

## Excellent Care

AT HOME



Hearfelt &  
Supportive  
*Care*  
At All Times...

3645 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite D Lafayette  
(beside Trader Joe's)  
www.excellentcareathome.com



Our mission is to provide personalized care, help maintain independence and enhance our client's quality of life on a daily basis.

- Fully bonded and insured
- Geriatric care management
- Hourly care
- Live-in care
- Transportation to and from medical appointments
- Medication reminders

Call to schedule a free assessment and plan care review. 925-284-1213

# Worm Composting Bin Building Workshop

Saturday, April 14th, 10-12pm

Heather Farm Community Center, Walnut Creek

Come build your worm bin, learn about vermicomposting and start immediately! It's easy – anyone can do it!  
All supplies covered, including worms!

Worms supplied by Bay Worms –  
www.BayWorms.org

Only \$10 per household to attend.

### REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

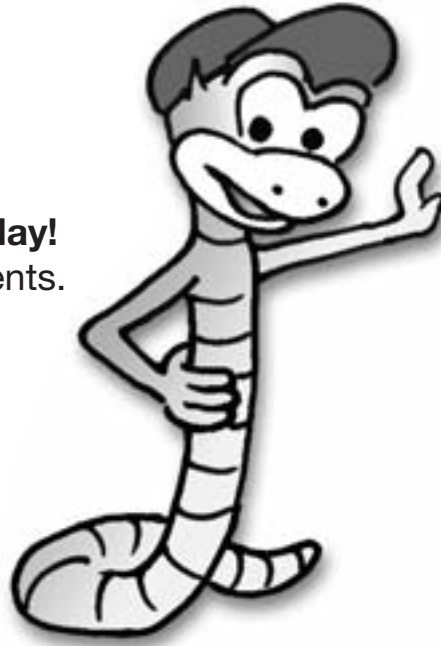
**Limit of 20 households so register today!**

Kids are encouraged to attend with parents.

One bin per household.

Last day to register: April 6<sup>th</sup>

Sponsored by the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority.  
Call **925-906-1801** for questions or to register.



### CCCSWA RESIDENTS ONLY:

WALNUT CREEK, ORINDA, LAFAYETTE, MORAGA, DANVILLE, ALAMO, BLACKHAWK, DIABLO.

# How Much Time Does *Your* Money Have Left

Protecting the Longevity of Your Retirement Resources



Pat Vitucci – Host of “Your Financial Life”, CEO and Registered Principal of Vitucci & Associates

Are your assets managed to last through your lifetime? Join Bay Area Financial Advisor Pat Vitucci for a no cost, no obligation presentation on current factors affecting the market and your retirement financial stability.

WHEN:

**Wednesday, March 28th ~ 12 Noon**

WHERE:

**Ruth's Chris Steak House, 1553 Olympic Blvd., Walnut Creek**



Lunch will be served

RSVP:

Reserve your seat by phone 1-800-472-8305 or online at  
www.dontinvestandforget.com



Vitucci & Associates, 877 Ygnacio Valley Rd. Ste. 220, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (925) 472-8300  
Securities and advisory services offered through National Planning Corporation (NPC),  
member FINRA, SIPC, and a Registered Investment Adviser. Vitucci & Associates and NPC  
are separate and unrelated companies. \*#60851

## 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](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com);

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

Editor:

Mr. Weil's "Public Forum" piece of February 29 cited "elaborate fictions" about MOFD finances. But his rebuttal made selective use of some facts, and omitted certain others.

Fact: MOFD's audited 2011 financials show that the District was already technically bankrupt at June 30, 2011. It had assets of \$42.4 million and total liabilities of \$55.6 million (pages iii and 21).

Fact: The extent of the insolvency is likely greater than this, given the report from the County's pension plan (CCCERA), on February 22, 2012 that the 2011 rate of return on the pension plan was only one third of the plan's long term assumed rate of 7.75 percent.

Fact: Mr. Weil has some direct responsibility for this problem. He was on the Board on December 9, 2003 when the Board signed the contract with the firefighters that first awarded them unsustainable pensions of the "3 at 50" formula and lifetime medical benefits. This contract, retroactive to July 1, 2002 and expiring on June 30, 2006, created the need to issue the \$28 million bond two short years later. This contract doomed the district to financial decline.

Fact: The MOFD's technically insolvent status is equivalent to a homeowner whose mortgage is under water and who thinks he can earn his way out.

Fact: It is impossible for MOFD to earn its way out. Local property values are down about 40 percent from the recent peak. Many sources support this: local realtors, Zillow, a Wall Street Journal article on 2/29. Property taxes, which are MOFD's main revenues, will continue to decline for several years. But expenses are going relentlessly up. MOFD 2011 financial statements, on page vii say "unprecedented losses in the stock market in 2008/09... will contribute to significantly higher employer pension contribution costs over the next couple of years". And this disclosure was before the dismal CCCERA report for the year 2011.

Fact: The insolvency hole is growing bigger, and the Board has done nothing that has materially slowed the rise. The Board extended the problematic 2003 contract to 12/31/2010, with a provision to begin negotiations on 9/1/2010. A year and a half after this agreed upon negotiation date, the firefighters remain out of contract. So these unsustainable liabilities just keep growing.

Fact: While the MOFD Board dawdles, many public safety agencies in the area have tackled the pay and benefits problem. Some, such as Palo Alto, have declared an impasse. Some, like our county sheriff and Pleasanton, have gone to tiered compensation. Others, like Martinez, have increased employee contributions to benefits. Some, like Pleasant Hill, have imposed a contract when negotiations have failed. Fact: The MOFD Board's ongoing failure to address this financial catastrophe has placed our fire service very much at risk. The MOFD Board appears to be running the district for the benefit of the firefighters, not for the citizens of Moraga and Orinda.

Carol Penskar  
Orinda

Editor:

Moraga's Uncivil Process: I was surprised to see the article in the Lamorinda Weekly about Moraga's failure to adhere to established norms and procedures for selecting our Mayor and Vice Mayor. Our town struggled with this very issue during the 2004-2008 timeframe, and I thought we had put this type of uncivil behavior behind us. A full public hearing was held at that time, the media covered the issue, and the minutes clearly document the outcry received from the public. The normal process (and its intent) was verified and the council was kept in check. The town agreed that a civil, open and transparent government process would follow historical norms and be utilized going forward. Now, in this latest incident, the fact that the initial motion to skip over the next-in-line Vice Mayor came from the presiding mayor, who ran a campaign on "civility"--is embarrassing. This slide backwards under her watch is dispiriting. We need to trust our elected officials to follow norms and procedures. The fact that Mendonca made this motion so easily, and that a second came from Councilmember Chew so quickly--leads one to believe that a Brown Act Violation likely occurred. California's Brown Act makes it clear that elected officials that communicate and reach a majority decision outside of a public hearing (without public input) are in violation of the law. One may argue that a lack of discussion doesn't mean a plan was pre-organized. But considering that this is such an important digression from Moraga's 30 year historical policies---doesn't it make you wonder? The possibility becomes even more likely when you consider the other controversial vote that took place that very same evening. Rancho Laguna was on an earlier meeting agenda, and Councilmember Harpham had held up high and pointed at a plan that was much more popular to the Rancho Laguna Park users, but ran quite contrary to what Mayor Mendonca and Councilmember Chew were trying to achieve. Yet at this latest meeting, with very little discussion, Harpham had suddenly changed his mind and was in the Mayors camp (along with Councilmember Chew) and they now had a majority of the council votes and acted to divide and split our beautiful Rancho Laguna Park. Harpham is also now our very much out of turn Vice Mayor. According to Moraga's norms and procedures--he shouldn't be. Why wasn't this placed on the town council agenda for public comment? What else is going on behind closed doors? Think closely this November when these officials come back up for re-election. We don't need this type of uncivil behavior in our community.

Lynda Deschambault  
Moraga

### Join our Public Forum

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