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Moraga pre-schooler Caroline Gustafson, 4, (center, pink coat) braves light rain and some stiff competition while hunting for eggs March 24 during the Moraga Juniors' Spring Egg Hunt at the Moraga Commons. Photo Andy Scheck

## March Rains to the Rescue?

By Andrea A. Firth

Rainfall across the region has been far below average this year, but the recent storms and torrential rains in March have brought some green color back to Lamorinda's hills. Yet, has there been sufficient rain to boost precipitation levels back to "normal," or even close? The *Lamorinda Weekly* checked in with our local rain trackers to see if the March rainfall was making a meaningful impact on the total precipita-

tion numbers for the year.

"Definitely, we are behind 'normal' totals over this rain year," said Susan Watson of Orinda. "But, on the other hand, in this Mediterranean climate where the summers are dry, this is a valuable time to be having rain here, as it stays in the soil longer than if rain had been heavy in January and then quit. [Although] it is not so good in the mountains as far as stored water is concerned."

Lon Metzger of Moraga concurs that Lamorinda's rainfall for the year is way below average. "Even if we get average rainfall from now to the end of June (the current rain year runs from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012), we will not get to 20 inches and will end at about 65 percent of average." Still Lamorinda is doing much better than other parts of the Bay Area, noted Metzger. ... continued on page A12

Advertising

**Quote of the Week:**

"It's a doggone shame."

Read Letters to the Editor, page A9



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## Mo Levich Wins Prestigious 'Jefferson Award'

By Cathy Tyson



Mo Levich at last year's Concert at the Res

Photo Eric Dausman

Businessman by day and musical force of nature by night, Maurice "Mo" Levich recently won the Jefferson Award for Public Service for his years of dedicated volunteer work.

Since 1998, Levich, who has a full-time job as CEO of Employerware in Lafayette, has directed the 31 members of The Big Band of Rossmore and is a founding member of the Generations in Jazz Foundation that promotes music education in schools. He's been an integral part of the Lafayette Summer Music Workshop since its inception over a dozen years ago. The accomplished trumpet player is also a long-time member of Lafayette Rotary and in 2007 was named "Business Person of the Year."

The Jefferson Award recognizes unsung local and national volunteers for their contributions to the community – it's the Nobel Prize for public service.

... continued on page A12

Levich will be shown receiving his award during the 6 p.m. Channel 5, CBS newscast on March 28, and again on March 29 during the noon news program.

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A local expert talks with Cathy Dausman. D1

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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, April 9, 7:00 pm  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, April 2, 7:00 pm  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, April 9, 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, April 18, 7:30 pm  
Board Room AUHSD Office  
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, April 11, 6:00 pm  
Special Meeting Strategic Planning  
Wednesday, April 11, 7:30 pm  
Regular Board Meeting  
LAFSD Office  
3477 School Street, Lafayette  
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Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 284-1968

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Police Report



**Parking (un)fine, 3/12/2012** The victim reported leaving a bike unlocked for 40 minutes, only to find it gone upon return. Although it was considered a petty theft occurrence, the bike owner is out over \$400. That works out to \$10 a minute of "parking" time.

**Face(plate) the music, 3/17/2012** A thief who broke into a vehicle ransacked the car and stole a stereo faceplate without permission, causing \$200 in damages. That is not music to any owner's ears.

**Unsafe at this speed, 3/14/2012** Two vehicles travelling at an "unsafe speed for roadway conditions" ended up colliding. One person involved in the accident was transported to the hospital after complaining of pain.

**Two days later...3/16/2012** A car and pedestrian collided. The pedestrian took a few licks on his knee, and was transported for medical help.

**Thou Shalt Not Trespass, 3/12/2012** A 62-year-old male was arrested for trespassing and resisting arrest in the 900 block of Moraga Road. He was arrested and transported to the main detention facility.

Lafayette's First Birthday Poster Boy – Marechal Duncan

By Cathy Tyson



Marechal Duncan Photo John Otto

It's not every day that your picture can be seen cruising all over town. Lafayette's Marechal Duncan recently received noteworthy birthday presents to recognize a lifetime of contributions from friends and family: his mug is prominently displayed on the Spirit Van, a shuttle service for seniors, and he was honored by a special proclamation from the Mayor and the City Council. Both the birthday and the recipient are extraordinary – Marechal (pronounced Marshall) Duncan celebrated 90 years on St. Patrick's Day – March 17, 2012.

"Marechal is a dear man, very committed to the well-being of seniors in Lamorinda. It was a pleasure to participate in honoring him by putting a 'Happy 90th, Marechal Duncan! From All Our Hearts, For All You've Done!' banner on the Lamorinda Spirit Van," said Mary Bruns, Lamorinda Senior Transportation Coordinator. "Marechal serves as Co-Chairperson for the Lafayette Community Foundation Liaison Committee for Seniors which sponsors

the annual Lafayette Senior Symposium. Marechal's dream is to pull together local organizations that serve seniors to collaborate, share information, and provide the resources to allow seniors to age in their own homes."

With a twinkle in his blue eyes, this retiree was recently recognized at a City Council meeting with a proclamation honoring his active involvement in the community for more than 50 years. He's been busy fellow, starting out when his four kids were little serving as a Boy Scout leader for 20 years and an LMYA basketball coach. He also volunteered to be the Co-chair of the Lafayette Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1998. And there's more - he's an active member of the Lafayette Historical Society and is currently the Vice President, he also just received a certificate as a "senior" member, someone over 90, of SIRS – Sons in Retirement, and was a charter member of the Lamorinda Toastmasters Club.

"He's very modest, which is why I hope we will celebrate him as a community. He has been a passionate advocate for seniors, which is why we got a campaign to fund the first ever

'advertising' banners on the Lamorinda Spirit Van to announce and acknowledge his contributions," said Kathy Merchant, Executive Director of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation.

Born in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1922, Duncan quips, "I didn't like the weather there, and at seventeen months old, suggested to my parents that we move the family to San Diego." He's been on the west coast, for the most part, ever since - spending his last 57 years at a lovely home in the Silver Springs neighborhood. He and wife Doris were one of the first families to move into the neighborhood, purchasing their lot and the recently constructed home for \$28,000, "a little bit cheaper then," said Duncan.

He joined the Navy in 1940, before World War II and served for just shy of six years. In a stroke of good luck, he was based in San Diego and assigned to be a mine sweeper at Pearl Harbor, but hadn't yet shipped out to the Hawaiian base when the infamous attack occurred.

Upon his return to the states he earned a bachelor of science degree from UC Berkeley and a few years

later got a master's at Pepperdine University. Duncan worked as the western area sales manager for Motorola, "I introduced radio paging to the west coast," a new concept back in the day.

The happy couple raised their four children and have become an integral part of the fabric of Lafayette. Now they have seven grandchildren, and are still active in a number of capacities around town and show no sign of slowing down. "Keep busy" is their motto, and they live up to it. Duncan regularly plays nine holes of golf, ditching a golf cart in favor of walking with his golf clubs, and his lovely wife Doris, also 90 this year, participates in bridge and supports sorority and panhellenic organizations. Both are an inspiration and great assets to the community and thanks to good health and good genes, epitomize the concept of gracefully aging in place.

Future birthday, anniversary or graduation banner greetings are available for the non-profit Lamorinda Spirit Van. Call Mary Bruns for more information at (925) 284-5546.



Photo Cathy Tyson

Eric Christensen, Lafayette's New Sheriff



Lt. Eric Christensen Photo provided

There's a new Sheriff in town, starting tomorrow, March 29. Lt. Eric Christensen of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office will serve as the next Chief, taking the helm after Mike Hubbard retires.

With the Sheriff's Office since 1991, Christensen has over twenty years of law enforcement experience to bring to the mean streets of Lafayette. Armed with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration, and having spent three years in the Army, along with stints as a Patrol Deputy and Detective for the San Ramon Police Department, a Supervising Sergeant

for Oakley's Police Department and having managed the Emergency Services Support Unit, he's well prepared to oversee Lafayette's Police Department.

"With his extensive background in local law enforcement in suburban communities, Lt. Christensen is well-qualified to serve Lafayette," said City Manager Steven Falk. "Given our potential for catastrophic wildland fires, mudslides, earthquakes, and flooding, Christensen's experience in the Emergency Services Support Unit should be valuable to the community." C. Tyson

Town Center Project

(Information provided by Christine Sinnette)

Scaffolding and balloons will go up at the site of the Lafayette Town Center Phase III condominium project on Friday, March 30, representing the height and mass of the proposed building. The location is the private parking lot behind Panda Express, next to the Town Center Apartments, 3595 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Curious residents will have a week to view the display, which will be dismantled on April 6. The lot's regular parkers will be displaced for the week.

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# Neighbors Appeal Approval of Proposed Home

By Cathy Tyson



Story poles of proposed home on Las Huertas Road. Photo C. Tyson

Can a few neighbors put the kibosh on plans for a house that has already been approved by the Design Review Commission (DRC)? The proposed home on an almost half acre lot near the end of Las Huertas Road had gone through substantial changes over a period of two years to finally gain approval from the DRC, subject to a number of conditions. The approved version of the home is within all city development standards – including height. The City of Lafayette’s height requirement is no more than 35 feet tall, the proposed structure is 24 feet, 9 inches. The home has 3,400 square feet on the first floor and 1,217 on the second floor.

The Ord family, who have lived across the street from the proposed home since 1976, argue that the house is out of scale with the neighborhood because of its size, mass, height, and square footage and believe the project does not substantially comply with the city’s Design Guidelines about privacy and views. A few other neighbors have gone on record to agree.

Isabelle Ord, who lives in the home with her children and her parents, Jane and Edward Ord, addressed the Planning Commission with their family’s concerns, “It’s tough as a

neighbor to make comments, but the project is so impactful to us we had to say something. This would be the tallest and largest home possible on this lot – substantially larger than the other homes in the neighborhood.” The Ords even hired an engineer to objectively describe the property, his bottom line – the roof area of the proposed home is larger than others in the neighborhood and the second story blocks the view.

Property owners Vlad and Ekaterina Malinovsky had approached all the immediate neighbors about the project on three separate occasions during the lengthy design process, to be good neighbors, “We’ve gone overboard to make this work.” Project Architect Bill Wood added, “We’ve done everything we can to make this house as low profile as possible.”

Assistant Planner Michael Cass pointed out at the meeting that, “The bulk and mass have significantly decreased during the review process.” Although city staff recommended denying the appeal by the Ords and upholding the Design Review Commission’s approval, Planning Commissioners weren’t so sure and asked for more information prior to making a decision. ... continued on page A8

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# Slight Ridgeline Silhouette Rejected by Commission

By Cathy Tyson

A visible sliver of house along a ridgeline is not okay with the Lafayette Planning Commission. A proposed 9,643 square foot home that is almost entirely hidden was not reduced in height enough to garner a hillside development permit.

Although attorney David Bowie argued that the Monticello Road home does “not have a significant visual impact,” and “views are intermittent,” Planning Commissioners saw it

differently. At last week’s meeting, the applicants made no changes to the design or site plan, but proposed planting five large oak trees to screen the house from a smattering of homes in Happy Valley, roughly a third of a mile away. Previous downsizing to the project included eliminating the third floor office, changing the gable roof, and shrinking the gross square footage by 745 square feet.

... continued on page A12

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# Moraga Civic News

## Public Meetings

### Town Council

Wednesday, March 28, 7:00pm  
 Wednesday, April 11, 7:00pm  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
 1010 Camino Pablo

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 2, 7:00 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### Design Review

Monday, April 9, 7:00 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### School Board Meeting

**Moraga School District**  
 Tuesday, April 10, 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  
 Phone: (925) 888-7022

### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



## Police Report

**St. Patrick's Day stolen car, 3/17**  
 The unluck of the Irish on Camino Ricardo. A silver Prius was parked in front of the owner's home and was last seen around midnight. Car owner had unwisely left the car keys inside the vehicle. Nothing was seen or heard at the time of the theft.

**Car burgled, 3/17/12** Just down the street from the missing Prius, another Camino Ricardo homeowner reported that his wallet, checkbook and gift cards, worth over \$600 were missing from his Acura MDX. Owner believes his car was locked, although there was no damage to the car to indicate a break in. At about the same time officers responded to a report of a suspicious subject attempting to gain entry into other neighborhood cars. Although they looked, they were couldn't find him or her.

**Domestic assault, 3/17/12** A call came in that a husband had allegedly assaulted his wife after an argument. He was arrested for domestic violence and was taken to the Martinez Detention Facility for booking.

**False alarm, 3/16/12** Cops responded to a residential alarm on Claudia Court in the middle of the afternoon. They checked and found that all the doors and windows were secure, with no attempted forced entry. Was it the wind?

**Child abuse? 3/16/12** A 17-year-old reported that a parent had injured her during an argument. Cops spoke with the young lady who was then placed under the care of Child Protective Services. The suspect was contacted and arrested for assault, but an investigation is on-going.

**Laptop vanishes, 3/14/12** A student who was studying in the Saint Mary's College library stepped away from her \$1,500 Apple MacBook Pro for all of ten minutes at 5:20 in the afternoon. While the erstwhile co-ed was able to provide a description and serial number, odds of it being return are micro-soft.

### Correction, issue

**date 3/14/12,** Since our first issue should have read: Mike Metcalf, Dave Trotter and Ken Chew remain on the Town Council. Our apologies to Council Member Chew for not including him.

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## School Districts and Local Governments Differ over Community Clean Water Initiative

By Sophie Braccini

For the Town of Moraga it was a no-brainer: vote in favor of Contra Costa County's 2012 Community Clean Water Initiative because if it passes it will help offset some of the unfunded mandate the municipality has to keep any trash from reaching the reservoirs. But for Moraga's other heavyweight in this election, the Moraga School District (MSD), voting against the measure made more sense—according to Superintendent Bruce Burns, school district funds are “to educate children, not to pay another State agency.”

Similarly, the Orinda City Council voted to support the measure, while the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) and the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) were both opposed.

The Community Clean Water Initiative, a property-owner mail vote with an April 6 ballot deadline, has generated a lot of controversy. Concerns include the fact that voting is not run by the County Election Division; there is no rebuttal statement included in the literature residents received; the use of

the money to be collected is not described in detail; and no oversight committee is assigned to control the use of funds. “Some of the things that the School Board noted is that there was no explanation in the ballot of how the money would be spent,” said Burns.

Moraga's Mayor Mike Metcalf didn't find anything questionable about the measure or the process. “This is normal for an assessment,” he said, “it is exactly like the lighting assessment that passed in Moraga last year. People are asked to contribute different amounts depending on the impact they have on water run-off.”

John Sherbert, Moraga Staff Engineer, explained that additional funding is needed to protect local water quality and keep trash and other pollutants away from waterways, as well as to meet increasingly-stringent Federal and State requirements. The Town's former Engineer, Jill Mercurio, evaluated the cost to Moraga of meeting the unfunded mandate at \$250,000.

“Whether the initiative passes or not, we will have to abide by the law

and pay for improvements,” said Sherbert, “the initiative would partially off-set this mandate since all the fees paid in Moraga, about \$169,000, would come back to the Town. If the measure does not pass, the Town will still have to meet clean water requirements and can be fined up to \$10,000 a day if found non-compliant,” he explained.

The Moraga Town Council voted unanimously in favor of the measure. “If the Initiative does not pass, the money will have to come from the General Fund,” commented Metcalf later, “that's where the money for police and parks comes from.”

Orinda's City Council also threw its unanimous support to the Initiative, with Vice Mayor Amy Worth noting that 100% of the fees paid by Orinda property owners would return to Orinda.

Paralleling the MSD, the boards of the OUSD and AUHSD also decided to vote no. “I understand that it brings revenue into the cities,” said AUHSD Business Services Associate Superintendent Chris Learned, “and

the Board said that they were in support of clean water. But the whole process was concerning to them.”

Don Freitas, Program Manager for the Contra Costa Clean Water Program, confirmed that the vote will pass or fail at the County level, not by jurisdiction. “Each property is assessed a tax according to its impact on the water shed, i.e. its size,” he said, “and the number of votes is according to the number of properties, not the amount paid.”

For example, AUHSD has five votes because it owns five different properties. AUHSD would be required to pay \$16,000 a year for 10 years, while MSD's share is calculated at about \$6,400 a year; the Town of Moraga would pay about \$1,100 a year. The average owner of a single family home in Lamorinda would see about \$22 a year added to the property tax bill.

According to the County, property owners should have received their ballots the week of February 21 and have until April 6th at 5 p.m. to cast their votes.

## Improving Pedestrian Safety at Dangerous Moraga Crosswalks

By Sophie Braccini



Proposed crosswalk

Graphic provided

There are two crossings along Moraga Road where, according to some pedestrians, you take your life in your hands when you cross the road. One is at Corliss and serves as a transition between a sidewalk and a pedestrian trail; the other is at Woodford, across from Campolindo High School (Campo) that is most heavily used by students coming

and going from school when traffic is at its peak.

There's never been an accident reported at the Woodford crossing, but according to Moraga Chief of Police Robert Priebe there have been some close calls.

Town Manager Jill Keimach and her team have been conducting community workshops to inform residents

and gather feedback. On March 15 she presented a final version of a plan to improve pedestrian safety before the Town Council makes its final decision on the evening of March 28.

About 20 residents showed up at the community workshop held on March 15 at the Hacienda de las Flores. It was not the first time the Town reached out to residents regarding pedestrian crossing improvements, but as proposals from Town transportation consultants Fehr and Peers changed, further discussion seemed like a good idea.

The main issue at Corliss is a hill that impedes the view for northbound traffic. The major improvements there will consist of an overhead flashing beacon above the crosswalk and an advanced warning signal placed at the top of the crest, both activated by pedestrians before crossing.

Most of the residents who came to the meeting were interested in the Woodford crossing. This is where students going to Campo, either coming from the Woodford neighborhood, the bus stop, or from their own cars parked on the street, have to cross to reach their destination. As the students try to traverse, a long line of cars winds its way toward the student drop-off area, while others attempt quick post-drop-off exits from the school's driveway.

“The traffic engineers have proposed two solutions,” said Keimach,

“One that would leave the crosswalk where it is and just make it more visible, and a second that would move the crosswalk south, before Woodford if you're driving toward Lafayette.” She indicated that this second option was thought by Fehr and Peers to maximize pedestrian security and would be the one recommended by staff for the Council's approval.

“I'd like to make a comment,” said Omid Boozarpour, a Campo sophomore and the only high school student present at the meeting, “I live on Woodford and cross there many times a day. I'd rather not cross at this second location, there is no sidewalk along the south side of Woodford and visibility is very limited. People making a right turn there will not see pedestrians; it's dangerous.”

“We are adding a corner curb extension at the southeast corner of that street to tighten the turning radius and slow traffic,” responded Keimach.

As the discussion progressed, the public succeeded in having a proposed raised median island on Moraga Road removed from the plan, as residents felt it would create more problems for morning traffic. Other safety features include pedestrian-activated LED flashing signs.

The March 28 meeting of the Town Council will include a public comment period during which people can share their thoughts with the Council before the final decision is made.

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## Council Throws in the Towel over Rancho Laguna Dilemma

*Second reading of the resolution tonight will end 30 years of off-leash hours*

By Sophie Braccini

Much could be said about the dramatic March 14 Town Council meeting at which a resolution that will ban off-leash hours at Rancho Laguna Park in a month passed on a three to two vote of the Council. Mayor Mike Metcalf and Council Member Dave Trotter cast the dissenting votes. The resolution that will be formally adopted tonight, March 28, leaves the responsibility of finding a compromise to the user groups, who must now return to the negotiating table to find a solution that works for everyone.

On March 28, the Council will hear the second reading of the ordinance that ends 30 years of off-leash hours at Rancho Laguna Park. A month later, the ordinance will be enforceable.

The dog owners felt that time separation between users was enough—the Council insisted on a physical separation—and when the Town was sued over its December 2011 ordinance that would have created a fenced dog area in what is now a wooded area at the edge of the park, the Council threw in the towel.

Although the ordinance terminates the off-leash hours at Rancho Laguna Park, it does not end off-leash freedom at Mulholland

Ridge. It also specifies that off-leash dogs will be permitted in an up to 3-acre fenced dog-park, the location of which is left undefined—it could either be located in Rancho Laguna Park or at another Town facility. The staff report indicated that the intent of this solution was to encourage all user groups to work together on a plan.

A ray of hope filtered through the gloom of the evening by way of a plan for the park presented by Lamorinda Dogs Association Board Member Jeanne Moreau. It was, in fact, the “Plan B” that was presented by the group in December but dismissed by the Council at the time on a 3 to 2 vote.

The Council could not discuss the plan since it was not on the agenda, but December’s third may vote, Vice Mayor Howard Harpham, indicated this time that “he could live with that plan.” The plan, which cuts the park in half leaving some grass for the dogs and some for recreational use, emerged from the March 14 meeting as the best bet to get a global solution.

Town Manager Jill Keimach confirmed though after the meeting that the Town was done working on this issue. “We expect that Lamorinda Dogs will reach out to

other user groups and park stakeholders to work something out,” she said.

The Town, as the owner of the park, is a stakeholder and during the Council meeting, first discussions among Council members took place to decide who would facilitate talks. “We might add some options for that to happen,” said Keimach.

Dog owners across Lamorinda were very disappointed with the Council’s decision.

“It is truly dumbfounding when a mere three city officials can change over thirty years of Moraga tradition, over the very passionate protests of hundreds of community members,” said Orinda resident Diana Stephens.

“The Town of Moraga Council’s recent actions to break with long standing policies and traditions have been very disturbing,” said Rob Blits of Lafayette.

“I just hope that we can build something better than the minimum for everyone given the limited resources we have,” said Moraga’s Bill Carman, a member of Lamorinda Dogs, “The increasing actions of retaliation from dog owners and the local government is not productive for anyone.”

The Board of Directors of

Lamorinda Dogs responded in a written statement to our request for comment: “While off-leash hours have worked safely for the last 30 years, the Town Council is now requiring a fenced separation of dog activity from other park users. Lamorinda Dogs has long supported the separation of use by early and evening hours, however we have also designed a number of plans with fenced separation that

would give Moraga an off-leash area with adequate space for safe activity of running dogs, ball throwing and Frisbee play,” wrote the Board on March 23rd. The Board also indicated that the litigation was started by residents not associated with their group and that it has been independently reaching out to different user groups to find common ground to design a solution.

### Girl Scouts Turn 100!

Submitted by Merrylee Landau

Brownie Scout Roxanne Landau and Junior Scout Madeline Landau, along with the Orinda Moraga Girl Scout Service Unit Director, accept a proclamation from the Town of Moraga honoring the Girl Scout’s 100th Anniversary.



Photo provided

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# Orinda Civic News

## Public Meetings

### City Council

Tuesday, April 10, 7:00 pm  
Auditorium, Orinda Library,  
26 Orinda Way

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 12, at 7:00 pm  
Auditorium, Orinda Library,  
26 Orinda Way  
Tuesday, February 14 canceled

### Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 28, at 6:00 pm  
Community Room, City Hall  
22 Orinda Way

### School Board Meeting

**Orinda Union School District**  
Monday, April 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

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www.cityoforinda.org  
Phone (925) 253-4200

### Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

### The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

## ORINDA POLICE

### Police Report

Needles and pinned, 3/20/2012 Orinda police found a 22-year-old male near the post office with two hypodermic needles and other drug paraphernalia in his car. Since that was a violation of his probation, and just plain against the law, he was booked and transported to Martinez Detention Facility.

We're not bailing you out, 3/15/2012 Orinda police arrested a 39-year-old-male on two outstanding warrants. The warrant terms were "no bail" so that's exactly what he got...

Old enough to know better, 3/14/2012 Just another driving under the influence story? Maybe not! A man who was a victim of his own poor judgment and depth perception caused a single car accident (his own) when he drove his car into a pole and became trapped inside. He was extricated by Moraga Orinda Fire Department, and medically cleared to be dealt with by police. His breathalyzer test showed .226. The gentleman in question was 73 years old.

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## Roads Orinda's Number One Concern

New Capital Improvement Plan draft underway

By Laurie Snyder



Repairs to an El Toyonal roadside drainage ditch have been added to the City of Orinda's updated Capital Improvement Plan for 2012-2013. Note the aging corrugated metal pipe (CMP). Estimated price tag: \$30,000. Photo provided

"Roads are our number one concern," said City Manager Janet Keeter at a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) workshop conducted by the Orinda City Council March 14.

Attendees at the workshop received a sneak peek at drafts of the latest CIP planning documents, which are not yet publicly available via the City's web site. Those documents include a revised version of the Capital Improvement Plan FY 2011-2015, which was adopted by Council in September 2011. Updates to the CIP are being made as part of the ongoing CIP planning process by the City's staff, and will be formally presented at a future Council meeting.

Several new projects have been added to the existing CIP while others are being moved out to future

dates in order to better address Orinda's pressing drainage and slope stabilization issues.

The Camino Pablo Pavement Rehabilitation Project, slated to improve Camino Pablo between Bear Creek Road and Moraga Way, has now been moved to an, as yet, unspecified future date. Initially projected to cost the City \$130,349 and \$600,000 in fiscal years 2011 and 2013, respectively, the project's estimated cost now stands at \$1,785,545. Completion at this juncture is dependent upon receipt of State funding.

Other major ticket items projected for the next several years include: \$1,019,815 (2012) and \$762,003 (2013) for the Annual Pavement Management Program, \$1,319,915 for the Glorietta Storm

Drain Improvements Project plus a new \$100,000 outlay for the Oak Springs/Candlestick Road Stormwater Improvements Project (both in 2013, the latter of which may be required as a result of pending litigation), and \$495,600 (2013) and \$1,630,260 (2014) for the Manzanita Drive Bridge Replacement Project, among others.

Despite the gloomy forecasts of increased expenditures immediately ahead for the City, Council members noted that there is, in fact, actually good news. The City is spending more now in order to head off potentially larger and more expensive problems that would likely crop up down the road if the City opted to not deal with its aging drains, bridges, and other critical infrastructure areas in the timeliest manner possible.

### Occupied Orinda?

Orinda City Council's CIP Workshop got off to a bumpy beginning when a small group of protestors blocked the entrance for several City Council members and staff to the City Hall community room prior to the start of the March 14 meeting.

The protestors – students from higher education campuses around California – were in attendance not to learn about Orinda's aging infrastructure but, instead to encourage Governor Jerry Brown to support what has been termed "the millionaire's tax." By meeting face to face with Mayor Steve Glazer, who is both Brown's political advisor and a member of the Board of Trustees of the California State University system, students hoped to persuade Glazer to convince the Governor to reverse the trends of increasing tuition and decreased State funding for California's universities and community colleges.

The students, according to City staff, did not follow the proper procedure to request that they be permitted to speak during the public forum portion of the meeting – as had a smaller, different group of students protesting at the City Council's "roads poll workshop" on January 11.

Council allowed this latest and more vocal group to have its say, recessed briefly so that the students could be encouraged to depart peacefully, and then resumed without disruption for the remainder of the CIP workshop.

## OCF Board Position Opening

The Orinda Community Foundation board of trustees is looking for a new member. All Orinda residents interested in filling this position should contact orinda@foundation@gmail.com.

## The Curious Case of the Yellow and Black Yard Signs

Taking a closer look at Fix Orinda Roads Now!

By Laurie Snyder

"Come on Orinda" signs featuring a pothole-slanted automobile and urging, "Let's FIX OUR ROADS NOW!" have caught

the eyes of even the most distracted of drivers passing through Orinda over the last several months, largely due to their bright yellow and black

design.

As a result, inquiring Orindan minds have been seeking out the web site of the signs' sponsoring organization for details (www.fixorindaroads.org). But the web site has not been completely built out as yet. For example, there is no "About" page – an overview page typically found on many web sites that is often used to indicate the names of an organization's management and its mission statement or objectives. Nor is there an explanation regarding the purpose of the site's online petition, or an indication of how the funds that are being raised by the organization will be used.

The web site does, however, provide the following basic data about the road signs' sponsoring organization:

Fix Orinda Roads Now!  
Campaign ID #1343654  
PO Box 54  
Orinda, CA 94563-0054

Conversations with both the California Secretary of State's office and the City of Orinda City Clerk's office have confirmed that this campaign identification data is correct. Because the group did not begin fundraising until after the first of the year, according to representatives from those governing bodies, the financial reports for Fix Orinda Roads Now! are not due to the City until July, 2012.

... continued on page A8

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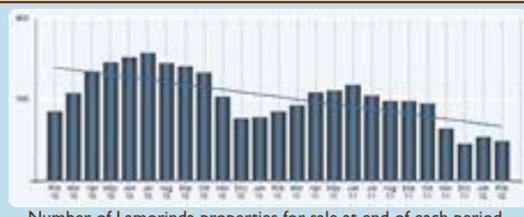
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# Signs of the Times

*Political and other temporary signs coming to an intersection near you*  
**By Laurie Snyder**

Following analysis and debate at three separate Orinda City Council meetings in January and February 2012, Orinda City Council members and staff finally approved – at the fourth meeting, held on March 20 – new Regulations for Temporary Signs. Council members hope that these new regulations will demonstrate the City’s support for freedom of speech and ensure an encouraging climate for area businesses while still enabling the City to have enough regulatory authority to head off urban blight from the proliferation of political and other portable signs.

Through it all, Council members and staff weighed the desires and potential legal requirements of interested parties as diverse as Orinda’s individual merchants and Chamber of Commerce, the fire department, the Contra Costa Association of Realtors, the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Northern California (ACLU), area candidates for political office, and Orinda residents and homeowners’ associations who

were expressing opinions for or against increasing displays around the City of signs to advertise everything from candidates to sandwich specials to homes for sale.

Details regarding the sizes, types, and number of signs that may be placed in the public right-of-way, versus on private property, and for how long those signs may remain are provided in a brochure available from the City’s Planning Department. That brochure also explains what actions will not be permitted when displaying temporary signs moving forward including, but not limited to, signs that are illuminated or have rotating or moving parts, or are placed in areas that would cause safety problems.

Additionally, City Council adopted Resolution No. 01-12, which designates the following 14 locations near major intersections as being appropriate for the display of temporary portable signs in the public right-of-way:

1. Camino Pablo and Miner Road
2. Camino Pablo and El Toyonal

3. Camino Pablo and El Sobrante
4. Honey Hill Road and Via Las Cruces
5. Saint Stephens and El Nido Ranch
6. Moraga Way and Overhill Road
7. Moraga Way and Glorietta Boulevard
8. Moraga Way and Valley View Drive
9. Moraga Way and Hall Drive
10. Moraga Way and Ivy Drive (North)
11. Saint Stephens and Hidden Valley Road
12. Overhill Road and Tara Road
13. Glorietta Blvd and Rheem Blvd
14. Charles Hill Road and El Nido Ranch Road

According to the staff report prepared for this meeting, the City will expend approximately \$1,000 for Public Works staff to install “small reference markers [at each intersection] to help the public identify the designated areas in the public right-of-way for display of temporary portable signs.”

## OHS Celebrates Girl Scouts

A Century of Service! Current and former Girl Scouts and troop leaders commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scouts at a recent Orinda Historical Society meeting. Talking about the ways scouting has helped little girls grow into accomplished young women were, from left: Ann Watrous, Gail Tsuboi, Selena MacDuff, Marsha Harris, Annie Odell, and Thama Brentano. Photo provided by Kent Long



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## Civic News Lafayette

### Neighbors Appeal Approval of Proposed Home

... continued from page A3

Discussing a resolution to the matter, Planning Commissioner Thomas Chastain was "happy the applicant has worked with the neighbors," and described the Design Review process as sometimes onerous, but in this case needed. "It's come a long way... but I'm still bothered by questions of neighborhood character."

"Context - how does it relate to the neighborhood?" asked Commissioner Mark Mitchell, explaining there are other large homes in the area but they are on big lots and set back substantially from the

street. Commissioner Rick Human agreed, "It's hard to make a judgment." He and Commissioner Karen Maggio questioned the accuracy of heights in the staff report and wanted another opportunity to confirm the relative scale of this home compared to others.

Concluding that this proposed home's relationship to others in the neighborhood is hard to measure, and that the Commission didn't have enough verifiable facts on height to make a determination, a motion was carried to continue the discussion to the Planning Commission meeting on April 16.

## Civic News Orinda

### The Curious Case of the Yellow and Black Yard Signs

... continued from page A6

**The Faces Behind Fix Orinda Roads Now!**

"Our committee is really just a group of concerned citizens," said Darlene Gee, City of Orinda Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Committee member. Gee invited anyone in Orinda who is interested in learning more about the condition of Orinda's roads to contact Fix Orinda Roads Now! for more information.

The organization, she said, started with a core group of people that participated in earlier, failed road improvement bond measures. That core group includes current Mayor Steve Glazer and Orinda City Council Member Sue Severson. Gee said that, although Glazer and Severson are members of the Council's Roads Subcommittee, they are simply participating, like other members of the group, as Orinda residents and not as part of their official Council duties.

Severson confirmed that she is indeed a participant, but reiterated that she has been "involved as a concerned Orinda citizen."

Other members of the core group of roughly 30 to 40 residents include Pete Hasselman, who provided the roads-related cartoons for the organization's web site, and Carol Penskar, of the City's Finance Advisory Committee and the Orinda Community Foundation, who is serving as the group's treasurer.

Penskar, who was unwilling to give a dollar figure for the amount of funds that have been raised to date because the organization is not legally required to do so until July 2012, confirmed the data provided by the offices of the California Secretary of State and Orinda City Clerk. "I can tell you that zero dollars were raised before January," she said.

Gee explained that the petition on the group's web site is not designed for a specific parcel tax, bond meas-

ure, or other goal but is, instead, designed to simply demonstrate the level of interest of residents in improving the city's streets.

Severson explained that the group tried several different ways of posting the online petition, but not having a volunteer with computer programming skills has proven challenging. Each of the various petition formats has had its own set of frustrating glitches.

The group, said Severson, also has not posted a list of its leaders because it has no leadership - it is just a grassroots group of folks who are sincerely concerned about the condition of Orinda's roads and drainage systems.

And, while the group has been set up as a political campaign and funds are being raised in the hope that there will be a campaign in some way, right now there is no specific campaign underway because the group's members are waiting on the Orinda City Council to make a final decision regarding whether or not to try for another infrastructure improvement ballot measure.

If the City has a measure for 2012, said Gee, "then we will gear up and become the 'yes' for that campaign measure."

Severson also indicated that the group is in a somewhat dormant mode, explaining that their grassroots community effort initially raised funds just to cover the cost of the yellow and black yard signs plus an informational mailing sent to Orinda households and that they exceeded their goal.

Severson said the group felt it was just time to do something about the condition of Orinda's roads, and encouraged Orinda residents to contact the organization if they wish to become involved or simply want to learn more.

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

Editor:

It is truly dumbfounding when a mere three city officials can change over thirty years of Moraga tradition over the very passionate protests of hundreds of community members. The limited dog hours at Rancho Laguna Park have brought me immense pleasure and many friends over the past thirteen years, and I will miss that privilege greatly. Unfortunately, the DOGmatic decision by the Moraga city council on the 14th aims to end any off-leash activities in either of the city's user-friendly parks.

I will also miss shopping in Moraga as I pass through on my way to the park, and I hope the retail community and the property owners prepare themselves for the drop off in customers from Lafayette and Orinda that will result. I will have no reason to shop in Moraga anymore. I will miss that too, but Orinda has all the services I need on my way in and out of town. It's a doggone shame.

Diana Stephens  
Orinda

Editor:

Moragans need to understand what is happening with Rancho Laguna Park and with the governing process in our town. The prospect of losing this unique off-leash setting is extremely disheartening to Moraga's dog owners but the arbitrary process exhibited by the Town Council in reaching its decision to end thirty years of this cherished activity should be disturbing to all citizens of Moraga.

The isolated setting of Rancho Laguna Park is ideal for dogs to safely exercise and socialize while their owners do the same. Dogs are allowed off-leash in Rancho Laguna only before 9AM and after 6PM (4PM from October 1 to March 31). For those few hours each day, even in the rain, the park is alive with dogs and their people. The rest of the day, from 9 AM until early evening, the park is available for use by everyone except off-leash dogs and most of the time it is deserted. It has worked this way for decades and it has worked well. Why has the Town Council suddenly decided that the primary users of Rancho Laguna will now be forbidden?

The three Council members who voted for the ban on March 14th offered no rationale other than the fear that a child might be bitten by a dog. No recognition that no such incident had occurred in thirty years of off-leash activity or that children can use the park free of dogs for most of the day. No explanation of what had changed to suddenly make the situation dangerous. No incident reports of dogs harming or threatening people in the park, no surveys of park usage, no reports on how the park will be used by groups other than dog owners. In fact the only relevant actual data submitted was a petition signed by 350 Moraga residents asking to keep the park as is. The signers of that petition and the parade of residents who pleaded at the meeting to preserve the current off-leash hours or curtail them in a reasonable manner were simply ignored.

The Council has the power to end thirty years of an activity enjoyed by many hundreds, if not thousands, of Moraga residents, but to do so without a compelling reason is irresponsible. Had the Council honestly wanted to find a resolution that would allow usage of the park by the most people, they would have considered a change in the allowable off-leash hours rather than an outright ban. Many very reasonable proposals for curtailing the hours were suggested at the meeting but the Council did not even address these options. One has to wonder what is really behind this illogical action.

A second reading of the revised ordinance is on tonight's agenda. This is the last chance to appeal the Council's ill-conceived action. All concerned Moragans need to be there to witness their Town Council in action.

Sincerely,  
Trish Bare  
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.

## In Memory

### Linda Lou Sjoberg



November 29, 1938 –  
March 1, 2012

Linda Lou (Hutchins) Sjoberg, a 50-year resident of Orinda, CA, died March 1, 2012, after a short, painless battle with pancreatic cancer. She was 73. In her last days, close family and friends, and her loved Tibetan Terrier, Tally, gathered at her hospital bedside. She lived every day with vibrancy and joy. She was with her husband and children at the time of her passing.

Born in Nogales, AZ, she was the daughter of the late Newt and Cynthia Hutchins of Yuma, AZ.

After a 30-year teaching career, she retired from the Orinda School District in 1994. Displayed in her home is a cherished quilt, a gift pieced together with thirty blocks of artwork created by the students in her last class at Del Rey School. Wherever she traveled, she was remembered by former students saying, "You taught me in third grade and were one of my favorite teachers."

Known for her short salt & pepper gray hair, neat appearance, and the sparkle in her eyes, she was a treasured friend of many who shared her passion for life and love of learning. Her love of travel took her to six continents. Her favorite trip? "The next one!" A talented artist, her water color miniature botanicals and needlepoint evening bags were treasured gifts.

She is survived by her beloved husband of 51 years, Ellis Sjoberg; her son Kurt Sjoberg of Cedarville, CA; her daughter Lynelle Sjoberg of Vashon Island, WA; her son-in-law Ian Jamison, and her grandson Tayo Neal Sjoberg-Jamison.

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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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

### Shred Fest a Success

Submitted by Peggy Hall



Photo provided

The March 3 Shred Fest sponsored by Hall of Taxes raised \$301 for the Rescue One Foundation which supports the MOFD by purchasing needed equipment. Hall of Taxes joined forces with 5A Rent-A-Space and Neighborhood Computers to help Lamorinda households rid themselves of e-waste and important personal documents. The response to the Shred

Fest was so favorable that Hall of Taxes plans to sponsor the event again on June 3. Picture from left Linda Borelli and Greg Reams (from Rescue One Foundation), Grant Stubblefield (Neighborhood Computers), Peggy Hall (Hall of Taxes), and Brad Noggle (5 A Rent-A-Space). To be put on the notification list, call Hall of Taxes at (925) 388-1040.

### Students Talk Their Way to Cash Prizes



Photo Tom Black

Three Miramonte High School seniors talked their way to cash prizes at the recent annual Four-Way Test Student Speech Contest sponsored by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Taking first place and \$300 was Lisa Chang, pictured here with Kristen Plant, public speech teacher at Miramonte. Second-place prize of \$200 went to Alex Chen, far right. Ar-

jang Asadi claimed third place and \$100. For many years public speaking teams from Miramonte have won national acclaim. The event was held at Postino Restaurant in Lafayette, where the Rotary club conducts its weekly 7:15 a.m. breakfast meetings. Founded in 1987, the club is celebrating its 25th year of operation.

### National Charity League Class of 2012

Submitted by Leslie Ryder



First row seated: Savannah Ryder, Caitlin Cunningham, Paige Williams. Seated around chairs: Katie DeWitt, Grace Whittom, Hannah Perkins, Kathleen Stanaro. Third row: Meredith Collett, Clare Durant, Shannon Burke, Lindsay Raftis. Fourth row: Samantha Reneau, Kimi Klein, Jenna Haufler, Annie Odell, Caitlin Noll, Daelyn Chase. Fifth row: Annalise Baer, Megan Freeman, Erin Byrne. Sixth row: Kellen Scanlan, Kelly Noah, Lizzie Newman, Kelly Leonard

Photo James Fidelibus

National Charity League, Inc. is a mother-daughter non-profit organization dedicated to serving local communities. Nationally, there are over 168 chapters committed to fostering the mother-daughter relationship through philanthropic, leadership and cultural activities. The Lamorinda Chapter was organized in 1989 and has members from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Participation begins in 7th grade and continues through the senior year, culminating in celebrations at the Claremont Resort and Hotel in the spring. This year's class of 2012 cel-

ebrated on Sunday March 11, 2012. The girls are honored for their many hours of philanthropic work volunteering at The American Cancer Society, California Shakespeare, Youth Homes, Smiley Dog and Special Olympics among others.

For membership information, please visit [www.nationalcharityleague.org](http://www.nationalcharityleague.org) These volunteer activities initiate a lifelong commitment to community service and deepen the bond between mother and daughter through these shared activities.

### Making a Difference

Submitted by Tania DeGroot



Photo Lupe Jimeno

Realtors from the Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie Orinda office trimmed and pruned trees and bushes, pulled weeds, picked up branches, raked leaves, spread bark chips and painted a bench in the area above the main parking lot at the Orinda Senior Village on March 10 as part of its second annual corporate Giving Day. Pictured from left, Mau-

reen Caldwell-Meurer, Toni Izuno, Teresa Roman, Rena Brown, Rachel Lederman, Tina Van Arsdale, Dana Fillinger, Kathy Wu, Doug Faulkner, Sassa Oznowicz, Tania DeGroot, Regina Englehart, Michael Buuck, Len Cohn, Ben Miller, Camille De Campos, Hollie Felts-Howell, John Fazel. (Missing from photo: Ruth and Bill Eddy.)

### Record Number of Lafayette Girl Scouts Celebrate 10 Years

Submitted by Colleen McCarty



Pictured from left: Kathleen Doughty, Adrienne Lee, Anna Hirsh, Lisa Fabbri, Candace Del Valle, Elizabeth Farnan, Arianna Ninh, Katie Olson, Kendall Comins, Emily VanOrmer, Shelly Kwok, Kristen Cervero, Casey Everitt, Jewels Biro, Molly Armstrong, Jenny Gonser, Mollie Nelsen, and Emily LaRoche.

Photo by Duane Nelsen

Young women in this community have many choices about how to spend their time. The following 29 girls chose Lafayette Girl Scouts and were recently honored for reaching the milestone of 10 years in Scouting: Troop 31042 (led by Geni Federas & Linda Bailey): Teresa Lo, Anna Hirsh, Amelia Curry, Casey Lee, Adrienne Lee, Candace Del Valle, & Kathleen Doughty; Troop 32232 (led by Gretchen Higgins): Jenny Gonser, Jacqueline Diede, Meg Kachidurian, Ashley Dubrasich; Troop 33846 (led by: Sue Olson): Arianna Ninh, Casey Everitt, Elizabeth Farnan, Emily VanOrmer,

Katie Olson, Kendall Comins, Kristen Cervero, Lisa Fabbri, Morgan Groover, Shelley Kwok; Troop 31983 (led by Cathy Vandenberghe): Madison McDonald; and Troop 31017 (led by Peg Matson & Colleen McCarty): Mollie Nelsen, Molly Armstrong, Emily LaRoche, Jewels Biro. These girls have enjoyed 10 years of making friends, providing service to others, camping, earning badges, selling cookies, learning leadership skills, and having a lot of fun! The girls were honored at the Lafayette Leader meeting on Feb. 9 by the Lafayette Coordinating Team, Lafayette Leaders and their families.

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## MOFD Votes to Hold Elections to Fill Vacant Board Seats

By Lucy Amaral

The Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board of Directors voted unanimously to fill its two vacant Board seats by way of election. Rather than holding a special election at District expense, the Board also opted to have this election coincide with the November 6, 2012 General Election.

Former MOFD Board members Richard Olsen and Brook Mancinelli resigned their seats in February. The remaining three Board members, Fred Weil, Frank Sperling and John Wyro, met on March 21 to decide on a course of action to replace them. Olsen represented Division 5, covering parts of Moraga, Orinda, and Canyon, and had several years left on his tenure. Mancinelli represented Division 3 in Orinda. His term would have been up this November.

MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley said the Board had several options: Appointing replacements for both seats; holding special elections for both seats at a cost of about \$35,000 each; holding an election that coincides with the upcoming General Election in November which would cost approximately \$5,000 each; appointing one replacement and using the election option for the other; or, doing nothing and allowing the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors to decide on the process.

Members of the public voiced their opinion, with most leaning toward an election, and all decrying the concept of spending \$35,000 for a special election with the general elec-

tion so close at hand. Wesley Ayers of Orinda called the special election option "fiscally irresponsible and universally disliked."

The discussion among the board members focused on balancing the variables: the length of time the positions would be left vacant, election costs, the benefit of additional opinions, and the possible public perception of the MOFD Board being an "Old Boy's Club" if they appointed candidates to these seats. All three agreed that while they would like to have a full board as soon as possible, they also felt that it would be in the best interest of the District as a whole to let the Division voters choose their representatives.

Bradley now must file the required documents by July 4, 2012 with the County Election Official to start the District's election process. Division residents interested in running for a Board seat may pick up and file papers with the County Elections office beginning July 16. The person elected to replace Dick Olsen will serve out Olsen's term, which ends November 2014. As Mancinelli's seat was due to be up this November, whoever is elected to fill his seat will serve the full four-year term.

In an unrelated but coincidental side note, it was mentioned that Weil's term is also up this November, making three MOFD seats open. Weil, who represents Division 2 in Moraga, said that it was "more likely than not" he will indeed file papers to run for another term.

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**Moraga Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Meetings**



Meetings of the MOFD Board of Directors are open to the public and take place on the third Wednesday of each month at the Moraga Library Community Room, 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga.

**Next meeting:**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
 April 4, 2012  
 6:00 PM Closed Session  
 7:00 PM Open Session

(go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for more information)

## Founding Members Gather at Moraga Garden Club Luncheon

Submitted by Marcia Fisherkeller



The six founding members from left, Elaine Lind, Eleanor Vaughn Shirley Engstrom, Pearl Duncan, Rose Tom and Hollace Gertmenian Photo Linda Foley

Six founding members of the Moraga Garden Club gathered at the club's annual spring salad luncheon March 15 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center. These ladies were part of a group that first met over 40 years ago to share their love of gardening, learn from each other, and enhance areas of their town with lovely plantings. The club has now grown to over 150 members and has contributed greatly to the community by supporting local schools and the library with their gardening activities, planting and maintaining many areas in the

town, plus contributing to the annual show of daffodils each spring. The spring salad luncheon is a big event and fundraiser for the club. Speaker Rosalind Creasy, a nationally recognized authority who uses edible plants in landscape design, taught attendees how to incorporate vegetables, fruit, and herbs into their gardens and intermix them with decorative shrubs and flowers. The luncheon theme, "The Colors of Spring" was carried out with the many colorful tablepieces also made by club members.

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## March Rains to the Rescue?

... continued from page A1  
"San Jose is only at 27 percent of their average," he said, "And on March 14th, our big rain day, they got less than 0.10 inch of rain."

[See the table for a comparison of rainfall data collected by our local rain trackers this year and last in locations throughout the area.]

How wet did it get so far in March? Allan Prager, who resides in Orinda's Sleepy Hollow neighborhood found that rainfall in the first 19 days of March to be over 10 inches, which was more than double the rainfall he recorded in early March last year. Gene Gottfried, who lives in the Upper Toyonal neighborhood of Orinda, recorded almost 10 inches of rain falling between March 13-17, including an impressive four-plus inches on March 14 alone. Orinda Downs resident Bill Moon found March 14 to be quite a wet one, too, recording over three inches of rain on that single day. But since he's been measuring precipitation Moon reports, he has seen even wetter days, including almost six inches (5.85 to be exact) on Dec. 31, 2005.

The fluctuations in monthly and annual rainfall numbers do not seem to surprise the locals who track precipitation.

"I am not all that surprised, more

Location	Rainfall Year-to-date <sup>1</sup> (inches)	Rainfall Last year <sup>2</sup> (inches)
<b>Orinda</b>		
Sleepy Hollow	23	37
El Toyonal	20 <sup>3</sup>	31
Orinda Downs	17	30
South Orinda	22	35
<b>Moraga</b>		
Ashbrook Place	16	28
<b>Lafayette</b>		
Amber Lane	12	24

<sup>1</sup>7/1/11-3/20/12 <sup>2</sup>7/1/10-3/20/11 <sup>3</sup>Measured thru 3/17/12

delighted not to have to face real drought conditions as in 1977 and 1978," Watson said. "This has been a year of storm extremes... It is late in the season, but late rains are not all that unusual, so we shall give thanks and enjoy the soakings. May they continue."

Prager is not surprised by the March wetness following a dry winter either. He has seen it happen before. In the 1990 to 1991 rain year, Prager's records show that only 7.5 inches of rain had fallen by the end of February. "In March of 1991, I recorded 10.74 inches," he said, adding, "That year ended up as a drought year anyway, but without the significant rainfall in March, it would have been much

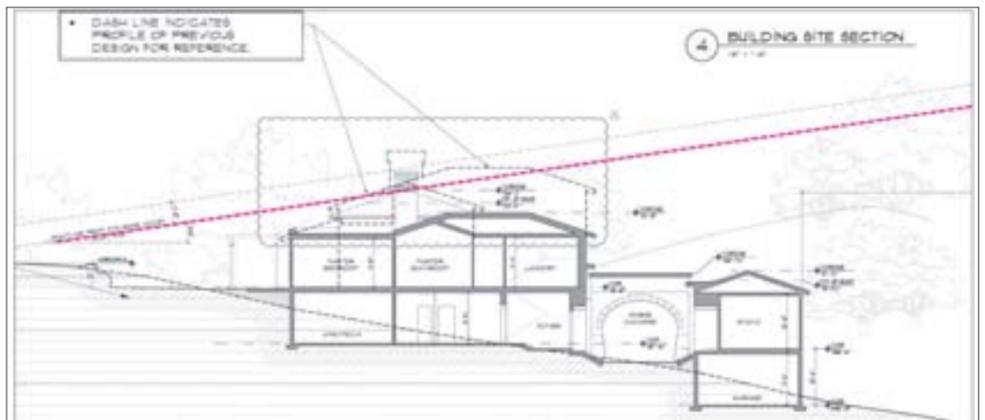
worse."

With rain predicted as the Lamorinda Weekly goes to press and throughout the following week, will this month's rainfall put the area back on track? Most rain trackers won't venture to say. While they are keen to measure and analyze the area's wet weather, rain trackers avoid forecasting.

"Looking back over the years of data I can see no pattern that would allow useful projections," Metzger said. "Patterns seem destined to be broken so it is not really a surprise. Besides we have never had a year that didn't have at least one month with above average rainfall, [but] I guess that is a pattern of sorts."

## Slight Ridgeline Silhouette Rejected by Commission

... continued from page A3



Drawing by Resort Design Architects of the proposed home on Monticello Road. Dashed line indicates profile of previous design to illustrate changes in the size of the structure, diagonal dashed lines shows the view from Rose Court.

"It's important to preserve hillsides for everyone, rather than just a few. I can't support putting a swimming pool on top of a ridgeline," said Commissioner Karen Maggio. Having to move a significant amount of soil was also a concern, grading 3,000 cubic yards just for the structure seemed excessive to Commissioners. In addition,

some grading would be necessary to complete the widening of the 130 foot long driveway to meet Fire District requirements.

Back in 2008, the same owners proposed a home on the thirteen acre site with a different architect. That project was smaller and a different style; it was approved by the Planning

Commission. Bowie pointed out that there is less visibility with the current iteration, than the original version – and that there's no requirement that a project be entirely concealed within the Hillside Overlay District. The Commissioners were not persuaded.

## Mo Levich Wins Prestigious 'Jefferson Award'

... continued from page A1

The Awards are meant to inspire volunteerism throughout the country.

"From the beginning, the awards have been based on the simple idea that one person can make a difference and, well, has Mo ever done that," said City Manager Steve Falk in his Weekly Summary. "I'm left wondering if it's just coincidental that Mo hails from Iowa – the same state [as] Meredith Wilson, the fellow who wrote the Music Man. Because that's what Mo is: he's Lafayette's Music Man."

When asked how he got involved in music education, Levich replied, "It started about fifteen years ago with friend Bob Athayde. I was invited to attend his 7 a.m. Jazz class, (at Stanley) and saw his valuable instruction in music and in life first-hand." Together they found a way to start the Lafayette Summer Music Program that continues musical inspiration and education during the summer. The Generations in Jazz Foundation was started shortly after that; the organization helps fund

scholarships for the music camp. Levich also proudly directs an orchestra of seniors, The Big Band of Rossmoor. As some of the elderly senior musicians passed on, it occurred to Levich to encourage younger musicians from Acalanes and Stanley Middle school to join. "There are no barriers in music," he said, referring to the mutually bene-

ficial relationship with the younger and older musicians.

"Mo is Lafayette's 'game changer'," said friend and fan Jay Lifson, executive director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. "Add Mo to the recipe, and it always tastes better. His vision and creativity lead to exceeding our very highest expectations."



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# Where did Roger Take the Picture?

One Man's Quest to Find Answers of Forgotten Railroad

By Sophie Braccini



Roger Heller's picture

Stuart J. Swiedler is somewhat obsessive. Obsessive and passionate. What makes him ultimately unique, is his inclination to share his quest with others. For three years now, seven days a week, seven hours a day, he has been researching, collecting, and analyzing pictures of the East Bay area to better understand local history and to show the transformations of the local landscape.

Audience members filled the community room of the Moraga Library on March 22 (some audience members sitting on side tables, others standing in doorways) to hear Swiedler's presentation. What sparked Thursday's fever? Swiedler's haunting quest to answer one question: "Where did Roger take the picture?"

Local resident Roger Heller has a collection of pictures of the trains and tracks from the past that used to cross the East Bay. The specific picture noted at Thursday's presentation is of a Sacramento Northern Railroad train running on tracks that seem to traverse familiar East Bay hills. But

which hills specifically?

The Sacramento Northern Railroad went through Lamorinda by way of Montclair and Canyon, and traversed Moraga and Lafayette before reaching Walnut Creek. It was built at the beginning of the 20th century to link San Francisco to Chico, via Sacramento, for both passengers and freight. It continued functioning in our area until February, 1957. Passenger transportation ceased in 1941.

Through a slide presentation, Swiedler took the audience on a railroad trip along the tracks that crossed the East Bay from Montclair to Moraga, from the '20s to present day, looking at every crossing to see if it could be "where Roger took the picture."

The slides showed a fascinating transformation of the local landscape: houses slowly invaded the wild hills, roads were carved, tunnels were dug. Photos of old newspaper articles underscored the land use battles that shook the East Bay at the time.

Finally, after going over the hills

from Oakland to Canyon, passing the Moraga School, the Barn and Saint Mary's College, audience members were shown the last crossing in Moraga at Bollinger Canyon. That's where Roger took the picture, Swiedler concluded.

Someone in the audience knew the answer from the start. "I remember that train and I recognized the crossing right away," said Moraga Historical Society Recording Secretary Susan Sperry, but she didn't spoil the surprise for others. Sperry and her family have been living in Bollinger Canyon for years and her father used to have a farm there.

After the presentation, members of the Society not only congratulated Swiedler on his monumental research, but also shared their personal stories about the train and/or the area.

You can see some of Swiedler's photos at [Eastbayhillsproject.org](http://Eastbayhillsproject.org) or access photos of the train at [bayareairailfan.org](http://bayareairailfan.org). Swiedler is scheduled to speak again May 23 at the Lafayette Presbyterian Church.

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Stuart Swiedler shows a picture of the train running by the Moraga Barn.

Photo Sophie Braccini

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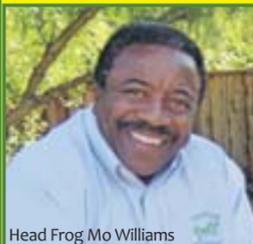
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## Record Participation in Lafayette's Science Fairs

Submitted by Janet Estee, LPIE Science Chair



Lafayette Elementary third-grader Alexander Sales expresses excitement about his Lemon Battery Experiment: "It actually lit! Wow!"

Photo courtesy Maryanne McCormick

Over 1,400 K-5 students participated in the Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE) sponsored science fairs in the Lafayette School District this year. Student science fair projects included classic experiments, as well as non-traditional ones. Stock performance analysis was shown by Lila Chatterton, and Dolbear's Law was investigated by fellow Burton Valley Elementary fifth-grade student Owen Holbreich, who correlated temperature with cricket chirp rates.

"In student science fair exhibits, there is powerful evidence of exceptional skill in collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking," said Lafayette School District Superintendent Fred Brill.

Helping to build the excitement

at the fairs, Lafayette community member Mark Brast explored the evening constellations, physical chemist and Lafayette Elementary School parent David Osborn, shattered flowers frozen with liquid nitrogen, and Springhill parent Nanette Heffernan's Green Team monitored energy consumption. LPIE instructors investigated the character of friction, and Lawrence Hall of Science challenged the squeamish with a hands-on display of live cockroaches. They were joined by Lindsay Wildlife Museum, Camp Edventuremore, Camp Galileo, Sangamo Biosciences, Astrowizard, and Mt. Diablo Bee Association.

The LPIE science fairs complement classroom science instruction.

Debbie Goetsch, Physician's Assistant and LPIE Science Instructor said, "The science fairs are great because they give kids a chance to explore and research an area of science they're interested in."

Yogurt Shack continued its generous tradition of providing a free yogurt coupon to every student participant.

Finishing the science fair season, the Rube Goldberg Machine Contest is scheduled from 6 to 9 p.m. March 28 at Stanley Middle School. Participating students must build a machine that can pop two balloons in 10 to 15 steps of energy transfer. There won't be a shortage of pulleys, batteries, dominos, catapults – or excitement – in the Stanley gym!

## Panel to Discuss Struggles, Successes of Professional Dance

By Sophie Braccini

The Academy Award winning movie *Black Swan* spurred a new curiosity about the demands of being a professional dancer, says Diablo Ballet dancer Erika Johnson. A graduate of the Saint Mary's College

LEAP (Liberal Education for Arts Professionals) program, Johnson will be part of a panel of professional dancers who will discuss their personal stories of struggle and success as part of "Inside the Dancer's Life:

*Black Swan & Beyond*" from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 5 at the Moraga Library.

"We'll talk about the discipline required for professional artists, the years of training, the travels, the in-



Ballet dancer Erika Johnson (right) with a fellow dancer Photo provided

juries," said Johnson, "then we will show examples of live performances on DVD." The discussion will be moderated by Diablo Ballet Artistic Director Lauren Jonas.

The presentation will be followed by a question and answer period. "Previous audiences have been very curious about this unusual job," said Johnson. "They wanted to know how we felt about the movie, if we go the gym, if we eat Twinkies. We love all the funny questions."

Johnson had an interesting professional path. Raised in Marin County, Johnson was hired by a large ballet company in Texas at age 18. She later returned to the Bay Area to join a smaller San Francisco dance

company, and registered in the Saint Mary's College LEAP program that allows professional ballet dancers to pursue higher education while continuing their careers. "You are hired between the age of 18 and 19, then you dance for 10 to 15 years, then what?" asked the young woman. "LEAP is a way to get a higher liberal arts education, studying the classics and working around dance schedules."

Johnson stopped dancing for three years to become a nurse, but recently returned to dance for Diablo Ballet.

An earlier panel discussion is scheduled at 10:30 a.m. April 5 at the Lafayette Senior Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd.

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## THE APP RAP

By Eric Pawlakos

### ICE "In Case of Emergency"

Developer: Sera-Apps

Cost: FREE

For: Android

Are you totally prepared for any emergency? Most of us think we are ready to go into action when needed, but the reality is, we probably have overlooked the basics. If you get in an accident, the difference between life and death could be in the details. Is your vital information readily available? If not, ICE may be your savior. ICE stands for "In Case of Emergency." The ICE app, developed by Sera-Apps, is a free app that I highly recommend as a download for all Android phones.

Here's how the ICE app works. It records and stores in your phone all the important information that would be needed when you are in trouble and can't respond. The first screen has four areas to input data. You can browse through the contacts in your address book assigning the relationship to you such as mother, father, spouse, child, friend, doctor, etc. Next, select the information icon to list your name, date of birth, blood

type, and home address. Third, in the area labeled "Notes," you record known allergies, medications, insurance phone and group numbers, medical conditions, organ donations, and any other pertinent personal notations. Last is the "Settings" icon where you set a password or change the language. While changing the language might not seem important if you are an English speaker, it is a very valuable tool when traveling abroad.

There are numerous ICE apps on the market, and many have more bells and whistles for a fee. ICE app by Sera-Apps is a solid, basic, app that is easy to use and free to download. iPhone users don't despair. Check out the free ICE app for the iPhone jointly developed by Donate Life America and Legalzoom that offers the option to email any contact on your emergency list.

Eric Pawlakos is a senior at Miramonte High School and on-air reporter for the teen radio program, Express Yourself!™



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# Gullible's Travails, or I'll Be a Fool for You

By Cathy Dausman

This Sunday is April 1, better known as April Fools' Day. The day has long been the province of pranksters, a time when the sly trickster is in rare form. One theory of its origin stems from a mid-1500s calendar reform.

In pre-Gregorian calendar time, New Year's was celebrated during March's Vernal Equinox. When France's Charles IX decreed New Year's was to be celebrated Jan. 1, those who kept to the old schedule and were still celebrating on April 1 were called "fools."

Today French school children chant "Poisson d'Avril" (or April Fish) when someone tapes a picture of a fish on another child's back. Lamorindans, too, have played and received their share of pranks. If you promise not to loosen the salt shakers, we'll share some with you:

Orinda resident Robin Bradley's mother put food dye in her children's milk on April Fools' Day. "You never knew what color your milk would be that morning," Bradley said.

Whittier "Whit" Porter (Moraga) took advantage of his company's music "on hold" selection and his friend's dislike of singer Neil Young. "On April first that year, I had a colleague call my friend. 'Mr. Johnson would like to speak to you about your job application. Would you hold while I transfer your call?'" The friend agreed, and spent the next 20 minutes suffering from Neil Young's Greatest Hits. "After a rousing rendi-

tion of 'Southern Man' I came on the line and said simply, 'April Fools!'" Porter said. "He wouldn't speak to me for months!"

As a child in Iceland, Erla Boren (Moraga) heard a radio station hoax. One farmer was so mad at being duped that the next year he called the station back, claiming his cow had just had a double-headed calf. The station even sent a crew to interview the man, Boren said!

Mary McCosker (Lafayette) was a die-hard Giants fan in elementary school. "My Dad woke me up on April Fools morning to tell me that

the Giants had traded Willie Mays!" she said. "I was devastated until he told me it was April Fools' Day. . . . Then I was mad at him."

Cindy Petrini's mother loved her morning coffee with lots of sugar. The night before April Fools' Day, Petrini (Moraga) snuck into the kitchen and swapped out sugar for salt. "I could hardly sleep I was so excited," she said. She awoke the next morning "to very unpleasant yelling and shouting" in the kitchen. "I got in so much trouble. I now play it pretty low on April Fools' Day hoping no one gets me."

## Fool Me Once...

Compiled by Cathy Dausman

The Museum of Hoaxes documents classic April Fools' jokes, including the Swiss spaghetti harvest, Sidd Finch, instant color TV, San Serriffe Island, and the left-handed Whopper:

<http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/hoax/aprilfool/index>

TV's Get Smart character, Maxwell Smart, was famous for getting out of tight spots with a well-timed "Would you believe..." See if you can spot the fable among the items below. But be careful, since it's almost April Fools' there might be some trickery involved:

- The yo-yo was once manufactured by a Marx brother.
- The Big Bang Theory actually debuted in 1952
- John and Yoko Ono report having dual sex change operations.
- Great Britain creates the Serious Organized Crime Agency

Answer: all of the above are true!

- Louie Marx was a toy maker
- The Big Bang Theory itself, not the TV show
- John and Yoko's hoax (their "report") occurred in 1970
- Yes, really. It's a national police agency with its own website: [www.soca.gov.uk/](http://www.soca.gov.uk/)

Source: <http://www.historyorb.com/events/april/1?p=2>

# 'Going Dark' Sheds Light on Climate Change

By Sophie Braccini



Photo courtesy Sustainable Lafayette

Lafayette will lead the way to sustainability from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. March 31 with its second annual celebration of Earth Hour. Created in 2007, participants turn off all non-essential electric lights for one hour to raise awareness of (and to take action against) climate change. This is the second year non-profit organization Sustainable Lafayette has led the project locally.

"Earth Hour was created by Australia's branch of the World Wildlife Federation," said Sustainable Lafayette Board Member Linda Riebel. "In 2011, the movement grew to 135 countries. Last March, over 5,200 cities and towns (including Lafayette) turned off lights for Earth Hour or held some other creative event to honor our planet."

Residents of Lamorinda and beyond are invited to meet at the Lafayette Plaza by 8:30 p.m. (southeast corner of Moraga Rd. and Mt.

Diablo Blvd.) on March 31 before Lafayette City Council Member Brandt Andersson turns off all the plaza lights and addresses the crowd.

While working at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, Andersson researched using daylight instead of electric lighting, and matching lighting needs to the tasks being performed.

"I learned two things," said the council member. "First, my boss, who was usually the last one to leave on Friday night, made a habit of going around the building before he left turning out lights that were not being used. In the 30 minutes that he spent each week switching lights off, he figured he more than paid for his substantial senior UC professor's salary. Second, we monitored some church meeting rooms in Missouri a few years ago. The rooms were well lit by skylights during the day, but we also found



that as night fell, the lights stayed off (even though meetings continued) until the lighting levels were a small fraction of the lighting typically needed for a meeting. The folks in those meetings explained that as the sun went down and the light lowered, it got pretty darn dark before anyone felt the need to get up and switch on the lights. The bottom line is that if you turn off unused lights, and don't use more light than you really need, you'll save money, and a little bit of the earth as well. Earth Hour helps send that message."

Residents are encouraged to bring candles and, like last year, the fire dancers will be performing.

"This year we want to emphasize ways to save electricity," said Reibel.

To that end, Reibel designed a pledge card that proposes different actions people can take to conserve, including: buy or borrow a Kill-a-Watt gadget and plug it into various electric devices to see how much electricity is used; try out a solar oven; replace a conventional light bulb (or ten) with a CFL or LED; use less air conditioning in the summer; air dry clothes; hibernate computers at night; and (finally) seriously investigate solar power for your home or business.

For more information about Earth Hour and ways to save electricity, go to [sustainablelafayette.org](http://sustainablelafayette.org).



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# Sports Reporters Needed

The Lamorinda Weekly is looking for additional sports reporters.

If you are interested in covering a variety of sports or just one or two sports, please email [wendy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:wendy@lamorindaweekly.com) and include a writing sample. Our immediate need is for baseball, softball and lacrosse coverage.

## 'Young Goethe in Love' Premieres at Orinda Theatre

By Sophie Braccini



Is "Young Goethe in Love" historically accurate? No. "It is more a mixture of facts and fiction," answered Director Phillip Stölzl to German media when his movie about the most famous German poet and philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was released in 2010. The film will be shown for one week as part of the Orinda Theatre's International Film Showcase series beginning April 6.

The film stirred a bit of controversy when it was initially released in

Germany. No film had yet depicted the life of the almost universal genius who invented such things as roller skates and discovered the pharyngeal bone. Yet with such a rich history, the film depicts the man at the beginning of his adult life. The young man is shown as an insecure poet who has just failed his law exams, during a time of self-doubt and self-discovery — a defining moment in his life.

The story begins with the description of the life of a trifling, unsuccessful poet named Johann

Wolfgang Goethe. He is sent by his father to a little sleepy town where he falls in love with beautiful Charlotte Buff. The film gives a great depiction of their fresh young love. But things take a turn for the worst and Goethe ends up in prison.

Desperately, he starts writing, and from that source of inspiration comes "The Sorrows of Young Werther," the novel that made Goethe the first almost-overnight literary superstar in Europe.

The book started "Werther-fever" all over Europe, with young men dressing like young Werther. This may be why Stölzl directed the movie to appeal to a younger audience.

The dialogues are snappy with a mix of modern and old-fashioned language, the pop-music is good and definitely modern. Stölzl's Goethe is light years from the literary icon he became. Instead, he is shown with all the urging of a hot-blooded lover. He runs wild in the woods and under the rain with his beloved, he suffers, fights; he is made of real flesh, suffering in the throes of passion.

The film is directed with great mastery by Stölzl, the rhythm is fast, and the overall esthetic is quite enchanting. Alexander Fehling, who plays Goethe, is very believable when he falls for Miriam Stein, who plays Lotte Buff, a real natural beauty who can play with a very large emotional range.

While the movie might make some scholarly and literary purists turn up their noses, others can get to know Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as an entertaining movie hero.

## Beau/Derek on ★★★☆ Salmon Fishing in the Yemen

"Salmon Fishing in the Yemen" attempts to dilute, if not to eradicate, the Arab stereotypes created by the dichotomy between Eastern and Western civilizations through a dream that is incomprehensible.

Enter the bountiful wealth provided by an Arab sheik—portrayed by Amr Waked—whose mission in life is to improve the living conditions of his war-torn country, Yemen. The potentate's plan is to create a vestige of an implausibility and impossibility by turning the desert into a pond filled with premium Scottish salmon. It is through his passion for fishing that he conceals this noble idea with his esurient and unfathomable desire for economic progress.

The script is written by Simon Beaufoy, well-known for his work in the Oscar-winning film, "Slumdog Millionaire." Beaufoy is also famous for creating extraordinary and noble lives through unremarkable characters or "commoners" in movie scripts. This, once again, is evident in "Salmon Fishing in the Yemen."

Enter Fred, a fisheries expert played by Ewan McGregor, and Harriet, the sheik's representative from London. Off they go to Yemen, with the common purpose of exploring the sheik's dream. However, with the flagrant and war-stricken region at hand, their mission turns to a poignant humanitarian service. The ending is predictable and yet thoughtful.

Seemingly enough, as the movie aspires for the lowest common denominator between war and peace, moviegoers will be in the bifurcation of disparity — either you will like the film or you won't.

Come to Lamorinda Theatres and perhaps you can find the common ground between East and West in this wonderful Indie film!

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



## Family Focus

### Parental Discretion Advised

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

One of the most common parenting problems I see, especially in our era of reality and talk television and constant electronic accessibility, is difficulty maintaining discretion with one's children. We already have the problem in our society of children becoming too aware of serious adult domestic and personal problems displayed on magazine covers, internet stories, blogs, video clips, and television shows. But, in addition, many parents unintentionally reveal too much about themselves or about others to their children and consequently cross boundaries that need to be in place between parent and child. We all know how important it is to limit exposure to certain media when children are young and impressionable. But what some parents fail to realize is that *they* are sometimes the source of unhealthy exposure for their children.

Some examples, all taken from my therapy practice but with identifying information changed, are as follows:

- Karyn brings in her 11-year-old daughter, Cassidy, for treatment for anxiety. Cassidy is increasingly unable to spend time at friends' houses or even at school without developing severe stomach pain. She does not want to be separated from her mother. Cassidy's mother, Karyn, has been struggling in her marriage and frequently cries when she is alone in her bedroom or bathroom. She talks to her sister and one of her close friends about her problems, either in person or on the phone. Karyn has always been a doting mom, but she doesn't realize that Cassidy is well-aware of her state of mind and frequently eavesdrops on her conversations and her meltdowns. Cassidy is a sensitive child who worries about her mom, herself, and the other members of her

family. Children usually feel helpless in being able to effect change and can only worry and despair when they see signs of serious family problems.

- Terry and Anita call to have me see their daughter, Bryn, a high school sophomore, because she has become increasingly defiant with them, and her grades have dropped from a B+ average to low C's. Bryn is a sweet, sensitive teen who confides to me that she actually feels guilty about her behavior and her poor performance in school. But she is also very angry at her father. He is a successful attorney and she has always looked up to him. But recently she has discovered that he smokes pot on a daily basis and looks at inappropriate websites on the computer. These behaviors are very distressing to Bryn, but she feels too uncomfortable to address them with her father. From my perspective, Bryn's father, Terry, is an adult and he can make his own choices. But he didn't protect his daughter well enough from the effects of his choices, and she has suffered as a result.

- Laurie is 44 and the married mother of three children, ages 10-17. She has been having an affair with a married man from another state whom she met online. They meet every two months or so, and they talk and text constantly. Laurie's husband works long hours as a business executive, and she is certain that he doesn't suspect anything. Laurie comes in to see me because she is confused and scared. But as we proceed to discuss her situation, she acknowledges that she has been so distracted that she didn't realize her children knew about her extramarital relationship. Understandably, she now adds extreme guilt to the mix since she never wanted them to know. But the damage has been done be-

cause Laurie did not effectively shield her children from the details of her messy life.

Unfortunately, there are too many examples to cite them all here. In my next column I will address situations where parents cross boundaries and become enmeshed with their children; the parents who say their teen children are their best friends. In all of these instances, children lose their sense of security and safety when they are exposed to more than they are emotionally or intellectually equipped to handle. They suffer and can become depressed, anxious, angry, and/or rebellious. They can turn to drugs, alcohol, eating-disordered behavior, cutting, and other means of escaping from their feelings and from their out-of-control lives. Parents did not intend harm in any of these cases. It is up to all of us to be mindful and cautious in limiting our children's exposure to adult issues.



**Margie Ryerson, MFT**, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. Contact her at 925-376-9323 or [margierye@yahoo.com](mailto:margierye@yahoo.com). She is the author of *Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship and Appetite for Life: Inspiring Stories of Recovery from Anorexia, Bulimia, and Compulsive Overeating.*

## Springhill Students Send Message About Education Funding Cuts:

"Don't Blow It!"

By Cathy Tyson



Springhill students and parents blow bubbles at recent "Don't Blow It!" rally  
Photo courtesy Jennifer Paul

Despite gray skies and drizzle, a group of Springhill Elementary school students came out to blow bubbles before class March 15 as part of the "This Budget Blows" campaign to encourage parent support for adequate and timely funding for Lafayette's schools. The date was chosen specifically because it was pink slip day — a day when thousands of teachers throughout the state received preliminary lay-off notices. The main message of the morning rally, sponsored by parent-led, grassroots organization, Educate Our State was "Don't blow it! Pass a budget that funds education now."

Funding for the next school year is uncertain — it will depend on the outcome of the state legislature budget negotiations this summer and the passing of a proposed tax measure on the November ballot. At stake is a statewide \$4.8 billion trigger cut in the governor's budget. Proponents argue

that it's impossible for schools to plan for teachers and programs with money that may or may not arrive, months after school officially starts.

"Parents want to bring attention to the crisis facing our schools," said Jenifer Paul, co-founder of Lafayette for Education, a group that is locally trying to raise awareness about the state of education in California. "Because the proposed budget is dependent upon an initiative passing long after school begins, districts are looking at cutting 20,000 teachers statewide, and shortening the school year. Enough is enough. Education must be a priority in California. We must adequately fund all of our schools and do so consistently."

The Lafayette rally was one of many throughout the state from Burlingame to Sherman Oaks. Organizers encouraged parents to send letters to state legislators to voice their concerns by signing on to [ThisBudgetBlows.org](http://ThisBudgetBlows.org).

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July 30-Aug. 3 • Aug. 6-10  
Aug. 13-17 • Aug. 20-24  
Aug 27-31

# Driving While Adolescent

What you and your kids need to know

By Laurie Snyder

On Lamorinda's roads, even mature drivers find it challenging to dodge darting deer without sending their cars over embankments or into telephone poles. But when you're "fresh out of the box," you think you know everything, says Orinda Police Officer Mike Gray. "Today's kids have got a lot more to deal with than we did."

The national statistics are worrisome. More American teens die from car accidents than any other cause. Inexperience remains a major factor in teen crashes – as it was when today's parents were teens. The twist today, however, is the added impact of technology, coupled with other temptations.

Texting, talking, or tinkering with cell phones, iPods and other electronic devices, as well wider access than ever before to alcohol and drugs, have been cited as key contributors in a number of high-profile crashes.

Gray thought one young man he pulled over was texting, but he was actually watching a video – while driving. To avoid getting caught texting while driving, Gray says teens now hide their cell phones down by their legs – meaning they're looking away from the road for even longer and in more dangerous ways.

Nationally, the risk of crashing a car – for adults as well as for teens – is four times higher while using a cell phone.

"It doesn't take a lot to distract teen drivers – or any driver," Gray said. Think about how much ground you cover at 40 miles per hour while looking down for four seconds to text. "You can do a lot of damage in that 600 feet."

Because Lamorinda roads can be challenging even on the best of days, the following statistics should give area parents even greater pause:

National statistics show that nearly four out of every 10 teens killed in automobile accidents had blood alcohol content (BAC) levels greater or equal to 0.01 percent. And the April 2011 issue of *Accident Analysis and Prevention* stated a full 75 percent of serious teen driver crashes nationwide hap-

pened because teens were going too fast for road conditions, were distracted, or failed to scan for, detect and respond to hazards.

That's exactly what happened in Orinda recently. A car that crashed on Ivy Drive was estimated to have been traveling between 53 to 60 miles per hour (over 30 miles per hour over the posted speed limit) when it sideswiped another vehicle. One passenger was severely injured.

"The speed limits are set at what they are," Gray said, "because that's the safe speed for maintaining the roadway." For beginning drivers, depth perception, vision and line of sight are not as well developed as they are for more mature drivers.

Gray, who is a member of the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department, served on San Ramon's graveyard shift before coming to Orinda five years ago. He has witnessed it all – kids, parties, property destroyed when a car hits a neighbor's car or house, people fleeing the scene of accidents. His is the face you or your kids are most likely to see peering through your driver's side window if you're pulled over in Orinda – and his is the face you'll see if your teen ends up in traffic court.

He understands that parents

like the peace of mind that cell phones provide, but urges parents and their teen drivers to put those phones in their car trunks so they won't be tempted to talk or text while driving.

"It's hands-free, not ear-free," he said.

What concerns Gray even more is the prevalence of alcohol use by area teen drivers. Although Orinda hasn't had many traffic fatalities, drinking and driving has become one of the biggest issues faced by the City's police and parents.

Area kids, afraid of being caught drinking and driving, have been fleeing accident scenes. When that happens, noted Gray, drivers face the added charge of hit and run. It's important for parents to teach their children that it's better to behave responsibly and stay with their cars in the event of an accident.

For Gray, any accident is personal. He's a dad. He tears up when he thinks of the young Lamorindans who have been hurt or killed over the years. He remembers every single one of them, and it clearly pains him as much as if those kids had been his own.

He'd rather not have to pull anyone over – but he'll do it to save the lives of you, your children, and your neighbors.

### Stats to Remember:

The greatest chance of crashing one's car happens within the first six months of becoming licensed.

The fatal crash rate for drivers ages 16 to 19 is four times higher than for drivers ages 26 to 69 – and, at night, nearly twice as high for 16-year-olds.

Two-thirds of all teens killed are not wearing seatbelts.

#### Parent-Teen Driving Resources:

To make sure that you and your teens are and remain the best drivers that you can be, check out the following websites:

**Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute:**

teendriversource.org; www.teendriversource.org/

**California Department of Motor Vehicles Key Sites:**

**Parent Teen Training Guide:**

www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/dl603/dl603.pdf

**Selecting a Driving School:**

www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/brochures/fast\_facts/ffd133.htm

Teen Driver Web: www.dmv.ca.gov/teenweb/index.htm

**Edmunds.com:**

Finding Driver's Ed Programs That Really Work:

www.edmunds.com/car-safety/finding-drivers-ed-programs-that-really-work.html

# Checkmate: Los Perales No. 1

Submitted by May Lo



The Los Perales chess team took home first place honors at the Berkeley Chess School Elementary School Tournament on Saturday, March 10 at Bancroft Elementary School in Walnut Creek. Sixty students from 21 schools east of the Oakland hills competed in five games of chess during five hours of play.

Los Perales' 10-member team held first place through all five games. Lamorinda schools (Los Perales, Del Rey and Glorietta) dominated the tournament and captured the top three positions. Rheem was also in attendance.

Los Perales' top four players (Ryan Yick, Richard Gross, Delu Zhao and Sean Donovan) received trophies.

The remaining team members received medals. In addition, LP fifth-grader Ryan Yick won the Best Game Award trophy.

The Los Perales chess team is comprised of students from every grade and is coached by Berkeley Chess School instructor David Stambuch at the LP chess after-school enrichment program.

#### Los Perales Chess Team

- Alex Clare (3rd Grade)
- Sean Donovan (4th Grade)
- Zack Donovan (1st Grade)
- Leopold Gross (2nd Grade)
- Richard Gross (4th Grade)
- Jacqueline Huebner (2nd Grade)
- Jeremiah Minz (3rd Grade)
- Hari Stoyanov (3rd Grade)
- Ryan Yick (5th Grade)
- Delu Zhao (3rd Grade)

#### Top Ten Schools

1. Los Perales 15.5 (Moraga)
2. Del Rey 13.5 (Orinda)
3. Glorietta 13 (Orinda)
4. Dorris-Eaton 12.5 (Walnut Creek)
5. Parkmead Elem. 11 (Walnut Creek)
6. Palmer School 10 (Walnut Creek)
7. Walnut Acres 6.5 (Walnut Creek)
8. Coyote Creek 5.5 (San Ramon)
9. Valle Verde 5.5 (Walnut Creek)
10. Buena Vista Elem 5.5 (Walnut Creek)

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# Acalanes Parents' Club Launches Grant Program

By Cathy Dausman

Seven Acalanes High School groups will receive individual grants of between \$2,000 and \$8,000 from Acalanes Parents' Club (APC) this spring, says APC President Wendy Poling. Poling says the grants are part of a "first-ever" program, and "an exciting new avenue for both AHS [Acalanes High School] and AUHSD [Acalanes Unified High School District]."

The idea was first presented at a summer parent's club meeting by AHS Treasurer Farshid Arman.

The grant committee, comprised of AHS Principal Aida Glimme, Poling, APC's Mary Newman (vice president) and Arman, received 17 applications. Actual dollar amounts for the winners were unavailable, as the recipients have not yet made their purchases.

Grant disbursements will be overseen by Glimme and a faculty advisor to ensure the funds are spent in accordance with site goals and standards. Glimme says the grants "encouraged our staff to be creative and innovative. It allowed them to go beyond what a typical classroom looks like, all in an effort to improve learning."

The math department received two grants, one for a "classroom flip-

ping" pilot program and another for a wireless TI Nspire calculator system. The visual and performing arts department received a grant, which, along with financial aid from Lafayette Partners in Education, will establish a digital student gallery in the Performing Arts Center. The school's world language program received a grant for books, DVDs and a field trip to support culture immersion. The AHS student club will use its grant money for promotional materials and support for its Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) program, and the English and journalism department will bring a live performance by the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival to the AHS campus and put *Blueprint*, the school newspaper, online.

The Acalanes Parent Club operates on a budget of \$377,000 for the 2011-2012 school year. Poling says their funding "comes from the generous donations of Acalanes parents."

"We're hoping the launch of the program is successful and that we can continue offering grants in the future," she said. "We've already added it to the discussion list when 2012-2013 budget meetings start with administration next month."

## Lamorinda Weekly

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# Spike in Local Burglaries Prompts Businesses to be Proactive

By Sophie Braccini



Orinda Theatre Square in the evening

Photo Doug Kohen

During his five years with the Orinda Police Department, detective Dan Jeffries saw only a handful of burglaries, but over the past few months he says there has been a spike.

These recent events have caused the Orinda police to somewhat modify their patrol pattern. The incidences have also reinforced the need for local businesses to come together and to find ways to prevent more crimes from happening.

"It was quite an unpleasant experience," said Entourage owner Gino Chiodo, remembering the night in March when someone broke the window of his salon in Theatre Square. "Unfortunately we've been broken into before." On that night, unidentified burglars smashed three business windows in Theatre Square: another at Shelby's, as well as one at Lava Pit above Entourage. These incidents followed rooftop intrusions in two businesses along Moraga Way, and an early-January theft at the new Flying A Gas Station near the entrance of eastbound Hwy 24.

"We have changed our patrol pattern to have more presence in the late night/morning hours," said Jeffries.

The detective also thinks business owners should take more preventative measures.

"Video surveillance cameras many businesses are using is of poor quality," said the Detective, "and some of the business owners do not know how to operate the [equipment]." Jeffries said that video footage is the best way for police to identify a burglar. He suggested the owner of the building (Theatre Square) install a system to film the access and alleyways of the Square, "and have large signs indicating that they are doing so," he said. "These burglaries are planned; thieves explore the areas they plan to attack. Signs like those can be a good deterrent."

In a note to the Chamber of Commerce, Orinda Police Chief Jeff Jennings recommended the following prevention strategies: "Alarm your business," Jennings wrote. "Arm it every day, and if you don't have one, consider installing one. Deposit your daily cash receipts at the bank. Keep a look out for suspicious behavior, and if you notice something call the Dispatch at 284-5010."

Chiodo appreciated the chief's

advice. "From now on we are taking all our cash away at night and we are leaving the register opened and visibly empty," he said.

Detective Jeffries also recommends that business owners attend the regular Orinda Watch meetings conducted by the Chamber of Commerce. "We work together with the support of the Orinda Police Department and share ideas about how to make things better," said past president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce Sue Breedlove when the group started in 2011.

Detective Jeffries often attends the meetings, and believes organizing the businesses can be a good preventative tool. "Businesses can watch out for each other and share best practices." Keith Miller, the president of the Orinda Chamber added that these meetings are open to all Lamorinda-area businesses interested in sharing concerns and ideas about crime prevention.

"It's all about safety and all are welcome," he said. Contact the Orinda Chamber of Commerce at OrindaChamber.org for more information.

## business briefs

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

### itrim Coming to Lafayette

855-my-itrim



If a slender Swedish body is your ultimate fitness objective and you live in Lamorinda, you are in luck. Next June, itrim, the Swedish fitness company, will open its first United States Studio in Lafayette. Registration begins in April. Jill Kinney is the United States CEO of itrim, partnering with the Stockholm-based company. She and

husband John Kinney are also the founders of Club One, a fitness club with about 15 locations in the Bay Area (mostly in San Francisco and the South Bay). "itrim is more than a diet and more than an exercise program," said Kinney. "It is a personalized solution to help people change their behavior patterns." People who sign up for itrim are assigned a lifestyle coach to help them modify their eating and exercise habits. Clients typically sign up for a year or two and, after the initial assessment, meet every other week with their coach as well as with a support group to work toward a common goal. Kinney said that an average of 65 percent of members from the seven-year-old Swedish program kept the weight off even after they left the program. "Everything is coordinated, there is

no diet pill, no shots," said Kinney, who indicated that the objective is to serve the overweight but otherwise healthy population. The program's exercise portion focuses on strength training (so weight loss is not done to the detriment of muscle mass) and on a lot of walking. "One of the first things we ask our clients is to get a pedometer," she said. "The objective is 10,000 steps a day." Kinney will open the first American itrim next to Clocks Etc. on Moraga Rd. and will have an office ready by the beginning of April to hand out information and accept applications. For more information, contact Kinney at [jill.kinney@itrim.us](mailto:jill.kinney@itrim.us).

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If itrim does not help you get back that dream figure, don't despair. There is another "i" resource in Lamorinda. Dr. Kevin M. Wong recently opened the Orinda i-Lipo Laser Center that utilizes the Chromogenix, i-Lipo Therapeutic Laser. Dr. Wong says that i-Lipo is a non-invasive, pain-free, drug-free body sculpting and fat reduction system that targets stubborn fat areas and provides immediate, and long-lasting measurable results. i-Lipo is FDA approved. It focuses a specific energy into the fat layer which stimulates the cells to convert their stored triglycerides into fatty acids and glycerol, and to open pores in the fat cell's outer membrane which allows these smaller molecules to leak out into the adjacent tissue. The fat cells then lose their round shape and collapse, much like a grape changing into a raisin. The released contents are then absorbed by the lymphatic system and transported around the body to be burned as energy. The designers of the system say that the i-Lipo laser creates the same, natural, metabolic process as the brain does when the body needs energy by converting and releasing the fat cells' contents. "Compared to surgical Liposuction, i-Lipo is much more affordable with similar results," said Dr. Wong. "It is painless and completely safe and can be used on men and women, on all skin types, and on any body areas where fatty deposits under the skin are a problem."

### News from the three Chambers of Commerce

#### Lafayette

• April Mixer, Wednesday, April 11, 5:30 to 7 p.m., Lafayette Physical Therapy 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd. # B110.

• Social Media Workshop, Wednesday, April 18, 8 to 9:30 a.m., Lafayette Library & Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Create a Business Facebook Page! FREE to Chamber members ~ \$15 for non-members RSVP: [workshops@lafayettechamber.org](mailto:workshops@lafayettechamber.org).

• Ribbon Cutting, Thursday, April 12, 5 p.m., for sewnow! fashion studio in their new location, 3534 Golden Gate Way.



Photo provided

• Great March Mixer at the Roundup Saloon. The Chamber reported what a great time the members had at the March mixer, hosted by Karen and Mike Johnson (pictured), owners of the historic Roundup Saloon. "Great food and good cheer streamed through the bar as guests of the Chamber and the locals chatted," said Johnson. "Thanks to the Chamber members who donated raffle prizes: Oakland A's, Local Happenings Magazine, Roundup Saloon, Risk Concepts, Titan Mortgage Brokers, Lafayette Car Wash and Lamorinda Winegrowers Association."

#### Moraga

• Registration now open for the 6th Annual Moraga Community Faire (scheduled for May 12). To register and reserve a booth, go to the Chamber's web site: [Moragachamber.com](http://Moragachamber.com) or contact Ellen Beans at [ellen.beans@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.beans@gmail.com). Businesses and individuals are invited to sponsor a colorful 96-inch banner that will hang on Moraga street light poles for three weeks before the Faire opens. Download the flyer online at [moragachamber.org](http://moragachamber.org) or contact Jane Russell at [JaneRussell57@aol.com](mailto:JaneRussell57@aol.com)

#### Orinda

• Ribbon Cutting for Visual Entree Optometry, Friday, March 30, 4 p.m., 2 Theatre Square # 114, Orinda. Join Dr. Stephanie Lee, O.D. as the Chamber welcomes this firm. For more information check their website at [www.visualentreeoptometry.com](http://www.visualentreeoptometry.com).

• Save the date for the big April Mixer at Wilder, April 17, 5:30 to 7 p.m., with cooking a demonstration by Charles Vollmar Chef Instructor / Culinary Health Educator / Wellness and Lifestyle Consultant, Epicurean Exchange.

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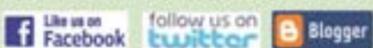
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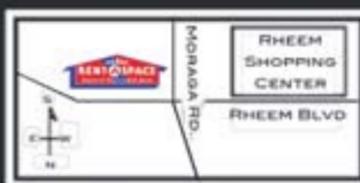
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# A Sport of the Mind

Submitted by Gerard van Steyn



Happy Valley Elementary team members Bella Gladden, Elena Mountin, Bradley Sides, Madeline Smith, Tyler Smith, Hayden van Steyn and Jacob van Steyn. Photo Gerard van Steyn

As most adults know, success in work / life is most often about being able to work effectively in a team environment, think creatively, develop unique solutions and then execute the plan – experiences that kids don't get enough of through traditional academics and after school activities. Because of the need for more opportunities to develop creative thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to work in inventive teams, Odyssey of the Mind (OoTM) has become a successful, growing worldwide program that fosters these life-skills in children and young adults.

OoTM team members apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to performing their own interpretations of literary classics. The foundation of OoTM is that every idea and solution must come entirely from the kids, with no coach or parental suggestion or input. Teams then bring their solutions to competitions on the local, state, and world level. Thousands of teams from throughout the U.S. and from about 25 other countries participate in Odyssey of the Mind.

Over the last four-plus months many local OoTM teams have been working hard to independently imagine, create, build, develop and perform their ideas, and to work collaboratively as teams, and have fun. On Saturday, Feb. 25, a record number of over 200 Bay Area teams of up to seven children each competed in the San Francisco Bay Region Odyssey Tournament.

One local team from Happy Valley Elementary developed a creative solution to their chosen problem in

which scientists realistically travel across the ocean, are sucked into a mechanical moving vortex, enter a two-dimensional computer world as flat people, collect samples of computer worms, escape and return to evaluate and report on their findings and all while running into funny, mischievous sea creatures. To construct and execute their ideas, they independently worked with a dozen different power tools and self-wrote and refined their script, costumes and acting.

The third-grade Rheem team (including members Emma Bennett, Jane Burcham, Olivia Hillhouse, Connor Johnson, Quincy Morgridge, Jamie Murray, and Michael Pien with coaches Jennifer Johnson and Lenore Morgridge) took first place in their division. Their problem emphasized math by constructing a structure that could support as much weight as possible. The team constructed a 12-gram

balsa wood structure that supported an amazing 235 lbs before it was crushed. The team also wrote and performed "The Lost Treasure" about pirates seeking gold, complete with a device which multiplied the treasure they found.

The following 12 Lamorinda teams won at the regional tournament and will be competing at the state Odyssey tournament on March 31:

- Glorieta Elementary School
- Happy Valley Elementary School
- Lafayette Rotary (high school team)
- Moraga Rotary (elementary team A)
- Moraga Rotary (elementary team B)
- Moraga Rotary Club (high school team A)
- Orinda Intermediate School (blue team)
- Orinda Masonic (high school team)
- Sleepy Hollow Elementary School (green team)
- Stanley Middle School (team A)
- Stanley Middle School (team B)
- Wagner Ranch Elementary School

Odyssey of the Mind helps kids develop critical life skills that they may not otherwise gain through traditional classroom work or youth sports. To learn more, check out [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odyssey\\_of\\_the\\_Mind](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odyssey_of_the_Mind).



From left: Lenore Morgridge, Emma Bennett, Quincy Morgridge, Michael Pien, Connor Johnson, Jane Burcham, Olivia Hillhouse, Jamie Murray and Jennifer Johnson. Photo provided

## TEEN SCENE

### Consider This: A Successful...Failure?

By Steven Zhou

Did you get accepted? What place did you win? Have you been awarded a scholarship?

When it comes to life, we all want to succeed. Competition seems to be the gas that fuels our teenage psyches. As I write this, I'm sitting on the floor at a public speaking tournament hoping to qualify for the State Championships. College acceptance letters are being delivered to friends and many are experiencing the joy of being "chosen." A couple of days ago, our Express Yourself Teen Radio on-air team was notified that our program is the most listened to show throughout the entire world on the Voice America Kids Network. In only three months of broadcasting, we are ranked number one.

One might argue that success is the trophy from the tournament, the acceptance from the desired college, or the status of being the top radio program worldwide. However, these trophies and accolades can only last a maximum length of a lifetime. Miramonte senior Lisa Chang shared her valuable viewpoint. "Learn to find enjoyment even when you don't end up on top. Those who are truly happy are those who love what they're doing." Instead of always trying to win, perhaps the loftier goal is to love the experience and make an impact on the world that survives after we're gone.

High school years are comprised of competition, from coveted positions on sport teams to auditions for the starring roles in school plays, but at what cost? A friend of mine wrote a paper describing the negative effects of over-competitiveness, citing examples of students who get professionals to take the SAT for them, or athletes who use illegal substances to gain strength.

When we examine the motives of someone who cheats to get an "A", or a student driven to the point of suicide by the pressure of "not measuring up", there would be little argument that their success equates failure.

Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor and 20th century psychologist, wrote, "Success cannot be pursued, rather, it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's dedication to a cause greater than oneself." While not a perfect definition of success, the quotation summarizes the lives of people who made a lasting impact through dedication to service such as Martin Luther King's work with civil rights or Gandhi's devotion to freedom. As teenagers, our true success could be measured with our efforts to make a positive difference.

As I wonder how to help Express Yourself Teen Radio continue to be number one, it dawns on me that the success of the program is based on these questions: Are we providing a voice to teenagers around the globe and are we enjoying this adventure? How we influence and improve must be the reward. Otherwise, in our pursuit of the physical prize, we may just end up successfully failing.

Steven Zhou, a senior at Miramonte High School, is the administrator and co-host of the international teen radio program, Express Yourself!

Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, [CynthiaBrian.com](mailto:CynthiaBrian.com).

The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

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# Spring 2012 Fashion Trends for Lamorinda Women

By Moya Stone

**T**he local weather thinks spring arrived sometime in January, but the official start of the season is now and that means it's time to talk (and wear) new spring fashions. For 2012 it's all about bright colors, patterns, feminine silhouettes, and dresses.

Specialtees in Lafayette has stocked plenty of options for the season including the classic wrap dress by Diane von Furstenberg and the current must-have maxi dress by Trina Turk. White peasant blouses with colorful embroidery are big this year and Specialtees has a nice selection by 3-J Workshop. Color is essential for all fashionistas and orange in particular is hot right now, but for some of us a little orange goes along way. Specialtees comes to the rescue with an array of blouses, t-shirts, and tank tops to help add just a bit of the color du jour.

For the woman who likes to mix and match, Pendleton store on Mt. Diablo in Lafayette offers blouses and skirts in pastel colors and floral prints. Pendleton has been an American staple in woven fabrics for men's and women's clothing since 1863. The Lafayette store has a small selection of summer suits, cotton sweaters, and Oxford shirts, which are all good looks for the office, charity luncheons, or a casual daytime wedding.

According to Shila Unal from Zahra Boutique Salon in Lafayette, Lamorinda women really go for the Boho look. This season Unal is selling maxi dresses and longer skirts paired with embellished tank tops or poncho-style blouses by BB Dekota. "The whole look for Lamorinda moms," says Unal, "is loose and comfy but with a flattering fit ... nothing boxy." Got stripes? Unal says they are a popular choice this season in dresses, skirts, and tops.

Vintage-inspired fabrics and designs by Darling are also well-received at Zahra Boutique. Floral fabrics, lace detailing and flowy dresses are signature looks for the UK based company, which is exclusive in the area to Zahra. Lafayette residents and regular customers, Nicole Graves and Nicole Jones like Darling's softer silhouettes and pastel colors although they say this is new for them. The friends usually go for more of a black and gray edgy style, but shopping at Zahra has opened their eyes. "This place breaks my comfort zone," said Jones one evening while attending a trunk show at Zahra. Previously ill-at-ease in color and anything frilly, Jones has fallen in love with the femininity of soft textures and bright colors, which is good timing for her as spring 2012 has been dubbed The Return of the Pretty.

Lots of color, pretty dresses, and above all comfort, it's all here for us this season at our wonderful Lafayette boutiques. No excuses - go forth in style.

Moya Stone is a local fashion writer and blogger at [www.overdressedforlife.com](http://www.overdressedforlife.com).



Spring dress and cardigan by Darling available at Zahra Boutique Salon in Lafayette.



Burning Torch available at Specialtees

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## The Lamorinda Republican Women's Federated Hosts Spring Vintage Fashion Show

By Moya Stone



Vintage dealer and stylist Jean Karevidas and LRWF Vice President/Membership Chair Elsie Euing with Dixie, the fashionable canine.

**T**he Lamorinda Republican Women's Federated (LRWF) will celebrate spring with a luncheon and vintage fashion show at noon on April 27 at the Orinda Country Club.

The event is a fundraiser for Sentinels of Freedom Foundation, which helps severely injured veterans with education, housing, and job placement. The LRWF is a club of like-minded Republican women who join forces on community outreach and education.

Elsie Euing, vice president and membership chair of LRWF, has been working with local vintage clothing dealer Jean Karavidas to organize the fashion show. Karavidas says she is happy to volunteer her time for such a worthy cause.

Karavidas is styling the show using clothing from her own collection as well as a few pieces from Euing's closet, including gowns from I. Magnin & Co. and a mouton fur coat. "We will show mostly eveningwear but also some day wear," says Karavidas. "Each piece is elegant and one of a kind." To show women how to update a vintage look, Karavidas intends to pair outfits with contemporary accessories. Pieces from her collection will be for sale.

A lineup of male and female models, many of them LRWF members, will strut their stuff in vintage fashions

from the 1940s to the 1980s. Even Dixie, Euing's Maltese Poodle, will grace the runway sporting something fabulous in canine wear.

But wait, there's more. To set a patriotic tone to the afternoon musicians will play good old-fashioned American tunes and singer Valerie JoRemley will sing The Star Spangled Banner. Models in WWII military and nurses' uniforms will circulate and chat with attendees. The planned event décor is guaranteed to raise American spirit with displayed American flags and red, white and blue banners. "This is not about politics," says Euing. "What we're trying to do is help our returning vets."

Guest speakers include Sentinels of Freedom Foundation Chief Operating Officer Carla Goulart and Veteran Ryan Skyes of San Ramon. In March 2008 Skyes was injured in a vehicle accident in Afghanistan. Skyes will share his experiences and how Sentinels of Freedom Foundation has helped him.

Tickets are \$40 per person. All proceeds go to Sentinels of Freedom Foundation. To reserve tickets call Jan Rains at 925-682-3727 or Elsie Euing at 925-254-8617.

Moya Stone is a local fashion writer and blogger at [www.overdressedforlife.com](http://www.overdressedforlife.com).

# Cedar-Wrapped Treasures

By Susie Iventosch



Cedar wrap salmon and swordfish

Photo Susie Iventosch

In the late 1990s I became aware of the micro-finance movement and developed quite an interest in this system of giving microloans to individual entrepreneurs in developing economies. In fact, I enrolled in a week-long Microenterprise and Development seminar at Southern New Hampshire University, where I had the good fortune of attending lectures with central bankers, community development professionals and professors from all over the world—Nigeria, Uganda, Mexico, Ghana, Switzerland and the Ivory Coast, to name a few.

Microfinance is a tool for fighting poverty by providing very small, unsecured micro-loans to poor people, usually women and usually in developing nations, so they may start or expand a sustainable business.

When I learned from Ying Compestine that her recipes and cookbook were to be featured at the March 30 Lafayette Whole Foods event at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, "Local Goes Global: Party for Good", I was delighted to hear that the proceeds will go to benefit micro-lending projects in poor communities around the world.

"It's a good cause," Compestine said. "I know first-hand that help like this can change a person's life. It is empowering and fosters independ-

ence."

At the upcoming event, Compestine will share her journey as a writer and as a passionate advocate for healthy living through her presentation "Asian Secrets to Ageless Living: A Writer's Journey from Two Worlds."

The dinner will feature a sampling of Compestine's recipes, carefully selected for their versatility and ability to accommodate different dietary preferences, and prepared by Whole Foods Executive Chef Marc Rubenstein. (For more information, visit : <http://www.wholeplanetfoundation.org/get-involved/campaign/asian-secrets-to-ageless-living-a-writers-journey-from-2-worlds-/>, or call Whole Foods at 925-284-5315.)

This is the nature of globalization. We can collect both friends and recipes from all over the world, while touching the lives of so many people through projects like microlending. I still communicate with a professor of economics from Uganda Martyrs University in Kampala, Uganda and a Swiss businessman turned microlender now living in the Philippines, as well as a central banker from Mexico City, all of whom I met at the 2008 seminar. Unfortunately, I have not yet garnered their favorite recipes! Oh well, there's still plenty of time!

Since I do not want to spoil the excitement around Compestine's featured dishes at the upcoming event, I decided to share a wonderful fish recipe I discovered at Whole Foods! It calls for fish fillets and an assortment of vegetables all wrapped in cedar papers and then grilled on the barbecue. The "Fire & Flavor" Cedar Wraps can be found near the meat department and cost \$7.99 for a package of eight.

This recipe was inspired by one of the recipes on the Fire & Flavor package, but you can also use any kind of veggies, or even add cheese if you like.

## Mediterranean Cedar-Wrapped Salmon or Swordfish

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

- Four 6-ounce fish fillets, any skin removed and cut into pieces about 1½ inches wide and thick by 6-7 inches long (Swordfish, Halibut, Salmon, Sea Bass)
- ½ cup pitted and coarsely chopped Kalamata olives
- ½ cup chopped sundried tomatoes, drained or reconstituted
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup kale leaves, torn into bite-sized pieces, or 8 large strips of kale leaves
- Mushrooms (I used ½ package of "Brown Clamshell" organic mushrooms by Mycopia from Whole Foods)
- 16 pieces of carrot (3-inch julienned strips)
- 4 cedar paper wraps
- 8 pieces of kitchen string, each about 10-12 inches long
- (\*Note I covered the string with long pieces of chives just for the pre-cooking photo!)



Photo Susie Iventosch

### DIRECTIONS

Soak cedar wraps in warm water for about 8-10 minutes to soften. Pat dry with a paper towel and lay cedar wraps out on a flat surface. Spray with cooking spray to keep contents from sticking. In the center of each cedar wrap, place kale leaves. In a bowl, mix olives and sundried tomatoes with garlic and olive oil. Then, spread mixture evenly over kale. Place mushrooms and carrots on top of olive mixture and then lay fish fillet over all. Now, call anyone you can to come over to help you roll and tie the cedar wraps! Starting at one end, roll the papers snugly around the contents (you will be able to tell which way to roll them ... there is only one way) and tightly tie the wraps in two places about halfway between center and the ends. Cook on a preheated grill for about 12-14 minutes, turning every three or four minutes. Remove from grill and cut strings. Serve the whole wrap on the plate along with wild, black or red rice, braised baby carrots, salad and toasted seeded bread. \*Note- you can use whatever veggies you like and can make this dish in any style you like. The package offers an Asian version of the same dish.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and [www.taxbites.net](http://www.taxbites.net). Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). **These recipe is available on our web site** [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://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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**Lamorinda's Religious Services**

**See also Easter Service advertisements on page B11**

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**◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆****ART**

**Moraga Art Gallery's new show, "Beautiful America,"** features the oil paintings of gallery member & local Moraga artist Ginny Ruble, as well as guest artist Linda Hanford whose work reflects her love of the nature, landscapes, and seascapes of California. The show runs through June 2.

**The Lafayette Gallery's spring show "Imagine"** will run through May 5 and features fresh and inspiring new work: paintings, prints, collages, ceramics, jewelry, and photography. To celebrate the annual re-opening of the Lafayette Gallery's outside Sculpture Garden, the Gallery is hosting a free reception on April 15 with wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music. The Gallery is open 11am-5pm, Tuesday - Saturday, 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette (across from Chow). For more information, visit www.lafayettegallery.net or call (925) 284-2788.

**The Valley Art Gallery's new show, "So Many Choices,"** will have an opening reception on Sunday, April 1, 3:30-5:30pm with featured artist Ruth Hussey. The gallery is located at 1661 Botelho Drive, Walnut Creek. For information go to www.valleyartgallery.org or call (925) 935-4311.

**MUSIC**

**On March 31 and April 1, the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra** will present a mix of New York's 1920s nightclub soundtracks and Europe's sophisticated classical music scene. The program, Transgenre, will include four such dynamic fusions, including La Creation du Monde by Darius Milhaud, For Aaron by Lukas Foss, An American in Paris by George Gershwin, and Piano Concerto No. 1 in G by Maurice Ravel, featuring internationally-renowned piano soloist Lino Rivera. For show times and tickets call (925) 943-SHOW, or go to www.LesherArtsCenter.org.

**San Francisco Chamber Orchestra presents Main Stage Concert:** La Bella Musica (Berkeley) on Sunday, April 1, from 3-5pm, at First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. Benjamin Simon, conductor. Avi Avital & Brian Thorsett, soloists. Rossini, Paisiello, Mendelssohn. Admission is free but tickets are required. For more info and tickets see www.sfcchamberorchestra.org/events/mainstage/ or call (415) 692-5258 or email tickets@sfcchamberorchestra.org.

**Contra Costa Performing Arts Society concert, April 10, 8pm,** Mt. Diablo Unified Universalist Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. The free concert will open with a Schumann Quintet for violins, viola and cello, followed by a trio for violin, cello and piano by Felix Mendelssohn. The same trio will play Cafe Music by Paul Schoenfield. The program concludes with a composition called Mississippi Five by Jim Parker played by the group called Quinta: flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon. For more info, go to www.ccpas.org.

**Big Band Ball Room Dance & Show on Friday, April 20,** Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Dance and be entertained by the 31-piece band that includes musicians from 10 years old to 92. The dance will start at 8pm. Call (925) 284-7404 for reservations. Tickets \$10 at the door or at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce.

**An Afternoon of Jazz - join us for piano standards and originals** by members of the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society Jazz Piano workshop Friday, April 20, 1:30 - 2:30pm, Community Hall, Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. We will be playing favorites from Hoagy Carmichael, Miles Davis, Oscar Hammerstein and more! Join the fun! Call Lafayette Senior Services at (925) 284-5050 to let us know you are coming. \$3 Members/ \$5 Non-Members.

**THEATER**

**Screening of award-winning film "Children of the Amazon"** at the Moraga Library, Thursday, March 29, 7-9 pm. Following the screening the Brazilian filmmaker, Denise Zmekhol will lead a discussion about the film. Part road movie, part time travel, her journey tells the story of what happened to life in the largest forest on Earth when a road was built straight through its

heart. Free and open to the public. Pre-registration not required, for more information call (925) 376-6852.

**"Opening Our Eyes,"** a documentary about eleven ordinary people who are making a positive difference in the world will screen on Saturday, April 21, 7pm, Community Hall, Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3490 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Q&A with one of the filmmakers immediately following. Requested donation of \$10 to benefit LLLC. For reservations call (925) 890-1441 or email candace94549@yahoo.com.

**A sparkling musical adaptation by Oded Gross** and Tracy Young of Moliere's The Imaginary Invalid, featuring clown work, delightful original songs, Broadway-style choreography, stunning costumes and non-stop physical comedy, will be performed in LeFevre Theatre at Saint Mary's College. Dates: April 18, 19, 20, and 21 at 8pm; April 21 and 22 at 2pm. Tickets: General - \$15; Seniors - \$12; Non-SMC students - \$12; SMC community - \$8. Info: Sharon Cahill, (925) 631-4670. Tickets are also available online at www.brownpapertickets.com.

**The Acalanes High School DramaDons theater group** presents Hamlet, William Shakespeare's greatest tragedy! This fast-paced adaptation by Bay Area playwright/director Jon Tracy explores the bonds of youth and the influence that their elders exert on them, May 2-5, 7:30pm. General admission tickets are \$10, \$7 for students/seniors; tickets may be purchased online at www.dramadons.org or at the door.

**LECTURE & LITERATURE**

**Friends of Orinda Library Book Sale - Thursday, April 5, 10am-1pm.** Sorting Room and Book Shop (Book Shop is open until 6 pm.) Books for all interests and ages: Orinda Library, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda. (925) 254-1358.

**John Gray: Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus, 20 Years Later,** Monday, April 9, 6:30pm, Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Lafayette. In his most recent book, Venus on Fire, Mars on Ice, Gray again tackles intimate subject matter with an inside look at the connections between hormone levels and happiness. The program is presented by the Commonwealth Club of California. Time: 5:45pm check-in, 6:30pm program. Cost: \$22 standard, \$12 members. www.commonwealthclub.org/events.

**Emeritus College 2012 Distinguished Lecture Series** presents Dr. Joel Parrott, "Past, Present and Future of The Oakland Zoo" Friday, April 13, 3-5pm, Diablo Valley College Forum. Tickets \$15 (\$10 children). Dr. Parrott will highlight the Zoo's new animals, the often difficult and humorous events involved in the transportation, relocation and care of exotic animals, and the extensive conservation efforts at the Oakland Zoo. The Zoo is home to 660 native and exotic animals.

**Meet the Author, Penny Warner, mystery writer** for adults and teens. Conversation, book signing and refreshments sponsored by Holden High School. Thursday, April 19, 7-9 pm, Orinda Community Church. Admission: \$25. For info call Holden High: (925) 254-0199 or office@holdenhigh.org.

**Discovering Opera: Gounod's Faust Presented by Bradford Wade,** opera lover for 35 years, Tuesday, April 24, 10:30-noon, Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Many operas have been written based on the story of the aged philosopher who sells his soul to the devil in return for youth and love, but Charles Gounod's is by far the best known. This lecture is given in conjunction with Opera San Jose's production of Faust, April 21-May 6. \$1 Members/\$3 Non-Members.

**KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS**

**Orinda Idol audition registration will be from April 1-30.** Orinda Idol is a singing competition open to young people who either attend school or reside in Orinda, Moraga or Lafayette. The objective of Orinda Idol is to provide an avenue for young people to pursue their love for singing, to bring joy to the community and to have fun. For more information go to www.orindaidolcouncil.org. Auditions will be held May 17-19. Up to 10 finalists in each category will be selected to

compete for cash prizes and recognition at the Orinda Idol Finals held on Sept. 9 at the Orinda Theatre.

**The Acalanes High School Golf Team hosts Junior Golf Clinic,** Monday, April 9, 3:30-5:30pm, Contra Costa Country Club, 801 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill. Players ages 7-17 are invited to come and participate in putting, chipping and hitting golf balls with the Acalanes Varsity and JV Golf Teams and coaches. Bring your own clubs. Fee: \$30/player - Check-in 3:15pm. For more information and to register contact Lori Brueckner at rwbueck@aol.com.

**2012 Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest,** open to all students who reside and/or attend high school in Orinda. Entry Categories are Science Fiction, Essay/Memoir, Poetry and Short Story. Students may submit one entry in any of the four categories for a total of not more than three entries. Submission deadline Friday, April 20, noon. Up to four winners will each be awarded \$250 prizes at the close of this school year, underwritten by the Friends of the Orinda Library.

**Art & Music Festival at TOPS (Preschool),** Saturday, April 21, 9:30am-noon, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. For tickets and further information please call (925) 254-2551. All Welcome!

**Bring your whole family to the Seedlings "Wheel Day"** on Saturday, April 22, 10am-noon, parking lot of the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Climb inside a giant tractor, sit on a real motorcycle and hear a real fire engine siren! Your child can also enjoy the bounce house, face painting, and even take a train ride around the parking lot. Admission is free and all are welcome! Snacks and refreshments will be available for minimal cost.

**OTHER**

**Taize service at Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church,** last Wednesday of the month, 7pm. "Steal away from barking dogs and honking horns, alarms, clever ring tones and overscheduled calendars — find respite from the pressure in which we all live. Come sit in the calm that is Taizé. Re-center. Refresh." All are welcome. Childcare is available by reservation only. E-mail kimberley@LOPC.org.

**Moraga's Roads At Risk - A town presentation, Thursday, March 29,** 1pm, Sunday, April 15, 4pm, and Tuesday, April 24, 11am, Moraga Library. Topics will include: the condition of our neighborhood streets and possible solutions; the state of our town's finances and how it may affect the planned repairs; we are all in this together; town leaders want to hear your opinions on the various options for funding. RSVP to ellen.beans@gmail.com or call (925) 376-7306.

**A savory and celebratory event: Friday, March 30,** Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center - hosted by Whole Foods' Whole Planet Foundation to support its global outreach to provide micro loans to entrepreneurs in developing countries. Tickets are \$35 to sample a three-course menu from nationally acclaimed author Ying Compestine and include a hard-cover copy of her new book "Ying's Best One Dish Meals."

**Join a National Park Service ranger for three free early morning wildflower walks** on Saturdays in April: April 7, 14 and 28, John Muir National Historic Site. The two-hour walks will begin at 9am with an easy saunter up Mt. Wanda to look for wildflowers. Over 82 species of native plants have been identified on Mt. Wanda. For more information call the John Muir National Historic Site at (925) 228-8860.

**Golden Gate Audubon Society presents The Grizzlies** of Yellowstone featuring Michael Leach on Thursday, April 19, 7-9pm, Northbrae Community Church, 941 the Alameda, Berkeley. Enjoy a spirit-enriching presentation about grizzly bears and Yellowstone National Park. Celebrate the Yellowstone ecosystem - a wild landscape. Cost: \$5 donation or free for members. For more info visit www.goldengateaudubon.org/education/speaker-series/ or call (510) 843-2222 or email nweedden@goldengateaudubon.org.

... continued on next page

**Please submit:**

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OTHER

**Orinda In Action: A Community Service Day, Saturday, April 21, 9am-noon.** Registration starts 8:30am at Orinda Library Plaza with coffee & bagels. A Free T-shirt to the first 300! A light lunch and music in the plaza is available to all. Everyone welcome! Volunteers can email with your name/number in your group to orindafoundation@gmail.com to sign-up for the Sleepy Hollow School project. Community Service hours available and certificate awarded.

**The annual Moraga Beautiful event will take place on Saturday, April 21, 9am-noon** at Rancho Laguna Park. Volunteers who can help with the beautification of the park should wear old clothes. The Town will supply gloves, brushes and stain. Individuals and groups welcome.

**Lafayette's 7th Annual Earth Day Celebration, Sunday, April 22, 11am-3pm,** Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Enjoy a great organic lunch, listen to live music, stop by the Arts and Sciences Center for special kids' crafts,

face painting and displays, visit the community garden open house and see other displays and movies. A parent-organized Self-Propelled Parade will depart Stanley Middle School at 11:30am. Bring your bike, skateboard, scooter, wagon, or anything else with wheels. For more information email earthday@sustainablelafayette.org.

**Walk MS - a community coming together to raise funds** and celebrate hope for the future, Sunday, April 22, Heather Farm Park, Walnut Creek: 8am Registration/Check-in, 9am start time. For more information call 1-800-344-4867 or email sam.mcilraith@nmss.org.

**Area residents who own classic cars are invited to participate** in the 4th annual Moraga Classic Car Show, May 12, 11am-4pm as part of the Moraga Community Faire. \$25 registration fee includes lunch for two. Prizes will be awarded. The registration deadline is May 5. To register, go to www.moragachamber.org or call (925) 247-4629.

CLUBS

**Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first** Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center, 1700 School St. Moraga. Social hour 11am, lunch noon. The April 4 speaker will be Gayle Uilkema, District 2 Supervisor who has had a long history of public service. She has served on the Lafayette City council, been Mayor of Lafayette and is now County Supervisor where she is Chairman of the Board. She also represents Contra Costa County on many state, regional and local agencies. For information regarding SIRs call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

**Margaret Race, Ph.D., will discuss her career working with NASA** and the SETI Institute at the next AAUW/OML meeting Sunday, April 22, 3pm, Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Cultural Center, 1700 School Street in Moraga.

GARDEN

**Over 3000 heirloom tomato plants will be on sale at the Contra Costa Master Gardeners First Annual Great Tomato Plant Sale,** "Heirlooms of the World" April 4-6, 10am-3pm, Our Garden (adjacent to the Contra Costa Times parking lot, 2640 Shadelands Drive off of Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek). Master Gardeners will be on hand to offer customers advice on how to grow the tomatoes! Each 4-inch tomato plant

will cost \$2. The proceeds from this sale will help the Contra Costa Master Gardeners continue their educational outreach to the home gardeners in Contra Costa County.

**The Montelindo Garden Club will host Robin Stockwell,** Friday, April 20, 10:30am, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Robin Stockwell is the owner, grower and manager of Succulent Gardens; a wholesale/retail nursery in Castroville where Robin cultivates over 400 varieties of quality succulent plants. The lecture is preceded by a plant sale and social hour starting at 9am.

**The Orinda Garden Club is inviting the community for a Walk-Around** at Orinda's Lake Cascade Saturday, April 21, 10am. Enjoy the 50-year-old Cork Oak trees that grace this popular place for runners, walkers and bird watchers and view the work that the Garden Club is doing to restore this historic landmark.

**Registration for the 8th Annual Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour,** which will take place Sunday, May 6, from 10am-5pm, is now open. This free, award-winning tour features 45 Alameda and Contra Costa County gardens that are pesticide-free, conserve water, provide habitat for wildlife, and contain 60% or more native plants. Included in the Tour are five Lamorinda gardens. Please register or volunteer at www.bringingbackthenatives.net/.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

MEET THE BUNNY

**The Lafayette Rotary Club's Annual Egg Hunt** is open to all second- and third-graders, Saturday, April 7, 10am, Lafayette Plaza (corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Rd.), Lafayette. The park lawn will be covered with candy for kids to put in their baskets. The youngest are always given extra time to get their share! The Bunny will be there to take pictures with the kids. Please arrive on time-it starts promptly at 10am.

**Bunny Brunch & Family Fun at the Lafayette Community Center,** Saturday, April 7, 11am-12:30pm. Cost: \$7/person in advance; \$9/person the day of event. Enjoy a pancake brunch and a show. This is a fundraiser for the Lafayette Community Center. For more information call (925)284-2232.

**Take a photo with the Easter Bunny,** Saturday, April 7, 11am-2pm, Rheem Valley Center. Easter clowns, Easter fairy, and balloon art. The photo session is free with your Rheem Valley Shopping Center receipts totaling \$25 or more, or with a coupon available on www.rheemvalley.net, but bring your own camera. Visit us online at www.rheemvalley.net (See stores for details. While supplies last) Rheem Blvd. at Moraga Rd. in Moraga

Upcoming Special Events at:



Starting this Friday March 30th  
Mirror Mirror - Rheem  
Salmon Fishing in the Yemen - Orinda



CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD  
Saturday, April 14, 7:00PM  
Orinda Theatre

MORAGA MOVERS MONTHLY CLASSICS

Wednesday, April 18, 4:30 PM  
Rheem Theatre  
The Talk of the Town (1942)  
Cary Grant, Jean Arthur, and Ronald Colman



QUEEN'S SLUMBER PARTY

Friday, April 20, 9:00PM  
Rheem Theatre  
It Came from Outer Space



MORAGA MOVERS MONTHLY CLASSICS

Wednesday, May 16, 4:30 PM  
Rheem Theatre  
The Heiress (1949)  
Oscar Winning Performance  
Olivia de Havilland, Montgomery Clift



PINK FLOYD THE WALL

Saturday, May 12, 7:00PM  
Orinda Theatre



Check www.lamorindatheatres.com for all movie listings

WORSHIP SCHEDULE for Holy WEEK

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 7:00 p.m.  
GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 12 noon & 7:00 p.m.  
EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 8  
8:15 a.m. Traditional Worship  
9:30 a.m. Blended Worship  
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
8:30—11:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast  
(Singles \$6 / Children 3-11 \$3 / Families \$15)  
(Childcare available throughout the morning)  
Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church,  
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422

You're Invited To Take a Photo\* with the Easter Bunny  
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\*With your Rheem Valley Shopping Center receipts totaling \$25 or more OR go online to www.rheemvalley.net to print out the coupon for a FREE photo session with the Easter Bunny.

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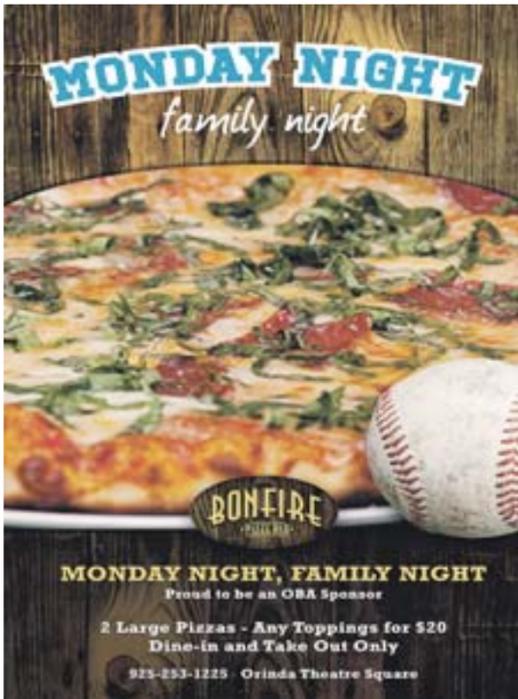
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<b>California Cuisine</b> Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq, Orinda 254-9687 Vino Restaurant, 3531 Plaza Way, Lafayette 284-1330	<b>Italian</b> Ristorante Amoroma, 360 Park Street Moraga 377-7662
<b>Chinese</b> Chef Chao Restaurant, 343 Rheem Blvd, Moraga 376-1740 Szechwan Chinese Restaurant, 79 Orinda Way, Orinda 254-2020	<b>Japanese</b> Tao, 960 Moraga Road, Lafayette 299-2882
	<b>Mediterranean</b> Shish Kabab Show, 376 Park Street, Moraga 388-0351
	<b>Thai</b> Siam Orchid, 23 Orinda Way # F, Orinda 253-1975

**Easter Brunch**



Millie's Kitchen, 1018 Oak Hill Rd #A,  
Lafayette 283-2397

Ristorante Amoroma, 360 Park Street  
Moraga 377-7662

Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq,  
Orinda 254-9687

Table 24, Theatre Sq,  
Orinda 254-0124

# LAMORINDA SPORTS



In our last issue, we asked some of our staff to write about why they wanted to work with *Lamorinda Weekly*. Here's one more, from our Sports section editor, Caitlin Graveson:

I joined the staff at *Lamorinda Weekly* as a Saint Mary's College student three years ago. Although I lived in Moraga, I did not know much about the community outside of the campus. As the sports editor, I quickly learned about the rich diversity of the Lamorinda sports world. From swimming to soccer to track to, most recently, trap shooting, I am amazed at the level of competition in such a wide range of sports. This job has put me in contact with some of the top athletes and coaches in the state. Not only that, but I have so enjoyed working with the parents of young up-and-comers in recreation leagues and summer camps. It has been a privilege to cover these programs and I look forward to continuing to do so. Thank you so much for sending in submissions, reading our section and supporting the wonderful athletes in this community.

## Lady Mats Finish Season in State Semi-Finals

By Conrad Bassett



Photo Kevin Nguyen

The Miramonte girls' basketball team had an extremely successful year. They finished with a record of 31-2. Their only losses came at the hands of North Coast Section rival Bishop O'Dowd. They lost to the Dragons in the NCS final at St. Mary's College and at the CIF Division III Northern California championship game at Power Balance Pavilion in Sacramento.

The Mats took on Bishop O'Dowd for the second time on St. Patrick's Day. Despite wearing green, the Lady Mats had no luck against their East Bay rival and lost, 71-50.

"Obviously there are several highlights and great moments (of the season) but I enjoyed the van drive to Sacramento before the championship game—Just being in the moment with such a great group of kids," head coach Kelly Sopak said of the final game.

Although the venue and experience made for a fun trip, the game was tough. The Mats led only one time in the game at 8-7 after a layup from senior Devon McDonald. The Dragons then went on a 14-0 run. The Mats hit

three three-pointers, one from junior Carly Gill and two from senior Janine Loutzenhiser, to pull within four. However, Dragons ended the period on a 14-3 run and never looked back. The closest the Mats got in the second half was 54-41.

After the game McDonald, who led the team with 13 points, remarked, "It was difficult to take the ball inside against the tall players but we hoped to draw contact and score. The worst case is that the shot would be blocked."

In order to have an opportunity to play at the home of the NBA Sacramento Kings, the Lady Matadors had to make an earlier trip on March 13 to the state capital—this time to Sacramento High where they won, 71-64.

Sophomore Megan Reid had a monster game as she posted 14 rebounds to go with 12 points and six assists. Loutzenhiser hit six three-pointers on her way to a team high 21 points.

"I could not have asked for a better senior season. We all played our hearts out. It was an amazing experience," Loutzenhiser said.

Despite ending with a loss, the team treasured the season. Season highlights included: winning more than 30 games; finishing undefeated in DFAL regular play season; winning the DFAL championship; winning the Willits Tournament, their own Mats Tip-Off Classic and the West Coast Jamboree Emerald Division.

"The journey began on an interesting trip to Willits. It was there that Coach Sopak encouraged us to have 'the one game winning streak' that was our motto the whole season. It is a dream to get to play at Arco (now Power Balance) and that was an incredible experience," said Reid.

"We really established ourselves when we won the first Dougherty Valley game and ended their long DFAL win streak. That gave us new momentum and then we beat them again," Gill said.

Gill knew that their team had been underestimated. "It was nice to prove our critics were not right."

With only three seniors on the roster, the Mats hope to return next year and repeat as DFAL champions.



Janie Loutzenhiser



Devon McDonald

Photo Kevin Nguyen

### The Acalanes High School Golf Team hosts Junior Golf Clinic at Contra Costa Country Club

801 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill, CA  
Monday, April 9, 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Fee is \$30.00/player - Check in begins at 3:15pm

We invite players ages 7 - 17 years old to come and participate in putting, chipping and hitting golf balls with the Acalanes Varsity and JV Golf Teams and coaches. Bring your own clubs.

For more information and to register contact Lori Brueckner at [rwbrueck@aol.com](mailto:rwbrueck@aol.com)

### An Evening of Champions

**Please join the Campolindo Sports Boosters for our annual Spring Party.**

**Saturday April 14 from 6:30 - 10:00pm**  
**Moraga Country Club Clubhouse**

**Go to [www.CampoFootball.com](http://www.CampoFootball.com) for invite or contact [galeremotto@comcast.net](mailto:galeremotto@comcast.net)**

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

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# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

## WINTER SPORT ALL-DFAL TEAMS



Sport	School	Award	Student
Boys' Basketball	Miramonte	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Kiran Shastri Joey Goodreault Ross Anderson
	Acalanes	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	James Griffin Noah Orlik Kevin Huber Buster Souza
	Campolindo	Most Valuable Player First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Griffin Piatt Jack Evans John Schmitz Justin Dunn
Girls' Basketball	Miramonte	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Janine Loutzenhiser Devon McDonald Megan Reid Carly Gil Breanna Alford Taylor Kizziee
	Acalanes	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Sophie Taylor Laura Hickey Ashley Ewing Mallory Brown
	Campolindo		
Boys' Soccer	Miramonte	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Nick Bachu Mike Worthington Taro Kyllonen Ryan Dias Kyle Visher
	Acalanes	Most Valuable Defensive Player First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Jacob Carroll Dan Glascock Austen Grassini Aidan Maguire Jackson Foote Bryan Berlier Austin deBack Kevin Park Eric Rogstad Max Mirner Graham Lindgren
	Campolindo	Most Valuable Player First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Sam Palano Nick Palano Harlan Raine Kian Maghsoodnia Rodrigo Diaz-Valdes Gus Keeble Ryan Donat Cristian Antezana
Girls' Soccer	Miramonte	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Megan Reid Sophie Fuller Coco Pearce Jane Fessenden Kristen Chan Tasia Robbins
	Acalanes	First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Kaitlyn McGee Callie Goodman Annie Beliveau Katherine Tottle Becca Bostwick Erin Bishop
	Campolindo	Most Valuable Player First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Sophie Leskan Julia Reshke Kelly Hilk Samantha Vankoll Lauren Petite Devon Bruzzone Jessica Tuan Gracie Stausser
Wrestling	Miramonte	Second Team Honorable Mention	Micah Spaulding (182) Ben Warren (106) Adam Kohr (113) Alex Jang (126) Kai Shimoko (132)
	Acalanes	Second Team	Andrew Nakahara (138) Andrew Mesetz (160) Aaron Shaffer (220)
	Campolindo	Honorable Mention First Team Second Team Honorable Mention	Jackson Hagglun (106) Grant Smith (113) Alex Mirante (138) Chris Wellbrook (182) Wesley Caspillo (120) Brendon Stryker (126) Eric Oeth (145) Danny Fox (195) Jack Simmons (258) Jackson Wiley (170)

## Saint Mary's Men Fall in Opening Round

By Caitlin Graveson



Matthew Dellavedova

Photo Tod Fierner

The Gaels finished an impressive season with a loss in the opening round of the NCAA tournament. The Friday, March 16 match-up against the #10 Purdue Boilermakers proved to be too tough for #7 Saint Mary's as they fell, 69-72.

"It wasn't lack of competitiveness or effort, just didn't go our way down the stretch," said head coach Randy Bennett. Bennett's NCAA tournament record falls to 4-6.

Saint Mary's shot the season's second worst percentage from the three point line at 16 percent. They only notched four threes.

"They played good defense, but we didn't knock down our shots either," said junior guard Matthew Dellavedova. With eight assists in the game, Dellavedova claimed the school's second highest single season assist record at 212, passing Mickey McConnell.

The Gaels took their only lead of

the game at 69-68 with 44.2 seconds to play, but Saint Mary's could not hold on to win it.

"Everyone cares and puts time in on the floor, off the floor, so when you lose one like that, when you're up with a couple of seconds left, it really hurts," senior forward Rob Jones said of the loss. Jones, ranked fourth in the NCAA for double-doubles, recorded his 20th of the season with 23 points and 14 boards.

"I'm just glad Coach Bennett gave me a chance to be a part of Saint Mary's and everyone on this team, that I got to know them so well," Jones transferred to SMC from the University of San Diego.

"If it didn't sting, it wouldn't be any fun," Bennett said. "Some guys get to return, but those three seniors don't. We were good because our three seniors gave us tremendous leadership this year."

## Cougars Play in Wildcat Tournament

Submitted by Mike Alderete



From left: Campolindo sophomores Matt Klein and Matt Alderete Photo provided

The Campolindo Cougars varsity golf team took eighth place on Monday, March 19th in the prestigious 35th Annual Marin Catholic Wildcat Invitational golf tournament. Sporting a young team of three sophomores, a freshman, and a junior, the Cougars competed in a field of 26 top

high school golf teams in Northern California and against more than 125 golfers. Leading the way for the Cougars, Matt Alderete and Matt Klein shot 76 and 77, respectively, on the Par 71 Meadow Club in Marin County.

## Lamorinda U14 Prep for Start of Season

Submitted by Mary Brown



From left: Hugh Olson, Manny Pestana, Payson Newman, Kai Weyland, Alex Kuhtarov, Charlie Delamore, Matthew Ringquist, Tom Collins, Ben Nash Photo provided

After finishing last season at the NorCal State Cup semifinals, the newly formed Lamorinda Soccer Club U14 boys' team will have their first game of the spring season on Saturday, March 24th.

With all the fields closed due to weather the week of March 13th, the team decided to go for a run in the rain at the Lafayette Reservoir.

## Lamorinda Varsity Gold Season Update

Submitted by Doug McKinley



Lamorinda (black jerseys) with St. Maximilian Kolb.

Photo Karen Drinkwater

In accordance with the rugby tradition of teams touring foreign countries, the Lamorinda team recently hosted a Canadian team. St. Maximilian Kolb (Toronto) stayed with rugby players' families in early March.

The teams played each other on March 10. Lamorinda won handily, 56-15.

Lamorinda is 4-0 in league play. During Spring Break, Lamorinda will tour Argentina and stay with the Argentinean players.

# Saint Mary's Earns First WNIT Win in Over 10 Years

By Alex Kozela



Alex Carbonel Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's women's basketball team capped off one of its best seasons ever with a victory over UNLV in the first round of the WNIT.

The Gaels (22-11) won their first

postseason game since 2001, defeating UNLV 71-63 on March 15 at McKeon Pavilion. It was the team's 22nd win of this season, tying the second most in school history.

It was a special night for the seniors, who were given the opportunity to play one last game in front of a home crowd.

"We were really excited," senior guard Jasmine Smith said of the last chance to play in front of the Saint Mary's faithful. "Being a senior, it meant a lot to me, and the rest of [the seniors.]"

Smith had 21 points in the win. Sophomore guard Jackie Nared led the Gaels, scoring 22 points and grabbing eight boards.

Saint Mary's carved out a 19-point lead early in the second half, but the Rebels fought back, cutting the lead to 42-35 with 15:19 left. After Smith and senior guard Alex Carbonel scored baskets to regain the Gaels' double-digit lead, UNLV once again pulled close, trailing only 51-47 at the 7:10 mark. The Gaels scored the next five points to build a nine-point lead and never looked back.

Saint Mary's head coach Paul Thomas was impressed by his team's performance.

"Our kids showed such character tonight," said Thomas. "We weren't feeling that comfortable [early in the second half], and our kids just picked

it right back up. I couldn't be happier."

Two days later the team took the court in Corvallis to face Oregon State, and despite shooting just 23.4 percent from the floor, the Gaels kept the deficit manageable the entire game, but still eventually lost 56-41.

Smith was the only Gael to score in double figures with 12 points, while Nared scored eight while nabbing 11 rebounds.

Despite the second round loss, the Gaels' postseason berth served as a culmination of how far the team has progressed over the last few years. The team garnered big wins against Brigham Young (54-48 on December 31), at Gonzaga (66-63 on January 14), and in the WCC Tournament against Pepperdine (67-63 on March 2) en route to their third WNIT appearance in as many years.

Thomas attributed this year's success to those who have helped build the team into what it is today.

"This season is a combination of what everybody who came before them has added to this team. They helped this team understand how to win a postseason game. I think they're all a part of this as much as the people in uniform right now," said Thomas.

"They knew they made history. We've made history for a lot of this year."

# Saint Mary's Adds Track Team to Athletic Program

By Rebecca Eckland

Saint Mary's College added a new sport to its athletic program this spring. The Gaels now boast a track team.

Though the new program technically offers no scholarships, the NCAA grants additional funds to Saint Mary's athletics for use toward athletes in the cross country and track programs. It also grants athletes with additional training time.

Junior Erin Burke said the addition of the track team will help her improve as a runner. "Now I can train and race more seriously than I have in the past."

Without a track program, a SMC runner received 656 fewer practice hours over the course of a four-year career than an athlete at other West Coast Conference schools and SMC athletes only had an opportunity to compete in 48 competitions, where comparatively, other athletes competed in nearly 100 meets.

Recruiting new talent has also become easier, according to assistant coach Mark Carberry. "Good runners didn't want to commit to a program that didn't have track," he said. "[With the addition of track], we can now utilize the beautiful area we train in year-round... it's going to put us in a good position."

"As an alumni of Saint Mary's cross country, it was hard to see the WCC grow while SMC didn't progress at the same rate. It's exciting to see us step up with a full-time coaching staff, and now, a track program—we're going to become an even stronger team," said head coach Marty Kinsey.

They began their season on March 3rd, running the Kim Dunst Invitational at Cal State Stanislaus, followed by the UC Davis Aggie Open on March 10th. This past week, the Gaels competed at the Johnny Mathis Invitational hosted by San Francisco State.

The athletes will focus on middle-to-long distances, running the 800 meter (or half-mile) to the 5,000 meter (3.12 mile) races.

Early this season, redshirt sophomore Rajpaul Pannu set a school record in the 5000m at the Kim Duyst Invitational. Pannu placed 8th with a time of 14:58.

For the women, strong middle distance races have been the headlines in this young season. Sophomore Alicia Doohan ran the 1500m in 4:52.41 in her first race of the season at Stanislaus. She continued an impressive running day finishing 2:22.81 for



Sophomore Rajpaul Pannu, ran a 14:58 5K in his first track race of the season. Photos provided



Freshman Cristina Garcia ran an 11:12.31 3000m race at the Aggie Open hosted by UC Davis.

800m. Freshman Gilbert Mundo is happy about the new season. "It means a lot to me," he said before practice on a spring day—something a Saint Mary's distance runner has not experienced before. "I really look forward to the next four years here at Saint Mary's... and being on the first Saint Mary's track team."

The next stop for the new track team is a meet at Chico State on April 13th. Selected athletes will compete at the West Coast invite, hosted by the University of Portland, to close the season.

# Oakland Strokes Beat Bay Area Rivals

Submitted by Diane Moe



Oakland Strokes' lightweight women captured first place in the recent Battle of the Bay regatta. From left: Michelle Lee (Orinda), Brittney Presten (Orinda), Anna Weitlmann (Piedmont), Indigo Catton, (Lafayette), Alia Shafi (Lafayette), Lizzie Pate (Lafayette), Cassey Chan (Piedmont) Photo provided

The Oakland women's varsity and junior varsity boats bested their Bay Area rivals, Berkeley High Crew, Marin Rowing Association and the St. Ignatius High School Rowing team, in the decade-long tradition of

the Battle of the Bay regatta on Sunday, March 11 on the Oakland estuary.

"This is a pretty big race because the Marin and Oakland girls are typically battling it out at the end of the

season," said women's varsity coach Derek Byrnes. "This race is how we gauge the rest of the year."

The women's first place finishes included the varsity eight, JV eight, 3V eight, and lightweight eight.

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# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 28, 2012



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian*

*...read on page D7*

## Seismic Retrofitting Lamorinda Homes

By Cathy Dausman



*Retrofit bracing*



*Photos Cathy Dausman*

*Retrofit anchor bolt with plate washer (on left) shown next to original anchor bolt and small washer.*

Earthquakes, large and small, are an ever-present Lamorinda possibility, since the area lies between the Hayward and Calaveras faults. While earthquake preparedness may focus on sheltering in place, many of us give little thought to ensuring that our “shelter” is habitable after a large earthquake. Lafayette resident Mason Walters believes “the best way to live in the state is to make the home safe.”

Walters is a registered structural engineer with 30 years’ experience. A principal at Forell/Elsesser in San Francisco, Walters’ local projects include retrofit work on Oakland City Hall after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and seismic isolation design work for San Francisco’s BART and U. C. Berkeley’s California Memorial Stadium. He also spent the past 23 years taking his own advice and seismically retrofitted two homes

he owned in Lamorinda.

Older homes (those built before 1970) are less earthquake resistant than newer ones, explains Walters, because legislators didn’t update the state’s uniform building code until after the 1971 San Fernando (Sylmar) earthquake. Even today, no one is legally required to retrofit their home or to even purchase earthquake insurance. ... continued on page D4

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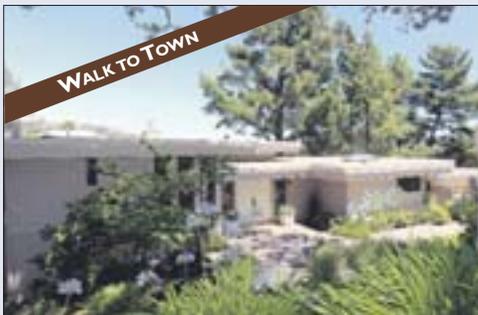
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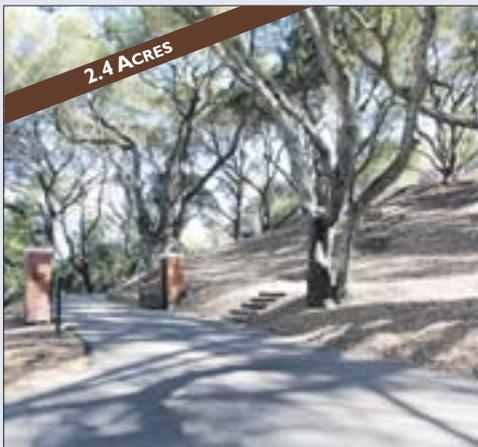


**Lafayette** - Sophisticated and stylish, limestone accents, hardwood floors, large picture windows, skylights, high ceilings, large decks, amazing views, and a neighborhood tennis court and pool. The perfect entertaining home! Tranquil front courtyard, quiet location, private road.

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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	4	\$184,000	\$1,950,000
MORAGA	6	\$425,000	\$1,155,000
ORINDA	4	\$695,000	\$1,100,000

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

501 Bavarian Court, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1968 SqFt, 1972 YrBl, 3-1-12;  
Previous Sale: \$440,000, 06-30-99

874 Las Trampas Road, \$184,000, 3 Bdrms, 1566 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 2-22-12

1590 Rancho Del Hambro, \$1,950,000, 4 Bdrms, 5228 SqFt, 1993 YrBl, 2-27-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,060,000, 01-20-95

3320 Sweet Drive, \$780,000, 3 Bdrms, 1431 SqFt, 1953 YrBl, 2-24-12;

Previous Sale: \$765,000, 09-04-09

### MORAGA

1935 Ascot Drive, \$425,000, 2 Bdrms, 1613 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 2-22-12;

Previous Sale: \$275,000, 11-16-98

188 Calle La Montana, \$839,000, 4 Bdrms, 2415 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 3-2-12;

Previous Sale: \$58,500, 09-25-73

3727 Campolindo Drive, \$605,000, 4 Bdrms, 1785 SqFt, 1967 YrBl, 3-2-12

41 Greenfield Drive, \$860,000, 3 Bdrms, 2325 SqFt, 1968 YrBl, 3-1-12;

Previous Sale: \$840,000, 08-11-03

206 Paseo Bernal, \$530,000, 3 Bdrms, 2117 SqFt, 1979 YrBl, 2-27-12;

Previous Sale: \$690,000, 07-15-05

160 Valley Hill Drive, \$1,155,000, 3007 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 2-22-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,175,000, 02-28-11

### ORINDA

76 Acacia Drive, \$785,000, 4 Bdrms, 2220 SqFt, 2007 YrBl, 3-2-12;

Previous Sale: \$464,000, 01-03-07

188 Alice Lane, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3831 SqFt, 1990 YrBl, 3-1-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,020,000, 01-24-02

30 Tara Road, \$695,000, 4 Bdrms, 1704 SqFt, 1952 YrBl, 3-1-12

## Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

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# Seismic Retrofitting Lamorinda Homes

... continued from page D1



*Foundation plate brace, connects concrete foundation to mud sill*

Since most Lamorinda homes are of post WW II platform frame construction style, retrofitting is fairly easy. Walters chose to retrofit his home from bottom to top rather than to buy earthquake insurance, and was willing to invest money he would have spent on premiums over several years' time to do so.

Walters suggests homeowners focus on retrofitting four things, in order of importance: gas water heaters, the foundation bolting and the "cripple wall," the walls above the floor, and the roof. The aim is to support everything from the ground up.

First, access the home's crawl space and inspect the building framework to evaluate how well it is secured to the foundation. The framework should be bolted into the mudsill (the horizontal wood laid over the concrete foundation). Strong earthquakes have dislocated houses from their foundations and caused them to collapse if bolting is nonexistent or inadequate. The current building code for new buildings requires 5/8 inch diameter bolts with plate washers, and this is the normally-used size for additional anchor bolts in a retrofit.

The cripple wall is a short transitional stud wall between the house's foundation and first floor framing. It bears the brunt of seismic action. Often the cripple wall has only a veneer of stucco or horizontal wood siding, neither of which has structural bracing value. One approach to retrofitting a cripple wall is to sheath the inside face with plywood or other structural wood sheathing. (Free retrofit plans can be found online at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/residents/planset/>.)

A similar approach can be used to strengthen the main walls above the first floor. Retrofitting these walls is significantly more costly and would require the help of an engineer, but it provides better seismic performance than simply retrofitting the cripple walls.

Walters has never heard of a "fully sheathed" home sustaining serious damage in an earthquake. Walters' father actually built such a home in the San Fernando Valley in the early 1950s, using plans that were advertised in a Popular Science mag-

azine. That house weathered two large, nearby earthquakes and numerous aftershocks without any apparent damage.

Most houses sided with grooved plywood, or "T1-11," have some measure of seismic bracing already. Houses with only horizontal siding (without plywood beneath) are the weakest of wood homes. Those homes can be strengthened by adding plywood sheathing. Older homes may also have "cut-in" or "let-in" bracing (where studs have been cut to make way for braces). These types of bracing are of little help in a large earthquake.

Large windows and garage doors are also seismic weak spots in a house, says Walters, as is any finished space over a garage. In these cases, consult an engineer before proceeding.

A gas water heater should be strapped down and braced to prevent an earthquake-caused gas line rupture. A plumber is required to strap and brace new water heaters, but if you install the item yourself, secure it carefully with materials from a lumber or hardware store.

Lastly, look up to your roof.

A wood shingle or wood shake roof may have only tar paper and "skip sheathing" (spaced boards) between the shingles and rafters. This type of sheathing offers little seismic bracing value. In contrast, asphalt shingled roofs are usually built over a base layer of 1/2 inch plywood or structural sheathing, which provides an effective "seismic diaphragm." The use of clay, ceramic or concrete roof tiles adds significant seismic inertia and may require additional seismic bracing, or the house can become top heavy and do serious damage.

While it may seem expensive to earthquake retrofit your home, Walters points out that today's economy makes it "a good time to get a fair price" on any work.



*An example of cut-in braces on a cripple wall that does not offer seismic bracing*

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# Local Resident Gets National Recognition for His Household Tip

By Sophie Braccini



The ice-catcher

Photo provided

## New Listing - Orinda Country Club Pristine Property!

www.18LasCascadas.com



**18 Las Cascadas Road, Orinda**

The home offers five bedrooms, four and a half baths, and four thousand plus square feet of living space. Some amenities include: dramatic nine foot ceilings, oversized windows in all rooms to capture natural light and provide wonderful views. The fifth bedroom has an outside entrance and is perfect as an office, gym, or au-pair. Located in Orinda's most desirable area with award winning schools, just minutes to shopping, the freeway, and BART. **Offered at \$1,500,000.**

Elegant property and lovely custom home nestled on a beautifully landscaped hillside lot – elevated for views and privacy – this home provides a traditional floor plan with a contemporary flare. Designed by Architect Christopher Volkamer.



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Isn't it unpleasant to have ice jump all over the floor when using the refrigerator ice dispenser? Unpleasant and even dangerous, as William W. (Bill) McCandlish experienced when his wife almost slipped on one of those loose and hard-to-see ice cubes. But McCandlish is not one to be intimidated by a fridge.

The retired mining engineer has a practical mind and likes to use household things to solve problems. "I was repairing a vent deflector that someone had stepped on when, looking at it upside-down, I thought it would make a great ice catcher," said the Moraga resident. The deflectors have magnets at each end to attach to heating vents, so it did not require any work to be converted into an ice-catcher. If the magnets won't stick, McCandlish recommends using hot glue.

McCandlish has been a reader of The

Handyman Magazine for years. Every month the publication highlights a particularly ingenious element designed by one of their readers. "I decided to send them an email describing the system with a few jpeg pictures to illustrate it," McCandlish said. "I was happily surprised when they called me about it."

"McCandlish's entry, 'Ice Cube Catcher,' was chosen from more than 1,500 DIY tips submitted [this] year to appear in The Family Handyman's most popular section, 'Handy Hints,'" said Doug Ruchefsky from The Rosen Group. "'Handy Hints' celebrates the true spirit of ingenuity where homeowners offer inventive ways to tackle tricky home repair issues, as well as recycle and 'upcycle' DIY materials." McCandlish's tip will be featured in the April issue of The Family Handyman, a national publication that reaches 4.6 million people each month.

# Field of Greens

## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

*"Sitting quietly, doing nothing, Spring comes, and the grass grows by itself." Zen Saying*

By Cynthia Brian



*Tender, spicy shoots of wild arugula....Cynthia's favorite forage. Photos Cynthia Brian*

All winter long the Lamorinda hillsides struggled to shed their golden grasses as they thirsted for showers of life giving rain. Finally the precipitation carpeted the landscape in lush emeralds where grass seeds sprouted producing weeds that feed.

My husband believes that I was born to be a bunny. Not the curvy sirens published in the pages of men's magazines, but the hungry hares hopping over hillsides breakfasting in our backyards.

Yes, I confess. I eat weeds. I am a forager. Everyday I scour my property for edible flowers and leaves. I've never met a field of greens that I haven't snipped, sampled, and savored.

Both wild and propagated, I assure you that you, too, can fill your pantry with nutritious, delicious fresh herbs, lettuces, shoots, leaves, and vegetative discoveries if you take the time to get to know the genuine food of nature.

In my obsession to get you up, out, and gardening this year, I aim to introduce you to the scrumptious salad bowl of edible weeds awaiting your dressing.

First, a cautionary warning: Before eating an unknown plant, make sure to definitely identify it to be certain that it doesn't contain poisonous or irritant properties. Poison hemlock and wild carrot truly look alike, especially to the untrained eye. Hemlock killed Socrates and it can kill you. ... continued on page D8

## Two Great Orinda Country Club Homes!



### 46 El Gavilan

Mid Century Modern impeccably REMODELED with clean lines, geometric simplicity & neutral colors. Enjoy PANORAMIC views from many rooms with walls of glass. UPDATED showcase kitchen, 2 modern baths, 4 large bedrooms, bonus play room/office, big family room. Great Patio/level play area off of kitchen!!

**Exceptional. \$1,175,000.**



### 25 La Campana

Cute, cozy Carmel charm inside & out with a fabulous yard. Updated yet original charm is maintained. 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, beautiful light-filled rooms, hardwood floors, many newer dual pane windows, a country kitchen, views, and 2 studio/cottages in the garden for work or play. Enjoy level lawns, a private deck with a spa and sunset views.

**Tranquility! \$828,000**

*It's April in Lamorinda For Real Estate*



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# Field of Greens

## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

... continued from page D7

With that proclamation, let's eat our lawns. As long as you haven't applied insecticides, pesticides, or non-organic fertilizers, your organic turf may be your ticket to a free feeding frenzy. Dandelions, chicory, chickweed, purslane, cresses, violets, and prickly lettuce are common specimens growing in Lamorinda backyards. Whether we want to admit it or not, a weed is merely a plant growing where we don't want it to grow. All of these "weeds" are actually cherished cultivars in other cultures. In Greece, on the island of Crete, the residents rank amongst the healthiest people in the world with zero heart disease, almost no dementia, cancers, or other diseases. Their diet consists of colossal amounts of foraged greens, which supply a maximum amount of vitamins and nutrients. The Mediterranean diet is healthy and effective because of the plentiful consumption of wild vegetation.

My current personal favorite is wild arugula. Both the leaves and the flowers provide a tasty, peppery flavor to my salads, sandwiches, and soups. I'm also a huge fan of wild garlic mustard with its sharp, pungent essence. Raw, steamed, sautéed, or stir-fried, these are great sources of calcium and iron. Whether it is sorrel, chives, thistle, calendula, or Miner's lettuce, the dietary content of wild greens is generally more nutritious than anything you can purchase at the supermarket. Depending on the specific greens, you'll ingest high concentrations of vitamin A, C, beta-carotene, zinc, manganese, fiber, and omega 3s.

Besides consuming my "rabbit chow," my garden supplies me with carrots, Swiss chard, cabbage, kale, leeks, lettuces, dill, fennel, parsley, spinach, onions, peas, beans, beets, and radishes. I'm sowing new varieties from Renee's Garden Seeds this season including tricolor pole beans, Oregon giant snow peas, wasabi arugula, jewel toned beets, specialty eggplants in an Asian trio, and, of course, butterfly and hummingbird garden favorites.

Discover these yummy edibles in your garden and instead of eradicating them, embrace them into your culinary creations. Whether you forage or cultivate, venture where the wild things are. (Don't harvest from roadsides, city streets, dumps, or places that could be contaminated, and always wash all gatherings.)

Chickweed  
Chicory  
Dandelion  
Fennel  
Henbit  
Lamb's Quarter  
Milk Thistle  
Plantain  
Prickly Lettuce  
Purslane  
Sorrel  
Shepherd's Purse

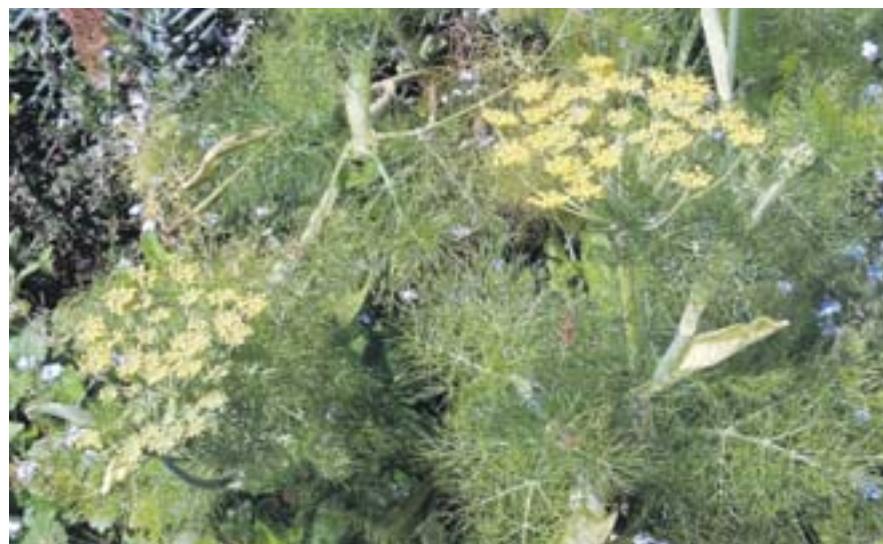


Deep green, nutrient rich leaves of Swiss chard.

Spring has sprung. Let the grass grow while you bunny hop to your own personal field of greens.



The word "dandelion" comes from the French "dent de lion" meaning lion's tooth because of its serrated leaves.



Lacy fennel with yellow fennel blossoms with forget-me-nots interspersed.



Blue periwinkle, also known as vinca minor, is not edible. It's a great ground cover.



*Pick up any fallen camellias to avoid blight.*



*Cynthia's lop eared rabbit, Monet, wishes you a Happy Easter Bunny!*



*Paul Ratto &  
Virginia Varni-Ratto*  
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Pruning for utility line clearance does not always follow desirable pruning techniques in regards to appearance and health of the tree. In this situation, the needs of the utility right-of-way take priority over the tree.

When you have a tree under a power line that requires frequent reduction by the utility co. it's important to have proper pruning before, or have the tree removed, and plant a tree with the criteria (i.e. size and placement) that should be determined by an arborist, so that a tree's health and appearance will never be compromised by the need for utility pruning. So don't wait until it's too late, call your local ISA Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you determine your choice for the perfect tree.

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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

*"Spring is the season for entering the fertile fields of life with seed, knowledge, commitment, and a determined effort." Jim Rohn*

Over the mild winter, my vegetable garden was fabulously overtaken by feral foliage, many of which I've enjoyed as edible delicacies. Now that it is time to prepare the soil for my new seeds, I must edit judiciously. The poison hemlock and the pretty periwinkle will go, but the wild dandelions, arugula, mustard, calendulas, and miner's lettuce will remain until their life expires. As I listen to the croaking of the frogs mating in my pond during the night, I dream of my garden. With these first days of spring, my spirits soar as I dig my paws into the awakening earth. Aw, the renaissance of nature is within my grasp. Breathe in the energy and enthusiasm of new growth.

- CREATE a spring garden room to make your property more intimate and gorgeous by building or buying a pergola or arbor.
- ADD a mirror flanked by evergreens to a porch to enhance the space.
- IMPROVE your soil by digging in organic matter and humus.
- REMOVE deep-rooted weeds such as dandelions from your garden by hand. Eat them!
- DECREASE the spread of crabgrass by applying a pre-emergent that keeps seeds from germinating.
- PROTECT tender shoots from rascally rabbits and destructive deer with light-weight cloth covers until your plants are off to a strong start.  
Old bed sheets work well.
- AERATE your lawn to improve the absorption of moisture and fertilizer before reseeding.
- PRUNE a few boughs of brilliant blue blooming rosemary for your kitchen vase. Enjoy the beauty, fragrance, and sprigs of gastronomic flavor.
- HARVEST the tender leaves of wild mustard, arugula, purslane, and dandelion. Add to salads and sandwiches for a surprising snap.
- REFRAIN from cutting back daffodils until they are as crisp as a cracker. They need to replenish the nutrients to the bulb for next year's floral explosion.
- SPRUCE up your home entry with spring in a basket! Buy four-inch pots of plants that accent your home colors to fill a rustic basket.  
Add a top dressing of moss and don't forget to include tulips for that Easter ecstasy.
- KEEP picking up those dropped camellia blooms to deter petal blight.
- PLACE a vase of fresh flowers on your nightstand. Research indicates that individuals with the brightest outlooks and happiest attitudes keep blooms bed side.
- CONCEAL ugly chain link fences by planting fragrant sweet peas, scarlet runner beans, or morning glory climbers.
- MOVE plants on a cloudy day to new locations this month. Water thoroughly two hours before digging the entire root ball, plant in the new hole, water, and watch.
- FORAGE for wild greens for an adventurous fresh, nutrient rich salad.
- IDENTIFY mushrooms before using for culinary purposes. Never guess if you are not completely certain.
- CELEBRATE spring with floral, fresh, crisp wines from local agriculture. Visit <http://www.lamorindawinegrowers.com/>
- BUY homegrown heirloom plants including peppers, artichokes, eggplants, tomatoes, herbs and more at the Legacy Garden Farm in Moraga, 1370 Moraga Way, Moraga (between School Street where my office is and the Fire Department) on the weekends in April ending on Sunday, April 22.
- LIVE on the wild side at the Spring Wildflower Festival on April 14 in Sunol. [www.ebparcs.org](http://www.ebparcs.org) or board the Wildflower Train April 14 and 28 in Jamestown. [www.railtown1897.org](http://www.railtown1897.org)
- GET out, get going, get gardening. It's springtime in our backyards!

*Celebrate Passover and Easter in a field of greens!*

Happy Gardening to You!

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



*Cynthia Brian with columbine, foxglove, and other garden beauties.*

## ASK CYNTHIA: Reader Requests



Mustard flower closeup Photo Robert Johnson

After perusing garden centers and the internet with no luck, Kelsey, a reader of The Lamorinda Weekly who enjoys Digging Deep, emailed me asking where she could find wild mustard seeds in bulk to plant on her hillside. Although they truly grow wild in our vineyards and on my personal property, I contacted my winery relatives in Napa Valley for a reliable resource on her behalf. Here you go Kelsey:

“For mustard seeds of several different varieties go to [www.wilburellis.com](http://www.wilburellis.com). Click on the Agriculture link and put in your zip code for a location near you. Or contact Molly at the St. Helena, 975 Vintage Ave., St. Helena, CA 94574-0404 at 707-963-3495.”

Another avid garden reader, Susan, contacted me about vetch as an over wintering cover crop she planted. Now that it is flowering, she wants to know if she can eat it.

“Although geese and goats gloat with adoration, if you have vetch as a nitrogen cover crop, don't be tempted to dine on it despite the fact that it resembles sweet peas. It is poisonous to single stomach creatures.”



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**25 La Campana**  
Carmel charm in & out of this 3bd/2ba OCC home. Beaut maintained, country kitchen overlooks very pvt yd. Two det studio cottages, lvl lawn areas, patio, gardens.

**Offered at \$828,000**



**74 La Encinal**  
Very well maint hm down pvt lane just mins to town. Incredible views across Orinda to San Pablo Reservoir. Lovely lg rms w/ big windows & high ceilings. Tons of appeal w/ez living convenience.

**Offered at \$999,000**



**17 Lombardy Lane**  
Upscale trad w/a Sante Fe flair on beautiful 1.18 ac lot in Sleepy Hollow. Updated kit adj to fam rm w/frplc; hdwd; ofc; high ceilings; dual pane; park-like backyard.

**Offered at \$1,100,000**



**5 Risa Court**  
Spectacular mid-century modern, completely remodeled 4bd + ofc/2.5ba, level .25 acre on cul de sac near top-rated schools.

**Offered at \$1,150,000**



**659 Cross Ridge Court**  
Lovingly maint 3bd/2ba 2356 sf trad in Orindawoods. Rarely avail 1-story; frml LR & DR; master w/lux bath; fam rm w/frplc; wall of windows & slider to pvt deck/garden.

**Offered at \$1,150,000**



**91 Acacia Drive**  
Spacious living in 3bd + office, 3.5 bath home with walls of glass, set amongst mature garden & fruit trees and sparkling pool. Many custom features, top Orinda schools.

**Offered at \$1,150,000**



**46 El Gavilan**  
Updated mid-century modern. 4 spacious bedrooms, 2 baths, beautiful hdwd floors, expansive views through walls of glass. Spectacular remodel!

**Offered at \$1,175,000**



**45 Oak Road**  
Rare newer construction! Custom 3bd/2.5ba Craftsman circa 2008. Gourmet kitchen opens to light-filled din area/fam rm, fab mstr suite w/ pvt patio, hm ofc, huge flat grassy are, unobstructed views.

**Offered at \$1,289,000**



**8 Lost Valley Drive**  
Beaut updated sgl lvl 4bd/3b + 2 half-baths in 3265 sf on serene 1.1 ac. Vaulted ceilings, gourmet kit, hdwd flrs, Andersen windows. Custom pool & spa, wonderful gardens.

**Offered at \$1,295,000**



**18 Las Cascadas**  
Beaut custom blt 5bd/4.5ba 4000+ sf trad w/contemp flair, lovely views, cmplt privacy, OCC area. Hdwd flrs, hi ceilings, 3 frplcs, mstr retreat w/deck. Prof landscaped, inviting gazebo.

**Offered at \$1,500,000**



**2 Altarinda Circle**  
Totally renovated & expanded sgl lvl 4bd/4ba trad on exceptional .63 ac lvl lot. Exquisite workmanship, showplace kitchen, fam rm, ofc, hdwd flrs, dual pane windows, close to Bart.

**Offered at \$1,775,000**



**284 Rheem Blvd.**  
Tranquil setting - fabulous landscape & beautiful gardens. Charming 4bd/2ba trad hm offering vaulted wood ceilings, remod kitchen & baths, great home & value!

**Offered at \$829,000**



**45 Merrill Circle**  
Fabulous estate setting, beaut remod 4+bd/3+ba w/quality detailing. Fr drs, crown moldings, porch & more! Picturesque garden w/grass areas, waterfalls - a pvt oasis!

**Offered at \$1,750,000**



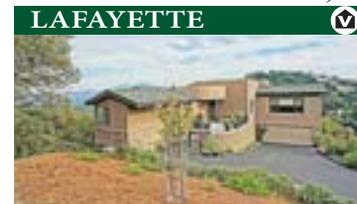
**895 Las Trampas**  
Delightful 3bd/2ba 1275 sq ft cottage style with exquisite handcrafted finishes. Fully renovated with unparalleled appeal in convenient & sought-after area. Mostly level .40 acre parcel with great curb appeal.

**Offered at \$719,000**



**3155 Indian Way**  
Beaut remod 2700 sf ranch style hm steps to schl/trail. Gourmet kit, hdwd flrs, beam ceilings, huge fam/play rm. 4 bd/2.5 ba + ofc. Charming curb appeal, flat yard.

**Offered at \$1,349,000**



**8 Hawks Hill**  
Absolutely stunning pano views of Mt. Diablo, hills & Carquinez straits. Custom blt in 2006 w/master suite, LR, DR, FR, kitchen on main lvl, 3 more bdrms & 2nd fam rm downstairs.

**Offered at \$1,458,000**

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