



# Orinda Civic News

## Public Meetings

### City Council

Tuesday, January 17, 7:00 pm  
Auditorium, Orinda Library,  
26 Orinda Way

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, January 10, at 6:00 pm  
Workshop Garden Room,  
Library, 26 Orinda Way

### Historical Landmark Committee

Tuesday, January 24, 3:00 pm  
Gallery Room, Library  
26 Orinda Way

### School Board Meeting

**Orinda Union School District**  
Monday, January 9, 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

**Open Sesame, 12/1/11** An Orinda resident inadvertently made it easy for a thief when said thief first stole a garage door remote from an unlocked car. The perp later let himself into the garage, where he heisted a stereo. From there it was smooth sailing into the house (the door from garage being unlocked) and a camera went missing. Thoughtful thief did close the garage door on the way out, though. No prints or leads, and police are advising burgled homeowner to re-code his garage door.

**A day in the park gone bad... 12/1/11** Imagine coming back from your Lafayette Reservoir hike and not finding your car. You didn't forget it, though. Thorough thieves stole the car and later burgled the owner's Orinda home, presumably gaining entry the same way "open sesame" did, above. They took \$5,000 in goods from the residence, but did "return" the car—leaving the formerly stolen vehicle at the scene of the home crime! If only they'd return the stolen loot as well...

**Car to Police: "I tried to tell you!" 12/3/11** The car sounded the alarm; still, a late model Toyota had its window broken (\$200 damage) and a purse snatched (\$280 value) from the front seat. We suspect there'll be more in monetary damages, as a credit card went missing and was later used in Antioch. No leads yet.

**No eggnog for you, 12/8/11** It's the most happiest time of the year. Unless you're the 39 year old male driver who was pulled over, given a field sobriety test (failed that), administered a breathalyzer (.140 says he failed that too), volunteered to take a blood/alcohol test (what do you want to bet the results will be?), and transported to Martinez Detention Facility, where he was booked. And his vehicle was towed away, too.

**Rock n' rolling, 12/8/11** Burglars used a rock for breaking and entry into an Oak Drive home, where they helped themselves to jewelry, the cost of which is still being tallied. They caused \$700 just breaking in, and fled in a white Ford Taurus.



**Maureen Wilbur**

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# A Year of Shared Sacrifices

## Orinda Mayoral Transition Offers Leaders and Residents Time to Reflect

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda's December 6th City Council meeting was brief, but informative for the nearly 45 community members in attendance.

Former Orinda mayors Bill Judge and Bobbie Landers joined with leaders from Orinda's business and non-profit communities to thank outgoing Mayor Victoria Smith for her service and witness the election of Council Members Steve Glazer and Amy Worth as Mayor and Vice Mayor, respectively.

Glazer and Worth thanked their colleagues for their unanimous support and observed how much they were looking forward to serving the citizens of Orinda in the coming year.

Glazer then got the ceremonial ball rolling by praising Smith for her efforts. Council Members Worth and Sue Severson echoed his comments and the newest member of the team, Council Member Dean Orr, thanked Smith for her guidance. Each member then took turns reading from a joint resolution honoring the outgoing mayor.

Thanking her family and staff, Smith said, "It has been a really great year," as she gave high marks to City staff for the job they have done during challenging economic times.

She also thanked her fellow Council members, explaining that each brings specific strengths to the governing table. Describing Glazer as having, "political acumen beyond compare," Severson as "the guiding force" behind the Orinda Community Foundation, and Worth as "the mother of the fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel," she also praised Dean Orr for his "complete depth and knowledge" in the planning and development arena.

Recalling difficult fiscal reductions that forced the use of employee furloughs – without a corresponding reduction in the needs of Orinda's citizenry – it was, Smith said, "A year of shared sacrifices for everyone."

Orinda's deteriorating infrastructure was also much on her mind, but all was not doom and gloom. Noting that the first of the Wilder homes are now on the market, Smith announced that Wilder's playfields are nearing completion.

Smith also delivered the heartening news that Orinda's Theatre Square area is now 95 percent occupied, and credited its new management company with the rapid, nine-month turnaround. "It's the place to be," she said as she talked

about teens flocking to the area after school and adults taking part in new events, such as the Orinda Jazz Festival.

Among the City's successes Smith cited the diverse offerings of the Parks and Recreation Department, noted that Orinda is "the safest city of our size in the entire state of California," and praised the impending arrival of affordable senior housing, stating that the Eden project "will be a great addition to our town."

In a follow-up interview, Smith further explored concerns about the City's deteriorating infrastructure. "When I ran seven years ago," she said, "we needed to fix the roads." That, she said, remains the major headache.

The City is projecting a three percent drop in assessed property valuation, something that has never happened before in Orinda's history, according to Smith. Saying that she and her colleagues are "keeping a close hand on the budget," she put things in perspective, however, comparing the small drop in Orinda's valuation to the 20 percent drop experienced by other communities across the Bay Area.

Smith also stressed the role that

volunteers play in Orinda. "Just the sheer number of people," she said, is key. "Having so many people with so many talents – artists, architects," sets Orinda apart. "I think it's probably the high point every year," she said, stating that Orinda would never be able to do what it does if it had to pay for everything it offers its citizens.

Pointing to Theatre Square's 95 percent occupancy rate as another high point of the year, Smith noted that many residents may not realize all of the good that has been happening. The City modified its zoning to enable businesses such as optometric services to open their doors. Kids feel more comfortable and welcome, and the owners of Table 24 plan to open a new Mexican restaurant.

Thanking Orindans for their support, Smith urged everyone to remain engaged – as will she. She plans to start working on a new recycling and garbage franchise agreement. "Our rates have not been as stable as I would have liked." And, she said, the City is also working on a new plastic bag pick-up program to tackle the problem of unwanted shopping bags. She also encouraged residents to "shop and eat Orinda."

# Orinda's 2011 Best Architectural Design Nods Honor Both Businesses and Homes

By Laurie Snyder



Flying A gas station Photo Andy Scheck

For the first time since the inception of the Mayor's Award for Excellence in Architecture, business owners working to improve the face of Orinda's retail community are being honored side-by-side with owners of some of the city's most stunning homes.

Victor Ivry and Michael Karp, co-owners of Table 24, were recognized for bringing life back to 2 Theatre Square – a retail space that has been a veritable revolving door of restaurants.

Allen Pennebaker, long-time owner of Orinda Motors, was honored for his transformation of the Valero station at 22 Bryant Way into Flying A Gasoline, a brightly-colored facility easily visible from Highway 24 where customers can now have their windshields cleaned and gas pumped for them by the hands of Pennebaker's employees.

The following residential winners were also recognized for 2011:

**Minor:**  
(Awarded for residential additions under 1,500 square feet and remodels)

**10 Crestview Court**  
Lupita Sutton, homeowner  
Fred Hyer, architect

**19 Via Hermosa**  
Susan and Howard Warner, homeowners  
Robin Pennell and Cindy Chan, Jarvis architects

**1 Crestview Court**  
Mark and Karissa Bohon, homeowners  
The Bohon Group

**Major:**  
(Awarded to new single family homes)

**14 Meadow Park Court**  
Ian and Lani MacKenzie, homeowners  
David Fagerstrom, architect

**2 Honey Hill Court**  
Dan and Jennifer Lyons, homeowners  
Peter Golze, architect

Participants were presented with their awards by Mayor Victoria Smith at the Orinda City Council meeting on December 6, 2011. The purpose statement of the annual Mayor's award, recently revised to reflect the addition of the new Downtown improvement category, now reads: "To recognize excellence in residential design and downtown property improvements which make an extraordinary contribution to the character and livability of Orinda neighborhoods and the vitality of the downtown." Details about the award and the 2011 award winners are available on the City's web site: www.ci.orinda.ca.us.

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