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Photo Andy Scheck

Santa Sighted in Orinda

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda's 25th Annual Tree of Lights festivities kicked off last Saturday with a welcome from Mayor Victoria Smith and other community leaders.

A children's chorus set the mood with special music, including a medley of "Mr. Santa" and "We Need a Little Christmas," followed by the countdown by Mayor Smith and Council Member Dean Orr to the annual lighting of

the Orinda Village tree, which will twinkle with white lights of hope throughout the holiday season.

But it was a certain round, white-whiskered, jolly man who stole the show. ... continued on page A12

Quote of the Week:

"We can fix my road, fix your road, our roads, our community."

Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Advertising

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Matadors End Season in Alameda, But Campo Rolls On

By Alex Crook



Brett Stephens #9

Photo Doug Kohen

It is hard to describe Campolindo High School's football season without seeming cliché. Predicted to finish in last place in the DFAL, every game has seemed like a "David against Goliath" rematch. However, 13 games into the season, Campolindo is undefeated and it is getting harder to determine which team is the underdog.

After handily defeating Hercules, the Cougars moved on to the second round against Bishop O' Dowd on November 26.

O'Dowd closed the gap a few times but the Cougars were unterrified.

"We've been doing the underdog thing all year, even tonight we were just out-manned in so many areas but these kids play with a type of a spirit and a fight in them...they really overcome a lot of what they give away," said Macy.

Campo hung on to beat O'Dowd 34-17 behind junior quarterback Brett Stephens' 188 passing yards and 88 rushing yards.

The Cougars advanced to take on second-seeded Cardinal Newman in Santa Rosa last Friday. Last year Cardinal Newman knocked the Cougars out in the first round, defeating them 35-7.

... continued on page C2

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Lots of Trees in Lamorinda



Everything you ever wanted to know about where to buy a Christmas Tree in Lamorinda is here. Cathy Dausman roamed our streets seeking out Nobles, Fraser firs, candy canes, and free hot chocolate. Read the story on page B5.

Sports C1-C3

SMC Reaches Elite 8



The Saint Mary's College Men's Soccer Team advanced to the Elite 8 in one of the most successful post-season runs in the school's history. The fun ended when they met the #1 ranked UNC Tar Heels last weekend. Read Alex Kozela's report on page C1.

Our Homes D1-D8

New Transitional Home Awaits Tenants



Las Trampas is creating a home in Lafayette for young adults with developmental disabilities that utilizes the elements of Universal Design. Sophie Braccini paid them a visit, and found a house that is both welcoming and usable for everyone. Find out more on page D1.



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Lafayette Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, December 12, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Wed., December 19, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, December 12, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District

Wednesday, December 7, 7:30 pm
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org



Police Report

No Fare! 11/20/11 Four people got into a cab and enjoyed a \$100 ride. They left the cab without paying. The cabbie, understandably miffed, called police. One of the riders, after being contacted by police, was gently persuaded to foot the bill. Wonder if the other three will offer him/her a reimbursement?

Into the Woods, 11/23/11 A vehicle reportedly traveled into a wooded area along Happy Valley. Numerous car parts were strewn along the roadway but the driver was nowhere to be found. An alien abduction, perhaps?

Bag this Scene, 11/26/11 A man entered a business on Moraga Road, put his hands into a paper bag and pointed the bag (hands and all) at the victim's face, saying "I saw this in a movie once." No threats were made, no demands were met...and the stranger with a dubious acting career left in an unknown gray or silver sedan. We are not making this up.

No Corraling this Mustang, 11/26/11 A 1999 Mustang parked and locked in the victim's driveway at noon had vanished by 10:30 that same night. First, strewn car parts and a missing driver; now whole cars are being abducted...

Stanley Teacher Brian Mangold Wins Award

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Brian Mangold and Toni McShane Photo Cathy Tyson

Christmas came a bit early for Stanley Middle School Special Education teacher Brian Mangold. He was honored by the Warren Eukel Teacher Trust as an instructor who has exhibited extraordinary commitment to his students. He wins a monetary grant of \$10,000, a generous amount to recognize his hard work in the classroom that is truly appreciated.

Annually the Trust accepts nominations for fantastic teachers in Con-

tra Costa County, ultimately selecting three who each receive a \$10,000 grant. Dance instructor Victoria Tukeyva of Richmond High and Jesse Hansen, a history teacher at San Ramon High, also won.

Mangold has been teaching special needs students at Stanley Middle School for the last five years; he graduated from the University of California, Davis and then received a Master's Degree and Special Educa-

tion Teaching Credential at Columbia University Teachers College.

"We're lucky to have him," said Stanley Assistant Principal Toni McShane, "Brian is impressive to watch as he develops teaching strategies for his classes." She proudly explained that he started a peer tutoring program for the mainstream kids to work with the special needs kids that students are "clamoring to get into." Fridays at lunchtime, Mangold started the very popular Karaoke Club for the special needs students, where everybody pitches in to help with the show.

At the awards dinner at which all three teachers were honored, Mangold reflected on his experience, "I've learned to look at things from a different perspective, to question boundaries and expectations that have become the norm. I've learned that by labeling people by their disability or by what they can't do, we limit our thinking, limit our approach and often handicap the individuals who are labeled." Commenting on lessons of perseverance, bravery and patience, he continued, "Watching my students struggle to express themselves, I've learned how frus-

trating and traumatizing it must be to feel like you have no voice, no say, or no one to listen."

Mangold credits the talented and dedicated faculty at Stanley for being so supportive, and described the many challenges that special education teachers face. "Generally you can't set up a single program that addresses all of your students' needs. Each child has different repertoires and deficits and there is no single strategy or approach that works for all of the students," he said.

On a personal note, he's not sure what he'll spend the money on. He became a father a little over two months ago, "so I may end up writing that check directly over to our diaper service."

He was also honored at a recent City Council meeting with an official proclamation that included: "Mangold has brought honor to himself, his profession and the Lafayette community for his work and achievement in the field of education." He humbly accepted the proclamation, thanked the Council, "It's quite an honor to receive this award. This is a special community to teach in....Thank you for supporting education."

Weighing Options for Future Road Repair

By Cathy Tyson

Since voters have not been able to pass a road repair tax of any sort for the last ten years, although they've come close, Lafayette city staff did a complete analysis of current and future road issues and is asking the Capital Projects Assessment Committee (CPAC) for guidance as options are weighed, at a meeting on December 8, for the next cycle of the Capital Improvement Program.

Although Lafayette can boast that

their roads are not nearly as bad as Orinda's, the city projects that there will be 81 failed streets by the end of 2012 that will cost \$13.4 million to repair.

It's the City's practice to look at road projects through a Five Year Capital Improvement Program to prioritize how and when to spend money on maintenance and renewal of infrastructure. The process to prioritize which roads will be repaired is not random; a

Pavement Maintenance Strategy has been in place for years. "Timely application of appropriate treatment to pavement has long been demonstrated as the best means to maintain overall quality of a road system and to minimize the aggregate cost of system maintenance and repair," wrote City Engineer Tony Coe in a staff report for the upcoming meeting.

Some residents have questioned this process - wondering if money de-

voted to maintaining roads in good condition could be more fairly spent to repair failed roads. It's been a city practice for more than fifteen years that not keeping up good roads creates a maintenance backlog that snowballs over time - ultimately adding more failed roads to the bottom line.

The task at hand for the CPAC is to find answers to three important questions spelled out in the staff report: Should the City continue its current strategy of maintaining roads in good condition while such a large failed roads backlog persists? Should the City Council release the \$3 million from the General Fund that it had earmarked for Measure G - if it had passed? What are some alternative strategies to prevent low priority failed roads from becoming an immediate burden on City's resources?

The CPAC meeting on December 8 is open to the public; it will be held at the Lafayette City Offices, 7:00 p.m., 3675 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Room 265. For residents with other plans that evening, be aware that CPAC only acts in an advisory capacity and will present its findings to the City Council in late January or early February.

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Correction,
issue date 11/23/11,
Pathway Project Dead on Arrival at Council Meeting: The upkeep figure reported in this article was incorrect. Annual conservatively estimated maintenance for the entire proposed 1.5 mile path is \$50,925, according to the Feasibility and Options Study for a Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathway Along EBMUD Aqueduct ROW. Members of the City Council received the presentation on the proposed pathway and provided comments to staff at the November 14 meeting.

Rez Stage is Ready

By Cathy Tyson



Just finishing up construction are from left, Terry Ring General Contractor, Santos Pocasangre carpenter, Barry Ring Superintendent and Jaime Zuniga carpenter. Photo Cathy Tyson

Finally – the Reservoir stage is open for business. It’s a dream come true for Rotary members who have diligently toiled constructing and then de-constructing temporary stages over the years for the annual Concert at the Rez – a fundraiser that supports local school music programs and other Rotary projects. While the hammering is complete, fundraising isn’t – see Giving Opportunities, page B?, for details. Look for an official grand opening celebration sometime in the spring, prior to the May 2012 Concert at the Rez.

“We are thrilled, so happy,” said John Sherry of Lafayette Rotary. He’s been out there every day taking pictures and enjoying the progress, just waiting on a few finishing

touches to the landscaping.

With a composite decking material that matches the grass, the idea was to make the structure as unobtrusive as possible. Rotary partnered with the Lafayette Community Foundation, as well as EBMUD, who will manage reservations, to bring the project to fruition. The stage will be available to the public for weddings, events, family reunions or kids playing with their pals.

The new stage is on the east side of the Reservoir, near the children’s playground and has a concrete pathway for easy access for those with mobility issues. Rotary member and contractor Terry Ring said the project took about six weeks to complete – taking into account a rain delay and Thanksgiving.

Nutcracker Story Time Enchants Little Ballerinas



Photo Cathy Tyson

Some of the dancers from the Prima Ballerina Kids Club of Diablo Ballet lit up the stage of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for a special reading of the Nutcracker story. To the delight of little ballerinas in the audience, Clara, The Sugar Plum Fairy and the Nutcracker came to life as Lauren Jonas, Diablo Ballet Artistic Director read the famous story by E.T.A. Hoffmann. Audience members got to participate in the story, adding special noises and movements to accompany the reading – a big highlight. C. Tyson

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, December 14, 7:00pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, December 19, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Monday, December 12, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District

Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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

Attempted car theft thwarted, 11/28/11 In the middle of the afternoon at Moraga Commons Park, the owner of a truck witnessed someone attempt to take his vehicle. He was able to reach the truck as it was pulling away from the curb and jumped into the bed as the truck drove north on Moraga Road. The owner was yelling at the would-be thief, after a short distance, the thief pulled over and fled to a passenger car that was tailing the stolen car. A search of the area ensued, but the thief and his/her accomplice were gone.

D.U.I. 11/26/11 A middle aged man who should have known better was doing double the speed limit late at night on Camino Ricardo, driving on the wrong side of the road, and failing to use his turn signal. Police were not surprised to notice objective signs of alcohol on the 46-year-old male. He flunked the breathalyzer test, was cited and later was released to a friend.

Fishing for door prank, 11/26/11 Sullivan Drive residents came home after they were out for the evening and found a long piece of fishing line had been attached to their front door knocker. The homeowners wanted to have documentation of the incident in case the vandals strike again.

Coffee with your donut? 11/25/11 School was not in session on a recent Friday night around 11:00 p.m. when a driver had lost control of his car after doing donuts and crashed into a chain link fence by the baseball field. Police report notes "moderate damage" to both the car and the fence. The driver was later arrested for D.U. I. Methinks there will soon be moderate to severe damage to the future cost of his car insurance.

Drinking at Rheem School, 1/23/11 Two cars, two juveniles and one semi-mature 18-year-old adult were parked at the Rheem School on Laird Drive with a case of beer in the back seat of one of the cars around 10:00 p.m. Cops spied the young men and figured they were not doing their homework. Everyone was released at the scene to their parents. Beer was photographed, then disposed.

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Planning, Deciding, Developing - Moraga Joins Forces for Economic Vitality

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council and the Planning Commission got together on November 30th to hear the Economic Development Action Team's (EDAT) report on the Rheem Center and to approve the recommendations of the Team so staff can move forward. More than ever, reviving the Rheem Center is at the forefront of concerns. Moraga's new Planning Director, Shawna Brekke-Read, reframed the question to include it in a global rethinking of the General Plan that would benefit the whole town.

EDAT presented the results of seven months of work. The Team had been tasked with finding ways to revitalize the Rheem Valley area—the shopping center and surrounding lots along Moraga Road—and streamlining the approval process for community supported retail.

One piece of the engine that will

move the Town forward was not included in the elaboration of the EDAT's plan: the property owners. None of the owners of retail property in the Rheem area participated in the discussion.

From the Team's work, a vision for the Rheem Center area emerged, developed from the public input sessions that were organized last August. Behind the tag line "I ♥ ToM" (Town of Moraga), EDAT identified four action items that most residents believe are needed: Improvement of the pedestrian experience and approach, creation of gathering places, expansion of the retail variety, and broader diversity of land use.

For each of these aspects, EDAT proposed short, medium and long-term plans. "We are the third task force appointed to propose actions geared at improving the business climate of the town," said EDAT's Hol-

lie Lucas-Alcalay, "we want some projects to start now so the residents can start seeing improvements." The report proposes beautification projects such as reconfiguring and replanting the concrete planters to break-up the perspective, and starting to apply for grants for pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

The medium term would include amendment of the General Plan, streetscape and signage upgrades, and a marketing plan to support business owners.

For the long term, EDAT proposes the study of a strategic plan for the area.

The Team also recommended that a part time Economic Development Coordinator be hired to drive the proposed actions. Both the Council and the Commission supported the idea, pending the identification of a viable funding

source. After the meeting, Keimach indicated that recommendation would be reviewed by the Council at its mid-year budget review in February.

Both the bodies also approved the Planning Director's proposal to start a review of the General Plan that should address some of the main hindrances to economic development. "If that is your recommendation, go for it," said Vice Mayor Mike Metcalf, "but it will take a lot of drive to reach that goal." Metcalf referred to many wide reaching plans that took years to achieve because Planning Directors get bogged down by ongoing business.

"This makes a lot of sense to me," said Planning Commission Vice Chair Dick Socolich, "this will provide the framework under which we will later develop a Rheem Specific Plan."

Council Okays Creation of Climate Action Task Force

By Sophie Braccini

On a four-to-one vote, the Moraga Town Council approved the creation of a Climate Action Task Force chartered with drafting a Climate Action Plan, or greenhouse gas reduction strategy, for the Town of Moraga. The Task Force will be selected and appointed by Town staff, and will not include members of the Council.

A Climate Action Plan (CAP), according to the staff report, "outlines transportation, water, agriculture, and waste GHG (greenhouse gas) reduction measures to achieve the reduction target, and proposes a timeline for implementation." Having a CAP in place would eliminate the need for new businesses and development projects to undergo additional environmental reviews mandated by the Bay Area Air Quality District's new 2010 CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) regulations that were established following the passage of AB32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which set the State's 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal into law.

The Council agreed that establishing a CAP would be in Moraga's best interest and would bring the Town into compliance with the goals of AB32. No one expects Moraga's impact on global warming to be of major significance, but a CAP will streamline residential and business application processes. The five-member Council also agreed that the members of the Climate Action Task Force (CATF) should be appointed by staff.

What the Council did not agree on, however, was whether or not two of its own should sit on the CATF. The final vote was obtained only after a spirited debate.

"I will hold my nose and cross my fingers and vote for it (a CATF with no Council representation)," said Council Member Dave Trotter. He added that he was disappointed that he could not get a majority of three votes to support the direct participation of Council members on the CATF.

Vice Mayor Mike Metcalf voted

against the constitution of a CATF sans Council members without any qualms, "We are about to make a very foolish decision, we are abdicating our responsibility," rapped out the Vice Mayor.

Metcalf and Trotter both argued that there is risk that a Task Force without Council participation would become unruly and drive the Town

in a direction it would rather avoid. They both wanted Council members to be able to monitor a process that they feared could become a stage for the promotion of a political agenda. "For some people in this Town, (the topic) is a religion," said Metcalf.

Metcalf's passionate argument persuaded Council Member

Howard Harpham to qualify his initial position of supporting the non-participation of Council Members in the CATF. Harpham asked the Town Manager not to hesitate to come back to Council to change the CATF's charter to include Council members if debates became too difficult to manage.

... continued on next page



See's CANDIES

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Benefiting Our Community's Children

Helping Children Feel Safe When They Need it Most

By Sophie Braccini



Officer Will Davis (left) and Sergeant Brian South Photo Sophie Braccini

What do tough police officers and soft stuffed animals have in common? In Moraga they 'collaborate' to make children feel safe when they need it the most. To allow as many children as possible to feel better when they are confronted with traumatic situations, the Moraga Police Officers Association is holding its fourth annual drive to collect new and gently used stuffed animals.

"I have been in situations when

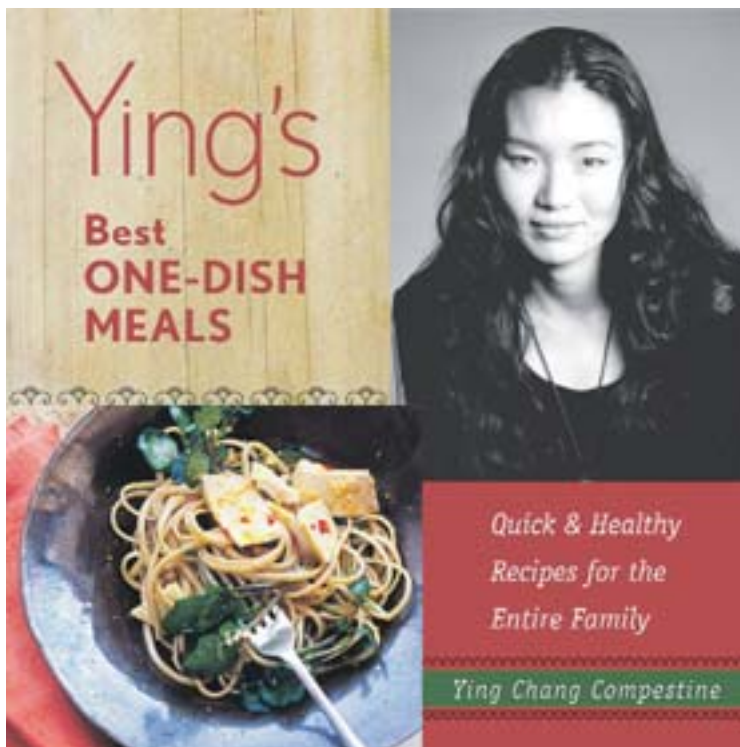
a kid was in an accident, or we had to announce a death, and I had a stuffed animal in the trunk of my car to comfort that child," says Sergeant Brian South, who is the President of the Moraga Police Officers Association and the manager of the holiday stuffed animal collection drive. "Four years ago we were looking for a way to give back to the community and found S.A.F.E., Stuffed Animals For Emergencies, Inc.," re-

members South, "we saw a great synergy between their mission and ours and started the collection." According to S.A.F.E, stuffed animals help ease the fears of children in times of crisis.

Every year the number of stuffies collected increases. Last year it was 1500 and South expects the number to rise again this year. "We have to remove them from the bins every day and put them in the store room," he says, "people in Moraga are very generous."

Some of the animals will stay at the Moraga Police Department for the officers to use when necessary. The rest will be sent to S.A.F.E. chapters that will dispatch them where they are most needed. "The first year some of them went overseas for our soldiers to give to the children in the war zones," says South, "most of the time, the animals go to local police and fire departments that will give them to children affected by traumatic events, or to hospitals, shelters and other charitable organizations."

Stuffed animals may be brought to the hallway of the Town's Offices at 329 Rheem Boulevard until December 27.



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11:00AM – 1:00PM

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Council Okays Creation of Climate Action Task Force

... continued from page A4

Mayor Karen Mendonca and Council Member Ken Chew both stated that they trusted Town Manager Jill Keimach to appoint a group of residents based on their representativeness and competence, and that quarterly progress reports by the CATF to the Council were enough for

them.

The staff report indicates, "The Task Force members would be selected to represent a broad range of interests that would not reflect special interests." Keimach expects to have a list of names by January. The CATF will meet monthly for about a year,

developing goals and drafting a CAP that would identify ways in which the Town can reduce green house gas emissions.

In the end, any Climate Action Plan for Moraga would have to be voted on and approved by the Town Council.

Looking for fun during the holiday break? Sign up now for Holiday Camp Hacienda! December 19-23; full day & half day options. Call 925-888-7036 to register!



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More Moraga Civic News on Page A10

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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, December 19, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tue., Dec. 13, at 7:00 pm canceled
Regular Meeting Library Auditorium
Tuesday, January 10, at 6:00 pm
Workshop Garden Room, Library,
26 Orinda Way

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC)

Monday, December 19, 7:00 pm
Community Room, City Hall
22 Orinda Way, Orinda

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
Monday, December 12, 6:00 pm
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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



Police Report

A Blanket Excuse... 11/28/11
A woman burglarizing an Orinda home must have found the back bedroom closet just right, because that's where the homeowner found her. He ordered her out of the house, and she complied. Police were called and found the suspect walking eastbound on Glorietta Blvd, wrapped in a blanket from the burgled house! The suspect was positively ID'd in the field and taken to Martinez Detention Facility.

Nothing to be Thankful for, 11/23/11 Police investigating a suspicious subject just before Thanksgiving found a man acting as a door to door magazine salesman. When questioned, he said he had no ID. He didn't have a sales permit either, so police searched his person and found a wallet with paperwork identifying him as a parolee from Texas. He was booked into Martinez Detention Facility. The personal check also on his person (a magazine sale?) was returned to its rightful owner.

Smells Like Teen Spirit, 11/22/11 Police stopped a car carrying four men. Since there was a strong odor of marijuana, a search was conducted. They found (wait for it...) marijuana. The car's 19-year old driver was cited and released.

Man About Town, 11/21/11
A 44 year old male was stopped in a truck belonging to someone known to have a suspended license. Sure enough the truck...er, its driver, is in trouble! Although he produced a valid California ID, he was driving with a suspended license. Come to think of it, after police ran a vehicle check, the guy is a repeat customer, logging four counts of driving/suspended license in seven months. He was arrested and transported to Martinez Detention Facility, where he was booked. Somebody with a valid license drove him there.



Peter & Darlene Hattersley



DRE# r00445794, DRE# 01181995

MARKET ACTION REPORT November 2011 City: Lafayette

Price Range: ALL | Properties: Single Family Home

Market Profile & Trends Overview	Month	Trending Versus*				YTD	Trending Versus*	
		LM	L3M	PYM	LY		PriorYTD	PriorYear
Median List Price of all Current Listings	\$975,000	↑		↓				
Average List Price of all Current Listings	\$1,352,282	↔		↓				
November Median Sales Price	\$755,000	↓	↓	↓	↓	\$936,000	↓	↔
November Average Sales Price	\$788,986	↓	↓	↓	↓	\$1,079,261	↓	↓
Total Properties Currently for Sale (Inventory)	57	↓		↓				
November Number of Properties Sold	7	↓		↓		223	↓	
November Average Days on Market (Solds)	38	↓	↓	↓	↓	53	↓	↓
Asking Price per Square Foot (based on New Listings)	\$378	↓	↓	↓	↓	\$423	↓	↓
November Sold Price per Square Foot	\$434	↑	↑	↑	↔	\$408	↓	↓
November Month's Supply of Inventory	8.1	↑	↑	↑	↑	5.1	↑	↑
November Sale Price vs List Price Ratio	100.2%	↑	↑	↑	↑	97.1%	↑	↑

* LM=Last Month / L3M=Last 3 Months / PYM=Same Month Prior Year / LY=Last Year / YTD = Year-to-date

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Council Extends Eden's Rights

By Laurie Snyder

The non-profit Eden Housing, Inc. was granted a one-year extension of its Exclusive Right to Negotiate Agreement by the Orinda City Council last week. The agreement was due to expire on December 14, 2011. The extension gives Eden the assurance that the City will not discuss or negotiate the development of the old library site with anyone other than Eden during the term of the agreement, and contains

a commitment by Eden to diligently pursue the project.

Eden has been working to obtain financing for the development of an affordable senior housing project at 2 Irwin Way, the former location of the Orinda library.

Valerie Sloven of Lamorinda Housing Advocates, and Eartha Newsong, an active resident of the Orinda Senior Village who coordinated Orinda's Seniors Around

Town program, spoke in support of affordable senior housing.

Council members then discussed and approved on a 4-1 vote the requested extension.

Vice Mayor Steve Glazer explained his reason for casting the lone dissenting vote, "I am very supportive of this affordable senior housing project and believe that Eden Housing is earnestly and sincerely working to advance this de-

velopment. This exclusivity clause should have been a part of our original agreement with Eden and not presented as an add-on. It is for that reason that I voted against the original two-year agreement and why I am voting against the one-year extension."

City staff expressed an expectation that the project will return to the Council's agenda in February, 2012.

Sisters Were Doin' It for Themselves in Orinda

By Laurie Snyder



Amelia Chen Photo provided

The City of Orinda welcomed an international dignitary and community leaders from across Northern California on Friday and Saturday, October 28 and 29 when it played host to the 2011 Conference of the Northern California Chapter of Sister Cities International.

The weekend of fun and learning at this 35th annual meeting began with a special reception held at the home of Orinda's former mayor, Bobbie Landers, on Friday evening. Landers said that, during the planning process when she and her fellow board members were thinking about the wine fest presented as part of last year's conference in Lodi, planners hit on the idea of presenting an opening beer reception to both increase awareness about Czechoslovakia's reputation for beer production and educate attendees about Orinda's

Sister City, Tabor.

Tabor, which has had a special relationship with Orinda since the late 1990s, was chosen as Orinda's Sister City to help Tabors strengthen their emerging democracy. Since that time, many Orindans have visited the city and, in turn, Tabor has sent several of its students to live and learn in Orinda.

On Saturday, the democratic principles of both countries were celebrated once again as local Boy Scouts presented first the U.S. and then Czech colors at the opening of the day's events. Both national anthems were also performed.

Mayor Victoria Smith welcomed attendees, and encouraged them to explore restaurants throughout the City and to "Shop Orinda" during their visit.

Ambassador Gao Zhansheng, Consul General of the People's Republic of China, then presented the conference's keynote address. Zhansheng spoke about the economic relationship between the United States and China, and indicated his support for the Sister Cities International program by encouraging the leaders of cities across Northern California to collaborate with the cities in China that are currently looking for partners.

But it was a young Orinda resident who most eloquently communicated the bridges that can be built by programs such as Sister Cities

International. Zhansheng was welcomed to the conference through song by Amelia Chen, the petite K-2 division soloist who captured the hearts of Lamorinda residents during the recent 2011 Orinda Idol finals. According to Landers and other audience members, Chen sang so beautifully and so impressed the Consul General that he was moved to hug the little girl following her performance.

Lunch catered by a Czech bistro gave attendees the chance to experience tasty new foods and enjoy one another's company before an afternoon of workshops that included a presentation by Orinda City Council member Dean Orr and a review by Orinda's current Sister City student, Stepanka Jandova, of the ways in which cities across Northern California can involve their youth communities in their respective Sister City initiatives.

Landers, when asked about the overall impact of the event, mentioned that one highlight in particular was the workshop presented by Richard Westin. Westin, a 40-year resident of Orinda who has served on both the Planning and Parks and Recreation Commissions and is now the current President of the Orinda Community Foundation, led a roundtable discussion on "How to Successfully Raise Funds for Your Organization."

He addressed the different components of successful

fundraising activities – volunteer recruitment, selecting the proper venue, advertising – and stressed the importance of taking the time to recognize and thank the planners and supporters of any event. He also discussed an important leadership role being played by Orinda's foundation, which has launched a user-friendly calendar on its web site (www.orindafoundation.org/) that gives residents a centralized place to learn about area happenings while also enabling community organizations to reduce scheduling conflicts as they plan their special events.

Participants in Westin's workshop were also invited to share their best fundraising strategies. "We're non-competing; we love to share ideas that work," he said as he reflected on the enthusiasm of the roughly 35 people who attended his session.

As with so many of its fellow Sister City groups, Orinda's own organization raises funds and recruits volunteers in support of its work. The committee's meetings are open to the public and held the fourth Thursday of every month. And because it is a 501 (c) (3) organization, contributions made to the City of Orinda to support its work are tax deductible. For more information about the Orinda Sister City's upcoming holiday program or about becoming a member, contact Bobbie Landers: (925) 254-8260.

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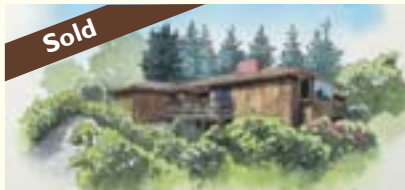


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Roads Poll Moves Forward

By Laurie Snyder

Roughly 35 citizens were in attendance at last week's Orinda City Council meeting, and several addressed the Council before it decided in favor of polling Orindans their opinions on fixing Orinda's roads.

Orinda resident Diana Stephens conducted a survey in her Crestview Drive neighborhood and summarized the results for the Council, saying there are residents who feel the City is not doing enough to protect the interests of its citizens.

Regarding a potential parcel tax, Stephens told the Council, "You need to address all of the reasons that previous parcel tax measures failed. (Residents) really need to hear you clearly address each and every concern," before putting additional measures on the ballot. She also suggested that a master plan for roads be created and shared with the community that wants to have a better understanding of the issues involved.

Resident Clyde Vaughn spoke next, expressing his opposition to future roads ballot measures and stating that Council has tried twice to pass similar measures and "failed miserably at the ballot box each time."

Vice Mayor Glazer noted that prior roads ballot measures received 64 percent of the vote, very close to the 66.7 percent that was needed to prevail, and commended Stephens and her neighbors for their initiative and "willingness to come together for the greater good."

Glazer explained that the City had previously attempted a single long-term strategy to fix all infrastructure problems at once, for which it received 64 percent approval. The Council's Roads Subcommittee, composed of Glazer and Council Member Sue Severson, is now looking at the possibility of fixing problems in phases - he suggested that a phased approach might prove to be more affordable for residents, and allow the City to demonstrate that it can efficiently complete projects before going back to residents on an incremental basis over the next several years.

The Council then discussed whether or not to authorize staff members to use City funds to contract with a professional polling company to solicit residents' feedback regarding repair and maintenance funding options, including different types of taxes, amounts, and durations - the results would assist the

Council in determining what, if anything, Orindans believe they can afford to pay in order to fix roads.

Several Council members observed at different times that professional polling data provides City Council, staff, and citizens with unbiased views of residents' concerns and wishes. Reflecting on Lafayette's recent roads ballot defeat and the economy, Smith said polling was key.

The Council voted unanimously to contract with Fairbanks, Maslin, Maulin, Metz and Associates to develop and conduct the new poll for an amount not to exceed \$16,350. Also known as FM3, the Council noted this firm came in with the lowest bid, has experience working with Orinda on prior polls, and agreed to work within the city's timeline, completing the polling by the end of January, 2012. The poll will be paid for from the City's reserves.

"It's not about what we, the Council, think is best or would like to do, it's about what the citizens of this community desire to do, or what level of support they're willing to lend to repair and improve our roads," concluded Severson.

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Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community!

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only).

Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com;

Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

Bravo! to the Lafayette PD and the Lafayette City Council in their purchase of-- in place of two new patrol car replacements-- two motorcycle units. This enhanced enforcement program was completed at no added associated cost and gives us a capability we have not heretofore had. From what I am hearing, not all Lafayette residents are altogether delighted with the new motorcycle enforcement. But the two existing traffic officers -- who previously had used cars and now ride cycles a good part of the year, are earning their keep. The Lafayette PD accident stats for year end 2010 totaled 106 collisions. The 2011 collisions totaled, as of Nov. 1, 58. We could expect (if 2010 is an indication) 10 more for the missing November/December numbers. Those would make for a total of 68 for this year. Some of this reduction can, no doubt, be attributed to the reduced vehicle volumes on our roads due to the economic downturn. But, certainly, not all. The motorcycle units started in mid-July and augmented their training by attending motorcycle school. Motor cycle units for Lafayette --which can be useful on Lafayette terrain in locations where patrol cars often cannot-- had been considered several times in the past. And, for various reasons, were rejected. Fortunately, Chief Mike Hubbard and our creative City Council found a way to get them for us. I know of many Lafayette residents who surely will be very grateful.

Lynn Hiden
Lafayette

Editor:

Our community, Orinda, is such a great city! But, our community has such bad roads!

With only an \$11 million annual budget, Orinda will never be able to spend more than \$1 million annually on road repair/maintenance. This guarantees that each year, the City will make fewer repairs than the roads need. Our roads -- particularly our residential roads, where most of us live -- will gradually and inevitably deteriorate even further. More potholes. Even gravel? The trend is down, down, except for the big roads, where we get matching funds from outside.

Much of our sales tax and property taxes leave Orinda, never to return. Our big brothers, Contra Costa County and the State of California grab our revenues and don't let go.

Convince the legislature to change the law? Keep more of that existing revenue here? Very unlikely to convince the huge -- and nearly broke -- State of California to change. They have enough problems. Get money for Orinda roads from the fire department? From our school districts? Other local districts? They are separate entities. Separate boards of directors. They have enough problems; they have a legal duty to take care of their own responsibilities.

Can we just re-order our city budget? Give more to roads? That would cripple police services. Cripple recreation services, classes at the Community Center, especially for our children and older adults (CPR classes).

Should we just let the roads go? Yes, we could.

Or, should we try to keep more money here, to fix our roads by ourselves? One way to do that is to vote in a new revenue stream or tax that, very strictly, may only be used in Orinda, only for Orinda roads, not for anything else. Such a tax cannot be subject to the highway robbery that is foisted upon us now by the county and state.

Will it take political will to do this? Of course. But, it is within the control of our community.

Keep our money at work in Orinda. Bypass the dysfunction in state and federal governments. Embrace changes we citizens of Orinda can make to put our hands on the cash we need.

We can fix my road, fix your road, our roads, our community.

Sincerely,
David W. Anderson
Orinda

... continued on next page

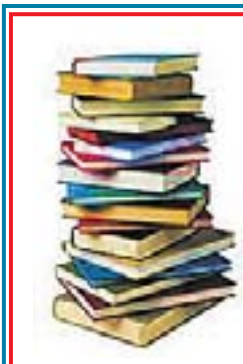
Public Announcement

Supervisor Gayle B. Uilkema will be interviewing applicants for District 2 county commissions and committees. Lamorinda residents are invited to apply for current vacancies:

Contra Costa County Women's Commission (CCCWC) advises the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and other entities on issues relating to the changing social and economic conditions of women in the County, with particular emphasis on the economically disadvantaged.

Family & Children's Trust Committee (FACT) makes funding recommendations on the allocation of a variety of funds for prevention and intervention services to reduce child abuse and neglect, provide supportive services to families and children, and promote a more coordinated, seamless system of services for families.

Application forms and more information are available from Supervisor Uilkema's office (925/335-1046), the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors (925/335-1900), or on line at <http://contra.napanet.net/maddybook/>.



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Letters to the Editor

... continued

Editor:

MOFD's increasingly awkward attempts to explain away the tax funding inequity, with Orinda taxpayers subsidizing Moraga taxpayers by \$1 million annually, is becoming painful to watch.

Now MOFD is attempting to rationalize the inequity by explaining that if the taxes from an area of south Orinda were dedicated to pay for service in Moraga, that this would answer for the majority of the inequity.

Why Chief Bradley, who knows where his units serve and where his revenue comes from, would propose such an argument that could so easily be dismissed by those knowledgeable of MOFD's finances and operations, is perplexing.

A detailed evaluation of MOFD's claims, including tax and operation statistics, can be found on the FAIR website, www.FairForOrinda.org.

Editor:

To Our Neighbors and Community, It's been two years since the Lafayette Library and Learning Center opened its doors on November 14, 2009.

nary success.

We have long said, and continue to say, "All We Need is YOU!" and you have responded with extraordinary generosity.

Warmest thanks and wishes for 2012, from the Board of Trustees.

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Editor:

I recently visited a new business in Moraga and was very pleased with their service. Wonderful Spa Center is struggling to get started in Rheem and could benefit from a "New business" highlight in the Lamorinda Weekly.

I want to be clear that I have no connection with the owners or anyone else connected with this business. I walk the Rheem Center most mornings and noticed they had opened.

Sincerely,
Sally Swanson

Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda, or one of its communities, that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair!



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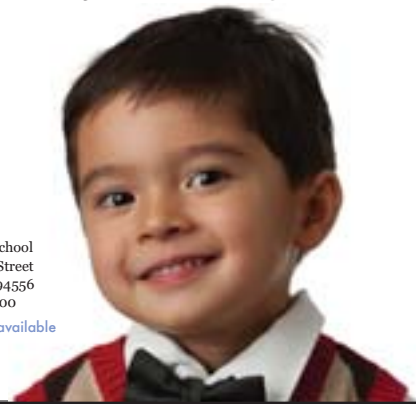
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Civic News Moraga



WOW, THIS OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT HAS REALLY TAKEN OFF!

MYRON, THAT'S THE MORAGA FARMER'S MARKET

New Parking Lot on the Starting Block

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council is moving forward with plans to build a new parking lot alongside the Moraga Commons Park on Moraga Road – a consultant has been hired to design the lot and prepare the bidding documents. Orinda and Lafayette will each be paying 25% of the construction cost, as a result of an agreement that the three communities signed when the Lamorinda Skatepark was built at the Commons in 2003.

“Lafayette joined Orinda and agreed at the end of summer to finance 25% of the construction cost of the project,” said Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram, “We wrote a request for proposals last October. MacKay and Soms from Pleasanton was our first choice.” The space where cars now park haphazardly along the road will create a 29-space angled parking lot, with safe access into and out of the lot from Moraga Road as well as good pedestrian access from the lot to Moraga Commons and the Skatepark.

“The City of Lafayette has requested an alternative design detail that would increase the sustainability of the parking lot by including permeable pavement or gravel,” stated Ingram, “The Town of Moraga’s interest is to keep this project within the engineer’s estimate for construction of \$200,000. The Town would also like this project to consider the most affordable and efficient drainage systems.”

The plans and bid documents should be developed between now and the end of March. “MacKay and Soms will work closely with us, as well as the cities of Lafayette and Orinda, during this whole phase,” said Ingram. “We hope that the bidding will start in April, leading to a contract for construction in May, and actual construction over the next summer.” Ingram does not think that the impact on Moraga Road will be extensive during construction.

As Seen in Moraga...



The Moraga Youth Involvement Committee serves the community at the Tree Lighting event at the Commons Park last Saturday evening.



A Capella carolers entertain the crowd Photos Andy Scheck



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Civic News Orinda

Orinda Police Trained in Taser Use

By Laurie Snyder



Detective Sergeant Neil Rafanan (in padded suit) talks with Shawn Murray during recent training of the Orinda Police Department in Taser use. Photos courtesy of the Orinda Police Department.

A Taser in the wrong hands can cause a media sensation. The Orinda Police Department believes that in the right hands the oft-maligned weapon makes life safer for the men and women who run toward rather than away from danger, as well as for the citizens they protect.

All fourteen members of Orinda's Police Department (OPD) are being trained as part of a larger program by the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department (CCSD), which also staffs the Lafayette Police Department, to teach its officers to use the Taser X-26, an Electronic Control Device (ECD). Officers in the Moraga Police Department have carried Tasers for several years.

"Every officer who is on duty will be carrying a Taser," likely beginning in January 2012, says Detective Sergeant Neil Rafanan, a CCSD detective assigned to the OPD. Orinda's Tasers will be bright yellow to ensure that nobody mistakes a gun for a Taser.

"The Sheriff's Department has been thinking about this since Warren Rupf's time," Rafanan explains. Rupf was the Sheriff from 1992 until his retirement last January. Rafanan, who puts criminals away for OPD's Investigations unit, is playing a key role in training Orinda's police to use their new weapons safely and judiciously—he has been a trainer since the end of 1998 and an instructor at the police

academy since 2003.

Rafanan believes the ECDs are safer for the police – and for the general public. "For every (gun) shot that you send down range, potentially another one will be returned," he says.

Tasing lasts roughly five seconds under CCSD policy, which also specifies that ECDs may only be deployed in an immediate threat to an officer or another person. When asked about a San Francisco Chronicle article likening ECDs to cardiologists shocking hearts, Rafanan replies, "It's a much weaker charge." Compared with a wall socket's 16 amperes and the 1 amp of a Christmas tree bulb, the ECD is only .0036 ampere. Officers are trained not to aim for the heart.

"It's not comfortable," Rafanan says of his own tasing during training, "but it's not fatal." California, he states, "is considered the pinnacle of police training in the country."

Not counting supplemental instruction, Orinda's officers each complete at least 24 hours of professional development each year, involving legal and skills instruction on handling active shooters, accident and DUI interviews and investigations, automobile operation, and the latest in life saving. In addition to knowing First Aid and CPR, members of the OPD are able to use AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators).



Rafanan said the Taser dart was well placed when Jason Watkins tased him.



Ian Jones demonstrates how he would subdue a subject he had just tased.



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Santa Sighted in Orinda

... continued from page A1

Children vibrated with excitement as Santa arrived by Moraga-Orinda Fire District truck. Bounding down from the cab, he waved as he made his way through the crowd. He greeted his biggest fans from his place of honor for more than an hour with help from members of Boy Scout Troop 237.

"Were you good this year?"
"Yes," said one, almost too softly to be heard.
"Tell him about the train," called a dad as his son's brain froze.

Another tiny one, too shy to meet St. Nick in person, advised his mom that it wasn't necessary to sit on the big guy's lap. "Santa already knows what I want."

"What's that?" whispered his mom. "A helicopter."
All it took for one little girl, frowning as she was seated on Santa's knee, was to look up into those twinkling eyes. Presto, a smile!

Santa, when asked by the *Lamorinda Weekly* if he had a message for local boys and girls, nodded thoughtfully and said:

1. Be grateful for what you have.
2. Be good to your Mom and Dad.
3. Be good to your brothers and sisters.
4. Be good to animals. I like animals.
5. Have plenty of chocolate chip cookies and milk ready.

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The Hospice Tree of Lights was lit shortly before Santa arrived.

Photo Andy Schreck

As Seen in Lafayette...

Despite the chill in the air, dozens of people came out for the lighting of the Hospice Tree of Lights in Lafayette.

Photo Doug Kohen

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Pearl Harbor Memories Still Burning Bright

By Cathy Dausman



The event's Color Guard, from left: Seaman Apprentice Brandon Chang, Seaman Apprentice Andrew Waggoner, Seaman Christian Hickman; and Seaman Apprentice Andres Serrano of Lafayette. Photos Doug Kohen

Vivid memories of December 7, 1941 spill hurriedly from the lips of Ed Wallen and John Chapman, as well they might. Chapman, especially, fears the next generation will forget the stunning events that catapulted the U.S. into World War II. Both retired Navy men are Pearl Harbor survivors.

On a recent visit to an East Bay high school, Chapman says he asked his student audience when World War II began and who attacked on U.S. soil – “They didn’t know,” he laments.

Last Thursday a group of local veterans and the Navy League sought to honor servicemen and women and preserve their history during a Pearl Harbor Remembrance dinner at Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building. The dinner, now in its fifth year, hosted Wallen, Chapman and several active duty personnel. Guest speaker Coast Guard Rear Admiral Christopher Colvin introduced himself to the Navy veterans and listened to their stories. “As long as America continues to produce heroes like Ed and John we’ll be okay,” he said.

In 1941, Wallen, known to his friends as “Spike”, was a 20 year old Machinist mate 2nd class stationed aboard the Navy destroyer USS Monaghan when Pearl Harbor was attacked. His ship had “ready duty” December 6, and all hands were aboard. “If I’d had an apple or a baseball I could have thrown it at the [Japanese] planes [flying overhead],” Wallen said. His battle station was “shaft alley”—below decks in the area between the ship’s twin propellers. His first glimpse of the stricken harbor was “the saddest thing.” The Monaghan escaped the harbor and went on submarine patrol, returning December 9. Wallen later served in the submarine service; he and his shipmates fought in the Coral Sea and Midway battles.

John Chapman was a Shipfitter 3rd class on the battleship West Virginia. Only 19 during the attack, Chapman remembers debris from other ships raining onto the West Virginia’s fantail. The water was an oil slick six inches deep. He began reciting the 23rd Psalm and remembers hearing a voice saying “take charge.”

“I’ll get you out of there,” he promised his shipmates. Chapman went into the harbor. When the USS Arizona exploded, the captain’s gig (motorboat) that rescued him was blown six feet into the air. Chapman later became a deep sea diver and helped build the USS Arizona memorial. Chapman estimates he helped save 40 men during the attack. When asked about medals, he says simply: “They don’t give you medals for doing your job.”

Marine Staff Sergeants Louis Carter and Jonathan Garfin were in the audience. Carter, an Iraq veteran, said he felt good that Wallen and Chapman survived, noting there was enough patriotism “for the whole of Contra Costa County in this building tonight.” Garfin was impressed by the survivors’ legacy and “proud to wear a uniform.”



(L-R) Ed “Spike” Wallen, USS Monaghan, John Chapman, USS West Virginia

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JMIS Launches Environmental Program: Trash Transformed into Energy

Submitted by Hillary Hoppock, JM History Teacher

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM) students are talking trash these days – and that’s a good thing! Middle school students are lining up daily to sort and save food scraps from their lunches at specially designed ECO (Environmental Conservation Organization) stations. Color-coded bins for recycling food scraps, cans & bottles, as well as dry paper and foil, sit side by side with traditional trash cans. The food waste collection system is diverting over 300 lbs of food scraps each week to a water treatment plant in Oakland, where bacteria breaks down the food to create methane and power the plant.

“JM students have really



Students and teachers of the JM ECO (Environmental Conservation Organization) club standing by the stations students use to collect food scraps and recycling. Photo provided

stepped up and impressed us,” states Kim Lockett, JM science teacher and founder of the school’s three-year old ECO Club. Fifteen dedicated ECO club members, five teachers and parent volunteers devote at least one day a week to be on hand at lunch to monitor the stations. Lately they haven’t had to do much in the way of discussing how to use the ECO stations. “Our JM kids come to the station and know exactly what to

do. It’s like they are on automatic as they scrape out the extra food, and recycle their cans, bottles and paper bags,” reaffirms science teacher and ECO club supporter Pam Bailes.

It’s been so successful that the school is adding plastic recycling to its recycling program in December. ECO Club members have volunteered extra time the first week or two to help JM students recycle plastic and paper (or

cardboard) containers. Thanks to the cooperation of the JM PTA, which sponsors the school’s Hot Lunch program, most of the food vendors use recyclable containers. The challenge will be to still separate out those items that cannot be recycled and put them in the regular trash bins, destined for the landfill.

Waste Management, Moraga’s trash service provider, has been an enthusiastic supporter of

the school’s program and attributes JM’s success to the careful groundwork followed as the program began. All science teachers devoted class time to explaining the food waste collection system and showing the transformation of trash to energy, and will now update students on the plan for additional recycling. JM is very proud of its efforts to help our school, our community, and our planet.

Lafayette School District’s Cost-Saving Demo Garden

By Sophie Braccini

According to Barbara Williams and Brad Crane, it costs \$1.70 a square foot to maintain a lawn, so replacing decorative patches of grass with drought resistant native gardens that won’t require any maintenance should make accounting sense. The idea appealed to Lafayette School District Superintendent Fred Brill and

he gave the go-ahead for a test cost-saving garden in front of the District’s administrative offices. A group of six parent volunteers got to work in early November—they claim that the money the District invested in plants for the 1000 square-foot garden will be recovered in savings within nine months.

“When I started the water usage audit at Lafayette Elementary, where my children go to school, I noticed that many native plants were over-watered on the premises,” recounts Crane. “I talked to the principal about stopping the watering and she decided to refer my proposal to the District.”

Crane’s idea reached the Lafayette School District Green Team, a group composed of the superintendent, representatives from the District’s school board, schools and staff, and a member of Sustainable Lafayette (Williams). “We looked at the plan with Fred (Brill) and he decided to try a test patch,” says Williams, “there was an area of about 1000 square feet in front



Barbara Williams and Brad Crane in the garden. Photo Sophie Braccini

of the District’s offices on School Street that served no recreational purpose and that we all thought would be a good test site.”

Crane worked with Garth Jacober, who owns Mt. Diablo Nursery & Garden, for his list of plants. “We wanted plants that are going to provide a lot of colors,” adds Williams, “we also ran the plan by Kim Curiel, the Garden Instructional Specialist at the Burton Valley Elementary Garden Classroom.” A total of 76 plants were planted in the garden that will not require any water after the plants are established.

“The District’s maintenance crew removed the lawn, we added amendments as we put our new plants in the ground, then we added mulch on top to contain the weeds,” explains Crane. It took the parent volunteers four hours to complete the garden, including the flag stones that were donated to create a path. “The total cost of the plants was \$990,” said Williams, “we estimated that the cost to maintain the area when it’s planted with grass is approximately \$1300 a year (mow, weed, fertilize, edge, water). The cost to maintain the demo garden is about \$100/year for water, to get the plants started, and mulch. So the annual savings to the District is \$1200 per year or \$1.20 per square foot of lawn converted.”

“There are other benefits to this garden,” adds Crane, “native gar-

dens are a great place for learning by experience. The native plants have been used by the indigenous American population in all sorts of ways that the children can learn. Native plants also attract native critters and pollinators and they do not require pesticides and fertilizers.”

Since this is a demonstration garden, Williams and Crane hope that it will spread. “We have asked the District’s maintenance crew to show us areas that present a maintenance challenge to see if we can do something about it.”

Williams and Crane say that the feedback has been positive so far, both from the School District and the neighbors on School Street. But they know that it will take time to convert all of grassy areas that are not being used for recreational purposes. “Most principals still think that the front of their school needs a large, green, grassy area – it’s what people are used to,” says Crane.

The native, drought tolerant plants newly installed in front of the Lafayette School District offices include:

- Manzanitas
- Yarrow
- Lupines
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- Penstemon Mimulus
- Milkweed
- Ribes (California currant)
- Mock Orange
- Native grass

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A Zero-Waste Kitchen—it's a Process

By Sophie Braccini



Nanette Hefferman in her kitchen with a few of the bulk food containers she takes to the store. She is holding a jar of homemade yogurt sweetened with local honey and fresh berries from her garden. Photo provided

Of the 3R's of sustainable life—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle—Nanette Hefferman's favorite is the first one: the new challenge the mother of three little children set for herself is to have a zero-waste kitchen. Recycling is not enough for the woman who is skeptical about the reality of the process and does not believe it solves any problems. But as she discovered, it takes ingenuity and time to live trash-free in a world that, in the name of convenience, packages everything extensively.

"The first reason for this decision is that, according to the EPA, packaging is the largest category of waste, making up 30% of municipal waste," says Hefferman, "that's a huge opportunity." Packaging also encourages the sale of non-durable goods, plastics and junk. She believes that the best solution to our growing trash pile is not to waste in the first place, "Recycling has a down side; it justifies the waste," she says.

Hefferman thought that the kitchen, the number one place for

creating trash in the home, should be the first place for starting living waste-free. With her vegetable garden and her chickens, a nice percentage of the food she puts on the table comes totally free of any kind of packaging. But she still has to shop for many things. Hefferman started looking at where she was doing her shopping with a different perspective. "When you want to eliminate packaging you have to stay away from processed food," she says, "you have to shop the perimeter aisles, it eliminates a lot of problems."

But to fully solve the waste=0 equation, Hefferman had to go beyond the 'bring your own bag' slogan to the 'bring your own container' scheme. "Many stores now sell washable, reusable produce bags that can easily be used instead of the plastic ones," says Hefferman, "and for the rest, I shop bulk and bring my own jars." When Hefferman goes shopping to one of her favorite Lafayette grocery stores, she gets her containers weighed. Whole Foods says it encourages cus-

tomers to bring their own containers, "Just bring your jars to the customer service station, we'll weigh it and put a little sticker on it, and the cashier will deduct it when you check out," said a Whole Foods employee.

Maintaining her kitchen demands advanced organizational skills, but Hefferman calculates that it is worth the effort, even from a budgetary perspective. "Buying bulk and preparing things yourself can save up to 80 percent of the price of food," she says. "Beans are a great example—dry beans cost a fraction of those in cans. I also make our yogurt, which costs just a few cents." Other items, such as flour, are not much less expensive bought in bulk. She estimates that in the summer, her grocery bill is cut in half, because the family grows a lot of its own produce, and the overall amount of their recycling has also gone down by 50 percent. "For me buying bulk is a way of life," says Hefferman, "my kids eat better and their food never comes out of plastic containers or bags."

Former Governor of Michigan Delivers Economic Lesson

By Cathy Tyson



Jennifer Granholm and Dan Mulhern seated Photo Cathy Tyson

"The story of Michigan is a cautionary tale for the country," said former Governor of Michigan Jennifer Granholm, who along with husband Dan Mulhern entertained a full house of eager attendees at a book tour event for the Commonwealth Club at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

Granholm served two terms as the Governor of Michigan, starting in 2002, winning re-election in 2006 during an unprecedented crises in manufacturing. Chatting with dotting husband, and co-author, Dan Mulhern, the evening got off to a comical start with moderator Lisa Vorderbruggen introducing everyone and asking about the proper way to address Mulhern; "first husband?" she asked. "First and last husband," said Mulhern, to chuckles from the audience. In his role as the spouse of the Governor he was "First Gentleman of Michigan."

The very down to earth, plain spoken pair who met in law school

have an easy chemistry, and laid out a few of the many economic challenges of running the state over eight tumultuous years. All the details are spelled out in their new book, *A Governor's Story: The Fight for Jobs and America's Economic Future*.

Granholm described the book as a, "Story for the country – about the role of government and what we can do as a nation...How do you deal with life when fundamental assumptions have changed." In her opinion, low skilled manufacturing jobs are not coming back, especially in a global economy.

She illustrated this with a story of the Electrolux Corporation – formerly headquartered in Greenville, Michigan. With a town population 8,400 – 2,700 of those souls worked at the Electrolux refrigerator factory, the epitome of the company town. Understanding the financial pressure the firm was under, and knowing that if the business left it would be devastating to the community,

Granholm offered extremely generous tax breaks and incentives from the state and local municipality. But in the end, the millions of dollars in concessions were not able to compete with the \$1.57 per hour they were slated to pay new workers in Juarez, Mexico.

Granholm outlined her attempt to improve Michigan's economy with twentieth century solutions, for what turned out to be twenty-first century problems. Despite aggressively cutting taxes, the state is 48th out of 50th in per capita government spending, and a personal income flat tax rate of 4.35% – one might assume that small government and lower taxes would spur growth. Unfortunately Michigan still has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the nation.

Granholm called for strategic interventions that allowed the state to diversify, which has slowly nudged the unemployment rate that spiked at 14% at the end of 2009 to 10.6% as of October 2011, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The pair advises investing in people, creating an incredibly educated workforce - something that they're working on right now. Mulhern is a Distinguished Practitioner of Business and Law at UC Berkeley. Granholm will be taking a sabbatical from her current teaching position at the Goldman School of Public Policy at Berkeley to host a television show devoted to covering the upcoming presidential election on new cable network, Current TV, starting in January. Not bad for a woman who grew up on the peninsula and at one time, many years ago was "Miss San Carlos."

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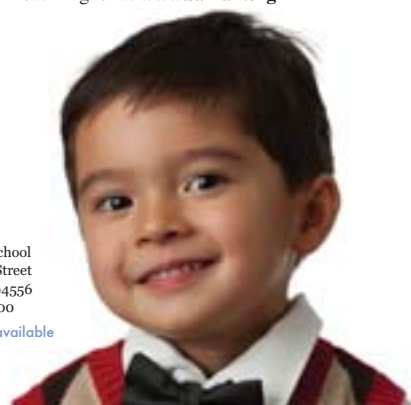
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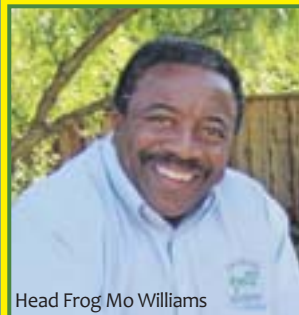
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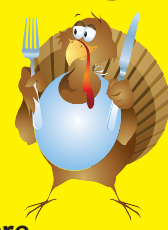


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Beau/Derek on *The Descendants* ★★★★★

By Beau Behan

One can argue that Shakespeare's legacy to the literary world is a précis expression: "To be, or not to be, that is the question." In essence, it is a question of whether death is better than life. *The Descendants* is not about *Hamlet*; rather, it is about taking one side of this proverbial expression--that is, "To live, and to live to the fullest."

George Clooney portrays Matt King, a man forced into self-introspection. He is suddenly bombarded by his past, by a present family crisis due to his wife's

comatose state, and by the very uncertain future of raising his daughters without a mother. To make matters worse, he must also grapple with a decision to sell the family's land that was handed down from Hawaiian royalty and missionaries.

Academy Award winning director Alexander Payne (*Sideways*) has painstakingly labored to convey the adage that life is not always a bed of roses. One can even say that his conscientious effort could be egregious due to the pain and sorrow that a moviegoer may experience through King's agony and dilemma.

I highly recommend this movie. It reminds us that life is too short. Derek is off on a holiday— practicing living life to the fullest!

(Derek Zembrak is a filmmaker and the president of the California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA); Beau Behan is a member of the CAIFFA Board and director of the Lamorinda Theatres.)



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Trading Hot Chocolate for Donations



Courtney Jensen and some of the participants from the Acalanes "Campaigners" Young Life group, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, were enthusiastically giving out hot chocolate and asking for donations for a trip to Africa on a recent chilly day in front of the Lafayette Reservoir. "We have a desire to make a difference in the world," said Jensen. Their tentative plans include painting a school and working on a water project in Tanzania or Kenya; their plans haven't

been finalized. They have started a fundraising effort to help at least partially de-fray the cost of the trip. Katie Stensland, Fiona Nelis and Kim Holland, along with organizer Jensen, made \$145 that day, the day before Thanksgiving. Although the \$145 is just a drop in the bucket – it's a start and the young women have ambitious plans for future fundraisers. For more information, check out their blog at <http://africaorbust2012.wordpress.com>. C. Tyson

THE APP RAP

By Eric Pawlakos

Shake to Answer
Price: Free
For: Android Smartphones Only
By: Murat Yener

Being able to answer your smart phone by shaking it may seem like a really simple idea. Sometimes the simplest apps are among the most useful. Shake to Answer is that kind of app. Without any bells or whistles, it simply allows you to answer your phone by shaking it, bypassing the need to slide to answer. It is quick to download and takes only seconds to set up. This app is extremely useful in a variety of situations when you just need to grab your phone and answer it without having to slide or tap.

It can be especially desirable when driving. Even with an ear-

piece, we all know how inconvenient and even dangerous it is to slide your phone or tap it to answer. With Shake to Answer, when you hear your phone ring, you simply jiggle it and say "hello." It comes with a shaking sensitivity, giving you six levels from which to choose. You can customize how vigorously to shake your phone before it picks up—from a gentle shake to a much more rigorous quaking. You can even tailor the app to go directly to speakerphone by shaking it. Practical, straightforward, and free...an excellent app for your Android.

Lots of Trees in Lamorinda

By Cathy Dausman



Asher (left) and Eric Menke of Orinda picked out an 11-foot Christmas tree at McDonnell Nursery on Saturday. Photo Andy Scheck

Recent sunshine and 60 degree weather might not put you in the Christmas mood, but visiting tree lots could make a believer out of even the Grinch. Lamorinda lots seem steeped in tradition, and each offers something unique. Here's a look at who's selling real, full-sized Christmas trees:

Sue Renno has sold trees in the Las Trampas pool parking lot (Glenside Drive and St. Mary's Road) in Lafayette for 18 of the last 19 years. Renno's trees are from her father's Oregon tree farm. She sells only Noble firs, which she says last longer, are sturdier, have nicely spaced branches and carry weight well. The trees are kept in water stands at the lot to keep them fresh. "I love selling trees," Renno says enthusiastically, noting the product's great color, freshness and fullness. She also loves visiting with her repeat customers, who range from Rossmoor residents to Lamorindans buying for themselves, their parents, and their grown children. One local family arrived on roller blades to buy its tree, and took it home in a wagon. Renno offers wreaths sales from Boy Scout Troop 204. Her trees are priced by height increments starting at \$60 for 5-6 feet; trees over 8 feet

cost \$105. Lot hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily; children receive candy canes with their tree.

J.R. Bierly runs **Honey Bear Trees**, on Deer Hill at Pleasant Hill (near Acalanes High School). Bierly grew up selling trees in the Bay Area and has been at this location five years. When not selling, he coaches baseball at Acalanes and

Lamorinda Baseball Academy. He hires local high school students to work the lot. "I like to keep the money in the community," he says. Bierly also offers a 20% sales donation to schools and nonprofit groups. Wood chips cover the ground and their smell vies with that of the tree inventory—Noble fir (sheared or natural style), Douglas fir and an East Coast favorite, Fraser fir. Fraser trees are tall and narrow; their needles are silver underneath. Trees range from 2-3 feet to 15 feet in height and cost between \$21 and \$300. Delivery and setup is extra. Bierly hand picks his Oregon-farmed trees, and likes to donate leftovers late in the season to local charities or churches. Honey Bear Trees is named after the bee hives which populate one tree farm; a jar of honey goes home with each tree. The lot is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, and Santa Claus visits from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. December 10 and 11.

Lafayette **Boy Scout Troop 224** has been in the Christmas tree sales business since 1958, long enough that one current scout parent was a troop Eagle Scout. Parent Joanne Layshock says this is the only local troop selling trees. Scouts unload and set up day after Thanksgiving. Parent volunteers staff the lot at Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Risa Road during school hours, working in three hour shifts. The scouts work afternoon and evening shifts. The lot is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, and offers four varieties of fresh cut Oregon trees:

... continued on next page

Festival of Trees Moraga Royale

The Holiday season is a perfect time for giving. Moraga Royale, along with local businesses and organizations, has donated and decorated beautiful Christmas trees to support the Rescue One Foundation; a non-profit organization dedicated to the aid of the MOFD paramedics. A silent auction will be held at Moraga Royale from December 1st to the 15th. Community members are invited to join in on the holiday spirit and perhaps walk away with a wonderful Christmas tree. Viewing and bidding hours will be from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm daily. Bidding will conclude on December 15th at 9:00 PM. If you are the lucky winner of one of these trees and you reside in the Lamorinda area, we will personally deliver it to your residence the following day, December the 16th. We would love for you to join us in this fun and giving event.

Happy Holidays

If you are interested in making a donation to this event, please contact:
Dianne Wilson or Al Pyne at Moraga Royale.

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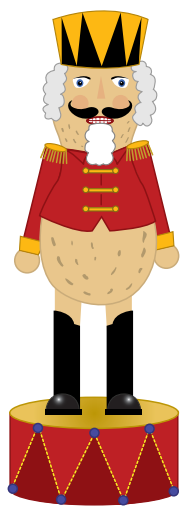
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Lots of Trees in Lamorinda

... continued from page B5

Small Scotch pine trees (2 to 4 feet) are \$25; Grand firs (6 to 8 feet) are \$70 to \$90; Douglas firs (5 to 9 feet) cost \$40 to \$90 and Noble firs (2 to 10 feet) are \$22 to \$160. Christmas wreaths decorated by troop parents are also available. There's free hot cocoa, and Lamorinda seniors get free local delivery. A portion of each tree sale is tax-deductible. The lot is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. through December 20 or until trees sell out.

Bob Holland, of **Bob's Christmas Trees**, has sold trees in Moraga for 36 years from a corner lot at School Street and Moraga Way. He hires local high school students to work and marvels that one such employee has returned yearly "for the last 15 to 18 years." Holland's trees are mostly from Oregon; he sells a selection of Noble fir, Douglas fir,

Grand firs, Nordman (a cross-bred tree) plus "a few Silvertip". Trees are 3 to 10 feet tall and prices start at \$15. Wreaths and flocking is available. The retired Oakland policeman keeps flexible lot hours, usually from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Holland says the first two weekends in December are critical to sales, but notes a few traditionalists wait until Christmas Eve to buy their tree. He says he'll be there then. Holland travels the country on an over-70 senior softball team the rest of the year.

Joe's Quality Christmas Trees is across from the gazebo on Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette for a second year. Joe Natina and his brother-in-law Steve Sewell bring in Oregon Silvertips and Noble firs, and price them from \$15 to \$17 per foot (Silvertips) and \$10 to \$13 per foot

(Noble). Grand firs will be available shortly. The trees arrive weekly in small shipments to keep them fresh. Custom wreaths are available and children can make their own mistletoe decorations. Lot hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily through December 24.

Some local nurseries, a hardware store, a drug store and one grocery store also sell full size trees. **Lafayette's Ace Hardware, Moraga Hardware and Lumber and Orinda True Value Hardware** do not, but they do offer tree lights and accessories. Moraga Ace Hardware is also a participant in the Lights for Life cancer fundraiser (<http://www.lightsforlifeinc.com/>), and Orinda Hardware has a model train display the kid in everyone should enjoy. Orinda's **Rite Aid** sells cut trees.



Honey Bear Trees proprietor J.R. Bierly (left) and Tommy Beritzhoff Photo Cathy Dausman

Orchard Supply Hardware in Moraga sells wreaths, garlands, cones and stands plus Douglas, Noble and Grand fir trees, from 5 to 9 feet tall. Prices range from \$21.99 to \$74.99, and "elf trees" are \$18.99. **Orchard Nursery** stocks Nordman, Noble and Silvertip trees in heights to 14 feet. Price quotes were unavailable by phone. Orchard Nursery also carries wreaths and greens and features a store display of 63 decorated trees.

stocks some live trees plus 2 to 12 foot tall cut Noble firs from Washington. Tree prices (\$20 to \$350) include free home delivery and setup. McDonnell suggests buying a tree bag for easy cleanup. They will also spray trees with fire retardant (a requirement for trees in public spaces) for \$6/foot.

Lafayette's **Whole Foods** carries sustainably-harvested Noble firs from Oregon and Washington in 6 to 7 foot height, for \$39.99 while supplies last.

Orinda's **McDonnell Nursery**

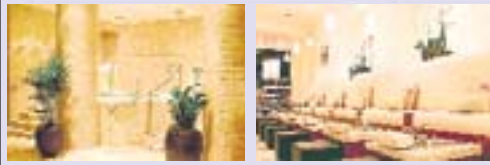
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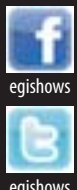
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Tree Shopping: the Basics

Local Stores offering cut Christmas trees:

- McDonnell Nursery, Orinda (925) 254-3713
- Orchard Nursery, Lafayette (925) 284-4474
- Orchard Supply Hardware, Moraga (925) 377-0994
- Rite Aid, Orinda (925) 253-1904
- Whole Foods, Lafayette (925) 284-5305

Seasonal Lots:

Sue Renno's, Lafayette

Las Trampas Pool parking lot, St. Mary's at Glenside
Hours: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily
Extras: candy canes, also sell Boy Scout wreaths
Trees: Noble Firs only
Price: \$60 to \$105, depending on size

Honey Bear Trees, Lafayette

Near Acalanes High School, Deer Hill at Pleasant Hill
Hours: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily
Extras: Santa Claus visits Dec. 10 & 11, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Trees: Noble Firs, Doug Firs and Frasers
Price: \$21 to \$300, depending on size and type

Boy Scout Troop 224, Lafayette

Mt. Diablo Boulevard at Risa Road
Hours: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; closed after Dec. 20
Extras: wreaths available, free hot chocolate, free senior delivery
Trees: Noble Fir, Grand Fir, Doug Fir and Scotch pine
Price: \$22 and up, depending on size and type

Bob's Tree Lot, Moraga

School Street at Moraga Way
Hours: flexible. Generally 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Extras: flocking available
Trees: Noble, Doug, Grand, Nordman and a few Silvertip
Price: starting at \$15

Joe's Quality Christmas Trees, Lafayette

Across from the Gazebo on Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Hours: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Extras: wreaths available; children can make mistletoe decorations
Trees: Silvertip, Noble; Grand firs coming soon
Price: \$10 to \$17 per foot

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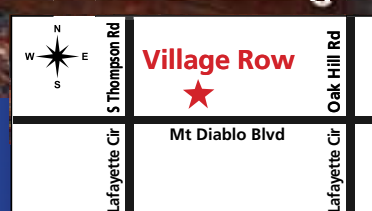
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Wreaths Around Orinda

By Cathy Dausman



Life Scout Michael Bernatz tests a light pole for a "Wreath Around Town" decoration



(front, L-R) Boy Scouts Stephen Schmidt, Sam Sernett and Ian Livingston, troop 273 pose with Cathleen Sodos (left) and Jane Wiser (right) before distributing their wreaths

Orinda is dressed in a bit of holiday cheer, thanks to the Orinda Garden Club (OGC) and one local Boy Scout troop. The club purchased 60 wreaths from Troop 237 (which sells them as a fundraiser), added decorations of their own and met with scout volunteers Saturday morning to decorate buildings around Orinda. This is the first year for the project, called "Wreaths Around Town." Wreaths were hung along Orinda's historic bridge, outside stores near the community center, in front of the downtown fire station and around the library, Orinda Crossroads and Theater Square. OGC's Jane Wiser and Troop 237's Stephen Schmidt co-chaired the event. Over 40 garden club members and an additional dozen scouts and scout parents participated in decorating or hanging the wreaths. It wasn't always easy, as Saturday's wind necessitated using cinder blocks to secure the wreaths in some locations. Wiser calls the wreaths a "manageable symbol of the holiday," and sees the wreath-hanging as an opportunity to "spread the joy of the season around town." When asked if OGC will take on the project again next year, her reply was an emphatic "we sure hope so!"

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Giving Opportunities this Holiday Season

Cycle Recycle, extended 'til December 11. Every year, Bobbie and Tom Preston collect repairable bikes for refurbishing by Trips for Kids, the Bicycle Hut, and by the inmates at Marsh Canyon Detention Facility. The repaired bikes are given at Christmas to under-privileged children. Most needed are tricycles and junior bikes; please no skateboards. The Prestons have been doing the Cycle Recycle for 14 years, and over 1500 bikes have been gifted to kids. New and/or used, repairable bikes may be delivered to the side driveway of the Preston's home, only through December 11, at 1307 Larch Avenue, Moraga.

A LibraryALIVE...EVERY dollar, every donor, every volunteer matters!

Since opening November 2009, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center has been ALIVE, serving 765,000 patrons, open 58 weekly hours, 7 days a week and providing programs every day for every age and interest. And here is a little known fact...the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation funds a stunning 53% of the costs to keep the doors open, programs abundant, and the physical building well maintained! *This is no small challenge, and we cannot succeed without YOU!*

\$50 funds 2 children's science books

\$1,500 funds updated technology

\$200 funds 1 hour of library services

\$5,000 funds a Distinguished Speaker

\$600 funds 3 Consortium programs

So, every gift, your charitable gift of any size, makes a difference! Become a member of the LibraryALIVE Annual Fund by check, online at LLLCF.org or call 925-283-6513.

Holiday Sharing. Many families had a much more enjoyable Thanksgiving this year thanks to a gift of 98 turkeys and 40 complete holiday food baskets provided to the Monument Crisis Center and donated in part by Grocery Outlet and the students at St. Perpetua School in Lafayette. This is the fourth year that the students have worked with the Crisis Center by donating, assembling and delivering holiday meal baskets. The baskets are complete with nutritious food and many seasonal favorites. This year was extra special with the addition of 98 turkeys. Many of those receiving the baskets are seniors on limited incomes and working families. To learn more about the Monument Crisis Center or to donate food, host a food drive or to make a financial donation on-line, please go to their website at www.monumentcrisiscenter.org/donate.

The Moraga Police Officers Association along with S.A.F.E. (Stuffed Animals For Emergencies) is collecting new or gently used stuffed animals to help children through traumatic experiences. The stuffed animals are given to local police and fire departments, which distribute them to children they encounter who have been affected by traumatic events. S.A.F.E also facilitates the distribution of donated stuffed animals for a variety of charitable purposes to help children. This year's annual holiday collection drive begins on 11/23 and ends on 12/27. New or gently used stuffed animals can be dropped off in the collection area located in the lobby of the Moraga Police Department, 329 Rheem Blvd. Thank you for your support!

The wonderful people of Handlebar Toys of Lafayette have kindly offered to host Lamorinda Girl Scout Troop #31983's "2nd annual Toy Drive Event" again this year, from November 25th until December 20th! There are several thousand homeless and needy children that will be served by the Mission this holiday. When purchasing a special gift for a child in your life, please consider choosing something to put a smile on another less fortunate child's face. Thank you so much from Troop #31983!

Make a difference in the lives of women, families, and teens by making a tax-deductible donation to Be the Star You Are!® charity in Moraga. New books are being shipped to groups and families across the US who have suffered in recent natural disasters. Checks of any amount may be sent to Be the Star You Are!® 501c3, PO Box 376, Moraga, Ca. 94556. Or make donations online via PAYPAL at <http://www.bethestaryouare.org/donate.htm>. \$25 provides 5 books, \$50 provides 12 books, and \$100 provides 28 books. Thanks for caring. Everyone counts!

Donations are needed to fund the final construction of the Lafayette Community Stage at the EBMUD Reservoir. The new permanent stage, initiated by the Lafayette Rotary, will be used for community events like the annual "Concert at the Res" (which funds music programs at our local schools) and many other outdoor performing events. Please send your tax-deductible donations via check to the Lafayette Community Foundation, c/o "Rotary Stage", PO Box 221, Lafayette, CA 94549-0221 or donate online with a major credit card at www.LafayetteCF.org.

Safeway: Help Us End Hunger Holiday Food Drive from November 16 - December 24. Purchase a \$10 prepacked bag of groceries which will be donated to the Food Bank. In store barrels will be available to drop off the donation, it's quick and easy.

Whole Foods: From Now until December 31, donate non-perishable items while shopping at the Lafayette Whole Foods store to support the Food Bank, or make a cash donation at the register while checking out. Look for pallets of healthy items on display. You can't miss the bins to collect donated non-perishable items.

Company C Contemporary Ballet is partnering with the non-profit Educational Foundation of Orinda to offer tickets to select performances of the 10th Anniversary Season Winter Program that benefit EFO and the Orinda schools. For every full priced benefit ticket sold to an EFO supporter, the Company will donate \$10 of the ticket price to EFO. Benefit tickets are priced \$45 orchestra seating, available for the following Winter Program performances: Leshner Center for the Arts, January 20-21 and the Novellus Theater at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, February 17 and 19. Most appropriate for children 7 and older. Benefit ticket buyers must use the code "ENRICH" when ordering tickets. Details may be found at www.companycballet.org.

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of our donors, Trust in Education has grown in its capacity to help Afghan families rebuild their lives and country. We began with a few neighbors in 2003. Now our grassroots organization is supported by thousands who have donated time and money. A critical mass of supporters is essential to our challenge to educate. After all, today's third grader will be a fourth grader next year. Education is the greatest gift we can give a child. Join us by contributing what you can and volunteer your time.

To make a secure online donation go to www.trustededucation.org/get-involved/make-a-donation/
Send a check to: Trust In Education, PO Box 936, Lafayette, CA 94549

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa

Over 85% of All Funds Go to Meals Served! Loaves & Fishes Is the Most Efficient Hot Meal Provider to the Hungry in Contra Costa County. Help us help the community. Mail Donations to: Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa, 1985 Bonifacio St., STE 100, Concord, CA 94520 or go to our web site at www.loavesfishescc.org/donations.html

On January 9, 2012 a group of Saint Mary's Students will be embarking on an unforgettable journey to Cambodia as part of their 'Jan Term'. Students will participate in the building of village water wells and learn how accessibility to clean water changes local people's lives. They're raising funds to support the building of a community water well in a rural community in the name of Saint Mary's College, and asking the Lamorinda community to donate items including: used summer clothing for children, easy-reader books, flash-cards, old toys (compact), and monetary donations of any amount. There will be a donation drive held outside of CVS in Moraga on December 11th, 10-2. If you can't come then, please contact vtbhatnagar@gmail.com to make other arrangements.

Need Donations?

During the holiday season, *Lamorinda Weekly* will accept and publish opportunities for local giving. Please send 100 words or less describing the cause, type of donation needed, and where to bring/send it. The organization collecting the donations, or receiving the donations, should be within our extended community. Submissions must be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com by Dec. 14 for inclusion in our Dec. 21 issue.



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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 with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Golfers Get Special Thank You from Afghanistan



Some of the members of the Bulls, who happened to be playing golf on December 3, posing with the flag that flew in Afghanistan and the framed certificate. Jason Woodworth in black sweater is holding the flag. Photo Cathy Tyson

Because of the generosity of The Bulls – a fun-loving group of golfers who get together on Friday afternoons at the Moraga Country Club, soldiers stationed at the Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan now have their own personal driving range. When he heard that his best friend, an army reservist, was being called to Afghanistan, Bernie Smit, a member of the Bulls, organized a golf equipment drive for the troops. The regular

Friday afternoon golfers were very generous and the Country Club pitched in with, “tons of golf merchandise - balls, golf bags, hitting mats, clubs, tees, hats, gloves,” said Jason Woodworth, Director of Golf. “We were happy to be a part of the effort and support the troops.”

As a very unique thank you the Task Force Light Guard participating in Operation Enduring Freedom sent back a flag that had flown over the

base this summer along with a special framed certificate that read:

“So that all shall know, this flag was flown Sunday, June 12th 2011 over Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan in Honor of THE MORAGA BULLS. Illuminated by the light of justice this flag bears witness to the sacrifice of those men and women fighting terrorist forces threatening the freedom of the United States of America and the world.” C. Tyson

Festival of Trees Raises \$40,000

Submitted by Susan Domingos



Photo provided

The Orinda Woman's Club and its 2011 beneficiaries have much to be thankful for during this holiday season. In spite of a troubled economy the community came together to support the Festival of Trees, the Orinda Woman's Club main

fundraiser. Over 500 people attended the luncheon and fashion show on November 17 at the San Ramon Marriott. Co-chairmen Alison Kling and Barbara Rogan did a fantastic job working with the Festival of Trees committees and with the staff at the

Marriott. Dan Ashley, the news anchor at ABC channel 7, was a fabulous master of ceremony. The Pavilion was beautiful, the food delicious, the fashion show spectacular. Helen Lyall's fashions were featured and were beautiful. Her store is located in Napa. Cassara's Fine Italian Men's Wear of Dublin provided the men's wear. The models' make-up was done by the Robert Jensen Salon of Lafayette.

The \$40,000 that was raised will go to the club's major non-profit beneficiaries for 2011. They are the Child Abuse Prevention Council, the Independent Living Skills Program run through Vestia, and the Orinda Woman's Club Committee, which awards scholarships to improve the lives of women and children.

The Orinda Woman's Club is a member of the California Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation of Women's Clubs International. If you would like to join or are thinking about it please contact Membership Chairman Karen Norris at 254-4704.

Ask Dr. Harold:

Spiritual Development

By Harold Jules Hoyle Ph.D.

My pre-holiday column last year focused on the activities that you could do with your child and I received several notes requesting that I talk more about the meaning that our winter celebrations hold. So this year I will take a psychological look at the spiritual development of children. A psychological researcher need not go much further than the local kindergarten soccer game to find the spiritual dynamics of children, but I will cover one popular model below.

What is spirituality from psychological standpoint?

Just as we have physical, intellectual, and emotional development, the natural development of children includes spiritual development. In their book, *The Spirit of the Child*, Hay and Nye suggest we refer to spiritual development in children with the term “relational consciousness.”

Relational Consciousness

Relational consciousness as a model focuses on three dynamics: awareness-sensing, mystery-sensing, and value-sensing, to describe children's spiritual capabilities.

Awareness-sensing is your child's ability to attend to and get lost in following the ball down the soccer field, or lost in the flowers growing down at the end of the field. We adults call this prayer, meditation, or mindfulness. Kids come pre-loaded with multiple attention abilities and we see it in their questions.

Mystery-sensing is the wonder and awe that children can express when they see something they like or don't like. Maria Montessori's described it well: “Only those who look with the eyes of children can lose themselves in the object of their wonder.” This “built in” wonder is what we can help our kids hold on to and develop.

Value-sensing is your child's delight and despair over an event, an activity, or the day. Grandparents can be much better than us parents in just listening and experiencing the delight a child gets when showing an accomplishment over and over. As kids play with their sense of goodness and security they reflect upon meaning and can experiencing a sense of oneness

with the universe. Isn't that the feeling of a good grandparent anyway?

What can we do?

Notice what your kids find wonderful. What about the view make them want to take a picture? What is so cool about the graphics in the video game? How does their prayer time make them feel? Have them notice and learn more whole stories. Hay and Nye describe this as “seed to apple tree.” Growing a garden and having chickens are examples of ways to help kids increase their awareness of their wonder about the world and the divine in the world.

Help kids hold their minds open to seeing the perspectives of others. Taking another perspective helps us to see the divine they see and better experience the wonderful in our own lives.

Share your awareness, mystery, and values with your child. Rather than make it a lesson, share it through your relationship. Be aware of those times when you experience the mystery and wonder of life and the divine in your life. Talk with your kids and others about your inspirations and experiences of the good and bad in life. Like it or not, they are watching us and if they see we have extinguished these spiritual dynamics they may learn from our example.



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

Harold is licensed clinical psychologist and a lecturer 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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Most Frequently Viewed Stories From Our Last Issue:



- Miss Moraga Valley takes on the Universe
- Mystery in a Trunk
- Girls' Basketball will be Tough in DFAL
- All in the Family: Second Generation Homeowners
- Orinda Police Department Nabs Potentially Masked Men
- Measure G Falls - Now What?
- Miramonte Boys Reclaim NCS Water Polo Title in Sudden Death Overtime
- 215 Reasons to be Thankful
- Lafayette Police Blotter
- Moraga Police Blotter

If you wish to view any of the stories above go to www.lamorindaweekly.com and click the link below the story.

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

ART

The Saint Mary's College William Keith (1838-1911) Collection will welcome visitors into the expanded galleries of the new Museum of Art thru December 18. Among never before seen recent acquisitions and newly restored paintings are magnificent early views of the Columbia River Valley, Pacific Northwest, Mt. Tamalpais and Russian River. The Hearst Art Gallery is open from Wednesdays through Sundays, 11am-4:30pm. Admission is \$4 for adults; free for groups, K-12th graders. For more information, please call (925) 631-4379.

Moraga Art Gallery will feature the work of guest artist Susan Heller thru Dec. 24. Heller's work falls outside the traditional function of quilts as each piece is intended to hang as a work of art. She enjoys using applique, for its added dimension and embellishes with hand-embroidery, beading or both. Moraga Art Gallery is open Tues.-Sun from noon-5pm. MAG is tucked in a corner north of CVS in the Rheem Center in Moraga (until the end of this show).

MUSIC

The Campolindo Jazz Program presents "ALL THAT JAZZ" featuring guest artist and Campo Alumnus Geoffrey Countryman with the Campolindo Jazz Ensembles. Jazz Combo will be playing from the entire spectrum of jazz styles plus original compositions by Countryman. Camplindo Performing Arts Center, free admission, Thursday, December 8, 7:30pm.

Friday, December 9, 1:30-3pm: Annual Holiday Concert and

Fundraiser - Performance by Rossmoor and Moraga Community Chorus at the Live Oak Room of the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. Get in the holiday spirit with a festive afternoon of music, caroling, light refreshments, and a chance to win wonderful raffle prizes. Funds raised will go to support the Lamorinda Spirit Van paratransit program. Call 284-5050 to reserve a spot. \$3 for member and \$5 for non-members.

Concert: Christmas on the Hill, Saturday and Sunday, December 10 & 11, 7pm, Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Moraga. Saturday and Sunday, December 10 & 11, 7pm.

Saturday, December 10, 4pm, and Sunday, December 11, 4pm, "This Shining Night" featuring the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church Festival Choir, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. This is great way to listen to some of your friends and neighbors raise their sixty plus voices - number of participants, not actual ages - performing traditional choral-orchestral music for the holiday. Tickets are free, but organizers ask that your reserve seats via their website at lopc.org or for more information contact Sharon Francis at (925) 283-8722 x 264.

Saturday, December 10, 10am. Beginning students from the Lafayette campus of The Contra Costa Children's Chorus will perform "Winter Awakenings" at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 1601 Mary Drive in Pleasant Hill. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children 14 and under. Please email: programs@childrenschorus.org to reserve tickets and pay at the Will Call table on the day of the event.

Sunday, December 11, 4pm, Christmas with a Flourish at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, featuring The OSLC Choirs with an ensemble of professional instrumentalists. A festive mix of jubilant, contemplative and just-for-fun holiday music from our singing and ringing choirs. This concert features the choral music of Texas composer Randol Alan Bass, opening with his haunting arrangement of the ancient chant/carol, Personent Hodie, and ending with his dazzling carol medley, Christmas Flourish. Add our tradition of a glittering reception in the Fellowship Hall, and you have a delightful holiday experience that will leave no Christmastone unturned! For questions call: (925) 283-3722.

On Sunday, Dec 11th, a benefit concert for the California Independent Film Festival and Contra Costa Food Bank will be held at the Orinda Theatre. Scheduled to appear at the Winter Holiday Concert are Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center performer Carol Alban (flute and vocals) and keyboardist Frank Martin, who has performed with Andrea Bocelli and Al Jarreau. Ticket admission, which includes a light brunch, is \$20 per person. Seating is very limited. Tickets available by going to lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.

Monday, December 12, 7:30-9pm. "Winterfest," Maestro Duane Carroll will lead the 45-member Contra Costa Wind Symphony as they perform seasonal favorites with special guests - members of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, in the LOPC chapel, 49 Knox Drive Lafayette. Although they usually perform at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek, the exceptional musicians of the Wind Symphony with singing special guests will rock the house with a variety of familiar seasonal selections including "Silver Bells," "Rhapsody for Hanukkah" and "Sleigh Ride." The concert will include an audience sing-along. Admission and parking are free.

Copeland, Ives and the Horizon Wind Quintet at 8:00 on Dec. 13th in Walnut Creek. Free 20th century classical music in beautiful Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church: An Ewazen Piano Trio, 6 songs for Voice and Piano, and a Gordon Jacobs suite for Woodwinds and Piano. 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek, CA. More information and full program at www.CCPAS.org.

Winter Concerts by Campolindo High School Choir on December 13, 14 and 15. Some concerts will be at the high school, others are at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. For more information, go to www.campochoir.com.

WomenSing presents Descends the Snow Holiday Concert on Wednesday, Dec 14, 8-10pm, at Lafayette/Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. WomenSing kicks off the holiday season with a concert entitled 'Descends the Snow.' Come experience every aspect of the winter landscape in song. Cost: \$20 general admission; \$18 seniors; \$10 students/youth. For more info see http://www.womensing.org or call (925) 974-9169 or email info@womensing.org.

Holiday Sing-a-long, Thursday, December 15th 7-9pm, Collector's Choice Antiques, 3574 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Please bring a can or food item for our local food bank. Sponsored by Massage Cottage, Collector's Choice Antiques, Mark Shaw of Remax Accord. RSVP to Mark Shaw, (925) 250-5591.

The Contra Costa Children's Chorus will perform "Winter Awakenings" Friday, Dec. 16th at 7pm, Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church. The young singers will perform an eclectic mass with each movement set by a different European composer. Firefighters and their guests are offered tickets at a discounted price. Tickets: Adults \$15.00 reserved by email: programs@childrenschorus.org (bring VISA/MC or cash/check to concert), or by voicemail 925 945-7101, x2.

THEATER

Friday, December 9, 7pm w/Concerto; Saturday, Dec 10th, 2 pm; Sat., Dec 10th 7pm w/ Concerto; and Sun., Dec 11 2pm: CAPA Nutcracker Ballet: Campolindo Performing Arts Center in Moraga. Tickets available online at www.ShowTix4u.com (click on California then CAPA Nutcracker). CAPA is

donating proceeds from 2011 weekday student performances to fight child hunger in Contra Costa. Please bring a jar of peanut butter to any show (donation barrels & envelopes available at all shows).

On December 16-19, The Peter Pan Foundation will present "The 13 Days of Christmas", a brand new, original holiday production written by two Lamorinda teens, Jayne Skinner (Campolindo High School) and Andrew Cope (Acalanes High School). The show also contains over 20 new songs and musical arrangements, written by Lafayette's own Leslie Noel. This new and incredible show supports a cast of over 150 community members, ages ranging from 5 to over 50! Presented by the Peter Pan Foundation, the show is a benefit musical supporting charities such as Children's Hospital Oakland. For more information visit www.PeterPanFoundation.org.

KIDS & PARENTS

Holiday Fun at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center: Holiday Cards Craft on Thursday, Dec. 8, 3:30-4:30pm in the Children's Room. Toddler Holiday Dance Party, Monday, Dec. 19, 10:15-11:00am in the Homework Center. Wear your party clothes and celebrate the holidays with music, dancing, and fun! This is a special event just for little ones ages 2-5. LLC is located at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette; (925) 385-2280.

Saturday, Dec 10, 11am-2 pm, take a Photo with Santa at the Rheem Valley Shopping Center. Bring your own camera. Holiday clowns & balloon art. You will need your Rheem Valley Shopping Center receipts totaling \$25.00 or more to participate.

Orinda Theatre is offering special free screenings of holiday classics when you bring a canned food item to these special Saturday morning shows: December 10th 11:30am - Elf; December 17th 11:30am - Polar Express.

5A is hosting a "Free Photos with Santa" day with cocoa, treats, gifts and craft activities on Dec. 18th from 11am - 3pm. 5A rent-a-Space is located at 455 Moraga Rd., Ste F in Moraga; (925) 631-7000.

TEENS ONLY

Start your holidays off right with a visit with friends at the Lafayette Community Center. The Lafayette Youth Commission is hosting an Open Mic Night on December 9th. Anyone can participate - come play an acoustic guitar, read poetry or tell a few jokes. The event is free and open to high school students. Doors open at 7:30 and the festivities begin at 8:00. We will be service coffee and snacks but as always, the Lafayette Youth Commission ensures that this will be an alcohol and drug free event. Please call 284-2232 for more information or directions.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

December 8 from 11am-2pm Saint Mary's Guild is hosting a Merry Christmas Luncheon at Saint Mary's College Soda Center as a fundraiser for student scholarships. The Saint Mary's College Chamber Singers will sing a wide variety of selections; including classical, traditional, jazz, and Broadway songs. Enjoy champagne cocktails and a Christmas raffle. The price of the luncheon is \$45. For more information call Jeffry-Lynn Dunne (925) 284-7750.

Lafayette Senior Services Annual Holiday Concert and Fund Raiser: Performance by Rossmoor and Moraga Community Chorus. Join us for a festive afternoon of splendid music, light refreshments, caroling, and an opportunity to win any of several raffle prizes. Funds raised will go to support our Lamorinda Spirit Van program. Bring friends! Please call 284-5050 to sign up. Friday, Dec. 9, 1:30 - 3pm, Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Fundraiser admission fee: \$3 for members/ \$5 for non-members. Raffle Tickets: \$1 each or \$5 for six raffle tickets.

The Danville, Alamo, Walnut Creek Branch of American Association of University Women presents its 7th Annual Holiday Home Tour, Friday & Saturday, December 9th & 10th, 10am-4pm. Tour five beautifully decorated homes in the Alamo, Diablo, &

Danville area. Tickets are \$35. Seniors 65+ tickets are \$30. Tickets available at East Bay Flower Company; 206 Sycamore Valley Rd W., the Danville Livery, (cash or checks only). Please, no children under 12. Email questions to holidaytour@auuw-da.org or visit www.auuw-daw.org/hhtour/hht.html.

Lafayette Gallery Trunk Show, December 10 & 11, unique gifts hand crafted by local artisans. The Gallery is located at 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette (across from Chow). Free event. www.lafayettegallery.net, (925) 284-2788.

41st Annual Alameda Holiday Home Tour & Holiday Tea will feature five gorgeous Victorian homes on Saturday, December 10, 9:30am-4:30pm. Tickets \$30/Day-of-Tour \$35. The gourmet shop and holiday artisan boutique is free and open to the public. Tickets & Information, (510) 629-6209, www.alameda-holidayhometour.info. Proceeds will benefit Alameda Family Services.

PJ Library, Jewish Community Center of the East Bay, Jewish Gateways, and Building Jewish Bridges present Hanukkah Festival of Light and Isaac Zones Family Concert on Sunday, Dec 11, 10am-2pm, at Jewish Community Center of the East Bay, 1414 Walnut Street, Berkeley. Fun day of Hanukkah activities for the whole family -- storytelling, family concert, latkes, dreidel games, arts & crafts, more! All are welcome! Cost: Suggested donation \$5/person + canned food donations. For more info see http://www.jewishgateways.org/events/2011/dec/11/hanukkah-festival-light-and-isaac-zones-family-concert or call (510) 410-0622 or email rabbibridget@jewishgateways.org.

Terzetto's Restaurant is hosting its annual Holiday Show of small works of art and gifts by local artists on Dec. 17th. Patrons can view the artwork of three local artists: Lauren Ekman who creates glass beads and jewelry, will be joined by Tamara Selvig, a skillful potter who also sculpts exquisite figures; Leslie Swartz will be showing her oils, Batik, pen, ink and water colour drawings, and hand painted glass ware. The art will be on display, and for sale into the new year.

OTHER

Friends of Orinda Library Book Sale, Saturday Dec. 17, 10am to 1pm at the Book Shop and Sorting Room. The sale offers good-quality books for all ages and interests, and will include many books ideal for holiday giving. Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, (925) 254-1358.

Surfing the web carries with it inherent risks. Learn valuable tips on how to protect yourself online: backing up your data, choosing a strong password, protecting your identity and wireless network, and much more from Edward Zeidan, Nerd4Rent. To sign up, call (925) 284-5050. \$1 members of Lafayette Senior Center/\$3 non-members. Tuesday, December 13, 10:30-Noon, Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette.

Electronic E-waste Collection/ Fundraiser for Loaves and Fishes of FCC. When: Saturday Dec. 10, 9am-4pm. Where: Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church @ 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Free to recycle televisions, monitors, laptops, cell phones, flat-screens and wires. \$5.00 per item fee to recycle: stereos, telephones, CPU's, printers, DVD players, radios, fax machines, small appliances etc. Secured Document Destruction (shredding) also provided at \$7.00 per Banker Box. Contact: (925) 890-1324.

CLUBS

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 and 174 will hold its annual Ladies Day Christmas Lunch at St. Mary's College Soda Center on December 19th. Reception starts at 1 am, with lunch at 12 noon. Miramonte High School Choral group will be featured for the entertainment. For further details on Sirs membership, or the lunch call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

Please submit:
calendar@lamorinda weekly.com

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Upcoming Special Events at:

RHEEM ORINDA LAMORINDA theatres

Orinda Theatre
"FREE" holiday movies at the Orinda Theatre with a canned food item for the Contra Costa Food Bank

Elf Dec. 10th, 11:00 AM
Polar Express Dec. 17th, 11:00 AM



Rheem Theatre
CAIFF Members 2012 Film Festival Preview Night
Dec. 12th, 7 PM

Come see a sneak preview of the great films that will be screening at the 14th Annual California Independent Film Festival February 10th - 16th
CAIFF Members, please bring a guest and show them the great benefits of being a CAIFF member!

Friday Night of Fright Dec. 16th, 10 PM
Rocky Horror Picture Show hosted by the Queen of Scream Vanessa. Live Stage show from the cast of Barely Legal. Please bring a canned food item for the Contra Costa Food Bank

Winter Holiday Concert
Dec. 11th, 11:00 AM

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CAIFF Classic Dec. 17th, 7 PM
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Wednesday
The Canterville Ghost

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Bunjo Comedy Club at the Rheem!

14th Annual California Independent Film Festival, Feb 10th - Feb 16th, 2012

Become a member of CAIFF to receive free & discount movie tickets at Lamorinda Theatres! www.caiff.org

Check www.lamorindatheatres.com for all movie listings

Have a Hearty Breakfast on Hand for the Holidays

By Susie Iventosch



Breakfast Casserole with artichoke hearts

Photo Susie Iventosch

During the holidays things can get hectic, but just because you're extra busy it doesn't mean family and holiday house guests aren't hungry when they wake up in the morning! These breakfast casseroles are a take-off on one a friend gave to me years ago. They are delicious and incorporate all of

the great makings of a hearty breakfast: eggs, sausages, bacon, cheese, veggies—all in one dish! And, best of all, they can be made a day or two ahead and reheated. These are just a couple of variations we like, but you can use your imagination and add whatever ingredients make you happy!

Mediterranean Breakfast Casserole

(Serves 6-8)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound turkey bacon, cooked and broken into small pieces
- 1 pound turkey sausage patties, cooked and crumbled
- 1 quart Eggbeaters (or 1 dozen eggs)
- ½ cup milk or plain nonfat yogurt
- 1 pound bag shredded hash browns
- 1/4-1/3 cup olive oil (used for sautéing veggies and potatoes)
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 1 package (6-pack) baby portabella mushrooms, sliced
- 1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1/3 cup sundried tomatoes, sliced or chopped (optional)
- 2 cups shredded cheese (your choice on what kind ... I'd use feta, too!)
- Salt & Pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large frying pan, cook hash browns in olive oil over medium-high heat until golden-brown. Transfer potatoes into a large mixing bowl. (If you are in a big rush, you can skip browning the potatoes and use them straight from the bag.) Using the same pan, heat olive oil and sauté onions until soft. Add mushrooms and cook both until caramelized. Toss into bowl with potatoes. Again, in same pan, add a little more olive oil and cook artichoke hearts and red bell peppers until just starting to brown. Dump into bowl. Add sundried tomatoes, sausage, bacon and half the cheese to mixture in bowl. Season with Italian herbs and S&P and mix well. Spread potato-vegetable mixture evenly in the bottom of a greased 9x13 baking dish. Mix eggbeaters with milk or plain yogurt, and pour over potato mixture. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top. Bake at 350° for approximately 35 minutes, or until eggs are cooked and cheese is browned. Enjoy!

Southwest Breakfast Casserole

(Serves 6-8)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound turkey or pork bacon, cooked and broken into small pieces
- 1 pound turkey or pork sausage patties, cooked and crumbled, or crumbled chorizo
- 1 quart Eggbeaters (or 1 dozen eggs)
- ½ cup milk or plain nonfat yogurt
- 1 pound bag shredded hash browns
- 2-4 tablespoons olive oil (used for sautéing onions and potatoes)
- 1 red or yellow onion, chopped
- 1 cup fresh or frozen corn kernels (frozen roasted corn from Trader Joe's is great in this dish)
- 1 large can diced Ortega chilies, or one Poblano pepper, roasted, seeded and diced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 tablespoon Louisiana hot sauce (or your favorite hot sauce, quantity varies based upon sauce!)
- 2 cups shredded pepper jack or white cheddar cheese
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- For Garnish:
 - ¾ cup green or red salsa
 - 1/3 cup fresh tomatoes, chopped (optional)
 - 1-2 avocados coarsely chopped or sliced
 - ½ cup chopped cilantro leaves

DIRECTIONS

In a large frying pan, cook hash browns in olive oil over medium-high heat until golden-brown. Transfer potatoes into a large mixing bowl. (If you are in a big rush, you can skip browning the potatoes and use them straight from the bag.) Add corn, chilies/peppers, sausage and bacon and half the cheese to mixture in bowl. Add hot sauce and season with and S&P. Mix well. Spread potato mixture evenly in the bottom of a greased 9x13 baking dish. Mix eggbeaters with milk or plain yogurt, and pour over potato mixture. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top. Bake at 350° for approximately 35 minutes, or until eggs are cooked and cheese is browned. Happy Holidays!

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. **These recipe is available on our web site** www.lamorindaweekly.com If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977.



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Independent Local Movie Theaters Struggle to Enter the Digital Age

By Sophie Braccini



The Lamorinda Theatres Foundation fundraising committee members at work: (From left) Ann O'Connell-Nye, Edy Schwartz, Shari Simon, Judi Kanter, Charlotte Holden

The New Rheem and Orinda Theatres must go digital. It is not a question of 'if' or 'when' – the big movie studios have already made that decision for them. The question is, can they afford the cost?

Going digital means an end to 35-millimeter film, which will result in big savings for the studios. Distributing a movie the old-fashion way means the

master print costs \$30,000 and the copies sent to movie theaters cost an additional \$3,000 each. When a big release is 5000 copies, going digital and sending movies to theaters virtually instead of on film engenders savings in the millions of dollars a year.

So, digital is the way of the future – the very near future, since major studios such as Disney and Fox have set an April, 2012 deadline for theaters to convert to digital. The cost of the new equipment? \$80,000 per screening room. For the California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA), which operates the Orinda and New Rheem Theatres with a combined total of seven screens, that's a \$560,000 investment.

"The movie industry is undergoing a transformative revolution," says CAIFFA President Derek Zemrak, "the relatively simple, 120-year old technology that used perforations is giving way to binary digits."

Many independent movie theaters may become collateral damage of the conversion. "Independent movie theaters such as ourselves represent 20 percent of the film distribution venues,

the rest being large exhibition networks (such as Cinemark with 448 theaters, including Century 14 in Walnut Creek)" adds Zemrak, "the studios have figured out that about half of that 20 percent will convert to digital; losing the other 10 percent may not be their main concern."

Studios will help those who convert at least half of their screens by April, 2012 by crediting them back some of the money they receive for the films (studios get an average of 50 percent of the ticket sales for each movie they send to theaters). "The plan is to convert two screens in Moraga and two in Orinda in 2012," says Zemrak, "that's a \$280,000 investment. We hope to raise half of it, and finance the rest with the studios' back-credit."

If the theaters cannot convert, they will not be able to present the new releases that attract a large percentage of customers to the movies. "We would still be able to show classic movies, independent releases and foreign films," says Zemrak, "but it is unlikely that it would be enough to fill the seven rooms we have and generate enough revenue to keep the theaters alive."

So if the Lamorinda community wants to keep its theaters, it will have to help.

A fundraising committee has been formed to raise \$140,000 for the new Lamorinda Theatres Foundation, which will own the equipment. Residents of all three communities have joined together in this effort—Orinda's Ann O'Connell-Nye, Moraga residents Shari Simon, Edy Schwartz, Judi Kanter, and Charlotte Holden of Lafayette.

A membership drive is underway;

becoming a member will sustain the Association, provide funds for the new equipment, and of course provide benefits to the members. The committee's first task was to beef-up the perks. "We wanted the three levels of membership to bring more advantages," says Schwartz, "all members will continue to go to the movies in the two locations for \$6 anytime, and for the Supporting and Leading members other perks have been added such as free admission to many events, including part of the California Independent Film Festival that's coming up in February."

The group is also seeking large corporate and individual sponsors. Other supporters of the local theaters are doing their part to help. "I would like to believe that if the citizens of Lamorinda simply knew what is happening, they would rally together to save our theatres," says Moraga resident and theater supporter Joan Edelson. Putting her energy where her mouth is, Edelson is seeking out Lamorinda restaurants to organize one or more dinners and donate a percentage of the profits to the theaters.

"We have to be able to show the big, popular movies as they are released," says Zemrak, "The new technology could bring the opportunity for us to show more new movies sooner. Our survival depends on whether or not Lamorinda wants to continue to have great local entertainment that profits the whole community." For more information or to become a member go to www.CAIFF.org.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

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business briefs

New Gift and Toy Store Coming Soon to Moraga

L Silhouettes Gift Shop

518 Center Street (in the Rheem Center)

It took ten minutes for the Planning Commission to approve Guadalupe Torres' application to open a retail gift shop in the Rheem Center next to Royal Siam. L Silhouettes Gift Shop will sell gifts, including toys and jewelry, and offer gift-wrapping services. The proposed hours of operation are 10am- 6pm, seven days a week. Torres plans to open before the holidays. Dave Schnayer, representing Kimco Realty Corporation, said that the Torres' have extensive retail experience as managers, but that this store is their first personal venture. "They are putting their heart and soul into this," he said, "I wish them success."

Grand Opening!

Flying A Gas Station

22 Bryant Way, Orinda

(by the eastbound entrance to Highway 24)



Allen Pennebaker

Photo Sophie Braccini

Allen Pennebaker, the owner of Orinda Motors, seemed to be in several places at one time for the Grand Opening Celebration of his new Flying A Gasoline of Orinda on Friday the 1st and Saturday the 2nd of December. "This is a very busy day," said Pennebaker on Saturday afternoon, "a lot of people have been coming and they love that we are the cheapest gas in Orinda and that we will pump it for them." Flying A's gas stations almost disappeared in the sixties and only recently the company that owns that name, Royal Petroleum, decided to re-start a network in the Bay Area. "I love that logo," said Pennebaker, "at the time we decided to start a gas station in Orinda this opportunity became available and we jumped on it." Joseph Torbati manages the station's detailing service: "Allen found me at a detail shop somewhere else," said Torbati, "here I do not have to be too fast and turn high volume; I can do the work my way, using a tooth brush when necessary."

New Optometry Center in Orinda

Visual Entrée Optometry

2 Theatre Square, Suite 114, Orinda

386-0258, www.visualentreeoptometry.com

What does 'Entrée' have to do with optometry? A lot, according to Dr. Stephanie Lee who opened a new complete service optometry center in Orinda this fall. In her new facility, with the help of her sister Jessica, who is an Optician, Lee provides a full range of optometric services including comprehensive eye examinations and contact lens fittings. Additionally, she can advise interested clients on preventative and maintenance care through nutrition. "Systemic

health issues such as uncontrolled imbalances of blood pressure, blood sugar, and blood cholesterol levels can all impact eye health and in some cases lead to severe vision loss," she says, "prevention is the best prognosis and utilizes new technologies to detect changes earlier. Maintaining a healthy body is an initial step towards good eye health."

Santa's Secret Wrapping Room

5A Rent-a-Space

455 Moraga Road, Ste. F

From December 1st through 23rd, in Santa's Secret Wrapping Room, 5A offers free colorful paper, ribbons, tape and everything needed to wrap holiday gifts; they also provides coloring and fun activities for children. The hours are 9am-5pm daily. On Sunday, December 18th, Santa will come to 5A for free pictures, a holiday photo frame, cocoa, treats, fun events and crafts, 11am-3pm.

Mark Your Calendar for ROC's 2nd Anniversary

2 Theater Square, Orinda

On Saturday, December 10th Republic of Cake proprietors Peter McNiff and Chih-Chung Fang invite the community to come and celebrate their second 'birthday.' The party will take place 2- 4pm with music, fun, a bouncy house and, of course, a variety of their famous cupcakes.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Wednesday, December 14, Holiday Mixer at Bank of the West, 3583 Mt. Diablo Blvd., 5:30-7pm. There will be food, fun, beverages and the big holiday raffle.

Moraga

On November 18 Edy Schwartz gave her farewell address as President of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Schwartz was president for four years and under her mandate the membership grew from 25 to 150 members. "It is the people who gave their time that made the difference," she said. Schwartz is foremost a community organizer; according to many volunteers she has drafted, "It is hard to say no to Edy!" Under her leadership were born multiple initiatives, including Lamorinda's first shop-local campaign, the Community Faire and a new synergy with St. Mary's College. Schwartz believes it is time to pass the baton. "Different people with different abilities are needed at different times," she says, "I am a community person, now the Chamber needs to be led by a more business-oriented individual, and we are very fortunate that Frank Melon, the Executive Director of the Moraga Country Club, stepped up."

Orinda

Thursday, December 8th, Chamber Holiday Mixer at Mechanics Bank, 77 Moraga Way, 5:30-7pm.

Mark Your 2012 Calendar ...The Chamber's Orinda Country Club Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, February 24, noon to 1:30pm at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. The cost is \$30 per person. The luncheon's speaker will be award-winning weekend anchor for NBC Bay Area News, and Orinda resident, Diane Dwyer.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

LAMORINDA SPORTS

SMC Reaches Elite Eight

By Alex Kozela



Doug Herrick #1

Photo Tod Fierner

The most successful post-season run in Saint Mary's athletic history ended on Saturday.

The Gaels' men's soccer team was only the second team in school history to advance to the NCAA Elite Eight tournament, the first in over 50 years.

The Gaels fell to top-ranked North Carolina 2-0 on December 3 as Matt Hedges and Ben Speas scored goals to lead the Tar Heels (20-2-2) to the Final Four.

En route to the loss, the Gaels (11-7-5) became the Cinderella team of the tournament by garnering road victories over #25 CSU Bakersfield (1-0), #7 UC Irvine (2-1 in double overtime), and #15 Brown (3-2 in overtime), racking up the most post-season wins ever for a Saint Mary's athletic team.

"We've been the underdog all season," said Gaels' head coach Adam Cooper, who also led the team to its first-ever WCC title this year. "Our conference picked us to finish fifth. Nobody expected us to win the WCC. We [were] always the underdog."

For a Gaels team that hit the back of the net only three times in

their first eight games, the run to the Elite Eight was indicative of a team hitting its stride at just the right time of the season.

"At the beginning of the season, I think we just got a little unlucky, and there was a lot of pressure to score, especially after getting shut out for a couple games," said junior defender Trevor Newquist, who scored two goals in the Sweet 16 win over Brown and was named National Player of the Week for his performance. "Towards the end of conference we got in a groove, and I think in the tournament you get so few opportunities that when you get one you have to score it."

In addition to finding their scoring touch, scoring six goals in the four tournament games, the Gaels found a way to cope with the travel, which took them nearly 10,000 miles up and down the state of California, out to Rhode Island and back, and then finally to North Carolina.

"It would it be hard-pressed to find any pro teams, in any sport that have had the travel that we've had to go through the last few weeks," said Cooper.

That, along with the resilient team effort, resonated with the Saint Mary's community. Students, faculty, and fans greeted the players each time they returned from their travels, and fans packed the school's Dryden Hall to watch a live stream of Saturday's loss to North Carolina.

Senior goalkeeper Doug Herrick, who set a new school record for shutouts this year with 11, offered to take a test for one of his classes before the North Carolina game, but his professor said he could take it once the tournament was over so his focus would be solely directed towards the next game.

"It's the coolest thing in the world, because everyone knows what's going on, realizing that this is a once in a lifetime experience," Herrick said.

Herrick also acknowledged dedicating this season to the late Connor Redd, who backed up Herrick as the Gaels' second keeper before his death in April of last year.

"I play for Connor in every game, and I think all of our guys would say the same thing," Herrick said. "There's nothing better than to take Connor all this way with us, and really live one of his dreams. I can only imagine how ecstatic he would be going to the Elite Eight. I'm so happy we can do that in his name."



Trevor Newquist #2

Photo Tod Fierner

LMYA Team Goes Undefeated

Submitted by Linda Murphy



From left: Assistant Coach Cameron Burks, Head Coach Mark Ross, players Sadie, Katie, Aly, Heidi, Riley, Grace, Rylan, Claire, Ellie, Katrina, and Catherine, and Assistant Coach Glenn Smith. Photo Linda Murphy

LMYA's second grade girls' Team USA went undefeated with a perfect 10-0 record.

Dads Play Water Polo for Fun, Exercise

Submitted by Rob Giglio



Photos provided

The latest Lamorinda fitness program for dads is Dads' Water Polo. This new group activity was founded last November by Eldad Hazor with the cooperation of the Lamorinda Water Polo Club. Hazor

has coached the Lamorinda Water Polo Club's under-14 boys' team for the past four years.

Eldad began the Dads Polo program for a fun way to exercise. "And remind those whose children play

water polo just how much work their kids are putting in to compete in this fitness intense sport."

The "El Dads," as they call themselves, meet twice a week at the Soda Aquatics Center to swim, pass, shoot and scrimmage.

"It's far more interesting than staring at the bottom of a pool while swimming laps and offers a great core strengthening workout as well," says Mitch Reed.

"And I will never again yell 'swim faster!' from the bleachers at one of my son's polo games!" admits Jeff Fara.

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About half of the participants primary focus of the program is on fit-played water polo in high school and college, but there are beginners. The dadspolo@yahoo.com.



SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

DFAL Fall Sports All-League Awards

(As available online as of 12/4)



Sport	School	Award	Name
Girls' Golf	Miramonte	First Team	Jessica Goldstein Tori Hoff Arielle Caronna
		Second Team	
	Campolindo	First Team	Samantha Chan Marissa Chan Nicki Bartak
		Second Team	
	Acalanes	Most Valuable Player First Team	Elizabeth Schultz Lauren Kim Adrienne Lee
	Girls' Tennis	Miramonte	First Team (Singles)
First Team (Doubles)			Logan Ehringer/Maddie Geary Haley Stanten/Claire Ramer
Second Team (Singles)			Jennifer Stanton Meg Anderson
Second Team (Doubles)			Georgia Briskey/Kady Richardson
Honorable Mention (Singles)			Anjali Majumdar
Honorable Mention (Doubles)			
Campolindo		First Team (Singles)	Melissa McCue Tori Perrella/Molly Pines
		First Team (Doubles)	Rachel Kelley/Kaitlin Cunningham Sydney Stone
		Second Team (Singles)	Amanda Lemelin/Tori Kallerud
		Second Team (Doubles)	Miranda Hill Natalie Korich Juliette Eyl Claire Faulkner Nicole Taylor
		Honorable Mention (Singles)	Natalie Li/Karina LaMeranar Grace Leng/Jessica Wong
		Honorable Mention (Doubles)	
Acalanes	First Team (Singles)	Tessa Karagocev	
	Second Team (Singles)	Ida Barabi	
	Second Team (Doubles)	Rachel Bauer/Connie Chen	
Girls' Volleyball	Miramonte	Most Valuable Player First Team	Sarah Vaccaro Audrey Breitwieser Mollie Swan
		Second Team	Beryl Slezak Kathleen Stanaro Maddie Higgins
		Honorable Mention	
	Campolindo	First Team	Sophie Seiberth Annie Shurtz Cassidy Abel Kelley Wirth Brooke Standing
		Second Team	
		Honorable Mention	
	Acalanes	First Team	Kendall Baker Tyanna Roy Brooke Aeillo Megan Dalziel Amanda Jarquin
		Second Team	
		Honorable Mention	
Girls' Water Polo	Miramonte	First Team	Erin Byrne Katie Caron Laurie Simon Megan Reid Emily Byrne Allie Light
		Second Team	
		Honorable Mention	
	Campolindo	First Team	Gracie Fowler Sam Flower Annika Jensen Kimi Klein Christy Faoro Lindsay Raftis Natalie Seidemann Hannah Buck Brooke Presten
		Second Team	
		Honorable Mention	
	Acalanes	First Team	Megan Dietrich Barbara Lanier Molly Quinn Kate Avery Lizzie Newman Elyn Stewart
		Second Team	
		Honorable Mention	

Sport	School	Award	Name	
Boys' Water Polo	Miramonte	Most Valuable Player First Team	Charlie Wiser Drew Holland Jack Fellner Kyle Weikert Robbie Fluegge Mark Ginsburg Jack Ryner Kevin Yee Mark Coufal Tennyson May	
		Second Team		
		Honorable Mention		
		Campolindo	First Team	Tor Jensen JD Ratchford Grant Sivesend Andrew Roberts Bradley Rochlin
			Second Team	
			Honorable Mention	
	Acalanes	First Team	Tommy Bush Tanner Cullen Connor Reid Andrew Schnugg Connor Mattox Jake O'Malley Jack Hlman Jacob Welcomer	
		Second Team		
		Honorable Mention		
	Boys' Cross Country	Miramonte	First Team	Dillon Read Jamie Fehrstrom Adam Roeder Mark Tamminga
			Second Team	
		Campolindo	First Team	Thomas Joyce Vinson Compstine Keith Geiger Adam Hathaway
Second Team				
Acalanes		Second Team	Tyler Troxel Michael Wang	
Girls' Cross Country		Campolindo	First Team	Carrie Verdon Megan McMillan Rachel Johnson Mary Orders Brigghie Leach
	Second Team			
	Acalanes	First Team	Annie Marggraff Kelly Collins Amy Hollshwandner Kelli Berge Tara Bozzini	
		Second Team		
	Football	Miramonte	First Team	Ross Anderson Jack Pietrykowski Ross Dolbec Anthony Piganelli Christ Tatcher Luke Carrillo Miles Honens Kevin Booze Kelly McGonigle Micah Solit Beau Davis Jordan Boeder Micah Spalding Joey Roticci Marshall Deutz
			Second Team	
Honorable Mention				
Campolindo			First Team	Brett Stephens Vince Graziano Griffin Piatt (O) Karl Thornton (O) Cookie Antezana Jaime Vega Griffin Piatt (D) Erik Baker Jamie Vega Dan Fadelli Karl Thornton (D) Vince Graziano Reiner Ebarle Danny Fox CJ Toohey Gabe Samaniego Nate MacDonald Gabe Samaniego
			Second Team	
			Honorable Mention	
Acalanes		First Team	Phil Rowley Paul Nork Spencer Henderson Kevin Camporeale Mike Leamy Carson Gardner Michael Brady Gabe Newman Buster Souza	
		Second Team		
		Honorable Mention		

LMYA Rivalry Match

Submitted by Sheryl Cardiff



The Lafayette 5th/6th grade girls LMYA All-Star soccer team defeated Moraga 1-0 on November 19. Megan Cardiff scored the only goal of the game. Photo submitted

Gymnasts Finish 2011 Season Strong

Submitted by Ann Wong



Back row, from left: Wayne Clark (coach) and Lisa Bond-Nelson (owner and coach); front row, from left: Emma Kobayashi, Maggie Phillips, Camille Valvur and Mary Rockwood (Level 4 Qualifiers); Jessie Musacchio, Jessie Robinson and Maddie Robinson (Level 5 Qualifiers); not pictured: Devyn Jauch (Level 6 Qualifier). Photo provided

The Luna Gymnastics Team from Moraga finished their 2011 competitive gymnastics season strong. Eight girls qualified for the State Championships. Competitions were held all through November at various locations throughout Northern California. The girls competed on the balance beam, vault, floor exercise and bars.

Matadors End Season in Alameda, But Campo Rolls On

... continued from page A1

This year, Campolindo turned the tables. Cardinal Newman jumped out to a 21-0 lead to stun the Cougars, but the DFAL champions responded with 21 unanswered points to tie the game at halftime, scoring two touchdowns in the last 28 seconds of the second quarter. Campolindo rode the wave of momentum in the second half to upset the Cardinals 35-24 behind Stephens' 210 passing yards. With the win the team advances to play Moreau Catholic on December 10 at the Raiders stadium, O.co Stadium in Oakland.

Miramonte's Season Ends in Alameda

On Friday, November 25, the fifth seeded Miramonte Matadors looked to upset fourth seeded Encinal in the NCS quarterfinal match up. Miramonte fell to Encinal in the quarterfinals in 2009. Mats senior quarterback Ross Anderson threw for 138 yards and ran for another 39. The first team all-DFAL selection's efforts helped the Mats get on the board first, taking a 14-0 lead. However, Encinal answered back with 48 unanswered points to eliminate Miramonte from the postseason tournament. Miramonte finished with a 10-2 over record.

Submit stories to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com



SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

Saint Mary's Women's Basketball Looks Good at Home

By Brandon Duran



Jackie Nared #3

Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's was picked to finish fifth in the WCC preseason poll. Despite a slow start, the Gaels are 5-2. Part of the slow start may be attributed to the loss of Louella Tomlinson. Tomlinson blocked more shots than any other player in Division I women's basketball history and is SMC's all-time leading scorer. The Gaels only had two returning two starters, senior guard Jasmine Smith and junior guard Kate Gaze.

SMC opened on the road against a tough #19 DePaul, losing 68-96. Inconsistency continued to be the theme in the first six games of the season. The Gaels broke even, going 3-3 before returning home to host the win-less (0-8) William Jessup Warriors on Tuesday, November 29.

Saint Mary's jumped out to a 10-0 lead over the Warriors behind a team effort—four different players scored for the Gaels.

Freshman center Carli Rosenthal scored the next six points for the Gaels, taking advantage of their frontcourt size.

Around the 10 minute mark, Jessup made a run with a string of field goals off of Saint Mary's turnovers, to get the 13 point deficit down to eight points. However, playing as more of a team helped SMC build a 47-21 lead heading into half.

Saint Mary's redshirt sophomore guard, Jackie Nared, a transfer from the University of Maryland, led SMC in scoring with 12 points at the break.

The Gaels came out in the second looking to continue their dominance inside and get

more production from the bench.

As in the first half, WJU started slow, scoring its first field goal 5:15 into the second. From that point on the Saint Mary's bench took over. Combining for 21 second half points, the bench got some crucial experience heading into the upcoming conference play.

Saint Mary's won by a score of 82-43, behind Nared's 17 points. Rosenthal posted a double-double with 10 points and 10 boards.

The Gaels dominated the inside game. "That's always our game plan, to get the ball in the paint. Either passing the ball into our post players or driving the ball in there with our guards, and I think he had a good combination tonight," said head coach Paul Thomas.

Although the Gaels controlled the game against WJU, they average 23.7 turnovers a game. Nared commented that this needs to change if the Gaels want to be competitive.

"We are kind of careless with the ball at times, but I think as we grow as a team and get to know each other and how each other plays more then we will get better," Nared said.

The Gaels overcame their turnover troubles by going 19-22 from the free throw line this past Sunday night to beat the Cal Poly Mustangs in a tight game down the stretch, 65-62. Saint Mary's (5-3) has two games left of their six game home stand, which includes a December 8th matchup against fellow East Bay school, Cal Berkeley.

West Coast Conference play starts December 29th in Los Angeles against Loyola Marymount.

Saint Mary's Men's Basketball Improves to 5-1

By Alex Kozela



Rob Jones #22

Photo Tod Fierner

The Gaels used a "triple-threat" approach to defeat Weber State in their fourth home game of the season. Junior guard Matthew Dellavedova, senior forwards Kenton Walker and Rob Jones all had double-doubles to lead Saint Mary's to an 87-70 in the final of the Shamrock Office Solutions Classic at McKeeon Pavilion. The Gaels also defeated Cal Poly, 59-52 on December 3 to improve to 5-1.

Dellavedova had career highs in both points and assists, recording 25 and 11, respectively. Walker tied his career high in points and rebounds with 14 and 11, respectively. Jones recorded his fifth straight double-double of the season, scoring 24 points and grabbing 12 boards.

Weber State (6-1) led by ten points towards the end of the first half before the Gaels went on an 11-2 run to cut the Wildcats' lead to one at halftime.

"This game was as important for us as any of them because we were down ten and kept our composure," said Gaels' head coach Randy Bennett. "We were able to get tight right before the half and then in the second half we played better."

The Saint Mary's offense finally hit its stride after the half, the "triple threat," Dellavedova, Walker and Jones accounted for 43 of the Gaels' 56 second-half points. Dellavedova said that a change in his poise helped the team out.

"I just tried to play a little slower. I've been rushing a little bit," said Dellavedova. "We moved the ball, and we tried to push the ball a little bit more and that helped."

Bennett said he has been impressed with Dellavedova's maturation this season.

"He's getting better," said Bennett. "Last year it was in Mickey's hands a lot more and he was a second facilitator, but now it's in his hands a lot more and he's going to have to take the best defender every night. I think he's figuring it out."

The impressive offensive display wasn't limited to Saint Mary's players. Wildcats junior guard Damian Lillard, an Oakland native who was recruited by Saint Mary's, dropped a career high of his own, tying his previous record of 36 points.

"I told him after the game we held him under 40. We did a good job," said Bennett with a laugh.

Five days later, the Gaels travelled down the 101 to San Luis Obispo to face Cal Poly. Jones recorded his sixth straight double-double with a game-high 18 points and 12 rebounds as the Gaels defeated the Mustangs 59-54.

Saint Mary's now has five more home games on the schedule before they face Baylor and Missouri State in the Continental Tire Las Vegas Classic on December 22 and 23. The team's first WCC match-up will take place in Moraga on December 29 against conference debutants Brigham Young.

"We're a team that's still figuring things out," said Bennett. "Guys are learning their roles. We're not as far along as last year's team as far as understanding roles, but we also have a chance for more growth with this team."

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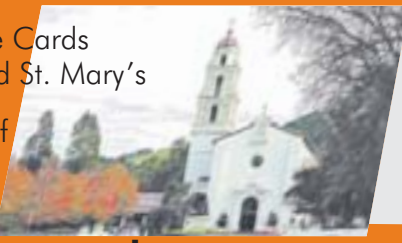


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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 05 Issue 20 Wednesday, December 7, 2011



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D2

New Transitional Home Awaits Tenants

By Sophie Braccini

Las Trampas Incorporated, the non-profit supporting people with developmental disabilities in Lafayette since 1958, is putting the

final touches on a completely remodeled home located in downtown Lafayette. It was designed and specially outfitted to allow some of the

young adults who are served by the organization to achieve independence. Building to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) specifications

and employing elements of what is now called Universal Design – creating environments that are usable by all people – gives a feel of spaciousness and normality to the home.

“This project was made possible by a Community Development Block Grant from the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development,” says Bonnie Peacock, the Development Director at Las Trampas. The non-profit got \$165,000 to remodel the property they owned but that was completely inadequate for disabled adults to live in independently. The entire inside space was redone within their budget and features four bedrooms and two baths.

“Some of the counters are lower than is the custom,” says Las Trampas Associate Executive Director Ron Kilgore, “and that height is quite convenient for anyone prepping food, independent of their posture. Some of the drawer block units are on wheels and can be removed to either allow someone in a wheelchair to get closer, or to create a separate island.” There is also space under the sink that allows for easy wheelchair access.



Dan Hogue demonstrates the shower in Las Trampas' newly remodeled home.

Photo Sophie Braccini

...continued on page D3

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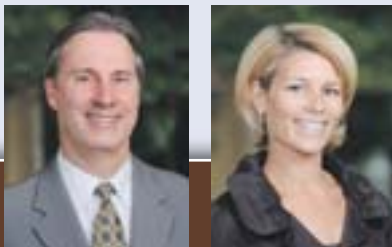
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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	5	\$480,000	\$2,200,000
MORAGA	7	\$340,000	\$885,000
ORINDA	6	\$200,000	\$1,825,000

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

1840 Del Rio Drive, \$480,000, 4 Bdrms, 1706 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 11-3-11

1017 Dyer Drive, \$768,000, 4 Bdrms, 1887 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 11-8-11;

Previous Sale: \$625,000, 02-03-04

3245 La Canada, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2215 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 11-1-11

3970 North Peardale Drive, \$2,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 4775 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-28-11;

Previous Sale: \$2,385,000, 05-30-06

831 Tanglewood Drive, \$1,510,000, 5 Bdrms, 6120 SqFt, 1925 YrBlt, 10-27-11;

Previous Sale: \$560,000, 10-08-98-

MORAGA

6 Baltusrol Street, \$450,000, 2 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 11-7-11;

Previous Sale: \$705,000, 06-21-05

8 Camelford Court, \$885,000, 4 Bdrms, 2116 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 11-3-11;

Previous Sale: \$656,000, 09-09-03

1438 Camino Peral, \$340,000, 3 Bdrms, 1348 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 11-2-11;

Previous Sale: \$46,000, 05-12-78

5 Idlewood Court, \$550,000, 4 Bdrms, 2135 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-31-11

2 La Quinta Street, \$847,500, 4 Bdrms, 2680 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-31-11;

Previous Sale: \$190,000, 06-23-78

14 Miramonte Drive, \$215,000, 2 Bdrms, 1152 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-31-11;

Previous Sale: \$452,500, 08-09-06

139 Walford Drive, \$745,000, 3 Bdrms, 1624 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 11-1-11;

Previous Sale: \$835,000, 03-28-08

ORINDA

73 Brookwood Road #52, \$200,000, 1 Bdrms, 673 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-28-11;

Previous Sale: \$142,000, 04-15-99

134 Canon Drive, \$799,000, 3 Bdrms, 1999 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 11-3-11;

Previous Sale: \$8,000, 06-02-75

230 Courtney Lane, \$920,000, 3 Bdrms, 2282 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 10-28-11

71 Evergreen Drive, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2786 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 11-4-11;

Previous Sale: \$293,500, 08-01-83

10 Las Palomas, \$1,825,000, 5 Bdrms, 3832 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 11-7-11;

Previous Sale: \$1,725,000, 03-04-03

77 Underhill Road, \$421,500, 2 Bdrms, 1251 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 11-8-11;

Previous Sale: \$379,000, 06-01-01

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

LAFAYETTE

Hedaro Court, 94549, US Bank, 11-14-11, \$575,000, 1955 sf, 4 bd

New Transitional Home

...continued from page D1

All of the electrical plugs are higher on the walls, while the light switches are placed lower than usual. "This design is in fact very convenient for anyone," says Dan Hogue, the organization's new Executive Director. He notes that several cities, including Fremont, Sacramento, Albuquerque, and Winnipeg, encourage Universal Design standards for all types of new developments.

Other elements of Universal Design found in the Lafayette home include wide doorways and hallways (a three-foot minimum width), no step entries, and lever door handles. "This kind of design just gives a more open feel to the house," adds Hogue, "it is one of the things we will all learn from people with disabilities."

The main bathroom also underwent practical and aesthetic improvements. The space that was once two small bathrooms is now a large area that includes a separate toilet and shower. "Beyond the grab bars, what is needed in a bathroom for people with a disability is a five-foot radius in which to maneuver a wheelchair," explains Kilgore. The shower room closes with a door and there is no lip to be negotiated in order to access the shower itself. The walls are completely tiled since there is no shower curtain, and all of the shower heads and faucets are placed at a good height for anyone to reach whether seated or standing.

"This house is a model of our strategy for the future," explains Hogue, "we want to provide solutions that help young adults with learning or developmental disabilities to evolve toward independence. This house where low income young adults can live will be a step for them, like we took when we left our parents' homes to go to college. Here they



Unassuming on the outside, the interior of the home has been designed to be usable by everyone.

Photo Doug Kohen

will learn the skills they will need to be independent, they will be integrated into the community and no different than anyone else on the block."

The house includes a room and bathroom for a staff person. "Depending on the needs of our tenants, the staff person will be there full- or part-time," explains Kilgore.

The organization does not know if it will be able to develop more such homes. "We are very thankful that Bonnie (Peacock) was able to secure this grant for us," says Hogue, "in this economy, our sources of funding are under a lot of stress."

Las Trampas will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony in January of 2012; adults with disabilities between the age of 18 and 24 who want to transition to a more independent life are welcomed to contact the Lafayette non-profit.

For more information email ltiexec@pacbell.net or call Dan Hogue at 284-1462.

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WINTER TREE TIPS

Winter brings cold and rainy weather. "While many trees will be dormant in the winter, exposure to the tough conditions can cause them major stress," says Darren Edwards, Certified Arborist with Advance Tree Service. "Minimize that stress by helping your trees through the cold months. If you take care of your trees in the winter, you will be rewarded in the spring."

Winter can be a good time for pruning most trees, while they are dormant, and pines should only be pruned in the winter months. Removal of large, dead, broken, poorly positioned limbs and corrective pruning can minimize winter storm damage, and maximize optimal spring growth.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you with your winter pruning.

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Home Grown Holiday!

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

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“Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect.” - Oren Arnold

The season for holiday gift gathering began for our family in the summer. It was then that we picked the peaches, pears, apricots, berries, and a cornucopia of vegetables to can and give to friends and relatives for Christmas. My sisters and I gathered wild flowers and colorful leaves which we pressed between wax paper creating our own version of stained glass windows. In November we would decorate the jars, adding hand drawn labels, and in December the baking would begin. Wooden boxes would be filled with candied and savory walnuts from our trees, wine from our grapes, preserves from our orchards, eggs from our chickens, garlicky tomato sauce from our gardens, and spiced cookies from our imagination. After collecting miniature pinecones from around the yard to mold into reusable ornaments, the packages were festooned with fanciful yarns, colorful ribbons, and a hearty greeting to be delivered with a smile. Every recipient received a present specifically designed with items we knew they'd enjoy. We all felt as jolly as St. Nick himself.

Over the years commercialism has taken over the season of giving. It's easy to zip into a store to purchase presents and have them wrapped and shipped. It's even less hassle to go on-line to order something for everyone on Santa's list. Yet, somehow, I am still drawn to the love, thought, and sweet individuality that handcrafted gifts exude. I enjoy meandering through my garden contemplating the gifts that are hidden within its boundaries and branches. Who will be the fortunate beneficiary of these heavenly delights? With the return to the earth movement in full swing, this December is the right time for you to employ a personalized home grown holiday.

Instead of cutting down a tree, start by purchasing a living evergreen that you can save in the pot for next year or if you have the space, plant for posterity. Let nature's winter wardrobe of berries and boughs inspire your holiday decorating. Evergreen trees with colorful berries include Chinese holly with yellow berries; English holly with red berries, North American native red cedar with fragrant foliage and frosty blue berries; and Brazilian peppertree with red pep-



Holiday centerpiece

Photo Cynthia Brian

percorns that are piquant in savory dishes. A deciduous merry berry tree that bears pink and aqua colored fruits is the pistache, a favorite food of squirrels, birds, and turkeys. If you have pines, redwoods, or other conifers in your yard, cut branches to weave into wreaths, centerpieces, and garlands, along with

pinecones, dried flowers, mushrooms, or other natural reeds. Decorate outdoor trees with strings of popcorn, cranberries, and rose hips that the birds will enjoy.

While poinsettias, paper whites, jams, jellies, and kitchen treats are always welcome, a few trouble-free gift-giving ideas inspired by the garden include:

- Holiday Napkin Rings made from bendable twigs
- Fragrant Potpourri
- Bay Leaf Garlands
- Rose Petal Sachets
- Lavender Bath Salts
- Aromatherapy Oils
- Apple-Clove Pomanders
- Herbed Olive Oil
- Pinecone Fire Starters
- Pressed Flower Greeting Cards
- Seed Catalog Journals
- Grapevine Wreaths
- Herbal Teas
- Infused Vinegars
- Potted Candles
- Terrariums
- Forced Bulbs in Glass Vases
- Seeds from your Favorite Specimens
- Birdseed Balls



Wreath with hydrangea blossoms

How-to lessons are ubiquitous on the internet. Other great garden offerings available at your favorite garden center are high quality tools, aprons, solar lights, pots, indoor plants, wind chimes, botanical art, gazing balls, and garden books. (My book, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, is still a best seller for all those who love nature with autographed copies available from my office, 925-377-STAR.) Besides the hand made riches from my children, my favorite gifts over the years have included hay, soil, shovels, plants, pruning shears, gloves, buckets, fertilizers, hats, chain saws, bird-baths, fountains, and other gardening necessities. Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruits would be as delighted as I am with the bonus of home made pastries, jams, pie filling, and condiments from the fields of friends and family.

For a hoe, hoe, hoe holiday sparkle, plant memories and grow green with aesthetically arresting home grown gifts from your garden that really show you care and share.



Cyclamen with Christmas Cactus in the back

Photo Cynthia Brian



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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 home 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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CYNTHIA BRIAN'S GARDENING GUIDE FOR DECEMBER

"Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul." Henry Ward Beecher

With Thanksgiving behind us, we now move on to the season of grace, gratitude, and glory with Christmas, Hannukah, and Kwanza. As we drive through neighborhoods, gardens are illuminated, bedecked and bedazzled ushering in the most favorite time of year for children around the globe. December is a time for reflection, rest, and regrouping with loved ones. Take the time to treasure the short days and long nights by bringing a bit of nature indoors with branches of evergreens, berries, persimmons, and pomegranates. Make a pot of herbal tea, curl up by the fire with a good book, and savor the season of giving.

- **BE** green and buy a living Christmas tree that can grow in splendor. Artificial trees are non-recyclable or biodegradable.
- **KEEP** your tree fresh longer by placing a freshly cut trunk in a bucket of water before placing in a tree stand. Water daily without floral preservatives.
- **BRIGHTEN** the holidays with breathtaking blooms of amaryllis. Available in many colors, they'll bloom in 6-8 weeks after planting in any light.
- **DRESS** your plants for the holidays with red berries and glossy leaves gleaned from the garden.
- **INCREASE** concentration by placing leafing and flowering greenery around your house.
- **HARVEST** prickly pear when the skins are red. Wear gloves and use tongs to peel before adding to salads.
- **HARNESS** inner peace by exercising or meditating outdoors in your yard or a park on a sunny day. Being in nature relieves stress and the fresh air revitalizes you.
- **FORAGE** for wild watercress in creeks. Cut stems, leaving the roots, wash thoroughly and enjoy with meals.
- **LEAVE** fallen leaves on your lawn. Mow the grass without a grass catcher to help mulch your lawn over winter.
- **BUILD** a bat house for our endangered insect eaters. Visit www.batcon.org for approved bat house building instructions. Bats have received a bad reputation over the years but they are friends to humans. Next summer each bat will eat 1000 mosquitoes in an hour!
- **MIGRATING** birds, hummingbirds, and butterflies benefit from feeder feasts. Make sure to keep a few drifts of perennials such as fuchsia, honeysuckle, and asters available as landing dinner pads.
- **BUGS** bothering your plants? Click on the free on-line tool called "Putting the Detective on the Case" at www.gardeners.com. A list of plant-specific suspects will be generated with detailed images to match with more than eighty close-up, color photographs to help gardeners determine the disease or the pest.
- **REJUVENATE** your soil by planting cover crops of fava beans, vetch, alfalfa, clover, or mustard to add nutrients for next season with this special green manure.
- **SHELTER** frost tender plants by wrapping with burlap. Dog pillow covers do a great job for containers.
- **ADD** color spots of cyclamen, cinerarias, dianthus, and primroses available in quantity at your garden center to fill in the blank spots of your winter garden.
- **REUSE** large plastic buckets or cardboard boxes as composting bins. Add your table scraps for home made compostable riches.
- **INVITE** butterflies and hummingbirds to your garden by planting the bright colors of Buddleia (butterfly bush), Rose of Sharon, and Weigelas now. The butterfly magnet "Lo and Behold Blue Chip" non-invasive buddleia stays under three feet without pruning and blooms non stop from summer to winter.
- **FORCE** bulbs indoors. Use a narrow necked vase, poke a few holes in a bulb with toothpicks, fill with water to the base of the bulb, and wait for the roots to form by storing in a dark, cool place for ten to twelve weeks.
- **SAVE** rainwater with barrels. Use for indoor plants. For the more adventurous water conscious environmentalists, consider installing a cistern.
- **BRIGHTEN** your holiday walls with American botanical art. Before there were plant patents, there were plant portraits.
- **PROLONG** the freshness of trimmings indoors by keeping pots out of direct sunlight and away from heat sources.
- **MARVEL** at the wild turkeys trotting through your property. Wild turkeys are capable of instant take off and can fly as swiftly as 50 miles per hour. They don't fly for long, but they accelerate quickly. They seem to love my pistache berries.
- **DONATE** time, resources, and money to a local charity making a difference in our neighborhoods. You'll feel great while contributing to the spirit of paying it forward.
- **CELEBRATE** local viticulture with a bottle of wine from grape growers in the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association, www.lamorindawinegrowers.com
- **GIVE** gifts from the garden and watch the love grow.
- **PLANT** seeds of gratitude for the gift of life.

Reuse, refresh, recycle, rejuvenate, and rejoice. Wishing everyone a splendid home grown holiday of celebration and gratitude for all our blessings. We'll reconnect next year! Happy Gardening to You.

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Cynthia Brian

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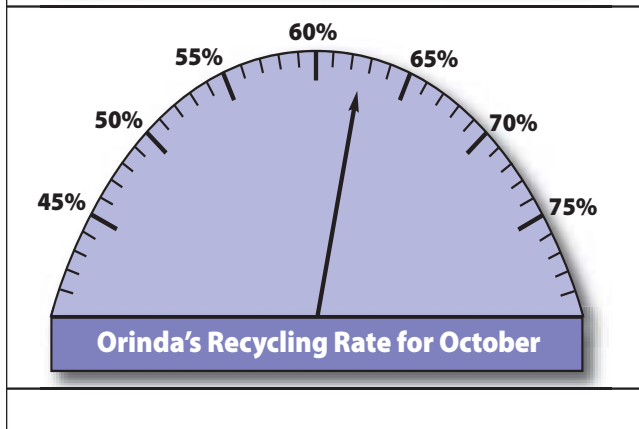
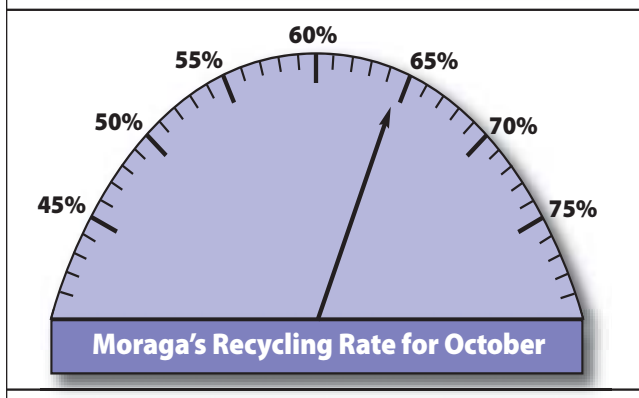
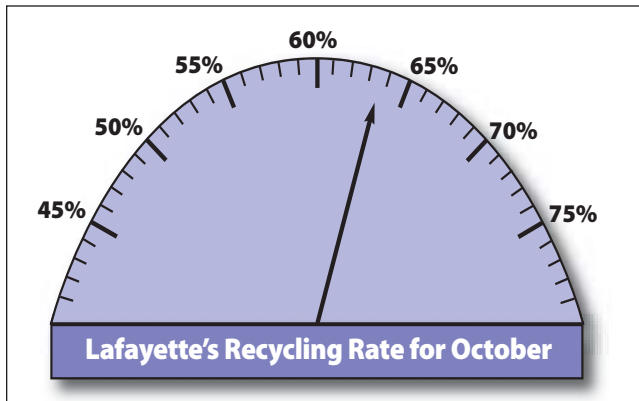
My virtual door is always open. I am available as a speaker and consultant. Feel free to contact me.



Recycling in Lamorinda

The numbers below are provided by the Central Costa County Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA) and will be included in the Lamorinda Weekly on an ongoing basis when available.

October 2011



To register with Recycle Bank:

If you've lost the letter that contained your PIN number, no problem – Go online to recyclebank.com and click on 'register'. Enter your information, including your address. Get a new pin by mail or immediately with a message sent to your cell phone; now you can complete your registration.

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ORINDA

106 Scenic Drive

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ORINDA

345 Camino Sobrante

Updated 4bd/3ba 3301 sf contemp on .55 ac in primo country club loc w/spacious great rm, updated kit, hdwd flrs, guest apt w/pvt entrance, ofc, lg master suite, lawn/play area.

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MORAGA

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Offered at \$695,000



MORAGA

675 Carroll Drive

Walk to town, schools, trails, parks & more. Pvt .31 ac lot w/attractive landscaping, grass play area, veggie gardens. 3bd/2ba updated thruout, hdwd flrs, dual panes, crown moldings, lighting, more.

Offered at \$699,000



MORAGA

41 Greenfield Drive

Spacious Harold Smith 3bd/3ba rancher, lg kitchen/fam rm combo. Gorgeous backyard w/lvl lawn & patio. Convenient location close to schools, shopping, trails, park & transportation

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LAFAYETTE

945 Mountain View Drive

The cutest home on the block! Charm abounds in this exceptionally cozy full of 1940's style bungalow w/ambiance & style. Lawn & garden all very pvt and ideal location near everything!

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LAFAYETTE

3376 Ridge Road

Affordable charming 4bd home in popular trail neighborhood surrounded by heritage oaks - truly a beautiful, natural setting. Tons of recent improvements. Walk to town/trail/schools.

Offered at \$649,000



LAFAYETTE

960 Hawthorne Drive

Trad 3bd/2ba hm in trail neighborhood. Hdwd flrs, Fr doors, wood windows, lovely deck for entertaining. Flat yard w/lawn & views. Nr K-8 schls, trail, shopping, restaurants and library.

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LAFAYETTE

3398 Ridge Road

Special Lafayette Trail 4bd/3ba home nestled among oaks with views of hills on .29 acre. Easy walk to downtown, restaurants, shopping & 9 years of schools. Backs to bike trail.

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LAFAYETTE

3286 Sweet Drive

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2950 Windtree Court

A treat for the Holidays! Come see this charming remodeled traditional home w/gorgeous light-filled kitchen opening up to magical flat backyard! www.2950WindtreeCt.com.

Offered at \$990,000



LAFAYETTE

1847 Reliez Valley Road

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LAFAYETTE

1258 Panorama

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LAFAYETTE

8 Hawks Hill Court

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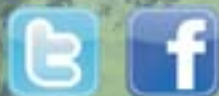
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