). Exceptions being, special ed situations.

Given class room personnel costs represent a major component of school budgets, simply restoring class size to previous generation numbers, would alone, obviate a tax need.

Finally, given the upscale makeup of our local population, there is also a tendency to equate small public school class sizes, with the quality of private schools. Nothing could be less valid. Agencies that assess such situations, consistently contradict this assessment. Even the increasing growth in Lafayette students now attending both private and non-secular schools, reveal that numbers of parents have become aware of the recent generations of "dumbing-down" America's schools quality.

The forgoing comments represent just a few of many reasons to Vote "No On B" - and, to send the District back to its "bottom-line drawing board" (using the talents of the Board to present credible reasons for seeking added funding – not, employing consult propaganda to manipulate voters!

Donald Lively  
Lafayette

Editor:  
I am writing to express my continued support for Lafayette Schools, but my strong opposition to the Lafayette School District's (LSD) untimely and ill-conceived consultant-driven parcel tax increase, Measure B, set for a mail in ballot ending May 3rd. My disapproval stems less from the fact that this 10th Lafayette School Tax represents a 46% annual increase each of the last 11 years (when it was \$84, and now \$508) but that the structure of the tax is grossly unfair.

First, as to the matter of the LSD's claimed "need", and an alleged precipitous drop in State funding putting programs in "crisis", the fact remains that

per-student funding ("ADA") has increased steadily from \$5,771 in 2000, to \$9,015 in 2009. (Per Student Revenue Trends, www.Ed-Data.k12.ca.us) Even LSD Superintendent Brill admits that the District does not have a "funding problem" it has "an enrollment problem." Actually, while revenues, teacher compensation, and Administration costs are up every year, LSD has seen its student enrollment drop steadily since 2000, an average of 12%, over ten years. Last reported enrollment numbers for 2010 show another drop. At the same time, the number of teachers has held steady, from 187 in 2000, to 186 in 2010.

The District's parcel tax has grown by leaps and bounds, with other local school taxes, in fact the 4th school tax hike in as many years. On top of school bonds, Measure B would result in a parcel tax that will have increased 285% in just 3 years. LSD parcel tax "J" (levied 2008) raised elementary parcel taxes 235%: starting from \$84 in 1999, then \$132 till 2008, to Measure J's \$313; then 3%/yr. hikes; now \$332 or 252% of the 2008 rate. If passed, Measure B will result in a 508% tax increase since 2000, or a hike of 46% each year over 11 years.

Measure B's "Temporary" \$508 Elementary parcel tax (Measure B adds \$176 more to the current "J" tax at \$332) would be 384% of the 2008 tax. But we all know from experience, that there is no such thing as a temporary tax. They only increase when they are renewed, just as J did.

But the worst thing about Measure B (and Measure J, before it) is that unjustly shifts the tax burden between citizens in unfair and irrational ways. Shaped and promoted by top tax "architect" Larry Tramutola (the so-called "Billion Dollar Man" because he has passed more school and municipal taxes than any non-elected person), Measure B once again buys the reliable senior vote by doling out purely age-based exemptions regardless of need or wealth, and avoids negative campaign funding by keeping commercial parcels, even huge ones like shopping plazas and 50-unit apartment buildings, taxed at the same rate as small single family homes.

While seniors are certainly deserving of our great respect, this age group hardly needs more subsidy in Lamordina. In point of fact, seniors are the wealthiest age group by assets, enjoying the fastest growing incomes in the last 2 years, and the second highest group overall for income level. Fewer than 3% of all Lafayette seniors have income below the poverty level.

Mr. Tramutola knows full well that seniors, like any other fair-minded group, will vote in their best interests (in large numbers), and that would be to pass a tax that exempts them from paying school taxes. This is a problem for working families, especially those stretched thin in more modest homes with large mortgages (many seniors have none) since they are called upon to pay a higher school tax to make up for the 28% of Lafayette homes now occupied by seniors. The LSD reports that 1,108 homes are already senior exempt – a number growing every year --and seniors are figuring out that they can escape rapidly escalating school taxes by merely checking a box on a form to achieve permanent tax exemption. (To Moraga and Orinda's credit, some of their senior exempt taxes are need-based, not age-based.)

Finally, Mr. Tamutola has a strangle-hold on our school tax measures – a "lock" on the business, if you will. With a prominent School Board Member advocating for successive increases in the Parcel Taxes, she simultaneously holds a voting School Board leadership position, while at the same time serving as a key staff member of Tramutola, LLC, the premiere tax consulting firm, headquartered in Oakland. Voters should all look carefully at Measure B, and read up and get the facts before they succumb to the slick District campaign and widespread fears about draconian cuts threatening their children's future and well-being. It's high time we let Mr. Tramutola and the LSD School Board know, that enough is enough. Vote NO on Measure B. Read more: www.NoOnB.info.

Lawrence M. Pines  
Lafayette

Editor:  
My 2.5 year old can't vote yet, but she wants to have all the opportunities for learning open to her that the current children have in their curriculum. If Measure B isn't passed, then she will miss out. I hope that you might publish this 'Yes on B(ee)!' picture of her in the newspaper so that it might persuade some readers that 'our future' needs the opportunities that past students have had.

Many thanks,  
Sarah David  
Lafayette





# SMC Men's Basketball Season Review

Gaels conclude season 29-6

By Bryant West



Rob Jones Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's men's basketball team met a bitter end to a strong season in the first round of the NIT, losing to the Kent State Golden Flash 71-70 on March 14th.

The Gaels, who led by as much as 12 in the second half, couldn't stop Kent State's comeback and a go-ahead layup from Justin Greene ended up the game winner for the Golden Flash. Junior Rob Jones had 21 points and nine boards for the Gaels in the loss.

Senior guard Mickey McConnell, the WCC Conference Player of the Year, had just five points in his final game. "When you're sitting there, it's kind of an emotional time," he said bleary eyed after the game. "You're just sitting at your locker thinking you're not going to be in that situation again with a group of guys you've been together with for so long."

Head coach Randy Bennett said afterward that while the loss was tough, there were "a lot of good things that have happened this year and we have to keep those in mind." When asked about McConnell, Bennett said

he had "been a stud for us all year. We wouldn't be in this situation if he hadn't done what he's done all year... We haven't had a better leader in our program."

The Gaels finished their season with a 29-6 record, the fourth straight season with 25 wins or more. Coach Bennett, the winningest coach in Saint Mary's history, earned his 200th career win in the 67-56 win over San Diego on January 19th. Bennett was also named the WCC Coach of the Year.

McConnell, in addition to his WCC Conference Player of the Year, was named to the Mid-Major All American Team after averaging 16.4 points and 6.1 assists per contest. Sophomore guard Matthew Dellavedova and forward Jones were named to the WCC All Conference Team, with Dellavedova averaging 13.4 points and 5.3 assists and Jones averaging 13.8 points and 7.7 rebounds. Freshman Stephen Holt was named to the All-Freshman team and became increasingly important late in the season for the Gaels as arguably the team's best defender.

The season produced a lot of positives for the Gaels, capped off by a 73-71 win in Gonzaga that propelled the Gaels into the elite of the conference and left the Bulldogs reeling. McConnell hit an acrobatic turnaround jumper for the victory that gave the Gaels a then 6-0 conference record. Gonzaga was 44-1 at the McCarthy Athletic Center before the loss.

The Gaels played a strong non-conference schedule, including a win over 76-71 win over St. John's on November 15th in Moraga and a 94-76 win over Mississippi State in Las Vegas on December 29th.

The Gaels non-conference losses were all against teams that found their way into the NCAA Tournament, including a 74-73 loss to BYU in the 2010 South Padre Classic on November 27th and a 69-55 loss to San Diego State four days later. Both BYU and San Diego State finished with top 10 rankings and made it to the Sweet Six-

teen in the NCAA Tournament.

But some late season losses meant the Gaels had to win the conference tournament in order to secure a NCAA Tournament berth and they did not beat the Zags again.

While the season certainly didn't end as the Gaels would have liked, the future still looks good for Moraga fans. McConnell leaves along with forward Phil Benson, but the Gaels retain the remainder of their team including Dellavedova, Holt and Jones. The Gaels also add some more size - something that was lacking throughout the season - with both 6-foot-9 freshman Brad Waldow coming and 7-foot center Kyle Rowley, a transfer from Northwestern, eligible next season.

Rumors swirled after the NIT loss that Bennett was interviewing with Utah for the open coaching spot left by Jim Boylen, but Bennett has continued to deny the rumors and stresses his optimism for the team's future.



Matthew Dellavedova Photo Tod Fierner

# Saint Mary's Women's Basketball Wrap-Up

Tomlinson ends career with all-time records

By Caitlin Graveson



Tomlinson (2) grabbed the WCC career rebounds record in the WNIT loss Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's women's basketball entered the season with high expectations. The Gaels were predicted to finish West Coast Conference play in second place, which they accomplished, with a 19-13 overall record. With the second place finish the team

received an automatic berth to the Women's National Invitational Tournament for the second year in a row.

Saint Mary's played host to visiting Nevada in the opening round of the WNIT on Thursday, March 17. The Gaels were unable to take advan-

tage of any Irish Luck on St. Patrick's Day and lost a heartbreaker, 62-65.

The teams traded points for most of the game. The tenth and final tie came at 59-all with 8:30 to play. The Gaels built a 62-59 lead with less than four minutes to play but Nevada stormed back to recapture the lead and hold on for the win.

Junior redshirt guard Jasmine Smith, a first team all-WCC selection, had 18 points and junior guard Alex Carbonel added 15 points, ten of which came in the first half on 6-of-8 shooting.

Senior forward Louella Tomlinson notched 19 points and ten rebounds in the win. With those rebounds Tomlinson became the career all-time rebounder for Saint Mary's and for the West Coast Conference; she grabbed 1,122 rebounds. She also had 303 rebounds in the season. Tomlinson is only the second person in school history to record at least 300 rebounds in a season.

"Rebounding wasn't my forte coming in but it was something I wanted to get better at and I think this is a testament at how much I have improved since I have been here," Tomlinson said of her performance.

Tomlinson, a first team all-WCC selection, also leaves with the all-time career scoring record with 1,848 and all-time blocked shots record with 667. The all-time blocked shots record is a NCAA record. Tomlinson started and played in every game of her career.

Head coach Paul Thomas said of Tomlinson, "I don't want to sensationalize this, but with the records she has... if she is not the best player to have played here, she is definitely one of the top two or three."

The Gaels lose Tomlinson, Leanna Richey and Suzie Davis to graduation. They retain WCC all-freshman selection Danielle Mauldin and Smith.

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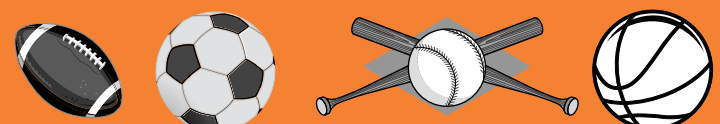
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B&W listing will cost \$24 (3.75"x1").

## SMC Gaels Home Game Schedule



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  - Sat, Apr 2** MTEN Gonzaga Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 12:00 PM
  - Sat, Apr 2** WTEN Santa Clara Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 12:00 PM
  - Sun, Apr 3** SB Boise State Cottrell Field 12:00 PM
  - Sun, Apr 3** WTEN Pacific Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 1:00 PM
  - Sun, Apr 3** WLAX Stanford Saint Mary's Stadium 1:00 PM
  - Tue, Apr 5** MTEN Montana Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 3:00 PM
  - Wed, Apr 6** WLAX UC Davis Saint Mary's Stadium 4:00 p.m.
  - Sat, Apr 9** WTEN Portland Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 12:00 PM
  - Sun, Apr 10** WTEN Denver Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 11:00 AM
  - Sun, Apr 10** WLAX Oregon Saint Mary's Stadium 1:00 PM
- Schedule is subject to change. Confirm at www.SMCGaels.com

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# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS



## CYO Diocesan Champions

Submitted by Monica Chappell



Front Row (L to R): Marcy Morse, Taylor Rowley, Brennan Pittsey, Kelly Ruane, Sasha Sadoff, Rachel Koenigsberg, Lily O'Toole, Bianca Chao, Jackie Geannacopulos, Kate Schirmer  
Second Row (L to R): Mike Ruane, Asst. Coach and Mark Pittsey, Head Coach

Photo Leslie Geannacopulos

The fourth grade St. Perpetua CYO girls' American league basketball team won the CYO Oakland Diocesan Championships on Sunday, March 12 at St. Francis of Assisi School in Concord. The girls defeated St. Bonaventure 17-16.

Submitted by Kevin Porep



Back Row (L to R): Asst. coach Vince Penza, Anne Kliger, Taylor Ligouri, Bella Penza, Bella Denny, Claire Porep, head coach Kevin Porep Front Row: Carly Porep, Ali Smith, JulieAnne Martin, Julia Lyons

Photo Bob Kliger

St. Perpetua's seventh grade American league girls basketball team completed the season undefeated in league play. The team went on to win the Contra Costa Diocese Championship by defeating Good Shepherd of Antioch, 47-41.

## Burton Valley Bobcats

Submitted by Sara Kelly



The Burton Valley Bobcats first grade girls' indoor soccer team finished the season as LMYA champions.

**Submit Sports stories to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com**

## Tournament of Champions

Submitted by Joanne Layshock



Front (L to R): Coach Joe Ziolkowski, Chris Hagmaier, Andrew Schatz, Grant Pedder, Coach Jason Hong, Back: Tom Hofmeister, Charlie Ziolkowski, Casey Harrington, Jack Hemmenway, Joey Layshock

Photo Joanne Layshock

St. Perpetua's American 2 eighth grade boys represented the West Diablo League in the Tournament of Champions in Brentwood on March 13. They defeated St. John's of San Lorenzo in the championship game, 59 to 44.

Submitted by Monica Chappell



After winning the West Diablo fourth grade boys' National Blue Division regular season title with a 9-1 record, the team went 5-0 in the playoffs, capped by winning the Tournament of Champions (TOC) on March 13 at Heritage High School. The TOC features the top teams throughout the Oakland Dioceses from Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Bottom row (L to R): Ben Lauer, Jack Wickline, Tristan Tzortzis, Matthew Raffel  
Middle: Nick Catalanello, Ricky Bianchina, Oscar Beckinger, Jackson Kirke, Alex Archer  
Top: Coaches Paul Wickline and John Kirke  
Photo Teresa Jimenez

## St. Perpetua Champions

Submitted by Suzanne Campillo



Front Row: Melissa Nolan, Kaitlyn Enrici, Samatha Darin, Hannah Edwards  
Coach Doug Campillo, Stella Burford, Kana Yamada, Isabella Campillo, Serena Singh, Head Coach Doug Edwards. Not pictured: Lily O'Brien

Photo Suzanne Campillo

After a winning basketball season, the fifth grade girls' National 1 team placed first in the playoffs. Three of the four playoff teams were from St Perpetua.

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## Lamorinda Girls Lacrosse Looks to Repeat Success

By Alex Crook



Junior offensive midfielder Courtney Neff (25) scored three goals in the win over the Mats Photo Andy Scheck

This spring, girls' lacrosse looks to be an exciting battle. All Lamorinda teams finished in the top three in last year's Diablo Foothill Athletic League.

**Acalanes:** Acalanes finished last season as DFAL champs, going a perfect 13-0 in league play and 16-7 overall before falling to Amador Valley in the NCS playoffs. The Dons finished their season ranked 17th in all of California.

Currently, Acalanes is 5-3 and 2-0 in league play with a 9-6 win over Miramonte on March 23, and an 18-9 victory over Campolindo on March 25. In the win over the Matadors, Dons junior offensive midfielder Courtney Neff scored three goals.

"I think that our team is going to win league this year. We did last year, and I believe we have the potential to go far again this year. Our whole team is so excited for the real season to start and if we play our hardest and go 100 percent during each and every game, we will without a doubt be very successful," says Neff.

Acalanes returns four members of last year's all-DFAL first team for their senior year. Acalanes is an experienced team ready for a competitive season.

**Miramonte:** The DFAL runner-up, Miramonte finished last year with a 9-3 league record while going 14-7 overall. The Matadors also represented themselves as a strong squad, finishing at 32nd in California.

Right now, Miramonte is off to a great start at 5-3, and 1-1 in DFAL

with a win over Dougherty Valley on March 25 and a loss to Acalanes. Mats sophomore attacker Lauren Dougherty scored five goals in the victory over the host Wildcats.

"I think that we have the talent to do great things this season... Beating Acalanes and Campolindo this year to win DFAL will be tough because all three of the programs are very strong... If we play the way I know we can, I'm positive that we can beat them," explained Dougherty, who was selected to last year's all DFAL second team as a freshman.

The Mats return two seniors, including senior midfielder Alex Seclow, and goalie Dani Albo; they lose midfielder Erin Walsh.

**Campolindo:** Campolindo enters this year hav-

ing finished in third place in last year's final DFAL standings. They look to rebuild after losing first-team all DFAL goalie Rachel Ozer to graduation last June.

The Cougars went 9-4 in league last year and 12-9 overall. Campo is 3-2-1 overall and 1-1 in DFAL play with a league win over Dougherty Valley on March 22 and a loss to rival Acalanes on March 25.

Against Dougherty Valley, Campolindo midfielder and junior captain Brooke Martini scored three goals.

"We are really coming together as a team and each and everyone on the team is improving," said Martini.

Currently, Acalanes and Miramonte are tied for second place in the league, while Campolindo sits at fifth place.



Sophomore attacker Lauren Dougherty scored five goals in the victory over Dougherty Valley Photo Andy Scheck

## March Madness in Moraga Middle School

Submitted by Sonja Schoenwald and Kym Leserman



Front row (L to R): Steven Leserman, Adam Beeri, Nick Tran, Lev Garcia, Sean Yamamoto; Middle row: Wyatt McNeil, Walker Franklin, Nick Drury, Cole Farrand; Back row: Sterling Strother, Chris Copen; not pictured, Brendan Gordon Photo Kathy Franklin

The Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JMIS) boys' seventh grade A basketball team won the league championship on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, in a close and physical game against Longfellow of Berkeley. Coached by Chris Copen, and cheered on by dedicated JM fans, the team won 47-42. The team finished 11-2, including wins over tough

opponents Albany and Orinda Intermediate School (OIS) in the post-season semi and quarter finals. Three members of the JM team - Nick Drury, Lev Garcia, and Sterling Strother (Tournament MVP) - were named to the all-tournament team, along with Max Flower of Stanley and Will Hicks of OIS.



## Joaquin Moraga Basketball Team Wins Championship

Submitted by Tom Duffy



Front Row (L to R): Jake Oxendine, Sebastian Vitung, Matt Kronenberg, Quinn Cuddihy, Jacob Westphal, Zack Duffy, Michael Hooper. Back Row: Asst. coach Mark Christensen, head coach Tom Duffy

The Joaquin Moraga sixth grade basketball team took home the championship trophy at the Martinez Junior High Invitational Tourna-

ment, which was held March 9-11. The Marauders defeated host Martinez, 42-28, in the opening game, held off a tough Albany team for a 43-41 overtime victory in the semi-finals, and then won a thrilling 48-47 come-from-behind shocker versus Willard in the Championship game.

After a steal with 9.5 seconds left, JM took the ball out of bounds at mid-court, down 47-46. Zack Duffy found Matt Kronenberg cutting to the basket and Kronenberg hit a lay-up to give the Marauders their first lead of the night with just four seconds left. JM held on to win it 48-47.

Matt Kronenberg scored 29 points in the final game, and was named tournament MVP. Michael Hooper scored 11 in the final game, and was named to the all-tournament team.

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## Moraga Baseball Association

Submitted by Jin Meng

### Bronco Division

March 13, 2011

Orinda Owlz 6 Moraga Giants 4

Giants highlights: Trevin Kroichick 3-for-3, 2 2B, 2 RS, RBI, 1 IP, 0 H; Vince Mossotti 3 IP, 0 hits; Evan Gabrielson 1-for-2, 1 RS; Ryan Schulze 1-for-3, 1 RS.

### Mustang Division

March 12, 2011

Giants 10, Cardinals 3

Giants Highlights: Cason Johnston 2 for 3, 3 RBI, 1 RS, 2 SB; Dominic Gillibert 2-3, 3 RBI, 1 RS, 2 SB; Ryan Kim 2 for 3, 1 2B

Cardinals Highlights: Max Schoenberger 2 IP, 3 Ks, 0 ER, 3 for 3, 1 RBI; Adrian Hyatt 1 IP, 3K, 0 ER; Nolan Wilson 1 for 2

### Pinto Division

March 12, 2011

Red Sox 15, Yankees 11 (8 innings)

Red Sox Highlights: Cole Jeter 4-for-4, 4 RS, 1 RBI; Brent Avenell 3-for-4, 2 RS, 3 RBI; Logan Filler 2-for-4, 2 RS, 3 RBI, 3B

Yankees Highlights: John Hunter 3-for-3, 2 RS, 1 RBI; Quinn Panos 2-for-3, 1 RS, 2 RBI; Dylan Wilkalis 2-for-3, 1 RS, 2 RBI, 2B

Moraga SF Giants 15,

Moraga LA Dodgers

Giants Highlights: Graham Becker 2-for-3, 2 RS, 2 RBI; Brady Manz 2-for-3, 1 RS, 2 RBI; Jackson Rusconi 2-for-4, 3 RS, 2 RBI; Will McGaughey 2-for-4, 3 RS, 2 RBI.

Dodgers Highlights: Brody Crouch 3-for-3, 2B, 2 runs, RBI; Nate Powers 2-for-3, 2B, run, RBI, Jack Beaty 2-for-3, 2B.

## Lamorinda United 94 Plays in Vegas

Submitted by John Fuller and Larry Margerum



Photo provided

The Lamorinda United 94 Soccer Team (LMSC) flew into Las Vegas to play in the prestigious Las Vegas College Showcase March 11-13.

Lamorinda opened up tournament action against the Chantilly Firecats from Virginia. Chantilly is currently ranked second in the nation according to getsoccer.com. Lamorinda played courageously, and even outshot Chantilly by a margin of 18-11, but lost 1-0 in the contest.

On Saturday, Lamorinda faced two more nationally ranked opponents. The first match pitted United 94 against the McLean MPS Power. Lamorinda defeated the squad from McLean, Virginia by a

score of 3-1 with two goals coming from captain Val Margerum and another tally from Samantha Zarleng.

On Saturday evening Lamorinda played Empire Soccer Academy from New York. Lamorinda won, 4-2. Campolindo's Margerum paced United once again with two goals, Acalanes' Kaitlin McGee and Jessica Jara notched one each.

On Sunday morning, Lamorinda defeated East Meadow Soccer Club, 4-1. Margerum, Claire Winter, Megan Turner, and Becca Bostwick each scored. Lamorinda United 94 concluded the weekend 3-1 and finished second place. The tournament success pushed Lamorinda United into the number four spot on the getsoccer.com rankings.

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# Life in LAMORINDA

## Crisis Center has Strong Lamorinda Ties

By Cathy Dausman



Volunteer Jim Holt (left) joins Contra Costa Crisis Center Executive Director John Bateson. Photo Cathy Dausman

Crisis: “an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person’s life.”—Merriam Webster online. Jim Holt and John Bateson are more specific: in their work for the Contra Costa Crisis Center, they may encounter homelessness, victims of child or elder abuse, suicide attempts, school-based youth violence (bullying or cyber-bullying, for example) and relatives who have lost a loved one. Both call Moraga home—Holt for 10 years, Bateson for 16. Bateson is Executive Director for the forty eight year old organization; Holt a volunteer who’s been on both sides of the counseling table.

Holt first volunteered for the Crisis Center in 2005. He answered the 24 hour crisis lines for a year before switching to volunteer work for the Red Cross. When his son Ryan, 20, died in a motorcycle accident in 2007 Holt returned to the crisis center as a participant in their grief support group and stayed with the grief group “for a couple years.” It was a difficult time both for Holt and Moraga; Ryan Holt’s death was the town’s third motor vehicle fatality involving young adults in less than five months.

The senior Holt also underwent private grief counseling through his medical provider but feels he benefited most from the weekly group grief counseling sessions CCCC provided. “My heart is with the Crisis Center,” he says, stressing the value of peer support which comes from

those who have also suffered the death of a loved one. “Only they know what it is like.” Holt works as an insurance broker but has considered becoming a grief counselor. Counselor-trainees must pass an initial health screening evaluation, and then undergo 25 to 30 hours of training over seven weeks.

Holt’s personal ties with CCCC is one reason he is co-chairing a new CCCC event—a benefit walkathon on May 14 at Heather Farm Park. The walkathon falls on the weekend his step-daughter graduates from Duke University, and Holt knows he can’t make both events. He’s committed to be in Walnut Creek for the walkathon. “I’ll probably write her [stepdaughter] a letter for someone to read aloud,” he says, adding his letter may end up being better than any speech he would give in person.

Bateson says the walkathon is a nice counterpoint to the center’s formal gala fundraiser in the fall. The nonprofit center’s 250 volunteers and staff of 22 handled more than 63,000 calls in 2010. It has an annual operating budget of 1.8 million, and relies heavily on grants and donations plus income from sales at its Leftovers Thrift Shop.

“With help comes hope,” says the Crisis Center mission statement. And Jim Holt knows he can help.

For more information about the Crisis Center, go to www.crisis-center.org.

## Araim Discusses Islam in America with Lafayette Rotary

By Sophie Braccini



Dr. Amer Araim Photo Andy Scheck

Dr. Amer Araim offered interesting insights on Islam and triggered pointed questions from the audience at the Lafayette Rotary Club meeting on Thursday, March 24, in the Oakwood Athletic Club. The

public meeting drew quite a crowd despite the rain. Araim is the president of Islamic Community Outreach of California and an Imam at the Dar-ul-Islam Mosque in Concord.

... continued on page C3

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## Trans-Sierra Xtreme: Adventure for the Whole Family

By Sophie Braccini



Chris Casado at Geppetto's Cafe in Orinda Photo Sophie Braccini

Chris Casado was 14 the first time he climbed Mt. Whitney; he was accompanied by Mike Murphy, who had been his 5th grade teacher. The hike was such a great experience that he went back six times. This month Casado and Murphy started a new business, TSX (Trans-Sierra Xtreme) which will offer Lamorindans from middle-school to retirement age a chance for adventure.

"We take people that have the necessary mental toughness; that's what makes 80% of the strength," says Casado, "and we take them on the ultimate trans-Sierra trek." Casado is scheduling four nine-day, 75-mile mountain trips in July and August.

"This trek takes people over

the Sierra to Mt. Whitney on what I believe is the most beautiful trail," says Casado, "it is the best experience for high achieving teens and adults. Two of my siblings and I chose the experience as the subject of our college essays; it was a transformative experience for all of us."

Casado's mother, Valerie, was 40 when she made the trek with her family. "I was totally unprepared when I did it," she remembers. "One of my sons broke his toe and couldn't go, so I made the decision to replace him to be with my other son and 13-year-old daughter, three days before the departure! Aside from blisters caused by brand new shoes, she says, "It was hard but magnificent. You learn so much about the region you cross on the trail."

Now 57, she is considering doing it again this summer. "One of the great elements about this adventure is the mix of ages," she adds, "it was a great bonding experience with my kids and I made friends for life."

An Orinda resident, Casado is an energetic young man who quit his financial investment job a few months ago to start his own businesses. He has at least three projects going; one is a telecommunication venture, the second is an iPhone app that helps plan family dinners –he and his wife are the busy parents of a baby and a toddler – the third is TSX.

Mike Murphy, the co-owner of TSX, has been taking groups

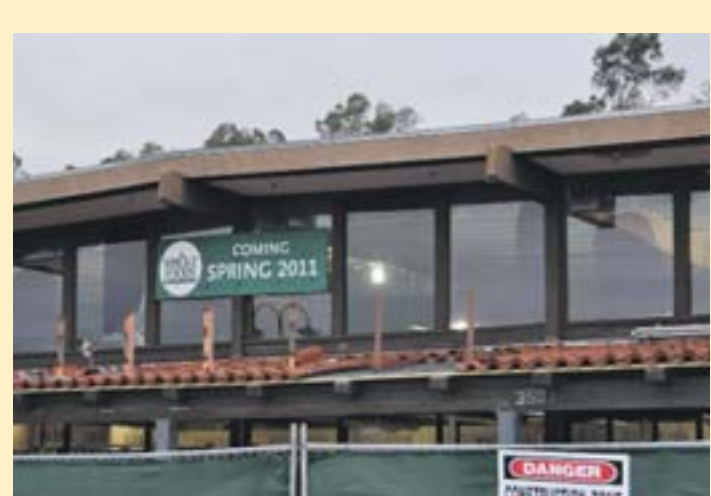
on the trek every year for the past 30 years. He is an experienced guide and holds a wilderness first responder certificate.

At \$1650 per person, the cost of the trip is not negligible. The price includes the loan of any supplies that participants don't already own themselves, such as utensils, backpacks, sleeping bags or mats. There will be an information session at 7:00 p.m. on April 7, at Bonfire Pizza in Orinda's Theater Square, or go to the website, [www.tsxchallenge.com/](http://www.tsxchallenge.com/).

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Whole Foods Market will open in May, according to the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. The new grocery store will hold a much-anticipated "Bread Breaking" Ceremony at 9:45 a.m. on May 18th.

## business briefs

### Stokes Named CIGA Retailer of the Year



Lafayette Chamber Director Jay Lifson congratulates Diablo Foods Ed Stokes on his Retailer of the Year Award. Photo Sophie Braccini

Ed Stokes, of Diablo Foods, has been named the 2010 Retailer of the Year by the California Independent Grocers Association (CIGA). The Award will be presented to him at CIGA's Installation Banquet on Saturday, April 14, in Sacramento.

### Caldecott Properties Comes to Lamorinda 370B Park Street, Moraga (Rheem Shopping Center) (925) 376-4000, www.Caldecott.com

Caldecott Properties recently opened a new office in Moraga, a few doors down from the Rheem Theater. Co-owner Andy Read and seven of the 30 Sales Associates currently live in, or are originally from, Lamorinda. Rob 'the Realtor' Jacobus is the manager of the Moraga-based office. "I've lived in Orinda for 22 years," says Jacobus, "I went to grad school at Saint Mary's College, and started my real estate career at Mason-McDuffie in Lafayette." According to the firm, the intent of establishing Caldecott Properties was to create a full-service brokerage specializing in sales, rentals and property management on both sides of the tunnel. Asked about retail in Moraga, Jacobus answered, "My opinion is that this is not the time to be too picky, the town has to be receptive to any and all. Moraga is a hidden jewel, people do not find it by accident; we need to be a little more friendly when they do." As far as residential real estate is concerned, he said that properties are moving, the inventory is down from last year at the same time, and the number of foreclosed home has increased but is still low.

### From Lamorinda Moms to Lamorinda Web www.lamorindaweeb.com

Tiraporn Olsen, Stephanie Kusinski, Lauren San Mateo and Holly Sonne met through Lamorinda Moms. The four are concurrently mothers raising children and professional women either in software engineering (Olsen and Sonne) or Marketing and Business Development (Kusinski and San Mateo). Olsen is an Open Source Web Developer at Strategic Social, and the founder of Moraga-based Happy Pixel Studio, LLC. For the past 10 years, she has helped many businesses with their online



(L to R) Lauren San Mateo, Stephanie Kusinski, Holly Sonne, Tiraporn Olsen Photo Tish Wetzell

needs. "I have seen how these small businesses and non-profit struggle to find affordable ways to spread the word about what they have to offer, or about their mission," she says. "As a parent member of Lamorinda Moms I also saw the need for communication between individuals and have questions answered. LamorindaWeb integrates the response to these different needs." The platform was launched on March 1st. Their first outreach campaign is geared to fundraising for the local education foundations. "LamorindaWeb.com will donate \$1 to benefit one of the three Lamorinda education foundations for every new person who joins the LamorindaWeb.com community between now and April 15," explains Kusinski, with a maximum of \$5,000 to be donated." Joining LamorindaWeb is free. The fund raising membership drive will culminate with the April 21 LamorindaWeb launch party to be sponsored and held at The New Rheem Theater, 350 Park St. in Moraga.

### Realtor Dana Green Recognized J. Rockcliff Realtors 3799 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 100, Lafayette (925) 385-2330

J. Rockcliff Realtors announced on March 21st that seasoned Realtor Dana Green has been awarded the company's coveted Top 1% honor. The award recognizes her outstanding performance as one of J. Rockcliff's top performing real estate professionals. Green is a resident of Lafayette and a second-generation Realtor. She works with a variety of local organizations, including the Lafayette Juniors, of which she is a past president and the founder of its popular Kitchen Tour event. She has been recognized for her work with local schools, and donates a portion of each transaction to Lafayette Partners in Education.



**Tri-Chamber Meeting – Make Your Movie**  
 Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda will hold a Tri Chamber Mixer at The New Rheem Theatre, 350 Park Ave, Moraga, on Tues-

day, April 26. Since the meeting will be in a movie theater, the Chambers are asking residents to shoot a video (three minutes or less in length) or create a PowerPoint presentation or slide show about how much they love their town/city. "I thought, we are in a theater and we are all proud of our city – and hey, let's have some fun," said Lafayette Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson. Winners from each community will be shown on the big screen and win prizes. All submissions must be on a DVD. Please contact the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for submission instructions, 284-7404.

### News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

- Join Lafayette Chamber and the A's for Meet, Greet, & Play Ball on Thursday, April 14 at the A's vs. Detroit Tigers game. Event Includes - Pregame, networking mixer in the Eastside Club (5:30-7pm), Appetizers and non alcoholic beverages included, and Discounted Field Level game ticket (\$21 - normally \$26). If the Lafayette Chamber group has the most members present at the event it will win a private suite for 18 to be used at a future game in 2011. Make sure that when you check in you mention Lafayette Chamber. To order your event tickets please go to [www.oaklandathletics.com/meet](http://www.oaklandathletics.com/meet) (Password: GREET.)
- Big Band Dance, Friday, April 8, 7:00pm at the New Rheem Theater, 350 Park Street, Moraga. Tickets available at Chamber Office.
- Shop Lafayette meeting, Tuesday, April 12, 12:30 in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.
- Monthly Mixer, Wednesday, April 13, 5:30pm at Lafayette Physical Therapy, 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite B110.

### Moraga

The registration deadline for participation in the Moraga Community Faire is April 15. At the March 25 Chamber meeting, Community Faire coordinator Ellen Beans reminded local folks that there are three ways for them to participate: get a booth, purchase a space on one of the Faire's banners that will be displayed all around town for 3 weeks (of the 30 spots available, only seven are still for sale), or volunteer at the Faire on May 14. For more information, contact her at [ellen.beans@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.beans@gmail.com).

### Orinda

First Annual State of the City Address and Special Recognition Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, April 20, starting at 12:00 Noon in the Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. The event is hosted by Rotary Club of Orinda and Orinda Chamber of Commerce. It will recognize as Best Small Business in Orinda, Orinda Taxi/Julian Juricevic. The State of the Town Address will be given by Mayor Victoria Smith. RSVP: Required by April 15. Tickets are \$20.00 per person - to purchase tickets go to the Chamber's web site at [www.orindachamber.org/events.htm#AwardsDinner](http://www.orindachamber.org/events.htm#AwardsDinner).

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



# Women's Health Experts Enlighten and Entertain

By Cathy Tyson

In an evening for adults only, two women's health professionals gave a fascinating presentation on mood, hormones and sexuality sponsored by the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation with Consortium partner John Muir Health. The charming speakers were Dr. Jeanne Alexander, a biological psychiatrist who specializes in reproductive psychiatry and menopausal sexual medicine, and Dr. Sondra Altman, an Ob-Gyn who has been practicing at John Muir Medical Center for the past eleven years.

"John Muir is a Founding Partner in the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium. This collaboration has now been extended by their providing our first corporate program sponsorship, which not only represents a generous gift to the Library Foundation, but will fund a series of health programs," said Kathy Merchant, Executive Director of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation. "Tonight was a great start to the series. To be able to hear a broad range of health information from the elite of the medical and health professions is an extraordinary benefit of this partnership."

In a wide ranging casual discussion, both doctors explained to an audience of mostly middle age plus women some of the intricacies of issues specific to females. Using humor and candid examples, they had the crowd in stitches at times.

Although the title of the event was Simple

Pleasures – Wine, Women and Chocolate, with actual complimentary wine, chocolate and snacks, it turns out some simple pleasures can be rather complicated as women age, go through menopause and deal with cancer or hysterectomy.

"Let's start where I usually start – the vagina," said Altman, who usually goes by Dr. Sandi. Although very informative, much of the subject matter is a little blunt for a family newspaper. Talk of estrogen dependent tissues and the benefits of certain products that can "turn back the hands of time," had audience members taking notes. "Put the zip back in your doo-dah," notes her website.

Dr. Alexander, who has done a significant amount of hormone and menopause research, explained the intricate relationship of hormones, fatigue, depression, the fabric of life and stress. "Fatigue is not an aphrodisiac," she said. She went on to discuss the complex relationship between estrogen and testosterone, "it's like a chess game."

One problem with couples in long term relationships, said Dr. Sandi, is that they are "out of the habit of being sexy," wearing a ratty old t-shirt to bed and having a TV and laptop in the bedroom. She recommends keeping your bedroom a sanctuary and encourages getting back in the habit of seeing yourself as a sexual person. She advises, "Make what you have work – water your own garden."

## As Seen in Lamorinda...



Rainbows over Saint Mary's College

Photo Cathy Dausman

# Pacific Chamber Symphony Plays in Lafayette

By Andrea A. Firth



Lawrence Kohl, Music Director and Conductor of the Pacific Chamber Symphony.

Photo provided

Over the past year, the Pacific Chamber Symphony (PCS) has added the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church to the list of Bay Area venues where the symphony regularly performs. "We are very pleased to play in Lafayette. It's wonderful space," says Lawrence Kohl, PCS' Music Director and Conductor.

Kohl, a clarinetist, founded the Pacific Chamber Symphony 22 years ago. "PCS is made up of the finest musicians in the Bay Area," says Kohl, who speaks proudly of the group, referring to their style as 'intimate grandeur.' "You get that personal, intimate experience when you go to a chamber concert," says Kohl. PCS has 12 to 30 musicians playing in a concert depending on the music to be performed, as compared to a symphony orchestra that will use from 60 to 100 musicians, explains Kohl. "With a chamber symphony, you feel like you are part of the music which makes the experience meaningful and moving," says the conductor.

With PCS' structure, the organization also has the flexibility to perform in a variety of venues in more than one community explains Kohl. PCS was launched in Livermore, where it continues to play at the city's per-

forming arts center, and over the years has branched out to perform regularly in Napa and occasionally in San Francisco and Antioch. Adding Lamorinda to the orchestra's circuit made perfect sense for Kohl, who now resides in Moraga and previously lived in Orinda.

"We really encourage students to come to our concerts too," adds Kohl noting that he and his colleagues conduct school assemblies to teach students about various music elements, give music clinics for middle and high school students, and have formed a youth orchestra in the Livermore area. Much of PCS' youth outreach has been done in Livermore where the organization has a strong infrastructure with a board of community members and many volunteers. Kohl would like to bring these educational opportunities to Lamorinda and set up a similar support system.

The Pacific Chamber Symphony's next Lamorinda concert will be held on Sunday, May 22nd at 2 p.m. at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Avenue in Lafayette. For more information about PCS or the upcoming concert go to [www.pacificchambersymphony.org](http://www.pacificchambersymphony.org) or email [info@pacificchambersymphony.org](mailto:info@pacificchambersymphony.org).

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**Klippert to Speak at Moraga Library**

By Sophie Braccini



Zoe Klippert

Photo Sophie Braccini

dle-age English woman on the American society of the time.

"The letters had been acquired by the library in 1977, but to do the research someone had to be from this area," said Klippert, who felt that she was the right person to do it. As a young woman, she studied English literature at Cornell University and then earned a master's degree in teaching from Harvard. It took a lot of persistence and support from her family because she quit her job to dedicate herself to research.

Klippert formed an emotional bond with Hubback's story, as evidenced by five trips to England, long hours spent in libraries, genealogical and historical societies, and time spent studying Hubback's novels for insights into the life of the reserved English woman. "It was a lot of work, but I enjoyed it immensely," she said, "now I know more about her than about some of my own ancestors, and somehow I feel related to her."

Hubback was indeed an interesting woman, with real struggles and hardships, and sometimes surprising opinions on Americans that were not free of prejudice. Klippert's work allows the reader to enter Hubback's world and relate to her experience easily. Her intimate understanding of Hubback and her family is accessible and informative.

Vaisey suggested that the Bodleian Library publish the work. "This book is the result of being at the right place at the right time," says an unpretentious Klippert, "because it is an academic book published in England, it is a bit pricey. But many libraries have purchased it, including the Contra Costa County Library."

Klippert will be at the Moraga Library on April 16, from 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Her book is available online at Amazon.com.

Zoe Klippert has lived in Moraga for close to 40 years. She was an original member of the prestigious San Francisco Chamber Singers (now Volti San Francisco), and among other jobs was a contract editor for the UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science. For the past 10 years she has immersed herself in the life and work of Catherine Hubback, an English woman who lived from 1818 to 1877. It all started when Klippert came in contact with 44 letters that Hubback, who immigrated to United States in her fifties, wrote to her family in England. The result is a book, "An Englishwoman in California: The Letters of Catherine Hubback," which Klippert

will discuss at the Moraga Library on April 16th.

In the summer of 1998 Klippert took a three-week class in Oxford that changed her life. The class, "Recovering the Past," was taught by David Vaisey using documents belonging to the Bodleian Library, where he was Librarian Emeritus. On the second day of the class, the participants were offered different sets of original diaries or letters. Klippert chose Hubback's letters, unaware that Hubback was Jane Austen's niece and had written 10 novels; but she immediately spotted the letters' historical value as Hubback described everyday life in the 19th century Bay Area and contained the spirited perspective of a mid-

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## The App Rap

By Eric Pawlakos

### GasBuddy – Find Cheap Gas

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With gasoline prices on the rise, GasBuddy is a free app that will appeal to both parents and teenagers alike. It not only locates gas stations wherever you are, it also finds the least expensive gas. This app is remarkably simple to use. Once you open the menu you simply press 'find gas near me.' After a quick search, GasBuddy loads all the gas stations nearest to you. This can be very useful if you are traveling and getting low on gas. Bobby Taylor, a student at Miramonte, commented, "GasBuddy has helped me find gas stations whenever I go to visit colleges, friends or need to travel for extracurricular activities." In addition, the app gives you the options to sort the stations by price, distance from you, and type of fuel. Once you click on a particular gas station, accurate directions are quickly loaded.

regular unleaded. For example, in the Moraga area, Lamorinda Gasoline's price of \$3.95/gal is 14 cents cheaper than Chevron's \$4.09. Lafayette's '76 is also at \$4.09. Depending on how often and how much you fill up, this free app could save you a nice little chunk of change. Douglas McKinley said this is a "cool and easy way to save some money."



Eric Pawlakos is a junior at Miramonte High School. When not at school he can be found playing rugby with Lamorinda Rugby, or learning guitar.

Testing this app in the Lamorinda area showed some differing prices for

## I'm All Ears



Photo Cathy Dausman

Tolstoy the dog listens while Roxanne reads "Airy Fairy" during Animal Rescue Foundation's "All Ears Reading" at Moraga library.

The program offers children grades 1-5 the opportunity to read to an ARF dog. All Ears Reading runs through June. Reading time is 3:30 or 4 p.m. C. Dausman

## Araim Discusses Islam in America with Lafayette Rotary

... continued from page C1

Since 9/11, Araim has been invited by numerous groups to come and speak about Islam. He said that over 50 churches, some hospitals and many colleges in the Bay Area have invited him. Dignified and eloquent, Araim is an adept of interfaith dialogue and his goals are to share with his audience the roots of his faith, bringing out what they have in common, leading to an audience understanding that American Muslims are no different from themselves.

"Christians, Jews and Muslims believe in the same God," he says, "the difference is the way we receive the guidance through Qur'an." He explained that to be a Muslim is to submit to the will of God expressed in the Qur'an. He told the story of how the sacred book was revealed to Muhammad verbally through the angel Gabriel over a period of approximately twenty-three years. He listed the five pillars of Islam, insisting that it is the duty of a Muslim to give back to the community since wealth is considered a gift of God. His most important message, on Thursday, was that Muslims living in this country pledge to abide by American law. He tried to dispel misunderstandings. "In this country the word 'Jihad' evokes someone with a sword," he said, "Jihad means the struggle to control, especially the evil within the self, or self-defense. In America, this is done through the law; violence is not an option.

For him, the violence that has erupted in some Muslim countries and led misguided youth to acts of

violence is the result of socio-economic or politic problems. "How do you interpret what is happening right now in the Middle East, this quest for democracy that is breaking out?" asked Rotarian Dick Holt.

"All these countries could be in favor of democracy," answered Araim, "but because of tribalism they have suffered dictatorships. But now people can communicate with others through the internet and circumvent government's control. They know what is happening in other parts of the world, they see that their rulers are corrupt, and out of desperation they face the oppression of their regimes." He added that he thinks that the Muslims in Egypt would welcome a secular state.

Dan Baker asked how Araim's wife would like to live in some parts of the Muslim world where women are oppressed. "Islam should not oppress women," he answered, "it is important to distinguish between tribalism and religion. Qu'ran says to protect women, not oppress them."

The general theme Lafayette Rotary's speaker series is "Building Communities."

After the meeting was over, the Rotarians continued to discuss that day's topic passionately. "He (Araim) is well-integrated into America, but he didn't address what happens on the other side of the border," said Mo Levitch, while another Rotarian added that the conditions of women in Islamic countries had not been discussed sufficiently.

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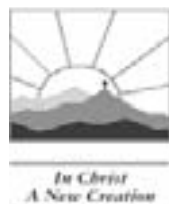


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Music at both services. Choir at 10am.  
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A Loving Community

**Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM**

Active Youth Program, Sunday School, Nursery Childcare, 10 AM  
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

## Not to be missed

### ART

**Guest Member Joanne Tauerer joins Moraga Art Gallery** for its current show, Chiaroscuro: Light and Shadow, March 22- June 4. The works in this exhibit are based on the attraction of light within the dark: the glow of the storefronts along Tauerer's hometown main street, the shimmering chandeliers in a festive restaurant or simply a corner with a welcoming chair and reading light. The gallery is located at 570 Center St in Moraga. For more information, go to www.moragaartgallery.com or (925)376-5407.

### MUSIC

**Thai Dance and Drama Troupe from Payap University in Chiang Mai,**



Thailand will perform on April 5th at 7pm at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Ave (one block So of WC BART, off California Blvd.) The 80-minute program will feature a number of dances from the various regions of Thailand, as well as a traditional Thai melodrama (Likay) with English translation. The performance is free, but there will be an opportunity to contribute to the troupe's expenses in making this tour.

**Big Band Ball Room Dance, Friday, April 8** at the New Rheem Theatre in Moraga. Students from Acalanes, Campolindo and Stanley will be featured with the Rossmoor Big Band and students are encouraged to attend the dance. Attendees can take a dance lesson at 7pm with Gail Enright and then enjoy the Big Band music from 8-10pm. Tickets are \$10.00, sold at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce office, 100 Lafayette Circle #103. Tickets may also be purchased at the New Rheem Theatre. Purchase your tickets in advance, as this event has sold out in the past. Space is limited. Call (925)284-7404 or visit www.lafayettechamber.org for information.

**April's Tuesday evening concert of the Performing Arts Society** will begin with a quintet for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon by Frigyes Hidas. The remainder of the concert will consist of two string quartets, one by Beethoven and one by Brahms, plus the Choral in A minor for organ by Cesar Frank. The public is invited to attend this free concert at 8pm, April 12, Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. For info see www.ccpas.org.

**Hear up-tempo numbers and ballads,** swing and salsa, instrumental and vocal soloists at the SMC Jazz Band's free spring concert under the direction of John Maltester. Thursday, April 14th at 8pm in the Soda Center and Wednesday, May 4th at 1pm in Ferragiaro Quad. Cost: Free.

### THEATER

**The Saint Mary's College Performing Arts Department** spring production will be ANGELS AMONG US, a selection of interesting and thought-provoking plays from long ago. The production will feature SMC students acting out stories from the Bible. Performances will run from April 5 through April 13. Performances will take place outside, in front of Saint Mary's College Chapel (in case of rain, performances will take place in LeFevre Theatre). General Admission-\$10; Saint Mary's Faculty, Staff and Students-\$5. To purchase "chair" tickets please call Sharon Cahill at (925) 631-4670. One FREE performance on Saturday, April 9 only, when performances will take place at the Moraga Commons Bandshell at the corner of St. Mary's Road and Moraga Road. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, picnics, etc. and enjoy the shows for free. No reservations needed.

**S.T.A.G.E. Troupe, teen theater in Pleasant Hill,** will present eight showings of the "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown," a musical based on the comic strip "Peanuts" by Charles M. Schultz at the Leshler Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive in Walnut Creek. Friday

April 1 at 7:15 pm.; Saturday April 2 at 2:15 pm and 7:15 pm; and Sunday April 3 at 2:15 pm. To purchase tickets (\$12 in advance or at the door), please contact the Leshler Center for the Arts by calling (925) 943-SHOW (7469).

### LECTURE & LITERATURE

**First Friday Forum: Stem Cell Research:** The Social, Ethical, Political and Therapeutic Implications is the topic to be presented by Dr. Bertram Lubin, president and CEO of the Children's Hospital and Research Center of Oakland at First Friday Forum, April 1, 1:30 pm at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, (LOPC) 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. In his talk Dr. Lubin will review the history of stem cell research and the current therapeutic applications of this research, along with the politics related to obtaining funds. Refreshments will be served at 1:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, with the lecture to follow in the sanctuary. For further information call (925) 283-8722 or go to lopc.org.

**Lafayette Historical Society's Speaker Series,** Wednesday, April 6th at 3pm; What's Happened Since the Railroad's Been Gone. Speaker Stuart Swiedler uses live images from his website (The Eastbay Hills Project) to unveil amazing visuals of the changes to the roadbed over the last 50 years. Lafayette Library and Learning Center, Arts and Science Room—Mezzanine Level. Donation requested: \$10 members; \$15 for non-members to help defray costs. Limited seating. Reservations call (925) 283-1848.

**"Dress Under Difficulties: Civilian Fashion in the Civil War",** a lecture at The Orinda Library on Thursday, April 7 at 6:30pm. Shelley Monson will describe the fashions worn during the war as well as the shortages civilians encountered. Scarcity of all manufactured goods were especially experienced in the southern states where a lady commented in a letter that she had used up all her "whites," that is her petticoats, as bandages for the wounded. Along with slides of period clothing, Monson will wear a costume she created complete from hat to "whites." This free program will take place in the Gallery Room of the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more info please visit ccclib.org or call (925) 254-2184.

**The Commonwealth Club presents:** "The Science of Geniuses" on Thursday, April 21, 6:30pm. The celebrated MacArthur Fellows Program awards "Genius" grants to exceptional inventors, innovators and creative talents. The winners are offered \$500,000 with no strings attached over the next five years to pursue work in their field of interest. Come out and meet the local Bay Area winners and learn about the projects that won them this esteemed award. Location: Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Time: 5:45pm check-in, 6:30pm program. Cost: \$12 members, \$22 non-members, \$7 students. Get tickets online at commonwealthclub.org or call (415) 597-6705.

**The Orinda Library will host a docent talk** on Tuesday, April 12 at 7pm on Berkeley Repertory's production of Anton Chekhov's masterpiece "The Three Sisters." The program will take place by the fireplace inside the library. It is free of charge and will last about an hour with time for questions and answers. The Orinda Library is located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more information, please call (925) 254-2184 or visit the library website at ccclib.org.

**Orinda Library Mystery Book Club:** Mystery fans join us to talk about our favorite genre at 3pm on April 15. This month's title is "The Lost Garden: An English Garden Mystery" by Anthony Elgin. Check with the library for copies. We meet in the Tutoring Room inside the Orinda Library at 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. For more information call (925) 254-2184 or go to ccclib.org.

### KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

**The Moraga-Orinda Fire District**



is hosting their Annual Spring Open House and Hot Dog Lunch on Saturday, April 9th, from 10am to 2pm, at Station 45, 33 Orinda Way in Orinda. The theme for the open house is

"Ready,Set,Go!" Kids and adults can meet their local firefighters, tour the fire trucks, eat hot dogs, and gather important wildfire safety & disaster preparedness information. Smokey the Bear and Sparky the Fire Dog will make special guest appearances throughout the day. For more info contact MOFD at (925) 258-4525.

**The 2011 Stanley Science Expo sponsored** by Lafayette Partners in Education and Stanley Middle School will be held on Thursday, March 31st, from 6:30 - 8:30pm, at Stanley Middle School. The Science Expo features numerous science exhibitors along with middle school student science projects. Exhibitors include NASA, Google Earth, and many more. Bring the entire family for an evening of hands-on science fun. Elementary school 5th graders are encouraged to attend to get a preview of Stanley events. Food and drink will be available for purchase.

**Moraga Junior Women's Club presents their Spring Egg hunt** on Saturday, April 16, at Moraga Commons, Corner of Moraga Rd. and St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. Ages 1-6. Games will be open from 9am until 12pm. Two egg hunts are scheduled: one beginning at 10am and the other at 11am. The cost is \$10 for a wristband which includes one egg hunt and unlimited games, crafts and bounce houses. Wristbands are only available for purchase in advance online at www.moragajuniors.org or at the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department located at Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga. Phone: (925) 888-7045. Adult admission is free.

**The Orinda Preschool TOPS invites you** to the 16th Annual Art and Music Festival, Saturday April 16, 9:30am-Noon. Located at the Orinda Preschool, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Join us for arts, crafts, musical performances, puppet show, baked goods and more. A morning of great family fun, tickets are \$5 per person, children under 2 are free. For more information and tickets please contact TOPS at (925) 254-2551.

**The Lafayette Rotary Club's Annual Egg Hunt** is open to all children ages 2 through 3rd grade. The event takes place at Lafayette Plaza (corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Rd) in Lafayette, at 9:30am, Saturday, April 23. The park lawn will be covered with candy for the kids to put in their baskets. The youngest are always given extra time to get their share! The Bunny will be there to take pictures with the kids. Please arrive on time as it starts promptly at 9:30am.

**Elementary to Middle School Transition Summit.** Worried about the transition into 6th grade? Sign up for Teenage Dream, hosted by Miramonte and Campolindo high school students for an afternoon of games, videos, discussions, food and fun to ease the transition into middle school! This event is open to all Orinda 5th grade girls and is taking place on Saturday, April 16, in the Glorietta MPR from 1-3pm. Sign up and help support Girl Scouts Troop #30040 in their Silver Award Project while learning about the experiences you will have in middle school. For more information and/or a registration sheet, email: girlscoutstroop30040@gmail.com.

**JF Kapnek 8th Annual 5K/1K Family Fun Run,** May 1st, 9am. Bring your friends and family to celebrate our accomplishments in Zimbabwe with the J.F. Kapnek Trust's 8th Annual 5K/1K Family Fun Run on May 1st at Miramonte High School in Orinda. There will be races for children as well as adults along with music of Zimbabwe, children's crafts and activities and a delicious brunch. Proceeds from this event will go to the Trust's efforts to diminish the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the children and families of Zimbabwe. Registration fee includes brunch and a T-shirt. Register online at www.active.com(keyword: Kapnek) or go to the Trust's website at www.jfkapnek-trust.org for more information.

### CONTESTS / SCHOLARSHIPS

**2011 Poul Anderson Writing Contest is open** to all students who reside and/or attend high school in Orinda. Entry categories are Science Fiction, Essay/Memoir, Poetry and Short Story. Submission deadline is Friday, April 22nd at noon. Entries are judged by a panel of Orinda writers and residents. Up to four winners will each be awarded \$250 prizes at the close of this school year, underwritten by the Friends of the Orinda Library. For details visit: www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org or email Susie Epstein, at suzepstein@aol.com

## Not to be missed

**High Achieving students of African-American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic descent** who reside in or attend a college in the San Francisco Bay area can apply for one of three \$5,000 college scholarships. Applicants must meet certain academic criteria and must express an interest in pursuing a career in the insurance and financial services industry. Students of all majors will be considered. Scholarship winners will have the opportunity to network with professionals in the industry and may be eligible for internships. For more information on how to apply and for eligibility requirements, visit [www.hsf.net/massmutual.aspx](http://www.hsf.net/massmutual.aspx).

### OTHER

**The deadline for the Spring Grants Cycle** for the Lafayette Community Foundation is March 31st. For information regarding grant applications, proposals and procedures please visit LCF's website at [www.lafayettecommunityfoundation.org](http://www.lafayettecommunityfoundation.org).

**Saint Mary's Guild Luncheon and Fashion show**, April 2, 11am, St. Mary's College, Soda Center, 1928 St. Mary's Rd, Moraga, will feature classic fashions from Draper's and Damon's. Hospitality hour from 11am - noon, followed by luncheon, raffle and the fashion show. For reservations, contact Jackie Brown at (925) 939-4222.

**Moraga Movers meet at the St. Mary's College Soda Center** on April 11 with social hour at 5pm and dinner at 6pm, followed by the monthly speaker. Julie Lindemann from the Moraga Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness (MNEP) will give a PowerPoint presentation on getting ourselves and our neighbors ready for an such an unpredictable catastrophe. Members and local residents may make their reservations by calling 376-6622, or by going to the new website [www.moragamovers.org](http://www.moragamovers.org).

**The OML branch of AAUW** proudly invites the public to its annual only-evening meeting to be held at the Serbian Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga at 7 pm. on Tuesday, April 12th. The scholarships for both Jr High School and High School students will be presented, following refreshments and a short business meeting. Dr. Kris Kulp-Group leader: Pharmacology and Toxicology Goup at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab will speak on "Biology as a Team Sport."

**Orinda In Action - A Community Service Day** Sat, Apr 16, 9am-noon. Registration starts 8:30am at Library Plaza with coffee & bagels. A Free T-shirt to the first 300! A light lunch is available to all. Everyone welcome! To register, send an email to [orindainaction@gmail.com](mailto:orindainaction@gmail.com) or visit [www.orindainaction.com](http://www.orindainaction.com).

**Earth Day Recycling, Sat Apr 16**, 9am-4pm. E-recycling in the Orinda Rite Aid parking lot. Goodwill truck and Food Bank bins available all day in the Community Center parking area. In celebration of Earth Day, please recycle!

**10th Annual Wildlife/Earth Day Festival** on Sunday April 17th 1- 4pm, Wagner Ranch Nature Area, 350 Camino Pablo Rd., Orinda. The free festive program to celebrate and support environmental education programs in the Nature Area will offer an electric Volt to test drive, a Raptor Show, ARF dogs, Eagle Shield's trailer of energy efficient systems, a giant solar balloon, native plants for your garden, arts and crafts, delicious food, music and games, and more - see [www.fwma.org](http://www.fwma.org).

**Lafayette Earth Day celebration, Saturday**, April 23rd: (9am - 11:30am) children K-5th grade can learn and practice bike safety on the outdoor course at Stanley Middle School with a festive parade to Lafayette Plaza Park; (11:30am - 1:30pm) enjoy a local, organic, sustainable lunch at the downtown Plaza Park with live music and activities; (11:00am - 3pm) Plaza Way will be featuring the "Backyard of Tomorrow" that demonstrates the latest green gardening techniques and materials. Also visit booths by Sustainable Lafayette, The Urban Farmers, Lafayette Farmers' Market, Trust in Education, CCC Solid Waste Authority, and more. For info see [www.sustainablelafayette.org](http://www.sustainablelafayette.org).

**Next Freecycle - Save the date:** Thursday, April 28th 9am-12:15pm at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane. We will be in the breezeway up the first stairwell off of the parking lot Freecycle of gently used children's clothing and equipment. Bring

## Not to be missed

items and take items, or just come and take! This is for everyone in the community!

**The Moraga TreeLine Triathlon will take place** on Saturday, April 30, 7:30 am at the Soda Aquatic Center, Campolindo High School, 300 Moraga Road. The event is ideal for the beginning triathlete as well as the more advanced competitor. The swim is a challenging 400 meter sprint, followed by a 22 K bike ride out to Canyon, and culminating with a 5 K run. New youth divisions have been added this year. For more information and route details go to [www.moragatri.com](http://www.moragatri.com), or call (925) 888-7035. Registration is open.

**Lafayette Service League's Annual TOSSED TREASURES SALE** will be held on Sat. April 30th (from 9 to 3) and Sun., May 1st (from 11 to 2) at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. The group is looking for donations. Proceeds will benefit Hospice Foundation of the East Bay and the Community Center. If you have items to donate, please call: Judy 284-9266, Diane 283-8790 or Jackie 284-4131.

**Campolindo Sports Booster's Annual Dinner & Cocktail Party.** Please join us in celebration and support of all our championship high school sports teams

on Saturday April 30, at 6pm at the Holy Trinity Church in Moraga. The evening features fine food and beverages from our no-host bar and a special guest speaker, Cal head Rugby coach Jack Clark. Ticket are \$50 per person if purchased by March 31st . After March 31st, tickets are \$65 per person. You can order tickets at the following link: <http://www.campoparents.com/Sports-BoostersFundraiser.pdf>.

### CLUBS

**The Lamorinda Peace and Justice Group** meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 7-9pm in the fireside room of Lafayette Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Road, Lafayette. For more information, call (925) 946-0563.

### GARDEN

**Moraga Community Farm is going to host** its Annual Nursery Plant sale. The farm is selling, herbs, heirloom tomatoes, and vegetable starts in 4" pots, from 9am-4pm, on April 2nd and 3rd. The sale will continue on weekends in April, while supplies last. The Farm is located between the fire station and School Street, in Moraga. All starts are seeded using unadulterated seeds, and are grown locally, pesticide free at the community farm. The starts include

## Not to be missed

some rare varieties, not available at nurseries. Proceeds from the sale cover the costs to run the non-profit, sustainable community farm.

**Lafayette Garden Club meeting 9:30am** on second Thursdays monthly, Our Savior's Lutheran Church,

1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Program for April 14: Roses, Roses and More Roses.

**Please submit:** [calendar@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:calendar@lamorindaweekly.com)

## Dining • Dining •

# Early Bird Dinner \$9.95

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or  
Lemon Chicken  
or  
Pork Schnitzel  
or  
Sirloin Steak



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Mon: 7am - 2pm; Tues-Sun: 7am - 8:30pm

# Heavenly Halibut

By Susie Iventosch

Halibut season just opened March 10, so you may be seeing fresh wild halibut in the markets soon. But, you will also notice a significantly higher price tag than last year's harvest. The is because the International Pacific Halibut Commission has recommended that, due to concern over reduced stock in the halibut population, the governments of Canada and the United States set catch limits 18.9 percent lower than last year.

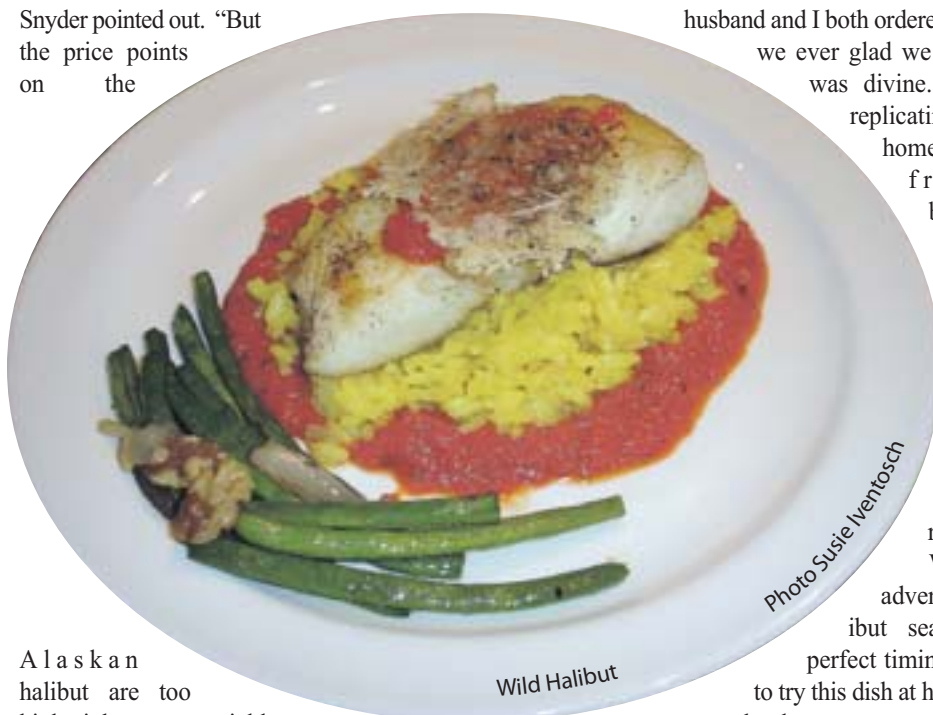
With the known benefits of eating halibut, many folks will not mind paying higher prices for this season's catch. Rich in Omega 3 fatty acids, halibut provides a range of cardiovascular benefits and improves the ratio of HDL (high density lipoprotein- the good cholesterol) to LDL (bad cholesterol). It is also a good source of magnesium, Vitamin B-12, Vitamin B-6 and folic acid. Omega 3 fatty acids can also lower triglycerides- a kind of fat carried in the blood stream, reduce the risk of certain types of cancer and even fend off both early and late age-related macular degeneration. Halibut is also believed to have properties that fight against Alzheimer's disease.

It seems like one might need a prescription for such a dose of health, but a large helping of cash is all it takes! And, it really is not all that pricey, when compared to sea bass or lobster!

At Diablo Foods in Lafayette, seafood manager Ray Snyder said he is carrying filets of local halibut, and steaks of the thicker and more expensive Alaskan halibut. Local halibut filets are running \$24.99 per pound, while the Alaskan steaks are \$20.99 per pound.

"You cannot tell the difference in flavor,"

Snyder pointed out. "But the price points on the



Alaskan halibut are too high right now to yield filets. The lower limit causes prices to increase, but in the long run, it is a good thing to ensure the fish population is sustainable."

He said the store should have halibut in stock from now through September, but customers can always call ahead to place orders, to ensure getting what they need.

At a restaurant outing a few weeks ago, the menu featured halibut served with roasted red pepper puree, saffron risotto and a black pepper-Parmesan crisp. It sounded so marvelous that my

husband and I both ordered it! Were we ever glad we did ... it was divine. I tried replicating it at home for my friend's birthday dinner and we were a l l v e r y

pleased with the results! With the advent of halibut season, it is perfect timing for you to try this dish at home. The roasted red pepper sauce with a hint of lemon, and saffron risotto accent the mild taste of the halibut beautifully.

For all the information you could ever want about Pacific halibut, from determining the age of your catch to how to cook it in a variety of ways, and an assortment of recipes, please visit: <http://www.iphc.washington.edu/>

Other sources: <http://www.medicinalnature.com/health-benefits-of-halibut/>; <http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com/lounge/benefits-of-halibut-6296.html>

## Roasted Red Pepper Butter

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 large red bell peppers, stem removed, seeded and cut in half
- 1 tablespoons fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 4-5 tablespoons butter, at room temperature and cut into small pieces

### DIRECTIONS

Place red pepper halves in a baking dish lined with parchment paper, and roast at 450 degrees for approximately 20 minutes, or until skins are beginning to char and separate from the meat of the pepper.

Remove from oven and cool peppers in a sealed paper bag. Remove skins and place peppers in a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Pulse until peppers are finely mashed into a puree. Add lemon juice and butter and process until butter is integrated. (You may still see lots of little specks of butter, but don't worry, when you heat the sauce it will integrate completely.) Store sauce in a covered container or sauce pan until ready to serve. When ready to serve, warm over low heat just until butter is no longer visible and sauce is hot.

## Cracked Black Pepper-Parmesan Crisps

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups fresh grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper (or more ... as you like)

### DIRECTIONS

In a bowl, mix pepper and cheese. Turn out onto a parchment-lined baking sheet. Shape into a rectangle about 6 x 8 inches or so. Bake at 400° for about 3-5 minutes, or until bubbly and just slightly beginning to brown. (Watch it closely so as not to burn.) Remove from oven and cool completely on parchment. When cool, break into 2x3 inch (approximately) rectangles. Set aside.



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

Many of our readers like Susie's recipes. Our website now features a link to our recipe page where you can read, print or download all of the recipes we have published. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977

## Saffron Risotto

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 1/2 to 4 cups chicken stock, warmed to a simmer
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 red onion, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 cups Arborio rice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Large pinch of saffron
- 3/4 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated (part for risotto and part for passing at the table)

### DIRECTIONS

In a large pot or pan, heat oil and add onion. Cook until onion is translucent, about 3 minutes over medium heat. Add rice and salt to onion and sauté until rice is becoming translucent, 2-3 minutes. Add wine and saffron and bring to a simmer, stirring often, until wine is almost absorbed. Then add broth, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring often, but not constantly, until liquid is nearly absorbed. Continue with this process, until all of the broth has been used, or risotto is al dente. Stir in Parmesan and cover and let sit for just a minute or two.

## Halibut

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds fresh, wild halibut filet (1/2 pound per person)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°. On a griddle, or a large oven-proof non-stick sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season the halibut with salt and pepper and put the filets, skin side down, in pan or on griddle. Sauté for approximately one minute then flip to other side and cook for another 1-2 minutes. Remove pan/griddle from stove and place in oven. Roast for approximately 4-6 minutes, depending upon filet thickness, until fish is cooked to desired doneness.

To Assemble Dish

Pour approximately 1/4 cup of red pepper puree on plate and spoon roughly 1/2 cup risotto over the top. Place halibut filet on top and lay Parmesan crisp on top. Finally, drizzle a little extra red pepper puree over the top and serve at once!

# Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

## Lafayette Garden Club Awards Grants

Submitted by Sharon Hunter



Photo provided

The Lafayette Garden Club is happy to announce that the funds generated by the 2010 Gardens for Gardeners Tour in the amount of \$8000 have been given to the following grant recipients:

- Kim Curiel, Burton Valley School
- Gailene Nelson, Lafayette School
- April Raffel and Bruce Wodham, Springhill School
- Kim Stern, Happy Valley School
- Monette Meo, St. Perpetua's School
- Patrice Hanlon, Heather Farms/Springstone School
- Mary Fuchs, Lafayette Senior Services
- Mary Bruns, Lafayette Spirit Van

These funds were raised in order to benefit area schools and Lafayette Seniors' garden education projects.

## Crisis Center Gets Birthdays from Girl Scouts

Submitted by Britta Glade



Photo submitted by Barbara Boster

Sleepy Hollow Elementary School Brownie Troop #573, led by Michelle Lehman and Jacquie Childers, celebrated the 99th birthday of the founding of the Girl Scout organization in style this year. The 22-member troop assembled "birthdays in a bag" to bring to the Monument Crisis Center for distribution. The Monument Crisis Center provides assistance and resources to low income and at risk families in the Contra Costa County. The bags, which included all the ingredients for a fun birthday party, will be given to children who might not otherwise have the means to celebrate their birthdays.

## Springhill Students Collect Soles 4 Souls

Submitted by Roxie Maisano



Photo provided

5th grader Ella Maisano at Lafayette's Springhill Elementary started a shoe drive for Soles 4 Souls, which will be distributing shoes to victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. For those wishing to help Japan by donating to Soles 4 Souls, gently worn or new shoes can be dropped off at any Sports Chalet before April 10. Pictured (from left) are 5th graders Clare Fontstein, Fiona Burrows, Alex Trux, and Ella Maisano.

## Lamorinda Schools

### Miramonte Students Go Bolivian

Submitted by Doreen Wagner



Photo provided

Miramonte teacher Doreen Wagner took 58 students from her Spanish class to Peña Pacha Mamá in San Francisco in early March. The field trip has become something of a tradition.

Peña Pacha Mamá is a Bolivian restaurant; through the years the owner has served up a night that students don't soon forget – those who attend the event tell the younger students about it, giving

them something to look forward to when they reach Spanish IV.

On March 3rd, the students started with a typical Bolivian dinner of empanadas, papas (potatoes of different colors), chicken, and fried plátanos (bananas). After dinner, they listened to Bolivian music made with flutes, drums, and a special Bolivian guitar. There was also a flamenco dancer; some of the students were given a chance to try their hands (and feet) at the exciting dance. Finally, because it was the beginning of Carnival for Bolivia, about eight men came in dressed in peasant clothes and playing different types of flutes. They explained, in Spanish, the history of the flute in Bolivia. The evening ended with all of the students dancing to Bolivian music.

## LPIE Science Fair Season

Submitted by Janet Estee (LPIE Communications Co-Chair, K-8 Science Advisor)



The best part of the bee display, according to Lafayette Elementary first grader Cynthia Lindgren, was "seeing the bees and learning about the honeycombs that they made."

Photo courtesy of Matt Fabela

The Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE, formerly LASF) science fair season is in full swing. Lafayette Elementary was the first LPIE science fair on the agenda this year. The successful season will culminate on March 31st with the always impressive Stanley Middle School Science Expo.

Each K-5 science fair boasts its own unique theme and style. "Going green" was a resounding theme this year and Springhill was certainly a standout on March 2. One week's worth of lunch waste was showcased in the form of a plastic dress worn by Springhill mom, Nanette Heffernan,

and Sophia McAdam's collection of school lunch food discarded as trash.

The fair at Lafayette Elementary School (LES) drew such a crowd that one parent exclaimed, "Next year it (the fair) will have to be held at the Coliseum." Fifth grade class projects, "Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader," PowerPoint presentations, and enzyme experiments, focused on the wonders of chemistry. "At the LPIE-sponsored science fairs our students can authentically explore an area of interest, learn about the scientific process, and present their findings. It is evident that the science projects were sparked by our

students' natural curiosity. Well done," said Fred Brill, Lafayette School District Superintendent.

"As our dependence on technology grows, we will need to educate students to be critical thinkers with a firm foundation in science principles," according to Jonathan Winter, Science Specialist at LES. Fair exhibitors allowed students to have fun while learning core science concepts. Camp Galileo explored centrifugal force, Mt. Diablo Bee Association shared queen bees, and LPIE Science Instructors examined oil spill clean-up. "As a biotech company we appreciate the value of strong programs in science education," said Edward Lanphier, Sangamo's president and CEO. "We are very proud of our employees, Janet Estee and Sal Orlando, and their involvement in bringing the excitement of biotechnology to local schools and are pleased to support them in this endeavor." The Sangamo team will step it up a notch from the Strawberry DNA Extractions at K-5 fairs and extract cheek cell DNA at the Expo.

The science fair season will close with a bang on March 31 with the Stanley Science Expo, one of the best in the Bay Area, with NASA Dr. Margaret Race's *In search of ET - How it's really done!*, Lawrence Livermore National Lab's *hydrogen powered cars*, Google views, Global Vicinity's *3D Magic of Xbox Kinect*, and PG&E's *electric Sedan VOLT*. On March 31st, science will take center stage at Stanley.

## JM Dances to Defeat ALS

By Sophie Braccini



Photo Andy Schreck

The Leadership Class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School recently organized a "Dance to Defeat ALS" – a fundraiser supporting the ALS Association's research efforts to find a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Entry to the dance, and a pink ALS wristband, was gained by students or parents making a donation to the ALS Association.

The Leadership Class at Joaquin Moraga (JM) is composed of 19 students. As part of their curriculum, the students decide on projects they want to support. One of these students, Oliver Ousterman, lost his father to

ALS four years ago. "There are medications to help slow down the process," said Ousterman, "but nothing has been found yet to stop it."

Jerry Gruen, who teaches the Leadership Class, explained, "Often referred to as Lou Gehrig's Disease, ALS is a progressive, fatal, neuro-muscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe. The life expectancy of an ALS patient averages two to five years from the time of diagnosis." Every 90 minutes someone in the United States is diagnosed with ALS, and every 90 minutes someone will lose the battle against this dis-

ease. ALS can strike anyone, anywhere in the world, and has no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic boundaries.

For the Leadership students the project was an opportunity to learn about ALS, how to make event planning decisions, and how to raise money. "We decided on a Hawaiian theme for the dance and made all the decorations," explained one of the students, "in order to save money, (another student) burned a CD with songs that others submitted; that way all the money collected from the dance can be donated."

The Dance to Defeat ALS raised \$4,000 for the ALS Association.

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[www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)

# Two Small Women Making a Big Difference

By Sophie Braccini



Susan Allison (left) and Mary Ann McLeod on the playground at Mulberry Tree Photo Sophie Braccini

Mary Ann McLeod will retire this year. After more than 30 years at the head of Moraga's Mulberry Tree Preschool, she is passing the baton to Susan Allison who has been with her as a Director for 10 years.

The two women have much in common, though a generation apart in age. They are petite, vivacious and warm, they share the same passion for education, and both graduated with the same Master's in Early Childhood Education from Saint Mary's College.

The preschool, on Saint Mary's Road, is a remarkable construction. A circular wooden structure, it was first owned by Tory and Robert Felton; Tory Felton was one of McLeod's teachers at Saint Mary's. "The round

structure is conducive to the type of learning that is occurring here," says McLeod, "the children move from one station to the next as their day unfolds."

"I started as an elementary school teacher," explains McLeod, "and I noticed that the first or second grade children had already acquired habits that were very hard to change. I believe that very early education is where you can build a foundation for life."

"The lesson plans are all based on a story line," explains Allison, "each of the four learning centers explores a different aspect of it through the art, cognitive learning, science, and movement. At each center, the teachers observe and challenge the children at their own level. Our mission is to de-

velop the cognitive, social, emotional and physical sides of every child."

"Here the children learn to learn," adds McLeod, "When they leave, they have learned to listen, to take turns, to take charge of themselves for some tasks, their social skills have blossomed, they can write some words."

Every few years, a new program is started at the school to take advantage of new research. "Three years ago we started implementing 'conscious discipline,'" says Allison, "it is a positive discipline approach that reinforces the positive behaviors with words. We as teachers do it, and now we are seeing the children doing it themselves." For example, if a teacher sees a child climbing on a table, instead of saying "Don't climb on furniture," she will say, "The play structure is for climbing," and she will show it to the child. "It works incredibly well," says McLeod, "we've given some informational material to the parents, and had a speaker about the method, so consistency is maintained between the home and the school."

Allison is already in charge of many things at the preschool; McLeod feels confident leaving the business that is so dear to her heart in Allison's hands. Allison feels comfortable as well, knowing that McLeod, who lives in Moraga and has grandchildren close by, will never be too far away.

# Orinda Academy Adds Sixth Grade

Submitted by Miriam Schaffer

Orinda Academy, a private, non-profit day school in Orinda, California for boys and girls, announces it is adding a sixth grade class beginning with the Fall 2011 semester.

"We have had repeated requests from the community for a personalized, quality middle

school program that includes a sixth grade," says Ron Graydon, founder and head of the school. "This will give families another option when choosing a middle school for their child, and will allow students to spend their entire middle school years with us and then continue on to a success-

ful high school experience."

An open house will be held on Wednesday, April 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Orinda Academy for prospective students and their families interested in applying to grades 6 through 12. For more information go to: <http://www.orindaacademy.org/>.

# 5th Annual AUHSD Film Festival Coming Soon

By Rebecca Eckland



Julia Anderson, Sydney Liu and Kyle Merryman, all sophomores at Campolindo High School, as they work on a film project in their Video 2 class. Photo R.A.Eckland

On April 15th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., students from Campolindo, Miramonte, Acalanes and JM Intermediate schools will be featured on "the red carpet" of the Fifth Annual Lamorinda Acalanes Union Film Festival at the Campolindo Performing Arts Center. Roughly twenty short films will be screened; what the films will be about is only limited by the imaginations and creative impulses of the students who produce them.

Justin Seligman, Video instructor at Campolindo High School (and Festival Coordinator), says that on any given day his students are producing a total of thirty short films. Seligman pauses to do the math: "That's five

classes, six to ten projects per class, so yes, thirty films a day."

He gives his students many different film types to work on, not simply the narrative-driven pieces one might expect. So far, his students have tackled various genres and styles: the silent film, musicals, sitcoms, the safety films you have to watch at certain jobs, infomercial and film noir, to name a few. "Some programs focus on personal narratives (personal editorials using film as medium) - this one focuses less on that. This type of program gives students a broad spectrum of approaches and allows them to dabble in areas that interest them. In the industry today, until you make it 'big' in Hollywood, you have to

have a large skill set in independent film making. You have to know how to shoot film, how to act, how to manipulate what you've shot." You have to be, to use a term Seligman taught this reporter, a "preditor" - that is, a producer/editor/actor.

Sophomore Julia Anderson wants to be a director one day, but for now is enjoying nearly all aspects of Seligman's curriculum, especially film editing. She took part in the film festival last year, winning an award for an infomercial on her invented product, "Port-A-Pants." Anderson explains: "We had to make up a product that didn't exist, so I thought, how great would it be to put stuff in your pocket to transport it somewhere else?" Right now she, as everyone in the class, is filming a sitcom.

Kyle Merryman, also a sophomore, is directing a sitcom that critiques the conventions in shows like "I Love Lucy." His project, "Gettin' Jiggy with It," has characters (played by students from the drama department) which include a cheating husband and a crazy, old-fashioned grandpa. "I love directing," says Merryman, "and I always watch the Oscars."

Eighty to one-hundred students will be involved in this year's film festival. The selection of which films/students to include will be made by Seligman and a few of his advanced students. Each film will be a "short" and last between one and five minutes. Also featured will be music by Jazztastic Voyage as well as several student DJs. Entrance is \$5.00.

"The program has grown so much in five years," said Seligman who cites generous community support as one major cause. Sponsors such as the Moraga Education Foundation, Campolindo Parents Club, and Contra Costa County Regional Occupational Program, among others, have provided the necessary financial assistance to keep the films rolling.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

**Acalanes Union**  
High School District  
Board Room AUHSD Office  
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
Next: Wednesday, April 13, 7:30pm

**Orinda Union School District**  
OUSD Office  
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
Monday, April 11, 4pm

**Lafayette School District**  
LAFSD Office  
3477 School Street, Lafayette  
Wednesday, April 13, 7pm

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

# Martin Named Lafayette's Teacher of the Year

By Cathy Tyson



Teacher of the Year (on left) Carroll Martin with indispensable aide/student teacher Gail Nugent Photo Cathy Tyson

Carroll Martin gives a new level of meaning to the word multi-tasking. With not one but two busy classrooms to accommodate her 26 students in the Fourth-Fifth grade Alternative Instruction Magnet (AIM) split class at Burton Valley Elementary School, there is clearly never a dull moment for this veteran teacher of 39 years. She seems to take the constant whirlwind of activity in stride, seamlessly shepherding all of her students through social studies, spelling, math stations, reading, writing, language arts and science lab. Keep in mind that at times the group is broken up by grade and ability with an integrated curriculum that runs on a two-year cycle.

Martin is this year's Teacher of the Year for the Lafayette School District. Teaching since 1972, fresh out college with a Bachelor of Science in Education from University of the Pacific in Stockton, she came to Lafayette and never left. Although she initially worked at Lafayette Elementary School, she's been teaching at Burton Valley Elementary School since 1979.

Students from across Lafayette who score exceptionally well on the Otis Lennon School Abilities Test, more commonly known as the OLSAT, are invited to participate in AIM class. Rachel Zinn, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, explains it best, "AIM is for cognitively able students. Carroll does a great job and her students thrive on project based learning."

Her students clearly love her, describing her as very enthusiastic about everything, a great imitator and enjoy her nearly unlimited supply of funny stories. One young man comments, "She figures out everyone's learning style," another chimes in "She's not strict, but won't let you get away with anything." Out of the blue from across the room Martin responds, "I have eyes in the back of my head."

Martin has developed a number of positive strategies that keep the group on task, from the "refo-

ocusing area" to the very popular "SPD" or student planned day - earned via points for 100% of the kids turning in homework - or points earned by receiving a compliment from another teacher. Daily P.E., simulations and her "no surprises" policy are also highlights from the kids' point of view.

"My all-embracing philosophy about teaching is, we are here as teachers for the success of students in their education and not their failure. My students need to be met where they are academically, they need to be challenged, and they need to be prepared for their future. To do this, their learning needs to be experiential, hands-on, and full of student engagement," says Martin.

"Teaching has been a lifetime commitment that has brought me joy, satisfaction, and challenges. Each morning I get up and do what I want to as a career, and I have always told myself that the day I do not want to go to work is the day I should quit. So far, after 39 years that hasn't happened. I feel extremely fortunate to have found my calling and to be able to live out my dream," said Martin.

She generously gives credit to full-time aide and student teacher Gail Nugent, "I couldn't do it without her." The pair has developed an organizational rhythm and keen understanding of the students. Also offering assistance are regular parent volunteers in the classroom to help manage paperwork and assist with projects.

"Carroll is an excellent teacher and takes pride in knowing each of her students and teaching them individually to their strengths," said Burton Valley Principal Sue Rusk. "Her extensive knowledge of the curriculum, organizational skills, ability to challenge her students along with her instructional strategies provides our students with a winning program for success. We are so very fortunate to have Carroll at Burton Valley School and proud of her nomination as Teacher of the Year for the Lafayette School District."

Submit stories to [schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

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

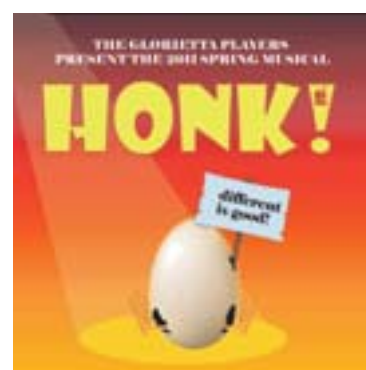
## Glorietta Elementary School Students get Ducky

Submitted by Jennifer Rogers



Elementary School. Producers of the production include parent volunteers Reed, Robyn Bowen and Pam Severson. The music director is Ralph Severson.

Performances of Honk, Jr. will be at the Glorietta Elementary School multipurpose room on Friday, April 29th at 4:00pm and 7:00pm and Saturday, April 30th at 3:00pm and 7:00pm. Visit [www.orindaschools.org/glorietta](http://www.orindaschools.org/glorietta) for ticket information.



With 110 fourth and fifth grade students participating in its 13th spring musical, Glorietta Elementary School presents Honk! Jr. The play is a contemporary re-telling of Hans Christian Anderson's classic story, *The Ugly Duckling*. It has been transformed into a smart comedy, full of bright, original, and fun musical theater. Through its wonderful humor, charm and message of tolerance, Honk! Jr. is

an entertaining show for audiences of all ages.

With its engaging choreography, innovative sets, and darling costumes, Glorietta's large-scale production of Honk! Jr. tells the story of Ugly, whose odd, gawky looks instantly incite prejudice from his family and neighbors. Separated from the farm and pursued by Cat, Ugly must find his way, while his loving mother, Ida, searches for him. Along his jour-

ney, he not only discovers his true beauty and glorious destiny, but he also finds love and acceptance.

"Honk! Jr. reminds us that being 'different' isn't necessarily bad... although it isn't always easy," says musical producer and Glorietta parent, Nan Reed. "Through his journey kids learn that being different is okay, and that somewhere out there, someone is going to love you – warts and all! This is a musical produc-

tion the entire family can enjoy... even the teens!"

Ron Pickett, a professional award-winning actor, returns to direct his 13th show at Glorietta

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lamorinda parents will have an opportunity to hear Gerna speak. He is teaching his class 'How to Give Your Kid a 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke!' on Saturday April 9th at the Moraga Library located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556 from 11:00am-12:15pm.

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

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

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

## Ask Doctor Harold: Resiliency, Revisited

By Harold Jules Hoyle Ph.D.

I received several e-mails asking me to write more about the concept of resiliency that I introduced at the end of my last article on bullying.

### What is resiliency?

Resiliency was once thought to be a trait, but more recent research indicates it is a set of processes. This is good news. The larger category of residence is made up of resiliency skills that can be learned and taught. Early studies by Anna Freud on children who were subjected to bombings in London indicated that family characteristics like consistent limit setting and families that modeled dealing with difficult emotions helped kids to "bounce back." Many of our kids deal with the more secret anxieties of school pressure and social pressure. When I was growing up there weren't any shows where people got voted off the show. Exclusion has become entertainment.

By the way, the bulk of the present research indicates that the primary factor in aiding kids in bouncing back is to have caring and supportive relationships inside and outside the family.

### What can we do about it?

The American Psychological Association came up with a list of 10 processes that aid in building resiliency and here are my translations of four that I think are perfect for families to work on.

1) Make connections: Relationships are important to kids. Build intergenerational time in your family life. Families that have activities that bring grandparents and cousins and extended family members together build a stronger sense of support and connection. If your family is far away use Skype or immerse yourself in a local faith-based community.

2) Have realistic plans and follow through: This might involve you modeling how you solve problems at work or in your family life. Barry Schwartz in his book, *The Paradox of Choice*, makes a strong case that too much choice causes us anxiety. It is not realistic for a 7 year old to pick out

what they want for dinner from a multi-page menu. Order a few things for the table and eat family style. Let your kids see your mistakes and how you deal with them. This modeling is important to teaching them that don't have to be perfect.

3) Avoid letting things get blown out of proportion: We can teach our kids to take a step back and see things from a longer term perspective. Having the ability to calm your self and take things in stride can take some time to learn and it is best to have multiple teachers and models.

4) Have a positive view of yourself: This is not about children's self-esteem, it is about helping kids to look realistically at their skills and acknowledge their strengths. In Ken Robinson's book *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*, he makes a strong case that we are healthier when we can realize the point where our talents and our interests meet. A place he calls the element.

I tried to use this one to avoid weekend chores and take long naps where I do dream work. You can try it, but it didn't work.

You can find the rest of the list at [APA.com](http://APA.com).



[www.drharoldhoyle.com](http://www.drharoldhoyle.com)  
Harold can be contacted by phone or email: 510-219-8660 [hjhoyle@mac.com](mailto:hjhoyle@mac.com)

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

## Lamorinda Weekly

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**Publishers/Owners:** Andy and Wendy Scheck;

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

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

**Editor:** Lee Borrowman;

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

**Advertising:**

Wendy Wuerth-Scheck; 925-377-0977,

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

### Staff Writers:

Sophie Braccini; [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

Cathy Tyson; [cathy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:cathy@lamorindaweekly.com)

Andrea A. Firth; [andrea@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:andrea@lamorindaweekly.com)

Sports Editor: Caitlin Graveson

### Contributing Writers:

Dean Okamura, Cynthia Brian, Conrad Bassett,

Susie Iventosch, Moya Stone, Roslynn Aragones

Stenzel, Lucy Amaral, Alex Crook,, Bryant West,

Cathy Dausman

**Photos:** Tod Fiermer, Doug Kohen, Jordan Fong,

Ohlen Alexander

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P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570-6133

Phone: 925-377-0977;

Fax: 1-800-690-8136;

email: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)



# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 05 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 30, 2011



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D4*

## Compost Fence or Gabion Art?

By Sophie Braccini

When Fred Strauss moved from Austin to Orinda last year, he arrived with years of landscaping experience and an adventurous spirit. Driving past his residence on Glorietta Boulevard, it's hard to miss the metal structure full of mulch and leaves that shields portions of his front yard. At first glance it appears to be a composting fence – a passive composting technique. But to Strauss, the structure is a vegetation version of the gabion walls he built in Texas.

“Four months ago a woman driving down Glorietta in the afternoon fell asleep at the wheel and crashed in the bushes in front of the house,” recounts Strauss, “I looked for an idea to replace the dead vegetation and came up with the fence, which

is a derivation of the gabions I built in Austin.” Strauss thought that some plants, such as epiphytes, would take root in the mulch-and-leaf fence; the rate of decomposition would be very slow since the fence contains only brown material.

According to the Seattle Times, “A composting fence attracts wrens and chickadees, and cuts down on the amount of woody waste that must be hauled off because most pruned branches can be cut to fit into the fence. Over time the green waste breaks down to feed the plants growing around it.” Strauss loves the way the light shines through the leaves in the morning sun and the different shades of brown that are created as the light changes.



*Fred Strauss with his compost fence*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*



*Building a gabion wall*

*Photo provided*

There's nothing to stop Strauss from calling his fence a gabion, from the Italian gabbione meaning “big cage,” – what counts is the cage that encloses the material. “If you look at what's done in the little artsy town of Marfa in Texas, you see very creative ways these walls have been used in public and private spaces,” he says. “I've used it for adding an interesting element of décor in my clients' gardens.” Strauss adds that gabion walls or fences can be filled with anything – mulch, wood chips, rock, seashells, leaves, even hay bales. The material used as fill must be larger than the openings in the mesh or welded wire panels; gabions may be fat, thin, tall, short, and may start and stop, turn corners, or curve any way desired. “All you need is a good steel man with welding skills and an artsy spirit,” he says.

One of Strauss's characteristics is to take advantage of a yard's natural circumstance to create something unexpected. “My job is imagining and creating beautiful gardens, with whatever resources might be available,” he says. “I can imagine quite a lot, very quickly, and I make a living out of doing that for people.” Strauss believes that there is no limit to what people can create between their shelter and the rest of the world if they are free-thinking and willing to garden the way no one has gardened before. “Garden life is never so good as when recycling and recreating bold integration of the natural environment and human-built elements of home,” he says.

Strauss' landscaping business is called Terrapin Garden; he can be reached at 254-8343.

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LAFAYETTE	Last reported: 7
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$555,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$782,500
MORAGA	Last reported: 10
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$122,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,175,000
ORINDA	Last reported: 6
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$250,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,220,000

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

- 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #25, \$555,500, 3 Bdrms, 1731 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 3-3-11; previous Sale: \$320,000, 12-08-99
- 828 Mountain View Drive, \$702,000, 3 Bdrms, 2432 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-25-11
- 840 Reliez Station Road, \$609,000, 4 Bdrms, 2269 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 3-4-11
- 3410 Shangri La Road, \$760,000, 3 Bdrms, 1990 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 3-3-11
- 3323 Sweet Drive, \$710,000, 5 Bdrms, 1610 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 3-1-11
- 3114 Sweetbrier Circle, \$782,500, 4 Bdrms, 1710 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 3-1-11; previous Sale: \$951,000, 07-22-05
- 708 Wee Donegal, \$621,500, 4 Bdrms, 2190 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 3-2-11; previous Sale: \$812,500, 06-01-07

### MORAGA

- 1897 Ascot Drive, \$365,000, 2 Bdrms, 1379 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-4-11; previous Sale: \$248,000, 03-16-90
- 783 Augusta Drive, \$799,000, 3 Bdrms, 1728 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 3-2-11; previous Sale: \$445,000, 02-02-98
- 1369 Camino Peral #B, \$272,000, 2 Bdrms, 1279 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 3-1-11
- 1588 Del Monte Court, \$880,000, 4 Bdrms, 2212 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-1-11; previous Sale: \$735,000, 02-27-01
- 2133 Donald Drive #14, \$122,000, 1 Bdrms, 560 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 3-1-11
- 8 Hanson Court, \$350,000, 2 Bdrms, 1211 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 3-2-11; previous Sale: \$445,000, 03-16-04
- 1056 Larch Avenue #A, \$670,000, 3 Bdrms, 1936 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 2-25-11; previous Sale: \$78,000, 03-15-77
- 4 Magee Court, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2740 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 2-25-11; previous Sale: \$739,000, 06-15-98
- 160 Valley Hill Drive, \$1,175,000, 1806 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 2-28-11; previous Sale: \$1,495,000, 04-19-07
- 149 Westchester Street, \$545,500, 3 Bdrms, 1892 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 3-4-11; previous Sale: \$132,500, 05-10-79

### ORINDA

- 75 Donna Maria Way, \$976,000, 4 Bdrms, 2264 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-2-11
- 2 Marston Road, \$250,000, 2 Bdrms, 814 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 3-1-11; previous Sale: \$689,000, 02-04-05
- 63 Meadow View Road, \$758,000, 3 Bdrms, 1524 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 3-1-11
- 5 Rich Acres Road, \$1,220,000, 4 Bdrms, 2932 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 3-4-11; previous Sale: \$1,375,000, 08-11-04
- 28 Watchwood Court, \$997,000, 2 Bdrms, 2014 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 3-4-11; previous Sale: \$369,000, 04-28-87
- 246 the Knoll, \$590,000, 2 Bdrms, 1532 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 3-1-11; previous Sale: \$725,000, 06-07-07

## Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

### LAFAYETTE

- 3156 Stanley Boulevard, 94549, RWW Properties, 03-04-11, \$480,000, 1568 sf, 4 bd
- 831 Tanglewood Drive, 94549, US Bank, 03-02-11, \$1,835,379, 6120 sf, 5 bd

### MORAGA

- 1982 Ascot Drive #C, 94556, US Bank, 02-28-11, \$279,500, 1473 sf, 3 bd
- 2133 Donald Drive #8, 94556, Federal Home Loan Mortgage, 02-14-11, \$215,411, 1224 sf, 2 bd
- 651 Moraga Road #11, 94556, Federal National Mortgage, 02-25-11, \$322,041, 1418 sf, 3 bd



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# Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

## Monet's Masterpiece Makeover

*"My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece." Claude Monet, 1840-1926, Impressionist painter and life-long gardener*



In my youth, when I still considered myself a farmer as opposed to a gardener, I viewed the magnificent oil, "The Artist's Garden in Giverny" painted in 1900 by Claude Monet, now hanging in the Musee d'Orsay in Paris. It was love at first sight, partly because the swathes of purple bearded iris reminded me of my own fields of scented dreams on our farm, and also, because as an apprentice artist, I ached to try my hand at dabbling in dots of light and color.

At the time I was a student living in Holland. April in Lisse, the Netherlands, is breathtaking at the Keukenhof as a sea of tulips in every color and shape announce the first breath of spring. Wrapped in winter wear, braving the frigid air, I attempted to capture the splendor on canvas. But it wasn't until I arrived in Normandy that the artist in me was reborn as a gardener.

Monet's garden mesmerized me. There were chickens and rabbits and a lush harmonized estate of thousands of plantings lovingly sowed. I strolled in wonder through a living painting, stopping to inhale the fragrance, and to photograph the brilliance. I vowed that when I designed my first garden, it would be in tribute to the visions of Giverny and Keukenhof sensibilities.

The acres of poison oak, blackberry bushes, and wild grasses were daunting when I bought land in Lamorinda. My quest for an impressionistic garden was almost thwarted by the unproductive clay soil and the myriad of thistles, weeds, and brush that needed to be cleared before I could begin propagating. While reading a biography of

Monet, I noted that he had hauled countless railway wagon-loads of topsoil to his Giverny garden. I followed suit with truck-loads of loam and compost.

With copious amounts of aid from my Dutch and French inspirations, my horticultural passion was two years in the making before my painter's palette beds yielded armloads of flowers in tones of amethyst, rose, sapphire, indigo, vanilla, and pale yellows. How delighted I was to witness my hillsides carpeted in colors carefully chosen for beauty, balance, and bounty!

Then Mother Nature intervened with a reminder that our climate zones differ by cloaking Lamorinda in a fortnight of below freezing weather. By the time the earth thawed, my carefully designed dream had drowned, died, and decomposed. The Dutch bulbs survived the cold becoming the foundation of my masterpiece makeover. Heartbroken yet determined, I underpinned the landscape with a more wild, tousled scene, allowing a rainbow of colors, textures, and plant specimens to frame the undulating fields.

Today my garden boasts mementos from travels to spectacular gardens I have visited around the world. However, my earliest affections for Gaulle and the Low Lands trump the others at this time of renewal. Keukenhof tulips and daffodils in every hue spring to life this season. Monet's iris wave in the wind, wafting their heady perfume my way as I sit in my creek side meditation meadow listening to the gurgling waterfall, the chirping of the nesting songbirds and the

croaking toads' mating dance.

Monet planted to paint. I plant to pray. In these stressful days, my garden decompresses the angst. Gardening is my universal language of love and I luxuriate freely in my Lamorinda cultivation. However mediocre, imperfect, untamed, and unruly, it is my personal masterpiece, my slice of heaven.

I join Monet in exclaiming, "What I need most of all in life is flowers, always, always!"

### CYNTHIA'S COMPOST COURSE

My garden is a kaleidoscope of colors and fragrance in April and I have my rich compost to thank for that. Keep your kitchen sink clean with my super simple recipe for success to recycle and repurpose your waste.

1. Keep a bowl or small container under your kitchen sink and every time you prepare any food, put all the scraps, except for meat, into the container. This may contain carrot, banana, onion, garlic, and potato peels, lettuce, all vegetables, tea bags, coffee grounds, bread, eggshells, etc.
2. Empty it each day in a five-gallon bucket in your garage, or to a storage area close to the kitchen. Do not leave outside or you'll attract raccoons, skunks, birds, and deer.
3. When the bucket is filled either dump into a pile you have created specifically for composting or use a purchased bin.
4. Add leaves, grass clippings, wood chips, pine

needles, straw, spent flower arrangements, blossoms, and any other combination of green or brown organic materials that are not diseased. It's best to have three times as much brown ingredients as green.

5. Turn with a pitchfork. As the weather warms, decomposition occurs.
6. When the mixture is rich, crumbly, filled with worms, and smells like the good earth, spread as organic mulch in your garden where it will leech into the soil to fertilize your plants.
7. Voila! Happy, healthy plants.

### PERENNIAL FAVORITES FOR MASTER MAKEOVERS

Daffodil	Rhododendron	Dianthus
Tulip	Astilbe	Dahlia
Crocus	Saucer Magnolia	Roses
Freesia	Lavender	Gladioli
Hyacinth	Calendula	Jacobinia
Muscari	Ornamental	Bergenia
Dutch Iris	Grasses	Abelia
Bearded Iris	Delphinium	Plumbago
Daphne	Campanula	Echinacea
Ranunculus	Aster	Columbine
Anemones	Agastache	Digitalis
Agapanthus	Lamium	Artemisia
Clivia	Coreopsis	Shasta Daisy
Kangaroo Paw	Hosta	Ground Covers
Camellia	Ferns	
Azalea	Gaillardia	



*A spectacular spring selection of daffodils mingle with long stemmed blue blooming rosemary, a bee's favorite friend.*  
Photos Cynthia Brian



**Patricia Battersby**  
925-330-6663  
pb@patriciabattersby.com  
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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide For April

*"The richness I achieve comes from Nature, the source of my inspiration." Claude Monet*

"April showers bring May flowers," or so the saying goes. It's time to tiptoe through the tulips, even with galoshes and umbrellas to celebrate the sensory spring jewels of crocus, daffodils, muscari, hyacinths, hellebores, tulips, freesias, and other early gems as they carpet our woodlands, hillsides, and personal havens. The secret to beautiful gardens is a gardener who is enthusiastic about digging deep-rain or shine!

- COMPOSE beautiful stoneware container gardens by mixing a combination of cannas, tuberous begonias, oxalis tetraphylla (lovely pink flowers), dahlias, Tinkerbell agapanthus, and lobelia.
- CAPTURE a photo of your garden with you in it and send it to us for possible publication subject to editorial approval. We want to showcase your creativity. Email high quality jpegs to

Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com.

- CLEAN out perennial beds now and prepare the soil for replanting.
- MULCH plants with organic compost. Wood barks are great for a top cover, but rob nitrogen from the soil as they decay.
- START seeds as soon as the soil is warm enough. If you are anxious, start your crops indoors near a south-facing window or use a fluorescent light for 12 or more hours per day.
- WELCOME the migrating birds home with fresh water in the fountain and seed in the feeder.
- PRUNE wisteria and other woody specimens before they leaf out to promote flowering.
- PLANT edibles amongst your ornamentals. Lettuces, parsley, dill, and basil are pretty as well as delicious.
- GROW your own personal bouquets. Create a stunning arrangement of a variety of daffodils and calla lilies and add sprigs of flowering herbs such as rosemary with its deep blue florets.
- DIG out and replace older woody lavender bushes. Lavender thrives for about 5 or 6 years then is ready for the compost pile.
- FLOAT camellias for an attractive conversation, stimulating centerpiece at a dinner party. Continue to pick up any camellia blossoms that have fallen to the ground to maintain the vigor of the bush.
- ADJUST your lawn mower to a higher setting and allow the clippings to nourish the soil.
- DON'T cut grass when it's wet as it breaks the delicate blades and compacts the soil.
- PROTECT your sewer lines by composting your food scraps as opposed to using the garbage disposal. Your garden and your pipes will thank you.
- BEE friendly by planting three or four types of native wild flowers to attract the honey gatherers as well as pest resistant varieties of flowers, shrubs, trees and vegetables, thus eliminating pesticides.
- LOVE caterpillar larvae as part of the natural food chain attracting birds. Plant host plants for the butterflies such as milkweed and dogwood. Leave a patch of dense vegetation for protection from inclement weather and a small mud puddle to quench their thirst.
- PARTICIPATE in any of the spring flower events in our area
- DECORATE for Easter with fresh eggs from geese, chickens, and ducks. With their natural loveliness, no food coloring is necessary.
- HAUL heavy rocks and flats of flowers by investing in a good wheelbarrow, cart, or even a Red Flyer wagon.
- EXPLORE our local hiking and biking trails for a whiff of springtime wild flowers.
- EXPERIMENT with new plantings and unusual varieties by visiting Lamorinda garden centers and talking with the garden experts.
- EXPERIENCE the bliss of living green and growing memories.

Welcome to spring. May you and your family enjoy a sunny bunny day in your personal Monet's masterpiece makeover.

Happy Gardening to You!

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Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com

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- 1) Buy foreclosures in select neighborhoods and cities in Contra Costa County, for strong rental income returns, with future appreciation.
- 2) Buy a home in Lafayette, Moraga, or Orinda, in a rare buyer's market.
- 3) Sell in the under \$1,000,000 range in Lamorinda, where sales are now improving, and move up to your dream house in a higher price range where the best negotiating opportunities exist.
- 4) Downsize, and sell in Lamorinda, where the market has not dropped as much, then buy a great one-story home at a bargain price in a nice neighborhood where homes have dropped more. Keep a low property tax by transferring it to the new house within Contra Costa County.

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MORAGA



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MORAGA



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MORAGA



## 1383 Camino Pablo

Light & bright turnkey 2820 sf 5bd/3ba entertainer's delight w/hdwd flrs, dual panes, granite kitchen & baths. Lg pvt bckyd & close to award-winning K-8 schools, park & hiking.

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MORAGA



## 297 Corliss Drive

Large former model 5bd home. 3200 sf w/updated eat-in kitchen & expanded mstr bath. Hdwd flrs, lg bonus/in-law suite & much more. Level, pretty yd w/lawn, pool & patio.

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MORAGA



## 1350 Bollinger Canyon Road

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LAFAYETTE



## 1252 Quandt Road

Beautiful trad Harold Smith hm & neighborhood. Fab end of cul-de-sac location. Updated kit/spac fam rm, 4+bd/3ba + lg bonus room. High ceilings, hdwd flrs, pvt master suite.

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LAFAYETTE



## 3419 Shangri La

Totally charming 3100 sf 5bd w/updated eat-in kitchen (granite/gas top), huge fam rm + bonus rm. 3-car gar. Lg 1.07 ac lot w/pool & use of riding arena. Great Reliez Valley location.

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LAFAYETTE



## 4090 Coralee Lane

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## 3724 St. Francis Drive

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