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Letters to the Editor

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

Editor:
Last year at this time, Derek Zemrak, Beau Behan and the CAIFFA re-opened the Rheem Theatre to be the new home of the California Independent Film Festival. They held a community event at the theater that was attended by a few hundred people. This year, for the first anniversary of the re-opening, one ticket has been sold. The people of Moraga, Orinda and the neighboring communities cannot move into a state of apathy and expect the theater to survive. We have planned for a celebration at least as grand as the re-opening, but so far, the people have not materialized. I believe that the New Rheem Theatre has been the signature model for bringing the people of Moraga together in a positive, unifying endeavor. I am very excited about having this theater open again!! Let's get moving!

Caroline Wood
Moraga

Editor:
There is no gift equal to the great memories Orion has received at Orinda Intermediate School so we are giving our Gratitude. We want to thank Orion's teachers Danee Jurichko and Susan Rodriguez for making Orion's time at OIS joyous and a pleasure for him. They have truly blessed his life. I don't know what strings were pulled to allow Susan to be in Core and Study Hall, mostly one on one, with Orion for three years but we will always be grateful for it. Danee's program is an amazing model for inclusion opportunities. I also want to thank Holly and Orion's other aides as well as the OIS staff for their support and guidance. Thank you, Mr. Randall for having an inclusive school and your positive attitude. A Special thank you goes out to the students of OIS for your compassion especially the ones who volunteer their elective to become friends in room 74. It is valued by more than just your new friends. Orion is moving on to Miramonte for next year and there have already been some wonderful ground break-

ing collaboration between Moraga, Orinda, and Acalanes Unifies School Districts to make it as successful as OIS has been for him. Thank you, Lisa, Ohmar, Sequoyah and Orion Sowle
Orinda

Editor:
Is Open Space and wildlife habitat for sale by Town of Moraga? Apparently, approving development on one of Moraga's open ridge lines wasn't enough as the Moraga Town Council is currently considering a proposal to sell off some of the town's own open space for a subdivision along the Lafayette Moraga Trail, one of the oldest, most scenic, and most used trails in the East Bay Parks Regional District. If the sale of the subdivision is approved, it would devastate both part of the beauty of this regional trail and eliminate some of the wildlife open space that exists where the subdivision is being considered. I am a frequent hiker on this trail (and) it saddens me a greatly that I will no longer be able to see these creatures or the open fields and trees at this particular location because of a decision that favors a short term windfall of money for a permanent reduction in open space and wildlife habitat that, once lost to private development, cannot be reclaimed. Instead of having a wide open space for the trail with a beautiful open space on its north side, the proposed subdivision will narrow the trail's corridor to a few yards on its northwest side. Please let the Moraga Town Council know your opinion on this proposal. It's ironic that Lafayette is celebrating the public opening and purchase of open space with the purchase of Acalanes Ridge while Moraga is selling open space it already owns. Robert Blits
Moraga
(Editor's note: Robert Blits' letter was modified slightly to delete references to photos that we were not able to include.)

...from Front Page

Lunch of the (Three-Quarter) Century

... continued from page A1



From left, Maggie Gee, A.J. Starr and Bette Budde
Photo Doug Kohen

Fazel recalls attending the Perry lunch with his mother and delighted in seeing old neighbors and his Boy Scout leader. Three organizations sponsor the event: Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, Fazel's employer, Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate/Mason-McDuffie, and Orinda Community Church. Fazel, who co-chairs the event, emceed the lunch wearing his father's tuxedo. While 130 seniors dined on a roast chicken meal, a staff of 30 volunteers worked behind the scenes to make it successful. Co-chair Lisa Shaffer, a BHG Mason-McDuffie realtor, was busy overseeing volunteers who set up, prepared and served food and cleaned up afterwards. "This community is what it is today because they [seniors] did what they did... We're so fortunate that we are a part of this community." Orinda residents Tom and Aileen Deahl were recognized as the longest-married couple in attendance. They

have faithfully attended Three-Quarter Century Club luncheons since the very first, held at Wagner Ranch Elementary. Deahl was a research chemist for Shell Oil in Emeryville; his wife substitute taught in Orinda schools until she was 80. "We haven't missed one [lunch]," said Aileen. Added Tom: "I've never seen so many old people in one place!" Aileen says the secret to their 70-year marriage comes from the song "Accentuate the Positive." Except for four years in Texas, the Deahls have lived in Orinda since 1951. "The smartest thing was we never sold our house in Orinda," said Aileen. Orinda resident Molly Gravelle was crowned Century Club queen. Gravelle taught for twenty years at Miramonte High (Mechanical Drawing and Home Design) before she retired in 1975. The baby, the king and the queen each received a commemorative plaque, and Mayor Victoria Smith marked the event with a procla-

mation. "These people worked for [city] incorporation and made Orinda what it is today," Smith said. This year's guest speaker was Bette Budde, a former Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) who joined in 1943. "How many of you remember World War II?" she asked in her opening remarks. Every hand shot up. Accompanying Budde were fellow WASPs A.J. Starr and Maggie Gee. The trio explained how each came to belong to the highly selective women's corps. Budde and Gee wore scarves commemorating the Congressional gold medals they received at a Washington, D.C. ceremony honoring WASPs last year. Shaffer says next year's date has already been reserved (in June), and says her volunteers will all be back. The event closed with Orinda Idols Neris Newton and Jacqueline Garrel singing "Sentimental Journey." For those in attendance, it was sentimental indeed.