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FREE

ROSS MOOR BIG BAND
BALL ROOM DANCE
 Friday, April 20th, 8:00 P.M.
 Veterans Memorial Building, Lafayette
 \$10 per person at the door
 Cocktail bar opens at 7:30pm!
 Call 284-7404 for reservations



Cherry pickers illustrate the size of the proposed building. View from BART's south entrance.

Photos Andy Scheck

Cherry Picker Party in Lafayette Parking Lot

By Cathy Tyson

The brightly-colored installation, looking a bit like an amusement park, was hard to miss if you happened to be in Lafayette last week. As reported in the March 28 edition of this paper, scaffolding and balloons were slated to go up in the parking lot behind

Panda Express to indicate the height and mass of a proposed project by KB Home, the Lafayette Town Center III Condominium project. Due to anticipated bad weather and an eight-day observation period during which City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review members

and the public could take a peek, cherry pickers – also called “booms” – were placed instead of the balloons, from March 30 through April 6, to illustrate the size of the proposed building.

... continued on page A12

Quote of the Week:

"Downtown Orinda plays a special role in giving Orinda its identity."

Read *Orindans Make Their Voices Heard Regarding Downtown Development*, on page A7

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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Moraga Produce Market Opens at Rheem

By Sophie Braccini

Many came to Moraga Produce on Friday, April 6, even though the store didn't advertise its "soft opening," but the new produce store, located in the Rheem Shopping Center, north of CVS, had a bit of a rocky start when the electrical system failed 10 minutes before the scheduled 9 a.m. opening. "People were already here waiting for us to open our doors," said manager Fabiola Martinez, "but we had to wait two hours before repairs were done." Martinez and her brother Roberto operate the Moraga store, the third location for the family business that was founded by their father. The store is large, and the efficient lighting system emphasizes the brightly-colored piles of fruits and vegetables. The pricing is attractive, even in the organic section located on the left side of the store. According to Roberto, who gets up at 3 a.m. to pick up fresh produce from the market in South San Francisco, these prices are not loss-leader prices. "We make enough margin the way things are priced now," he said. "These prices are here to stay." In the store, Moraga residents filled their baskets. "I'm so glad you opened here," one customer said to Fabiola. "I won't have to go to your store on Olympic." At the cash register, Saint Mary's College students rang up customers. "It's a fun job," said Ryan, an SMC theater student. Soon, dairy and bulk products will be added to the store's selection, and over the summer Martinez says he will source his fruits from local farmers. The selection may vary according to what Moraga customers want. Moraga



Siblings Fabiola and Roberto Martinez manage Moraga Produce
 Photo Sophie Braccini

Produce is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and is planning a grand opening, with many specials, on April 21.

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Earth Day 2012

Our staff found plenty of opportunities to lend a helping hand! B8-B9



Sports C1-C2



Campolindo Seniors to Play College Baseball

Winning the NCS championship is on Campolindo's to-do list. Alex Kozela reports. C1

Our Homes D1-D8



Attracting Birds to the Native Back Yard

Sophie Braccini discovers that there's more than flora on the Natives Tour. D1

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Lafayette
Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, April 23, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, April 16, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, April 23, 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
Wednesday, May 9, 7:00 pm
Regular Board Meeting
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Changes Coming to the West End

By Cathy Tyson



Architectural rendering of one of the buildings that will comprise the Woodbury, a luxury condominium project by Ward Young Architects of Lafayette. Image provided

Lafayette's west end is slowly but surely growing, care of Branagh Development. Three projects are in the pipeline at various stages of approval along Mt. Diablo Boulevard: Eco Vive West – located at the corner of Risa Road and Mt. Diablo just across the street from the Veterans Hall, the Woodbury on the site of the former Hillside Motel, and an approved office building affectionately known as 3722 Mt. Diablo. “When all three projects are built, they will certainly change the look of the west end of our downtown for the better,” said Planning and Building Services Manager Niroop Srivatsa.

Each project has its own unique challenges. The most prominent of the trio, the Woodbury - luxury residential condominiums - was approved back in 2007, but due to the downturn in the economy and difficulty securing financing, it was placed on hold. Plans have recently been revised from 65-units down to 55-units spread throughout seven separate buildings that will be built in phases with private parking.

“It all started in 2005-2006 when we were working on the Hidden Oaks property,” said Matt Branagh, Head of Entitlement and Land Acquisition, located near Pleasant Hill Road and Olympic Boulevard. “We saw tons of empty nesters coming through who were all looking to downsize.” He explained the Woodbury's one-level condos at just under 2,000 square feet –mainly two bedrooms, 2 ½ bath units – are directed to move down buyers, ready for a change after years of maintaining a single family home. The generous size and expansive outdoor patios and decks are meant to accommodate large family gatherings for easy entertaining.

Attention to detail is a Branagh hallmark; plans include “over the top finishes” throughout. “Our biggest concern was sound insulation, so we hired

a top notch acoustical sound engineer to make units as sound proof as possible,” explained Branagh.

The project was well received back in 2007, and at a recent study session for the revised iteration by Scott Thomsen of Ward Young Architects with Design Review, commissioners were equally positive, calling it efficient, livable and nicely scaled. Chair Ken Hertel found the new version “a fantastic re-birth...it will certainly dress up a hillside that has been lacking for some time.”

What next? After the Woodbury project, “We looked at the surrounding properties for opportunities to further enhance the neighborhood,” said Branagh. Less than a block away was the vacant northwest corner of Risa Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Named after green building principles, and including reclaimed lumber on the exterior, Eco Vive West is the proposed three-story, 9,800 square foot office building slated for the site. The project has been before the Design Review Commission three times to date for study sessions. “A Development Agreement is being drafted for the City Council's consideration,” said Srivatsa, which would finalize approval of using the City's Right of Way on the corner.

“This will be a joint venture with the city – we will be improving the entire site. The Veterans Building only has 43 parking spots – the new project doubles that,” said Branagh. The parking lot will be available for overflow parking serving the Veterans Hall and Temple Isaiah. After completing some market research, there appeared to be a need for a medical facility with handicap accessible parking—Branagh anticipates tenants will use the building for medical offices. Designed to be subordinate to Veteran's Hall, and maintain the view corridor when driving into town from the west end, the modern take

on a classic barn was a winner with Design commissioners who commented they, “appreciate repeated refinements” on the “simple quiet structure” and called it, “humble without diminishing quality.” Credit the creativity of Scott Thomsen once again of Ward, Young Architects here in Lafayette.

Finally, located on a long and narrow, bow-tie shaped parcel, just east of the Veterans Hall parking lot, sits 3722 Mt. Diablo. Like Branagh's other projects on the west end, it's also designed by Ward Young Architects, similarly it's had some design adjustments along the way. It was recently sold to a Lafayette business, the new owners plan to start construction soon.

About the Developer

Now in its fourth generation in the Bay Area, the Branagh family has always been active in construction and development. Matt Branagh's great grandfather, John Branagh, came from Ireland just after the turn of the century. According to Matt he obtained, at the ripe old age of 21, the 13th contractor's license issued by the State of California in 1919. John's son Charlie grew up in the business and returned to work after being discharged from the Army in 1945 after the war – running Branagh Inc., based in Oakland, until the early '90s before handing the business over to his sons Tom – who is now President, and Bill, now retired, who was the Treasurer. Charlie's son, Peter Branagh, decided in 1986 to found Branagh Development – more of a boutique development firm, headquartered in Danville. There was never a doubt for Matt Branagh, who was raised in Moraga and says he spent his summers as a kid sweeping floors and weed-whacking at family construction projects. Matt and his brother, Mike, recently established MB Realty Group.

More Spending on Road Repair Expected

By Cathy Tyson

The usually financially conservative Lafayette City Council has indicated it is willing to open up purse strings a bit to address road repair. In the aftermath of last years' failure of Measure G, the parcel tax for road repair, it appears not enough residents have an appetite to tax themselves, so the city needs to find another way to solve the problem.

Road maintenance budgeting is spelled out in the five year Capital

Improvement Program or CIP. Twice a year, city staff updates the CIP, looking at current projections of revenue and infrastructure needs and runs it by other city boards for review before the final version is presented to the City Council for adoption.

A number of options have appeared to improve the road repair budget outlook, noted in the most recent CIP update. There was a Goal Setting Workshop in January, it was

there that the City Council was supportive of allocating an additional \$400,000 per year toward road repair - the same amount that is collected as the Waste Management mitigation fee anticipated every year. Tony Coe, Engineering Services Manager, recommended in a recent staff report that “it would be financially feasible for the City to continue that allocation for

the entire five-year cycle.”

Coe projects \$14.4 million available for capital funding over the next five years. Historically contributions from the General Fund, gas tax, and Measure J sales tax total \$1.7 million every year to the Capital Improvement Program that goes toward road and drain repair.

... continued on next page

Police Report



Dear Readers: We are experiencing difficulty obtaining detailed crime reports from the Orinda and Lafayette police departments, which are staffed by the Contra Costa County Sheriff. Please bear with us as we try to determine how to best serve the public given the limited information that is being made available to us.

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The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applicants to fill the following volunteer vacancies:

- Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Circulation Commission
- Community Center Foundation
- Crime Prevention Commission
- Senior Services Commission

To learn more about these volunteer opportunities and to obtain an application visit the City's website www.ci.lafayette.ca.us. Or call Joanne Robbins, City Clerk 925-284-1968 an application will be mailed. Positions open until filled.

Lafayette's New Parking Meter....

Now your credit card will feed 'er

By Cathy Tyson



One of the next generation parking meters installed for a three month trial run in front of the Mercantile Building. Photo C. Tyson

Will that be plastic or coins? In response to the city's auditor suggesting that the city reduce cash transactions, the City Council opted for a three month trial run of solar powered parking meters that accept Visa and Mastercard in front of the Mercantile Building. If drivers buy in to the new-fangled models, they may receive the green light to spread throughout the downtown.

Collecting, sorting and depositing sacks of heavy coins is no picnic for parking enforcement staff, "It would be much more efficient if we decided to switch all the meters," said Community Service Officer Cathy Surges-Moscato.

"They're definitely more user-friendly," continued Surges-Moscato, who is in charge of the test drive that runs from late March to late June. At only \$1.00 per hour, most parkers who may stop for a quick latte and croissant at La Boulange can scrounge enough change to feed the meter. But plastic costs just the same for those that are change-challenged, although the city pays a small

percentage to process debit and credit cards.

While some parking experts have suggested adjusting parking rates in response to demand, there are no plans for that in Lafayette at this time. Switching old meters to next generation models is actually fairly easy – in a nutshell, the old heads come off, and new twin-hydra heads fit onto the old base.

Put another nickel in...

In that nickel-munching thing

Get me curbside parking time

It's legal, legal, legal.

Lafayette's new parking meter

Now your credit card will feed'er

Ugly duckling, never said

It's regal, regal, regal

Metal "art" along the sidewalk

Soon will have the townfolk talk

A bit like Lurch, a perfect perch

For seagull, seagull, seagulls...

Closer! Come on get closer!

Just park your car along the boulevard

And swipe your plastic—

it ain't hard

Takes the stress off L-P-D

No more jangling coins to see

Wonder who collects bank fees

from meters, meters, meters...

-Cathy Dausman

More Spending on Road Repair Expected

... continued from page A2

Add to that the \$400,000 from Waste Management fees to total \$2.1 funding annually – enough to pay for a fair amount of asphalt.

Recommendations by the Road Funding Task Force and CPAC, the Capital Projects Assessment Committee, also encourage the City Council to transfer at least \$3 million from the General Fund Reserve account, which was originally pledged as a contribution if Measure G passed, into a special sinking fund for capital improvement to be used over three years.

Throw in a couple of grant awards expected in 2013 to fund pavement management work, traffic median and streetlight installations on Mt. Diablo, and the road repair situa-

tion in Lafayette is looking more manageable.

That would be the good news, however the bad news is there's still approximately a \$15 million road and drain repair backlog and 81 failed residential roads. Three recommendations from CPAC were recently adopted by the City Council: continue the current pavement management strategy, increase funding to address the backlog of failed roads, and implement a stopgap strategy on certain roads to stretch their useful life. That's excellent news for the families living on the ten-street list for the Stopgap Chip Seal Program that kicks off in 2013, starting with Buckeye Court and Fiora Place.



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- 24 TREETAS DR
- 4 WANDER DR
- 149 WALFORD DR
- 108 WALFORD DR
- 4 SPARROW CT
- 11 KETTESLN
- 8 PIMENTEL CT
- 133 WESTCHESTER
- 15 BRECK CT
- 830 AUGUSTA DR
- 1164 LARCH AVE
- 1160 LARCH AVE
- 1027 LARCH AVE
- 1024 LARCH AVE
- 1148 LARCH AVE
- 1204 LARCH AVE
- 1056 LARCH AVE
- 1090 LARCH AVE
- 4 LARCH LN
- 1843 JOSEPH DR
- 9 FLETTI DR
- 479 MORAGA RD
- 656 MORAGA RD
- 39 PASEO DEL RIO
- 1426 DE LA CRUZ
- 107 NATALIE DR
- 257 SANDRINGHAM
- 238 SANDRINGHAM
- 235 SANDRINGHAM
- 1072 COUNTRY CLUB
- 1050 COUNTRY CLUB
- 398 BIRCHWOOD DR
- 256 BIRCHWOOD DR
- 13 DONALD DR
- 1924 ASCOT DR
- 1939 ASCOT DR
- 1977 ASCOT DR
- 2067 ASCOT DR
- 1958 ASCOT DR
- 2063 ASCOT DR
- 2135 ASCOT DR #28
- 2135 ASCOT DR #17
- 2135 ASCOT DR #20
- 2135 ASCOT DR #27
- 2135 ASCOT DR #26
- 2087 ASCOT DR #224
- 2087 ASCOT DR #124
- 2083 ASCOT DR
- 2091 ASCOT DR
- 1018 RIVER ROCK LN
- 94 G ELDER
- 1409 CAMINO PERAL
- 1403 CAMINO PERAL
- 1418 CAMINO PERAL
- 1405 CAMINO PERAL
- 1437 CAMINO PERAL
- 1416 CAMINO PERAL
- 1475 CAMINO PERAL
- 1515 A CAMINO PERAL
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- 180 VALLEY GLEN
- 208 VISTA GLEN PL
- 950 OAK VISTA
- 545 PALO ALTO PL
- 7 EL CAMINO FLORES
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- 30 ROSS DR
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- 19021 SCHUESTER DR
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MORAGA Moraga Center (925) 376-7252
WALNUT CREEK Countrywood Center (925) 935-9300
CONCORD Vineyard Center (925) 827-0330
SONOMA MarketPlace Center (707) 996-4465
NAPA Napa Town Center (707) 255-9375

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, April 11, 7:00pm
Wednesday, April 25, 7:00pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, April 16, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Monday, April 23, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District

Tuesday, May 8, 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

Receiving stolen property, 3/26/12 A smart phone owner lost, or had stolen, her phone while attending an event in Danville on Saturday, 3/24. Just a couple days later she was able to use the phone's tracking system that led her to Moraga – where the phone was inside of a car parked in a lot on Moraga Road. She confronted the new phone owner who returned it, but explained he purchased the phone for \$200 at the Concord Flea Market.

Open front door, 3/26/12 Moraga cops noticed the front door of a home on Paseo Grande open and were unable to find a homeowner. There was no obvious damage to indicate a break-in. A peak inside revealed nothing suspicious, so they closed the door and left.

Tree vandalism? 3/24/12 A Rheem Boulevard resident told police he suspected his neighbor removed branches from a Town of Moraga-owned palm tree located near his home over the weekend. The reporting person was concerned that the tree may have been damaged and that branches and leaves would block the storm drain when it rains. Someone from the Town's Public Services department came out to examine the tree and said it was fine.

Same neighbor, 3/26/12 Oddly enough, just a couple of days after the reported tree damage, a Rheem Boulevard homeowner said he had received several e-mails from the neighbor about their disagreement. Reporting person felt the e-mails were threatening and asked police to investigate. Police took a look at the e-mails and found no threats or other criminal actions.

Bike missing, 3/22/12 A black and red Trek bicycle was reported missing from a Rimer Drive home. The bike was last seen in the garage, but it's a mystery as to its disappearance. Owner claims his side door to the garage is locked and alarmed and the main garage door is always closed. Bike is valued at \$1600. Police will continue to investigate.

Party's over, Cinderella, 3/21/12 At just before midnight an officer stopped by a home on Miramonte Drive to crash a loud party. Officers could hear the noise from 150 feet away from the residence. Party host received an official warning citing the Moraga Municipal Code for Persons Responsible for a Loud or Unruly Party.

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42 Days for a Show of Faith

By Sophie Braccini

Who could resist women's tears and the innocent pleas of little children to save off-leash dog hours in Moraga, even from the distant pedestal where the Town Council presides over the destiny of the town? On March 29 the Council partially laid down arms and gave supporters of off-leash dogs at Rancho Laguna Park 42 days to work out a plan for a fenced dog area that would satisfy the varied needs of all park users, before enacting a resolution that would terminate the possibility of unfettered canine play at the park. The second reading of the resolution the Council was set to adopt that night was postponed until May 9.

If a fenced dog area is proposed at Rancho Laguna Park, where off-leash hours have existed for many years, dog owners need the buy-in of the park's other user-groups, such as sports users, families with young children, and any other type of potential park user. The Council did not identify who these groups might be, or which individuals might be able to represent general park users.

The Council's decision came after

a few hours of public comment, mostly from dog owners.

"You got what you wanted," said resident Bill Carman, "It has been an emotional issue... let's stop the retaliation and let's do this (a fenced dog park). We are close to a solution." Carman asked the Council for six months to work out a plan that would include everyone.

"I hear that there is a strong desire to find a solution that works for everyone," said Town Manager Jill Keimach, who continued, "I'd like to propose tabling the decision to a date certain, May 9. That gives 42 days, or three council meetings. We will hear from the community as soon as possible and will have time to do an environmental analysis. And if the community can't come up with a plan, we will have the second reading of the ordinance (ending off-leash hours)."

That idea was approved on a 3-2 vote, because Mayor Mike Metcalf and Council Member Dave Trotter thought that 42 days was not enough time—they had asked for a 90-day grace period.

The Council also indicated that it hoped the residents who previously brought and dropped a lawsuit against the Town would get in touch with the Town's Attorney and agree not to litigate again. Otherwise, the Council did not see the benefit of working on a plan that could be legally challenged.

The Council designated Keimach as the point of contact for the community to work out a compromise. In the days that followed the meeting, community members began contacting her. "There have been a number of people who have already expressed interest in being on a community-based committee to design an off-leash fenced dog park at Rancho Laguna Park," said Keimach on April 2. "Although the Council identified me as a 'point person,' I was not given the authority to select individuals or lead the committee, nor do I think it would be a good approach. I believe it is important that the Town not drive or create the committee or the plan."

The Town offered to provide meeting space at the Hacienda and has requested a proposal for a consultant

to conduct a biological assessment and an arborist report.

"Tina Brier and Jeanne Moreau seem to be taking the lead in getting a committee together," said Keimach. Blair Newel, a board member of Lamorinda Dogs, confirmed: "Jeanne Moreau of Lamorinda Dogs is working with the town manager, Jill Keimach, to form a community task force," he said. "The first meeting is scheduled for April 12, after spring break. This group will include active town members from different groups who will work together to fine tune a compromise plan to present at the May 9 Town Council meeting. The timeline is to get a plan approved and begin construction by summer along with the new playground."

Keimach indicated that a conceptual plan should be submitted by April 20, to allow time for staff to prepare a report and publish the packet in time for the May 9 Council meeting. Other individuals interested in participating in the discussions should contact Keimach at jkeimach@moraga.ca.us.

Measure A, Coming Soon to Moraga Voters

By Sophie Braccini



Volunteers make calls on behalf of Measure A

When Superintendent Bruce Burns stands in front of an audience to present facts about the Moraga School District (MSD), he is not shy about pointing out the achievements of the district he's led for a little over two years. Burns does not campaign—there is a team of parent volunteers who do that—he talks about MSD's financial needs and answers questions regarding the new parcel tax, Measure A. Sometimes he and those who work on the Yes on A campaign are met with skepticism. But in a town that draws many of its residents for its schools, they find a lot of comprehension and support. The question is: will that support tally the two-thirds votes needed to pass Measure A?

"We are one of the top-rated districts in California," said Burns during a meeting with the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. "We've been able to maintain small class sizes and retain very qualified personnel. We educate the whole child and introduce innovative programs, and all this in spite of

declining State funding."

It is estimated that MSD lost State funding in the magnitude of \$6.6 million over the last four years.

"Over the past five years the district has cut \$1,210,790 of yearly expense in response to the state budget crisis," said Michael Holbrook, a MSD parent and member of the Measure A marketing campaign team. MSD's budget for the coming year includes almost \$400K in additional cuts and uses \$700K of reserves.

Holbrook, who described himself as fiscally conservative, is fast to point out that he was impressed by the district's frugality. "What sold me is how the last two superintendents have managed the funds," he said, "MSD gets less funding per student than many other school districts in California. Through cuts and with support from parents, the district has been able to maintain its excellence and innovative programs. But come 2013-14, it is likely that cuts will have to be made in the classrooms if Measure A does not pass—small class size,

teacher assistants, and enrichment programs could be affected."

Whether they have children enrolled in MSD or not, many residents are coming out in favor of Measure A. John Mattson's children, now grown, all went through the Moraga public school system. "We've always appreciated the quality of education in Moraga and Lamorinda," said Mattson, adding that as an orthopedic surgeon he recognizes the importance of education as an investment: "This is important for our future, for our children, and for our property values," said the longtime Moraga resident.

"Our schools are the main differ-

entiator for our community," said realtor and Moraga resident Ben Olsen. "We have some disadvantages compared to Walnut Creek in terms of shopping and entertainment, and what ultimately makes young families chose Moraga are the schools. Investing in the schools makes a lot of sense."

Last time Moragans voted on school parcel tax, in 2004, it passed on a slim margin of about 20 votes. Not everyone believes that more money means better results in schools, and in the current economy some might find it difficult to pay an additional \$18.75 a month.

"Don't you already have a parcel tax for the School District?" asked Moraga property owner Joan Bruzzone during the Chamber meeting. "Why do you need an additional parcel tax, doesn't it automatically go up?"

"The parcel tax that was voted in 2004 remains at the same level, while costs increase and what we receive from the State continues to significantly decrease," responded Burns. "When it (the 2004 parcel tax) was voted in it was scheduled to cover our expenditures for seven years, and through savings we were able to extend its impact for three more years." Measure A is intended to keep the schools solvent for another five to eight years.

Measure A in a Nutshell

Annual parcel tax: \$225 per parcel
Needs a 2/3 majority
No sunset, no inflation clause
Deadline to postmark ballot: May 8, 2012
Total annual additional income for MSD: \$1,271,250
Independent Citizens Oversight Committee: included
Low income seniors can ask to be exempt
MSD's total annual revenue last year: Approximately \$15 million

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Hetfield Development may be Moving Toward Conciliation

By Sophie Braccini

A smaller footprint and smaller lots were favored by the Moraga Planning Commission on April 2 as it reviewed the final Environmental Impact Report for the subdivision of the Hetfield property, which is located off Sanders Drive in Moraga, along a creek, on 58.2 acres of MOSO open space land. According to some of the neighbors this is a step in the right direction, although some concerns remain.

During the long meeting the applicant, John Wyro, acknowledged that this project has been a lot of work and has taken a long time to be approved. The first application was filed in December of 2005. "If it's taken so long it's because the first plans, with six large lots and commensurate very large houses, were out of character with the neighborhood,"

said neighbor Bob Ellerbeck. "The risks and environmental impacts were not mitigated either. But the neighbors recognize that this is a private property that can be developed, as long as it abides by local regulations and guidelines."

"I thought that the Planning Commission did its homework," commented Wyro after the meeting. "We'll spend more time now on the conceptual development plan, with the eight-lot small footprint option that the Commission prefers." Wyro is confident that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) indicates that all of the impacts can be mitigated to a less than significant level. "These new lots will be closer in size to the average lot size currently existing on Sanders Drive," he said. "The three houses at the end of Sanders will have

no house behind them and we are working with the other neighbors to limit the visual impact." Wyro added that, in an effort to be a good neighbor, he has offered to add vegetation to the back yards of some of the Sanders properties, and has even given them some land that they thought they owned, but in fact they did not.

Smaller homes relieved some of the neighbors' concerns, but others remain. "Everything can be mitigated, but at what cost?" asked Ellerbeck. "If this development is too expensive we risk a situation where grading will take place, home pads carved in the hillside, but no construction happens. And we would be left with an ugly scorched hill." He speaks from experience, since this scenario happened on another nearby property.

"We are very concerned with the economics of the project," added Malcolm Cooper, who also lives on Sanders Drive. "One of the Commissioners calculated that it would take 9,400 truck loads to move the dirt of the proposed grading. How could that amount of work be financed with only six relatively small homes?"

"No developer, now-a-days, would take the risk of grading, if they had not calculated that the whole project was financially sound," answered Wyro.

Eleanor Vaughn, another Sanders Drive resident, is still not a big fan of the project. "We experienced a landslide here in the '80s," she said. "We were all affected by it physically and financially. I don't care what the engineer says, that hill is still unstable. At the time of the slide, it was decided

that the property was not fit for building and the owner decided to abandon his development project. The property was sold to different owners over the years."

The EIR addresses landslide concerns, noting that the proposed building sites in the Hetfield subdivision are not being constructed on landslide debris, and the hillside southwest of the building sites is to be reconstructed as an engineered fill that is keyed into bedrock. The report goes on to state that, too often, older residential projects were constructed on or immediately adjacent to landslide deposits, constructed within the floodplain of creeks, and/or built on undocumented fill.

The next step should be taken in May with a presentation of the conceptual plan by the Wyro Company.

Moraga's Swing Vote, Vice Mayor Howard Harpham

By Sophie Braccini



Howard Harpham Photo Sophie Braccini

When three of the members of the Moraga Council were elected, almost four years ago, one of the three was designated to never get the opportunity to sit in the Mayor's chair. According to the town's unwritten tradition, that role fell to the candidate who was elected by the fewest votes— Howard Harpham, who is now the vice mayor.

Four years ago the retired Public Defender for the Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office thought it unlikely that he would serve more than one term on the Council, but he now admits a willingness to run again next November. Harpham has been the swing vote on a few decisions, notably the recent issues regarding Rancho Laguna Park. Harpham's vision for Moraga is of a college town, which differs from the unsubstantiated semi-rural character that many want to preserve.

"I am not one to pull the minutes because I've been slightly misquoted, or to talk just for the sake of it," says Harpham. "I talk when I really have a point to make or an argument to develop." Harpham speaks less than his council colleagues, but when he does

speak, people listen, especially since his position is not always the one that is expected.

"When I worked for the D.A.'s Office," recalls the former attorney, "there were times when someone would get much better treatment than they should have, just because he or she was able to reach out to the judge. Making due allowances, the same thing can happen during a council meeting when residents come up with something reasonable, that's conveyed with some real emotion." However, any attempt to strong-arm the Council is sure to meet with his opposition.

Regarding Rancho Laguna Park, Harpham seems to have changed his position more than once, from being willing to give off-leash dogs some grassy areas, to favoring the option without grass, to again supporting a dog area with grass. "It is not like there was a great solution and a bad one," says Harpham. "I thought that the option without grass was a better one for the town as a whole, and I'm sure that if the dog owners had given it a try, if grass had been sewn (as the plan proposed), the solution would have worked. But I could also live with the second option (the so-called Mickey Mouse plan).

Harpham indicates that this last change was not the result of demonstrations and threats by dog owners, but that the law suit that was filed against the Town was costing thousands of dollars; a luxury the Town cannot afford, even to make a point. "I do not make my decisions based on the number of people who show up at a meeting," he says, "but on what I think is in the best long term interest of the town."

For Harpham, the first element that needs to be in place for the long

term preservation of Moraga is its finances. "Our first duty is to match our obligations to our resources," he says. Maintaining the infrastructure

is a must for the vice mayor who also manages a homeowners' association that annually sets aside the funds for its roads. "We need to bite the bullet,"

he says, referring to the Town's plan to put a road-related tax measure on the November ballot.

... continued on page A12

Moraga Librarian Beth Girshman Moves to Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



Beth Girshman Photo Sophie Braccini

Orinda's Senior Community Library Manager Caroline Gick was recently promoted to the very large Ygnacio Valley Library in Walnut Creek. To replace her, Beth Girshman, Moraga's Senior Community

Library Manager, will leave the job she was appointed to a little over a year ago.

"I love Moraga and have made a lot of friends here," said Girshman, "but Orinda will be a promotion for me. It is a larger library, the position is full-time and staff is larger."

According to the Contra Costa County Library, they are in the process of recruiting a new librarian for Moraga but the hiring freeze that's in place is causing some delays.

"Moraga is a very active and vibrant branch, that has a very supportive group with the Friends of the Moraga Library," said Girshman. "I'm sure a new, very qualified librarian will be hired soon."



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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 8, at 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 25, at 6:00 pm
Community Room, City Hall
22 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
Monday, May 14, 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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The Orinda Association:

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Police Report

Dear Readers: We are experiencing difficulty obtaining detailed crime reports from the Orinda and Lafayette police departments, which are staffed by the Contra Costa County Sheriff. Please bear with us as we try to determine how to best serve the public given the limited information that is being made available to us.



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Assessing the Health of the Community's Heart

Orinda Mayor presents State of the City Address

By Laurie Snyder



Mayor Steve Glazer Photo Andy Schreck

"There are many ways to examine the health of our town," said Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer in his State of the City address presented March 28 to members of the City's Rotary and Chamber of Commerce.

The health of any town – sprawling or small – is typically measured by assessing the health of its vital organs – the community's economic vitality, the achievements of its students and schools, the level of crime versus residents' sense of safety, the stability of the local government's budget, residents' environmental

and social awareness, including charitable endeavors and their support for the protection of civil rights, as well residents' "general friendliness."

Noting that Orinda's "level of community engagement and connection continues to be robust," Glazer pointed to the number of residents active with service, parent, and garden clubs, as well as elementary classrooms that are "teaming with involved and engaged parents" in a town of 17,500 "overseen by five elected volunteers" and "guided by 54 additional volunteer citizens serving on various committees and commissions."

But Glazer also warned that Orinda's current level of peace and tranquility may be shaken over the next few months. In addition to downtown development discussions that may raise the temperature on an already simmering pot of community discontent, two projects "likely to create debate in the coming months" include the J & J Ranch and Lavenida Lane subdivisions.

The Bruzzone family has proposed turning its 12 acres between the J & J Ranch project and the back of Miramonte High School into eight home sites. Orinda's Planning Commission will hold

that public hearing April 12.

And possibly as early as June, Commissioners will review proposed development of a 21-acre site near Del Rey Elementary and Miramonte, which is home to the Contra Costa County's oldest adobe building. Built in 1841, the Moraga Adobe, according to Glazer, will "under the proposed subdivision plan ... be restored and used as a club house for residents of the proposed 13-lot subdivision with the possibility for periodic public access."

Other issues Glazer described as "not so controversial any more" include the Orinda Grove by Pulte – a 14-acre project which will require the relocation of City-owned ball fields while creating 73 small lot homes and new Orinda Union School District administrative offices; Wilder – the largest of all which, when completed, "will contain 245 single family residences, five ball fields, a public art and garden center, public maintenance facility, private swim and fitness facility," and trail network "connecting to the regional open space areas ... and approximately 1,300 acres of open space;" Orinda Oaks – a 12-lot subdivision that will likely be developed on 23 acres atop Stein Way; and the Eden Senior Affordable Housing program.

Pulte, said Glazer, hopes groundbreaking will begin in June – the same month Wilder's playfields are slated to open. Additionally, Wilder's private swim facility and clubhouse are now complete.

Signature Homes' latest plans for Orinda Oaks will likely be approved in mid-2012.

Eden Housing "has obtained

[with the exception of building permits and other minor items] all of the approvals from the City of Orinda necessary for the development of 67 senior affordable residences on the former library site," and is awaiting word regarding its request for California tax credit financing.

Glazer also stressed that "road and drain failures continue to plague our town" as he talked finance. "We have reduced staff, frozen positions and required six furlough days for employees this year and may require up to ten ... for next year. We are one of the few cities that does not have a defined benefit pension plan.... Our employees invest their retirement contributions on their own. Our employees also do not have post retirement medical benefits."

Heartening news included Orinda's ranking by the F.B.I. as America's fifth safest city, completion of environmental remediation on the old Mobil station site across from the Library, and a rise in Orinda's sales tax revenues by 5.2 percent as of March 12.

When asked, during the question and answer period, how large a role sales tax actually plays in the City's operations, City Manager Janet Keeter noted that sales taxes comprise roughly 10 percent of Orinda's budget.

Several members of the audience urged Glazer to consider seeking further savings by sharing staff and services with the City of Lafayette and Town of Moraga. When Glazer responded that Council and staff have looked at this and found it unworkable, one audience member commented *sotto voce*, "They're not going to fire themselves."

Please submit Letters and Opinions:
letters@lamorindaweekly.com

Attention History Hounds!



Ever sniffed out a good mystery? The Lamorinda Weekly has been asked whether "Paul Park" is an actual park in Orinda named after an area resident or merely a strip of land next to the Orinda Highway 24 off-ramp mistakenly designated as a park by Internet mapping sites (www.recreationparks.net/CA/contracosta/paul-park-orinda). If you know the answer or can offer a clue, contact laurie@lamorindaweekly.com.



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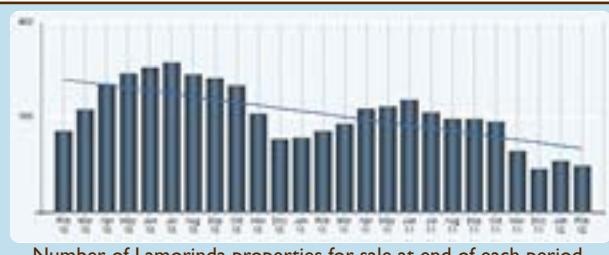
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Orindans Make Their Voices Heard Regarding Downtown Development

By Laurie Snyder



Orinda's City Council and Planning Commission met in front of a nearly packed house at a joint session March 12. Twenty-eight residents provided feedback regarding downtown development before the elected and appointed officials turned their focus to zoning and updates regarding major development projects. Photo Andy Schreck

Twenty-eight area residents rose to express their opinions during the public comments portion of a March 27 meeting co-hosted by Orinda's City Council and Planning Commission. Their collective commentary stretched nearly 90 minutes, providing City staff and elected and appointed officials important, but often confusing input regarding what citizens want for the City's downtown.

City Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu transported residents back to August 2009 – the dawn of the current downtown debate – when a task force consisting of 11 residents, appointed by the City Council, recommended changing Orinda's land use policies. Planning Commission meetings ensued with the Council eventually deciding that broader public input on the vision of the future of downtown was necessary before the very specific recom-

mendations of the Task Force could be considered. Subsequently, frustrated by 100 poorly attended public meetings, the City hired the consulting firm of MIG to present community workshops. Fifteen hundred residents were alerted via Twitter, a Parks and Recreation program participant list and other methods, and a survey was prepared by the Planning Department and made available at community events and online. ... continued on page A9



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Glenn Beaubelle 925-253-4600



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Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community!

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. **email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com**; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

As Hollywood goes, so goes Lamorinda.

On March 29, The New York Times reported that "[a] far-reaching rezoning plan . . . would turn parts of Hollywood into a mini-city -- with residential and commercial towers rising on streets like Vine, Hollywood, and Sunset . . ."

The Times went on to say that the plan for Hollywood "has set off a storm of opposition from residents fearful that it would destroy the rakish small-town charm of their community with soaring any-dyne buildings that block views of the Hollywood Hills (and its iconic sign) and overwhelm streets with traffic."

Similar environmentally disruptive plans are in the works for Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda.

Tall buildings and high-density housing are planned for the downtown regions of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda.

In Orinda, for example, the city council voted unanimously in February to advance plans for a 67-unit downtown apartment complex. The complex would have room for about 37 cars.

Before Lamorindans are saddled with irreversible high-rise, high-density housing, the voters in each city must be able to decide, in city-wide referendums, whether or not to permit the construction of such housing. Locally elected politicians must be held accountable for their actions.

Moreover, unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats who serve on such regional authorities as the Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Association of Bay Area Governments are determining how the downtowns of Lamorinda should look. Also, powerful real estate developers want to give Lamorinda a facelift.

New high-rise construction would destroy the views of the nearby hills and lead to more traffic and parking problems. Life in Lamorinda would become less enjoyable and lead to lower property values -- values that have, in recent years, declined noticeably.

Richard S. Colman
Orinda

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 and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.



Sports Reporters Needed

The Lamorinda Weekly is looking for additional sports reporters.

Our immediate need is for baseball, softball and lacrosse coverage. The pay rate is \$50 per published article .

If you are interested in covering a variety of sports or just one or two sports, please email wendy@lamorindaweekly.com and include a writing sample.

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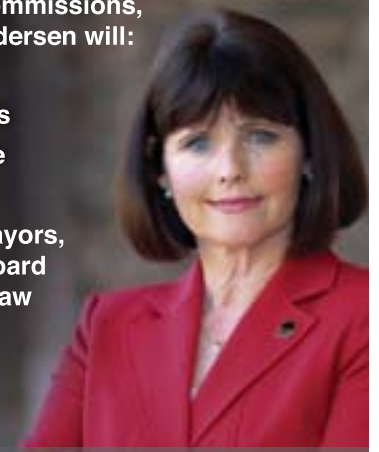
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Orindans Make Their Voices Heard Regarding Downtown Development

... continued from page A7

Residents' comments from that survey are presented in the staff report on the City's web site. Combined with the audio of the March 27 meeting – also available online – one gets a picture of divergent citizen opinions, hopes, thoughtful analyses, heartfelt concerns and, at times, pie-in-the-sky dreams for a City with a budget of less than \$11 million.

"Add a few more fountains and gardens and artwork but no four story buildings," wrote one survey respondent. "If you want a town with four story buildings and residences on top of them and no parking and traffic jams, please move somewhere else."

Other comments included:
"We moved to Orinda because it is semi-rural, not because it has a bustling and 'vibrant' downtown," wrote another. "If we wanted that we would be in Berkeley, Walnut Creek or Pleasant Hill."

"I would like not to have to go to Lafayette or Walnut Creek ... to get a little nightlife! I'd love to feel it was a destination!"

"I LOVE ORINDA. I wish the downtown looked more like Santa Barbara or Carmel – Spanish style buildings to go with its origination..."

Still others suggested specific changes:

"I'd really like to see safe ways for the residents to be able to walk and bike to downtown."

"Make it like a downtown Aspen or even a downtown Truckee.... Consider closing down the streets to car traffic one night a week and have an Orinda stroll."

"Rather than developing new buildings encourage existing building owners (Phairs) to renovate and re-develop space for the new realities of live/work. Remove realtors from ground floor

locations and replace ... with businesses that collect sales tax for our City."

During the meeting one new Orinda resident – a young mother – recounted being trapped with her small child in the elevator near McCaulou's. Saying she and her family moved to the community because her husband had an "idyllic" upbringing in Orinda, she now finds the city "uncared for and crumbling."

Former Orinda Books manager Maria Roden, a 12-year resident with a teen graduating from Miramonte in three years, described herself as puzzled by the city's empty buildings and shocked by its lack of supermarkets, calling the city depressed and shabby. "We need to plan for the future before it's too late."

Orinda native Jeff Hawkins observed that, while not sold on plans proposed by the pro-devel-

opment advocacy group, Orinda Vision (www.orindavision.org), "Downtown Orinda will change."

Owen Murphy of Save Orinda (saveorinda.org) asked and answered why citizens should care about downtown planning, saying proposed changes could irrevocably alter Orinda.

"Downtown Orinda plays a special role in giving Orinda its identity," said Bruce Burrows, who expressed frustration with disinterested property owners and merchants unwilling to upgrade facilities or operate on Sundays.

Herb Brown and Kent Hagan spoke against One Bay Area (www.onebayarea.org). "If people want to redevelop and make things new" that would be fine, said Hagan; raising building height limits would not. Vince and Janet Maiorana pressed the Council to learn why Corte Madera and Palo Alto are fighting

One Bay Area.

Richard Colman reminded attendees that the City's recent poll of residents showed that 98 percent of residents already rate Orinda as an excellent or good place to live.

Following a discussion on zoning and development project status updates, the Council concluded the meeting by commending participants for their engagement and for the evening's civil tone.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorindaweekly.com

New Breast Cancer Treatments Targeted to Each Patient's Needs



**Wednesday, April 25
6:30 to 8 pm
Lafayette Library and Learning Center**

Patients often say that one of the most challenging aspects of a breast cancer diagnosis is the lack of control over "what's happening to me." Technological advances at Alta Bates Summit, part of the Sutter Health Network of care, allow for more treatment choices targeted to a woman's own diagnosis, her lifestyle and her body. Come hear Radiation Oncologist Valery Uhl, MD and Surgical Oncologist Lisa Bailey, MD, talk about the latest techniques in breast cancer treatment, including Intraoperative Radiation Therapy (IORT).



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Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Miramonte Student Speaker Wins Again

Submitted by Fred George

Miramonte High School senior Alexandra Glaser took first place during the third round of the Lions' Student Speakers Contest March 22 in Concord. She will move on to the District Level Contest scheduled for 2 p.m. Sunday, April 22 at the Rossmoor Hillside Clubhouse, Las Trampas Room, where she has the potential of winning \$4,500 in

scholarship money. There are two more levels after the District Level, where another \$16,000 will be awarded. The topic is "What can the America of yesterday teach the America of today." Alexandra is sponsored by the Moraga Lions Club, and plans to go to George Washington University in Washington DC upon graduation.

Girl Scout Troop #30794 Gold Award Winners

Submitted by Irene Gessling



Madline Larson Photos provided



Alanna McCauley



Megan DeTrane



Tatiana Gessling

Four Campolindo High School seniors (Tatiana Gessling, Maddie Larson, Alanna McCauley and Megan DeTrane) recently earned Girl Scout's highest honor, the Gold Award. All four girls have been scouts since kindergarten in Moraga's Troop #30794, under the guidance of Troop Leader Laura McCauley, and completed requirements that developed leadership and culminated in an extensive service project that made a difference in their community.

Tatiana Gessling painted, organized, and created a check-out system at a library for Harbor House in Oakland, which provides opportunities to those with limited resources to become self-sufficient so they can reach their full potential. Alanna McCauley focused on the relationship between pollinators and our own human food supply. She grew 400-plus self-sowing native plant seedlings in biodegradable newspaper pots and distributed them to family

gardens throughout the Bay Area, and created and distributed an informative flyer that provided easy-to-complete steps to support pollinators. Megan DeTrane installed three raised garden beds, installed a garden pathway, and instructed a class of schoolchildren on gardening techniques at Harbor House Ministries in Oakland. The raised beds are to be used by both immigrant families who receive their services and schoolchildren who attend after-school programs there. Maddie Larson spent months of administrative and logistical work collecting new and gently used clothing, shoes and accessories for a Back to School Shop for disadvantaged youth in San Pablo. She was recognized by the Mayor and the Council for her efforts on behalf of the community's youth.

Girl Scouts of Northern California bestowed this rare, prestigious Gold Award to less than 180 young women last year.

SMC Student-Athletes Bring Sports Equipment, Experience to Peru

Unlike many college students who sought sun and fun during their spring break, 17 Saint Mary's College student-athletes packed donations of clothing, shoes, sports equipment, and school supplies and set off for Lima, Peru March 31 to work closely with local children as part of the Here for Kids International outreach program.

The program, which is headed by SMC faculty member and president of Here for Kids International Randy Farris, connects at-risk children from other countries with student-athletes from across the United States. Athletes are selected from a pool of qualifying candidates recommended by coaches from colleges and universities.

SMC volleyball player Lauren

Corp was joined by two fellow volleyball players (Missy White and Anna Schroeder), as well as 14 other student-athletes from Saint Mary's soccer, cross country, and lacrosse programs.

"This is not a class," Corp said. "The student-athletes received informational e-mails from Randy Farris, the individual who orchestrates this trip. Here For Kids International works with another organization called Kids Alive International. Kids Alive provides an education, nutritious meals, and medical care to more than 165 children in Peru."

Student-athletes helped run after-school activities (like sports) with kids ages 12-18 and worked on service projects within the community. This is the second year a group of student-

athletes from Saint Mary's traveled to Peru to work with this organization.

It was Corp's first time in Peru (or in South America for that matter). She travelled last January to the Kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific for a class to teach some of the local villagers about sustainability, but also helped provide aid to villages that had been hit by tsunamis.

"I was excited to play with the kids and try to use the gifts that God has given me in order to help these children," Corp said. "I know that we were all looking to gain a little bit of perspective on this trip as well."

For information about Here for Kids, visit <http://hereforkids.bbnw.org>.
-J. Wake

2012 Eagle Scouts of Troop 204 Help Many

Submitted by Charlotte Holden



From left, back row: Joe Holden, Evan Groover, Justin Steuber; middle row: Gregory Bontemps, David Furtado, Harrison Naton, Kody Kiefer Wedell, Nathaniel Evaristo; front: Connor Tetzloff
Photo provided

Lafayette Boy Scout Troop 204 will honor nine young men who achieved the Eagle Scout Award – the highest rank in the Boy Scouts of America – April 28 at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. The Eagle Scout Class of 2012 completed a variety of projects that benefited underprivileged children and disabled adults, beautifying parks, reaching out to our soldiers overseas and helping children in Africa.

Acalanes High School juniors Gregory Bontemps, Nathaniel Evaristo, Evan Groover, and Justin Steuber each completed a variety of projects that benefited the community: Bontemps planned and executed a week long summer day camp for the children of Garden Park Apartments in Pleasant Hill; Evaristo collected

thousands of individual sized items such as toiletries, food, personal items, books, and comfort items that were then packaged and sent to our troops overseas through the Blue Star Moms organization; Groover coordinated a drive to collect used musical instruments which were donated to benefit the underfunded music program at Westlake Middle School in Oakland; And Steuber collected unwanted bicycles, repaired them, and delivered 31 bikes to Trips for Kids, a Marin organization that takes inner city kids on bike excursions.

Campolindo High School juniors David Furtado, Joseph MacLeod Holden, and Harrison Naton worked diligently on projects as well: Furtado collected over 500 pairs of shoes and delivered them to

Mother of Peace Orphanage in Zimbabwe as part of the high school mission trip sponsored by Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. MacLeod Holden coordinated a six-month-long collection campaign of used Lamorinda Soccer uniforms to donate to Fund-a-Field, a Bay Area organization run by high school students who yearly visit Africa, and provide impoverished kids with uniforms. And Naton built a fence at Diablo Foothills Regional Park in Walnut Creek to help to keep cars off of hiking and equestrians trails. This helps the rangers, who are constantly repairing the trails due to illegal off-road joy riders for their respective projects.

The nine scouts being honored (including San Ramon Valley High School junior Connor Tetzloff – who collected donated supplies to establish the production of organic dog treats for distribution and created a 26-page dog recipe book for George Miller Adult Services of Contra Costa ARC – and Monte Vista High School junior Kody Kiefer Wedell – who transformed a vacant hillside into a park-like setting at Alamo Elementary School in Alamo) have all been active in Troop 204 for at least five years. As part of becoming an Eagle Scout and particularly with their projects, each scout has had to clearly demonstrate leadership qualities and abilities.

Troop 204 has awarded this special honor to only 330 scouts since 1935.

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Lynn's Top Five The Good Divorce Means Financial Preparedness

By Lynn Ballou, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

There is a lot of debate about how many marriages end in divorce and at what ages we are particularly vulnerable. I think all of us either know someone who has divorced or have experienced it ourselves. As you might guess, financial advisors typically find themselves intimately involved in the planning process of support and asset division as part of the crafting of the settlement agreement or at the conclusion when it's time to pick up the pieces and move on.

Here are a few things that I've learned over the years in my practice that might help those of you experiencing this journey yourselves or nurturing others who are. Even better, maybe these ideas will be helpful to you in strengthening your own marriage by staying in touch on important financial topics before things become too contentious to fix.

1) Understand what you have to work with. In most marriages we divvy up the tasks. Often the wife is in charge of all matters pertaining to raising the children, and the husband takes care of the finances. But what results from this clean cut division is a lack of knowledge on the part of one spouse or the other about key and important financial matters. Spouses who are "out of the loop" are especially vulnerable in a divorce because not only are they grieving the loss of their marriage, they quickly must get up to speed on a lot of complex financial matters and make often irrevocable decisions under great pressure and stress.

2) Know what you need, try to stay true to your core values, but be prepared to be flexible in your thinking. Most spouses cannot afford to continue the lifestyle enjoyed jointly as a couple as they move on to their new single status. In our community a core value is often the preservation of a Lamorinda education and lifestyle, but at what cost? Be prepared to face what is affordable and make choices that might involve, for example, renting in Lamorinda rather than owning, or moving to a less expensive home while the children finish school.

3) Anticipate shortfalls. Be brave and work on your own or with an advisor to craft a financially viable future for yourself and when

involved, children. Pretending that everything is fine when financially things are not sustainable will only result in disaster later on. And when children are involved, as tough as it is to skinny things down now, it only gets worse if everyone is penniless later on. If you need to revitalize a career path or pare down the living situation, tackling that head on and not ignoring it sends a strong and important life lesson and message to your children that solutions can be found and that ignoring problems does not solve them.

4) Determine where you are willing and able to negotiate and where you feel you cannot. Perhaps your prior life included exotic vacations, frequent new cars and expensive colleges for the children. You probably can live without much of this, but want to draw the line at giving up on college funding. So, this is where you might have to negotiate. Perhaps you take a four year private college off the table and instead figure out how to ensure a four year public college education that might include two years of community college. Not easy choices, but better to plan ahead than be blindsided later on. Again better for you and better for your children to know ahead of time than to be promised something unrealistic and be shocked later.

5) Be prepared to have your insurances, estate plan, tax

advisor, financial advisor in place and ready to go once the divorce is final. A few things to do in advance: Do you need a life insurance policy to be in place to ensure that any support will continue to be paid if your former spouse dies? What happens to your health insurance? Should you go on COBRA or obtain your own policy now? Once assets are transferred to you do you have your own estate plan set up to ensure that your choices and plans will be met? Are you receiving taxable or paying deductible spousal support? Will you need to pay estimated taxes? Get answers to these issues before your divorce is final and have your team lined up and ready to go!



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional and co-owner of Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisory (RIA) firm in Lafayette. Lynn is also a Registered Principal and Branch Manager with LPL Financial (LPL). The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Financial Planning offered through Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, A Registered Investment Advisor. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

Plan, Prepare - Ready!

Submitted by Grace Santos

Does your family have a disaster plan? Would you know what to do in a wildfire, an earthquake or some other major disaster? Does your family have a communications plan if you are separated from each other?

Join us at the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Spring Open House and Hot Dog Lunch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 14 at Station 45 (33 Orinda Way, Orinda) to learn how easy it is to put together your own family disaster plan and how you can make your home less vulnerable to wildfires. We will help you design your family disaster plan, and answer your questions about how you can "harden" your home to reduce the risk of fire, especially for homes in the Wildland Urban Interface or WUI.

Get information from fire offi-

cials, police, emergency managers and other experts on how you can prepare your home and your family. Kids and adults can meet their local fire-fighters, tour the fire trucks, and gather important fire safety and disaster preparedness information from MOFD and other local agencies. Smokey the Bear and Sparky the Fire Dog will make special guest appearances throughout the day. The hot dog lunch is sponsored by firefighters at Local 1230. All proceeds will be donated to the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

It has been said that during a disaster "no plan will become your plan." Don't get caught without one! For more information, please contact the Moraga-Orinda Fire District at (925) 258-4525 or visit our website at www.mofd.org.

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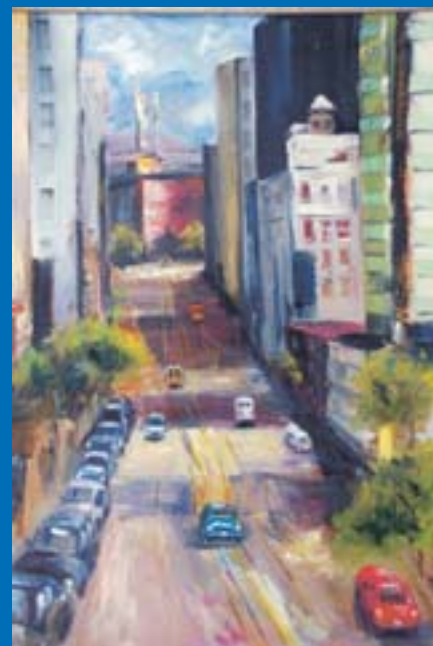
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On Saturday, April 14th
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Cherry Picker Party in Lafayette Parking Lot

... continued from page A1



View from second floor of the Mercantile building on Mt. Diablo Blvd.

The project entered the review process at a public hearing on April 9 with the Design Review Commission. According to Senior Planner Christine Sinnette, it will also be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council. Complete background information with maps, site plan and building elevations on the 81 condominium unit, five-story building with extensive underground parking is available via the city website at www.love-lafayette.org.

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Moraga's Swing Vote, Vice Mayor Howard Harpham

... continued from page A5

"Our second duty is to select the best people to manage the Town, and I think that our Town Manager, Jill Keimach, is head and shoulders above any previous manager we've had," he says.

The third duty is to foster an ethos for the town. "My vision for Moraga is one of a college town," he says. "Leiden (in the Netherlands, half way between Amsterdam and The Hague) is the model I have in mind—with cafes where professors, students and residents hang out, where

campus buildings are intertwined with the non-university homes. We would need a shuttle between Saint Mary's and the town, and we would need new schools in the College, such as a Nursing School, to be integrated with the town."

Harpham has started to invite college professors to speak at Kiwanis meetings, noting that, "If there were more such events right here in town, it would make Moraga much more fun!"

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“Futures” Has Moraga Commons Looking Bright

By Cathy Dausman



Moraga Commons stays neat and clean, thanks to Futures Explored, Inc. grounds crew from left, Bill Davenport, Chad Cordon, job coach Daniel Rednic, Pam Rohrer and Jennifer Campbell. Photo Cathy Dausman

While adults and children played on a recent sunny morning at Moraga Commons, two men and two women swept the parking lot of leaves, moss, and litter. Chad Cordon, Bill Davenport, Pam Rohrer, Jennifer Campbell and Eliot Quintana are part of Futures Explored, Inc. – a private tax exempt non-profit serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Futures Explored began work in Moraga parks in 1996 with a crew of seven and a job coach. The current crew works weekdays at Moraga Commons and Rancho Laguna Park.

Moraga Public Works and Parks Superintendent Dan Bernie certainly doesn't take them for granted. Bernie admits he didn't initially know how the Futures crew would work out when he assigned the group a small section of the Commons to clean on a trial basis, but said in two weeks "it was spotless."

"I can't say enough good things about the group," he said.

With three Moraga parks and over 360 acres to maintain on a two-

man town crew, Bernie is grateful for the extra help. Their attention to detail has even diminished the need for pesticides, he noted.

Budget cuts prevented the group from working for a time in 2010, but they're back, making Moraga Commons what Bernie calls "one of the nicest parks in the county."

Each worker is responsible for transporting him or herself to the Futures site in Lafayette before they're driven to the park by job coach Daniel Rednic. Rednic and program coordinator Barbara Townsend offer support only as needed, noting their job is "to be invisible." Workers are simply people who happen to have developmental disabilities, she said.

The crew is proud of the work they do and the paycheck that comes with it. They work from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with an hour off for lunch, pulling weeds, raking and sweeping.

"In the warm weather we clean tables," said Campbell, "but not in cold weather because the water gets our hands too cold."

Davenport swept steadily, and spoke enthusiastically about "finding

money"—nickels, dimes, quarters – while doing his job. He proudly showed off his recent purchase of camouflage gloves.

Rohrer loves to work outside because it's so beautiful, and she loves to play 'peek-a-boo' with children who wander by. And while Cordon stopped work to politely answer questions (cleaning tables and sweeping are his favorite jobs), it was clear he was eager to return to pushing his broom.

Local resident Pete Williams has long admired the group's work. "They are out there week after week helping us all out. They deserve some recognition," he said. "I always say hello to them and thank them for the good job they are doing but I suspect many just pass them by and take them for granted."

For more information about Futures Explored, visit www.futures-explored.org or call Barbara Townsend at (925) 284-3240, ext. 223. Futures Explored, Inc. also staffs a Lafayette's Round Table Pizza crew and a Lafayette street cleaning crew.

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Performers for Progress a Generous Act

By Lou Fancher



From left: Miramonte sophomores and Performers for Progress performers Emma Patton, Amrita Newton, and Paige Powell. Photo provided

How often do high school students perform miraculous acts of generosity for complete strangers? At Miramonte High School in Orinda, the answer is twice a year.

Performers for Progress presents student-run-performed-produced cabaret-style shows each fall and spring. Different charities are chosen, with a special effort made to select underfunded, under-the-radar non-profits.

Cecily Schmidt and Sarah Brovelli are co-producers of the 19-act show that will run April 12 and 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Miramonte High School Theater.

"The show is a full scale production," Schmidt wrote, sending her replies via e-mail while traveling during the school's spring break.

An impressive list, including poetry readings, Chopin Etudes, comedy sketches, jazz bands and choral ensembles demonstrates the range of talent and the overwhelming commitment of teens helping teens.

The Sophia Project, an Oakland-based family support operation that assists children and

families at risk of recurring homelessness through a variety of services, was chosen by this year's co-producers.

"[We looked] for a cause we are passionate about," Schmidt said. "Producers in the past have focused on health and education, but we focused on helping children and teenagers. In the fall, we donated to Operation Footprint, an organization that performs surgery on children in Honduras suffering from club foot. For the spring, we wanted to choose a local charity to help those in our community."

Sophia Project Executive Director Carol Cole was thrilled by their approach. "Performers for Progress sought us out on their own," she said. "I am very impressed with their intention to help without asking anything for themselves; it is rare and so needed."

One hundred percent of the funds raised will go to respite care and a new program in which teen clients of the non-profit—many of whom did not receive appropriate modeling of child interactions themselves—are trained to care for young children enrolled in the program.

"Our teenagers have the possibility of giving back in a way in which they are uniquely qualified, i.e., in the setting in which they received healing: working with young children who are now suffering in the same way they once were," Cole explained.

Although Schmidt and her fellow performers never meet the people living at the other end of the group's generosity, they keep close tabs on how the \$4,000 they raise bi-annually will be spent.

"Our donation will be used for transportation for the teens, food, materials for the training and a small stipend of \$25 for each teen," Schmidt reported.

Cole said her organization is using the next few years to focus intensively on family support services. A property in San Leandro provides housing and daily programs; trained staff members make home visits in the West Oakland communities that constitute their primary area of service. Ninety children and 32 families currently receive weekly to monthly assistance.

Based on principles introduced by Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Waldorf School, Cole's decades-long work with families emphasizes individuality, self-expression and the humanity often discovered through artistic reflection.

"Participating in artistic work in a trusted environment is freeing and gives them joy as well as a starting point for conversation regarding the big questions and issues in their lives," Cole said.

Although speaking of teens in The Sophia Project, she could as likely have been referring to the students at MHS.

"I'm always blown away by the commitment, talent, and passion of all the students involved," Schmidt said. "I love Performers for Progress because it allows me to help others and raise money through something I love: performing."

Performers for Progress hopes to expand by traveling to local schools and eventually, obtaining 501C3 status of their own. Tickets will be available at the Miramonte Theater door: \$6 Student, \$12 Adult. For more information, you can email perforpro@gmail.com.

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Rube Goldberg at Stanley: Some Assembly Required

By Cathy Dausman



From left: First place winners Max Franz, Aidan McNamara, Tyler Shenone, Ryan Nall
Photos Cathy Dausman

Two balloons. Three judges. Ten steps. Ten contestants.

Add cardboard tubes, plastic, string, needles and pins, assorted toy cars, mousetraps and dominoes, confetti, and two dozen Stanley Middle School students, stir, and you've got the 2012 Rube Goldberg contest.

Rube who?

Reuben L. Goldberg, a San Francisco native, U.C. Berkeley engineer and Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist who loved to complicate the simplest of tasks. Remember the 1960's vintage Mousetrap game? That's Rube Goldberg at his finest.

Science teacher Mike Meneghetti developed the contest 12 years ago at a parent's request. It became a scaled down version of a similar contest held at Purdue University. The Stanley contest runs every other year. "Students are given a set of rules about what the machine [they build] must do," he said. "The theme this year is 'Party Time.' The goal is to pop two balloons."

To honor Goldberg, every momentum-fueled move is designed to be complex. Students paired their "I don't do Simple" Goldberg t-shirts with colorful wigs, glasses, noses or hats, and the games began. Each group explained, step by step, what they hoped their homemade contraption would do. Then marbles rolled

down inclines, knocked over dominoes, spun into bowls and pushed toy cars with lethal pitchforks toward unsuspecting balloons.

And yes, plenty of mousetraps were used.

Ideally, the machines worked with little human intervention. Realistically, some "nudges" were inevitable, but the audience of parents and siblings loved every moment leading up to resounding balloon pops. Eighth-graders Morgan Shepherd, Olivia Carver and Reilly Webster originally formed a team as a joke, but soon got into the spirit of the competition.

They estimate they spent 24 hours "tinkering with friends" after school. Their efforts earned them a second-place finish. First place was awarded to the sixth-grade team of Ryan Nall, Tyler Schenone, Max Franz and Aidan McNamara and their sturdy lime green contraption. Fiona Burrows, Stella Sowarby and Clare Fonstein took third place; Ivan Dikov and Isaac Douglas earned honorable mention. You can view other Rube Goldberg contraptions in action online at:

<http://mousetrapcontraptions.com/>
<http://www.youtube.com/user/Rube-GoldbergTV>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qybUFnY7Y8w>
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From left: Second place team Morgan Shepherd, Olivia Carver, Reilly Webster



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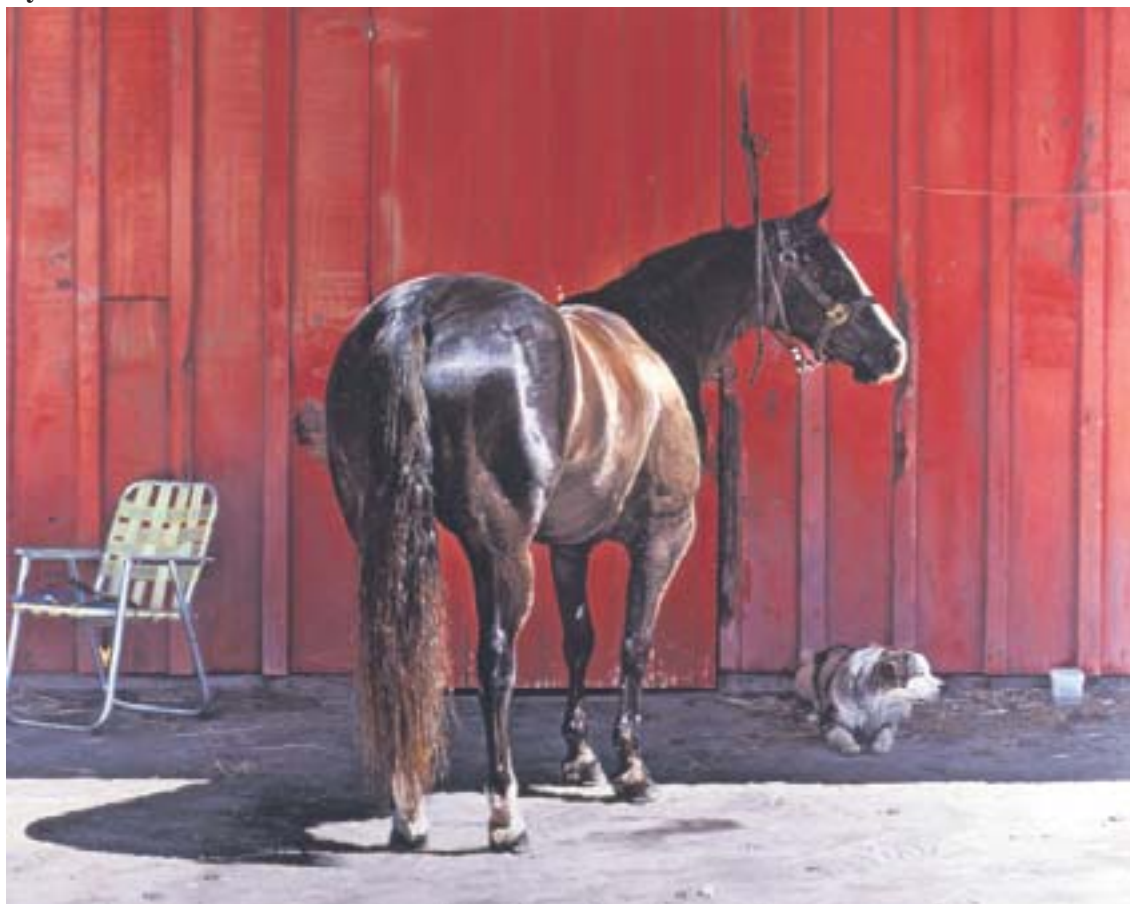
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Richard McLean: Painting to Exactitude

By Jennifer Wake



Kahlua Lark, 1979, Oil on canvas, 44 x 54 inches, Collection of Marco DeAndrea, Liv DeAndrea, and Ariel DeAndrea
Photos courtesy of SMC Museum of Art

The soft sheen of sweat, the tense muscles and popping veins of the horse in Richard McLean's 44 x 54 inch oil painting *Kahlua Lark* (1979) evokes a sense of wonder. You can almost smell the strands of hay intermingled in the soft packed dirt, feel the heat of the mid-day sun as it beats against the red barn wall. True to the roots of photorealism, the composition is so exact many people might wonder if it's a painting at all.

McLean, renowned photorealist painter of large format equine images, will be honored as the ninth Master Artist by the Saint Mary's College Museum of Art as part of the Museum's Master Artist Tribute series beginning April 22. The exhibition will be McLean's first retrospective, featuring his incredibly detailed oil paintings, watercolors, landscapes, and portraits from throughout his 40-plus-year career.

As a young painter in the late 1950s, McLean cut his teeth on abstract expressionism, but says the switch to realism was more subtle than he thought it would be. "It was about getting back in touch with painting using strong guideposts and the demands it made on you," McLean said. "I was reconnecting with the early roots of painting in its simplest form."

Saint Mary's Art Museum curator Jim Whiteaker pointed to a small fence post in the background of McLean's painting, *Incident in Galt* (1999-2000), and said, "Look closely, and you can see elements of Vermeer."

McLean says he began to look out the studio window, rather than inside the studio wall. "I found things that were terribly complex and inter-

esting. I had a desire for exactitude: very tight and detailed painting committed to a very exacting rendition of the physical world."

While he paints from photographs he takes during his travels, McLean notes that he is still dealing with the fundamentals of a composition: line, color, light. "While you see the realistic elements of the painting, other more abstract elements are there as well," he said. "You see wheels, yet they are one of many things: they are a circular element that plays off of other kinds of shapes."

So why horses? A simple matter of interest meeting opportunity. "I saw few if any animals in contemporary art and thought it was an area that could be explored," he said.

As with most budding artists in the late-1950s, teaching was McLean's bread and butter. "Teaching gave me an intellectual home ground to meet other artist-teachers," he said. "It also helped my ego to be with young people who thought I

knew more than they did."

For more than three decades, McLean taught drawing and painting, beginning at the California College of the Arts in Oakland before accepting a full-time position at San Francisco State University. His favorite class to teach was beginning drawing because "that's where the language of art begins."

McLean "officially" retired from teaching in 1989, but continued to teach occasionally for six more years. He says teaching allowed him to be the person he was a long time ago as a young child.

"One tends to move towards something you're praised for early in life," he said. "Your presence counts. You get approval from peers." Even as a young man, McLean felt most alive and most himself when making images of some kind.

"My foster father always told me if it wasn't for drawing pictures, I'd starve," McLean said. "I've never regretted choosing what I do. I never wanted to do anything else."

In Conversation: Richard McLean and Paul Karlstrom

Richard McLean will be in conversation with Paul Karlstrom at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 22 in the Soda Activity Center, Moraga Room, at Saint Mary's College. A public reception will follow in the Museum Patio. Art historian and catalog essayist Karlstrom is the former Regional Director of the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art based at the de Young Museum and the Huntington Library. The Master Artist Tribute IX exhibition, which will feature works from all nine Master Artists, runs through June 17. For information, visit stmarys-ca.edu/museum.



Self Portrait, 1982, Watercolor and gouache, 30 x 22 inches, Collection of the Artist



Incident in Galt, 1999-2000, Oil on canvas, 42 x 72 inches, Private Collection



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Look Who's Cooking at Burton Valley

By Cathy Tyson with information provided by Lisa Evaristo



From left: Spencer Lewis, Cole Brightbill, Gwen Miles, Ben Krey, Emma Hathaway, Aidan Lewis, Dalilah Wiseman & Jenna Evaristo. Photo provided

The third year of the Burton Valley Elementary School Cook Off was bigger and better than ever. Expanding to give more students the opportunity to be involved, there were dozens of entries that were narrowed down to eight finalists. With proud parents and neighbors watching, each of the finalists received a certificate, and a goody bag with measuring spoons and cups, hand towels, spatulas and more, plus their cool Chef's coats and hats were gifts – all courtesy of the school's food vendor, Sodexo.

"The kids were amazing. The food was fantastic. Seriously good!" said Lisa Evaristo, hot lunch coordinator. "The good news is we will be putting the fifth-graders' recipes on the May menu and they will be the featured chefs. Our fourth- and third-graders will be featured next year and will also be the guest chefs. How cool is that?" Listed below are the eight finalists and their awards. Look for the recipes on the Burton Valley school website shortly.

- And the winners are:
- Dalilah Wiseman:** Grand prize winner / 5th grade / Chicken & Broccoli stir fry
 - Cole Brightbill:** Best presentation / 5th grade / Flaming balls of turkey with pesto pasta
 - Emma Hathaway:** Best Kitchen Etiquette / 5th grade / Emma's gourmet Mac & Cheese
 - Aidan Lewis:** Fun Kid Food / 5th grade / Aidan's BBQ chicken sandwich
 - Jenna Evaristo:** Healthy Food Choice / 4th grade / Rainbow wrap
 - Ben Krey:** Judges choice runner up / 4th grade / Kick'in Chicken Chili
 - Spencer Lewis:** Kid Friendly Presentation / 3rd grade / Turkey BLT Wrap
 - Gwendolyn Miles:** Best Kitchen Safety / 3rd grade / Fettuccine Alfredo

Funk and Exuberance Shared at Stanley



Stanley Middle School music students are joined by members of the US Air Force Band of the Golden West for a special March 28 performance. Back row, from left: Jonah Kallen, Zoe Portnoff, MSgt John Ruff, Ryan Kapoor, Arden Childers; front: Adrian Guzman, TSgt Michael Hornbuckle, Sophie McGlothlen. Photo Provided

The US Air Force Band of the Golden West shared musical tips and encouraged Stanley music students to "blare their hearts out" March 28 at Stanley Middle School.

"Their showmanship and funk spoke volumes to the students and adults who were able to attend," said Tina Tankka, Stanley Music Room parent volunteer. More importantly,

this very elite group of music masters (MSgt James Butler, NCOIC/Lead Alto Saxophone, MSgt Jonathan Ruff, Trumpet, TSgt Micheal Hornbuckle, Bass Trombone, TSgt Marshall Gentry, Drums, SSgt Alex Nikiforoff, Guitar, SrA Joseph Whitt, Operations/Double Bass) shared a message of connecting with people, making friends, and building global relationships, she said.

Audience members of students, teachers and parents were joined by Lafayette Mayor Carol Federighi and City Manager Steve Falk.

"The US Air Force band members were a poignant reminder that our military is integral in delivering our country's goodwill," Tankka said. "They gave us the luxury of forgetting the day's agenda and of remembering to be human. We hope to host this fantastically exuberant ensemble again in the near future." – J. Wake

Mirror Mirror

By Derek Zemrak



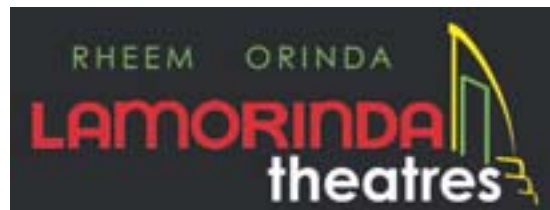
Mirror Mirror on the wall, what's the worst movie of the year thus far? How does Hollywood take a beloved classic story and proceed to destroy it? It breaks the one rule of filmmaking: shooting a bad script. There were a few clever twists to the magic mirror, the poison apple, and the kiss, but that did not help. The film could not decide if it was a slapstick comedy or a straight comedy. The acting was all over the place. Julia Roberts, the Evil Queen, who has not had a good performance since *Erin Brockovich*, which was not Oscar-worthy in my opinion, has hit rock bottom. Snow White, Lily Collins (*Abduction*) and daughter of Phil Collins, was neither believable nor likeable. The prince, Armie Hammer (*J. Edgar*), was the bouncing ball on the acting spectrum. Is there a director? Trarsem Singh (*The Immortals*) has the directing credit.

Nathan Lane (*The Birdcage*) and the seven dwarfs are the best part of the film. The opening scene was effective with good use of animation but then it all slides down the snow bank. The cinematography had beautiful shots but bad acting eventually obscured the scenery. I particularly liked the costume design in the film, especially the dwarfs and the Queen, from Oscar recipient Eiko Ishioka (*Dracula*), who passed away on Jan. 12. Hollywood has lost a true talent and we will miss Eiko's inspiration and creativity in the movies.

The beast in the movie, yes a beast, is too scary for the little ones. Youngsters will laugh at parts of the movie but it will be a long 106 minutes for anyone over 11. Also, the end credit Bollywood dance sequence made absolutely no sense.

The Evil Queen says: "Snow White must fall." Boy does she!

(Derek Zemrak is a filmmaker and the president of the California Independent Film Festival Association)



As Seen in Lamorinda



Fifteen Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School students were having a blast after school at the Moraga Center on March 30 encouraging drivers to "Honk, it's Cassie's birthday." Photo Cathy Dausman

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Tennis Pro and Artist Donates Collection to Help Mentor

By Glenn Nosse



Jan Pablo Schurig Photo provided

Lafayette Tennis Club head tennis pro and artist Pablo Schurig and Allison McCrady Fine Arts (aMFA) Gallery owner Allison McCrady brought the Lafayette and Orinda art and tennis communities together when they sent out a blast of e-mails and made personal calls to art and tennis fans in early March to help a fellow artist and friend.

Schurig and McCrady joined forces to raise more than \$5,000 to help Schurig's art mentor, Don Hatfield, who within the last months lost his wife to cancer, his home to foreclosure, and then shockingly on February 27, lost his daughter, Rachel, who was murdered in her home.

Compelled to help his friend in the only way he knew best, Schurig donated all of his original artwork to be auctioned off with

all proceeds going to the Rachel Winkler's Children's Foundation, which was created to help Hatfield care for his daughter's three children (the eldest only 4 years old) who are now without either parent.

The response was amazing. Many who donated did not know Hatfield, his daughter, or the children. "It's just normal for the art world to be inspired and act," McCrady said about the response. "We're artists." The tennis community was equally inspired, offering generous donations to the fund.

When asked if he had any emotional reaction to seeing his artwork leaving in the driving rain, Schurig said, "Painting them was just a time in my life; I'll find another inspiration to paint again." Schurig's artwork features world class tennis players, bull fighters, flamenco dancers and paintings of the Dave Matthews Band.

Schurig will continue to display his art at the AMFA Gallery in Berkeley. For more information visit: rachelschildrensfund.com. To see Schurig's artwork visit his website at www.PabloFineArt.com.

Acalanes Artist on a Mission

Submitted by Grace Linderholm

When Acalanes senior and art student Grace Linderholm visited the struggling Victor Hugo School in Gonaives, Haiti on a medical mission October 2010, she was so taken with their mission and their struggles she decided to continue her service upon returning home.

Lindstrom created a partnership with Mr. Charles Henri (the school's founder and principal) which has blossomed into The Global Chalkboard Project. Under the fiscal agency and non-profit One World Children's Fund (OWCF), she has continued her commitment by working with local elementary schools and now, artists to make sure that the Victor Hugo continues to exist and change children's lives.

On April 21 and 22, Linderholm and fellow art students will be selling prints of original artwork at the Lafayette Gallery and the Art Room (50 Lafayette Cir-

cle). All profits will be donated to the Victor Hugo School. The show will also feature Serge Gay Jr., a Haitian born artist who is behind the award-winning music videos of Cee-lo Green, Train, Greenday, and more.

The support of One World Children's Fund makes The Global Chalkboard Project one of 30 internationally-selected projects, and the first one in Haiti. Linderholm is their youngest champion. "The show is our second major fundraising event," Linderholm said. "It's a great community gathering, supporting both high school artists and a local gallery. With our last donation to the school, The Global Chalkboard Project ensured that the children had a daily meal, were served clean water, and continued their education."

You can find out more about the support of OWCF at: oneworldchildrensfund.org.

Sister-to-Sister Summit Gives Middle-School Girls Voice, Guidance

Submitted by Sophia Tan

A sea of girls and their laughs and smiles will once again fill the Bentley School gymnasium from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 28 as part of the annual Sister-to-Sister summit—a program started by the American Association of University of Women (AAUW) that is dedicated to celebrating friendship and sisterhood with middle-school girls.

For the past 12 years, the Sister-to-Sister program has recruited high-school girls who are willing to provide a network of support and care for sixth-through eighth-grade middle-school girls. High-school facilitators attend nine three-hour monthly training sessions during the early fall in order to prepare for the spring summit day. The Sister-to-Sister program helps guide and provide answers to younger girls for some of the questions they may have as they transition through middle school and from middle to high school.

The summit day includes

speakers, small group discussions between middle-school girls and high-school facilitators, a panel of high-school girls to answer any and all types of questions, games and much more. This year, the program has also incorporated a community service project into the summit day for all the girls. Together, the middle-school and high-school girls will be tying blankets the day of the summit, packaging them, and sending them off to girls in Afghanistan—a way for the girls involved with and participating in Sister-to-Sister to reach out and help girls in other parts of the world.

Sister-to-Sister would love as many girls as possible to join them for this special day of girls helping girls. For more information, please visit www.sister2sister.info or contact Laura Wittenberg at (925) 788-0901 or Valarie Burgess at (925) 997-0118. (Girls must sign up by April 23. Every girl will receive a t-shirt, and lunch and beverages will be provided.)

Breakfast at Moraga Hallmark



Moraga Hallmark employees (in blue aprons, from left) Barb Swanson (partly obscured) and Linda Podwalny watch as Elizabeth White talks to KKDV radio DJ Steve Fox. Photo Cathy Dausman

Mid-morning shoppers at Moraga's H & A Hallmark & Fine Gifts enjoyed their 15 minutes of fame, plus free coffee and pastries, during a recent KKDV Radio catered coffee break. With store owner Jay Patel

watching, sales clerk Elizabeth White bantered briefly on-air with DJ Steve Fox while co-workers Linda Podwalny and Barb Swanson looked on. "We need more support from Moraga [residents]," Patel said. Former

Moraga Mayor Karen Mendonca was also on hand. When told she'd just missed the group photo, Mendonca joked: "I don't have to be in every picture!" C. Dausman

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Campo's Academic Decathlon Team Earns Impressive Individual Awards at State Competition

Submitted by Jonathan B. Lance, Contra Costa County Office of Education

Campolindo High School's Academic Decathlon team competed in the California State Academic Decathlon Competition March 17-18 in Sacramento, representing Contra Costa County in this state-wide event. Six team members earned the following individual-achievement medals:

Anastasia Fedorova (senior):

- Bronze in Music

Laura Gustafson (junior):

- Bronze in Physics

Jacob Phillips (senior):

- Gold in Speech

Christoph Steefel (sophomore):

- Gold in Economics
- Gold in Physics

- Silver in Highest Overall Score in Division
- Silver in math

Evelyn Steefel (junior):

- Silver in Super Quiz

Roman Wright (junior):

- Gold in Economics
- Gold in Physics
- Gold in Highest Overall Score by Team
- Bronze in Essay

Earlier this year, Campolindo's team took first place in the Contra Costa County High School Academic Decathlon, earning the honor of representing the county. The Contra Costa County Academic Decathlon is directed by the Contra Costa County Office of Education.



Campolindo's Academic Decathlon "Red Team" all smiles at state competition. Photo Diane Morrell, CCCOE





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Moraga Juniors' May Garden Tour Promises to Inspire

By Sophie Braccini

This year's Moraga Juniors' Garden Tour will feature six diverse Lamorinda gardens, from modern to poetic to whimsical. The self-guided tour on May 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., promises to surprise, delight and inspire.

"We chose three gardens in Lafayette, two in Moraga and one in Orinda," says Junior Wendy Smith. "What we look for when we select these gardens are places that are unique, reflect the owners' personality, and will provide the visitors with a wonderful experience that can unleash their own creativity in their own garden."

A wide range of gardens are featured. Virginia Steuber designed her garden herself. "It just came out of my heart," she says. "The vegetable garden was conceived from the medieval vegetable garden concept. The front garden was inspired by the backpacking trip we take in the Sierra. I just wanted it to look wild, naturally occurring, which in fact takes a lot of work."



Photos provided by Moraga Juniors and Virginia Steuber

Steuber included themes from other trips, such as garden mounds from Germany, and an 'old roses' English garden. She recreated an Alice in Wonderland space on the side of the house, Peter Rabbit has his space in the back, and she added a labyrinth to her garden that she walks daily.

Key to the installation has been her gardener, Ricardo Enriquez. "Anything I design, he can install," she says. Steuber and her husband feel so blessed with their home that sharing it, especially for a good cause, is something that's important to them. "We want to do more for the community," she says.

Other gardens on the Tour are testimony to the taste of their owners and the talent of the landscape architects who were able to materialize their vision. One modern garden, designed by Joseph Huettl of Huettl Landscape Architecture, is elegant and colorful,

and features a lot of natural material and interesting plants. Visitors will find interesting ideas about outdoor kitchens and water features, as well as recreation and play areas.

This year's Moraga Juniors' fundraising goal is \$20,000, with all proceeds to benefit STAND! For Families Free of Violence in Contra Costa County and to support the on-site emergency shelter Therapeutic Child Care (TCC) program. The TCC program helps children heal from trauma and develop social and academic skills needed for success.

Tickets for the May 5 tour are \$30. Gourmet lunch boxes are also available and may be pre-ordered for \$10 each. They can be purchased from Juniors' members online at www.moragajuniors.org, or at the following locations: Across The Way (Moraga), McDonnell Nursery (Orinda) and Orchard Nursery (Lafayette).



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Chilean Mushroom Pil-Pil

By Susie Iventosch

My husband and I recently stayed in a small town on the Maipo River in the Chilean Andes foothills. Besides the amazing views and a zip line across the river and back, we tasted a new dish there that we absolutely loved.

"Pil-pil" is a Chilean appetizer, which reflects its Spanish roots using lots of garlic, butter and olive oil, but with the added zing of finely diced peppers. Be careful with that ... as I sit here writing this column, my mouth is still burning, and my left eye, too, which I accidentally touched after cleaning, cutting and tasting the pepper. Youza!

Pil-pil is often made with seafood such as oysters, scallops or shrimp, but the Tribu restaurant where we dined offered a mushroom version that we thoroughly enjoyed.

The dish was bursting with flavor, and we did not find it to be all that hot, so I don't think they used a lot of the diced pepper, but rather just a hint to give it a gentle bite. The rest of the ingredients included finely diced zucchini, carrots, green onions or leeks, parsley and quartered mushrooms. It was sort of like eating a mushroom escargot, only made with olive oil in addition to butter, and adding other finely diced veggies, besides the larger pieces of mushrooms.

We soaked our bread in the delicious sauce, and every time the waitress tried to remove what she thought was an empty dish, we held on to it, telling her we just weren't ready to part with it!

For this recipe, you can decide just how much heat and garlic you want to give it. I am a garlic- lightweight, so I usually go easy, but I must say, this Tribu recipe was loaded with garlic, and it was delicious!

Chilean Mushroom Pil-Pil

(Serves 4 for appetizers)



Photo Susie Iventosch

INGREDIENTS

- 8-10 large brown or cremini mushrooms, cleaned and cut into quarters
- 2-4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced (depending upon your garlic-meter)
- ¼ cup finely diced zucchini
- ¼ cup finely diced carrots
- ¼ cup finely sliced green onion
- ¼ cup finely diced leeks, white part only
- ½ Serrano chili pepper, finely minced (these mellow with cooking)
- 2 tablespoons finely minced parsley
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2-3 tablespoons butter
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a cast iron or heavy skillet, heat olive oil and butter and cook over medium-high heat until melted. Add garlic and cook until just turning golden. Stir in paprika and salt. Add diced veggies (except parsley) and mushroom quarters and cook over medium-high heat just until veggies are al dente, maybe 2-4 minutes, tossing to turn mushrooms and stir veggies. Sprinkle parsley over top before serving. Serve piping hot with crusty French bread.

*If using shrimp, add with veggies and cook for about one minute, and then turn shrimp and cook for another minute or until shrimp turns pink.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suzieventosch@gmail.com.



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2012 Earth Day

Earth Day 2012 in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Last year's celebration at Lafayette Plaza Park

Photo Doug Kohen

Sustainable Lafayette is bringing the Lamorinda community into a worldly event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, April 22 that, according to earthday2012.org will mobilize one billion people. In Lafayette, about 1,000 are expected to partici-

pate, celebrate the existing sustainability work done locally, enjoy the music, the fun, the food, and get inspired to do more. The location has slid east slightly and will be centered at the Library and Learning Center, to accommodate more activities and

promote more interaction.

"In previous years we had the Earth Day festival at Stanley Middle School, Plaza Park, and also split between the Plaza Park and the library," says Sustainable Lafayette organizer Michael Dawson. "This

year we decided to take advantage of the library's great facilities, including the outdoor amphitheater plaza and Golden Gate Way (which will be closed during the event). And the library makes it an even better event because they're bringing some of their consortium partners and will be opening up the community hall for the rain-harvesting lecture and movies. They've been helping plan the event from the beginning."

Water conservation will be in focus this year. A grey-water-capturing and rain-harvesting lecture will be held in the Community Hall, and related movies will be shown. The Interactive Kids Center will feature the Lawrence Hall of Science and Lindsay Wildlife Museum and will also have lots of fun crafts. And the Bike Parade from Stanley Middle School will have a bike decorating contest for the first time. Nanette Heffernan, who's leading the bike parade, is also giving away free Chinook Books to every participant.

"This year we'll also have more non-profits and related organizations like The Urban Farmers, Kiefer Koops, Moraga Gardens (selling

veggie starters), etcetera," added Dawson. "Near and dear to our hearts will be the displays of all 2012 projects from Sustainable Lafayette. We're excited to show our work around the Lafayette Community Gardens, GoLafayette.org, Lafayette Recycles, and the Green Schools. We didn't intentionally plan a more educational Earth Day Celebration – there are just so many projects and organizations to talk about!"

At the same time, Sustainable Lafayette focused on making this a fun, celebratory event. The Lafayette Chamber is sponsoring music by the Gypsy Chix and the Dream Posse, and they've worked with local vendors to offer the best food options. "We will offer a greater variety of fresh, organic food by bringing in different food vendors (Fist of Flour, Whole Foods, Nature's Bounty, and Bookmark Cafe)," says Dawson. "This year we'll have a hot pizza oven and even more great choices than last year."

For a detailed program, visit sustainablelafayette.org.

Lafayette Community Garden Opens on Earth Day

By Sophie Braccini



Holding a map of the garden are, from left: Leah Ingram, Beth Ferree, Janet Thomas, Susanne Frey

Photo Sophie Braccini

It's been a long time coming, and it required the tenacity of the Sustainable Lafayette Food Group, including Janet Thomas, to finally create a community garden in Lafayette.

The community can visit the community garden site on Earth Day, April 22, along Mt. Diablo Blvd. across from the Reservoir. But if you want to become a member of the garden, you must work there two hours a week, take your crop home – and sign up early. The first plants are not in the soil yet but 50 families have already signed up and only four spots are left for this year. The garden will also serve as an outdoor education center, free and open to the public.

It took more than two years to find the site, get the City's support and raise the \$83,000 that was necessary to launch the project. "We owe a big thank you to the Mulvaney family who gave us \$25,000 in a matching fund," says Thomas. "There were 90 other contributors to our fund, who gave what they could, including Girl Scout troop 32153 who gave more than \$300."

Susanne Frey, science and math teacher and horticulturist, designed the garden that incorporates raised beds for the vegetables, restored na-

tive plant areas, and sitting areas for picnics and teaching. For example, a number of beds have been set in a wide circle with seating in the middle for enjoyment and/or classes.

Gardener Beth Ferree is the volunteer in charge of the classes that the Outdoor Education Center will offer. "We will have one free class every month on a Saturday," she says. "The first one will present the riparian ecosystem, we'll teach about edible natives, then about 'the good, the bad and the ugly,' or the role of insects in the garden."

Leah Ingram was hired part-time to manage the garden, and she has started planning what will go in the beds. "We've talked with the families who are members of the garden, they decided what they wanted to plant and harvest," she says. The garden will mainly produce for the members who pay \$150 per family – the donations constituted the seed money (literally!) – "but no one is turned down for lack of funds," adds Ferree.

The garden group wanted a very diverse set of Lafayette residents to become members. "We have all age groups in our membership," says Thomas, "from young families to retired residents. And whether they live in multi-family dwellings or on

sloped-lots, they can't have their own vegetable garden."

The April 22 open house will feature activities, informative sessions, and trail exploration. The Mount Diablo Bee Keepers Association and the Audubon Society will be there and seedlings will be sold by the Mount Diablo Nursery. The very well-organized group has scheduled its first harvest festival Oct. 13 which will be open to the whole community.

At this time, they still need volunteers to construct the beds that will be double-dug and amended with soil from Acapulco Soil in Richmond. Thomas noted that so far the project has received a lot from the community, from builders such as Overaa Construction who worked for free, or Heather Hamilton owner of Eco-mulch in Martinez who says she would give them all the mulch they'd need. "Starting with the Mulvaney family we got wonderful community support," says Thomas. The quote by environmental pioneer Rachel Carson that will be at the entrance of the garden says it all: "In Nature Nothing Exists Alone."

To donate time, tools or other items, visit the Garden's site at lafayettecommunitygarden.org.

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The Environment – Where We All Meet

Orindans to roll up sleeves at fourth annual Orinda in Action Day

By Laurie Snyder



Last year's Orinda in Action event

Photo provided

“The environment,” said Lady Bird Johnson, “is where we all meet; where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become.”

In Orinda, one such focusing lens

is provided each spring by organizers of the City’s annual Orinda in Action Day. This year’s event will begin at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, April 21 with coffee and bagels at the Orinda Library Plaza, and is expected to draw between 400 and 500 area residents.

Following check-in at tables

manned by volunteers from the Orinda Women’s Club, participants will fan out across the City from 9 a.m. to noon. Although no e-recycling or goodwill donations will be accepted this year, plenty of good deeds will still be done.

Moms, dads and even grandpar-

ents will work side-by-side with Orinda’s littlest ones to collect twigs and other green waste while teens and adults clean up creeks, wipe down Orinda Community Center chairs, refill park sandboxes, and pick up litter from Orinda’s historic bridge through the downtown and beyond. Those with green thumbs will plant flowers or drought-resistant plants.

“It gives children a real close-up view of places that they drive by often, and allows them to help the community at the same time,” said Molly Griffin Wilson, a member of this year’s organizing committee. “We make sure that everyone gets to do something that works for their level.”

Students will earn community service hours for Miramonte High, the Orinda Intermediate School’s Others First initiative, and other school-based projects. Signed certificates for service hours worked will be provided at the event’s conclusion.

Afterward, volunteers will be treated to a light lunch at the Plaza with entertainment by Orinda Idol’s own Steve Harwood, Master of Cer-

emonies and DJ.

The timing to roll up one’s sleeves couldn’t be better. Throughout 2012, America is celebrating the 100th anniversary of Lady Bird Johnson, one of America’s most ardent advocates of community and national beautification. A major force behind the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, which banished billboard blight and minimized junkyard eyesores, Johnson is also credited with inspiring generations to brighten our world, sustainably, with colorful wildflowers and other native plants.

“There is much,” said Johnson, “the government can do and should do to improve the environment. But even more important is the individual who plants a tree or cleans a corner of neglect. For it is the individual who himself benefits, and also protects a heritage of beauty for his children and future generations.”

All who live, work or attend school in Orinda are welcome. To join in the fun of Orinda in Action Day 2012, register online at: www.orinda-communityfoundation.org, or e-mail orindainaction@gmail.com.

Orinda Family and Home Expo on Earth Day

The first annual eco-friendly Family and Home Expo, which is targeted toward green-minded, environmentally-conscious homeowners with kids, will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 22 at the Orinda Community Center auditorium. More than 15 vendors representing kids’ clothes, yard and lawn design/maintenance, general contracting, interior flooring, pool maintenance and more will participate in this event.

“Since I am a mom of young kids, I wanted to bring together some trusted vendors who are environmentally-friendly and fun for families,” says Sarah Arnold, coordinator of the event. “It seemed perfect to have the event on Earth Day.”

As a realtor, Arnold has seen an overwhelming interest in Green products. “Homeowners want to know how to make their home ‘healthier’ for their families, as well as save money and reduce their environmental footprint,” she says. And there are many benefits for going green: The state gives incentives and rebates for buying energy-efficient appliances, and kids grow up with

less allergies and ailments such as asthma that can be brought on by chemicals in our environment.

“One of the highlighted vendors is Bellwether Materials, who is in the start-up phase of bringing to market home insulation made from sheep wool. It is a safe, healthy, and natural alternative to fiberglass,” Arnold says. “And it’s easier to install than other types of insulation and formaldehyde-free.”

Kids can enjoy presentations by Andy Zandy the Balloon and Magic Guy and Soja Martial Arts, or satisfy their sweet tooth at the Loard’s Ice Cream booth, while parents talk with vendors. Cora Sue Anthony from HGTV’s Real Estate Intervention, will also be there to talk about her new show and give tips on how use staging to get your home sold.

“It is an opportunity to rub elbows with a local celebrity, and to pick her brain on new home design trends she has seen as in the area,” says Arnold.

For information about the Expo, e-mail Sarah Arnold at samold@rockcliff.com or call (925) 253-7074. – J. Wake

Lunch Hour Clean Up at the Reservoir

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Lafayette Chamber Membership Director Barbara Gilmore, Lafayette Chamber Ambassador Gayle Pulley, Marie Montoya (Hunsucker Goodstein & Nelson PC), and Sherri Boctor (Hunsucker Goodstein & Nelson PC) at last year’s Clean Up. Photo Marie Montoya

Lafayette lawyers and staff from Hunsucker Goodstein & Nelson PC will be ditching pinstripes in favor of something stylish, yet washable,

for “beautification” during the Second Annual Earth Day Lunch Hour Cleanup Friday, April 20 at the Reservoir. Volunteers from the Lafayette

Chamber Green Committee along with members of the public are encouraged to pitch in picking up trash; bags, gloves and vests will be provided for all volunteers. Adventurous trash seekers are invited to scour the shoreline in paddleboats provided courtesy of EBMUD.

“It’s a great way to contribute to the community,” says Marie Montoya, paralegal, PR and marketing specialist for the firm. “We plan to meet at the Visitor’s Center at noon, get equipment and branch out from there. It was really fun last year.” She explains that the Reservoir is short staffed, so completing some of the clean up gives workers the opportunity to focus on other projects. The event officially runs until 2 p.m. Someone will be at the paid entrance to allow helpers complimentary access and to direct drivers through to the Visitors Center. Sunshine, paddle boats, making the Reservoir a better place for all to enjoy and doing something positive for Earth Day – you can’t beat that with a litter pick-up stick.

Volunteers should wear closed-toe shoes and look for the annual membership gate; cars will be let in at noon free of charge. Volunteers are asked to confirm with Marie Montoya at mmontoya@hgnlaw.com or by calling (925) 299-5113.

please...



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Moraga Beautiful Day

Nearly 25 years ago, former mayor Margaret Depriester gave new meaning to the term “spring cleaning” and as one of the original event coordinators, instigated “Moraga Beautiful Week” as a way to bring the community together to clean up and beautify Moraga. This year’s Moraga Beautiful day will be held rain or shine from 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 21 at Rancho Laguna Park (2101 Camino Pablo, Moraga). Volunteers are requested to wear old clothes and the Town will supply gloves, brushes and stain. Volunteers will weed, trim, and stain picnic benches and play structures making our wonderful parks even better. For more information, contact publicworks@moraga.ca.us.

Lafayette's Earth Day Celebration!

Sunday, April 22nd

Join us at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for an unforgettable day of food, friends and family fun! Enjoy an amazing, organic lunch while listening to live music. Visit the interactive kids zone, watch a lecture and movies, and learn about exciting new projects in Lafayette.



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(11am - 3pm)

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- ❖ Grey Rainwater and Rain Harvest Lecture
- ❖ Environmental movies in Community Hall
- ❖ Interactive Kids Center

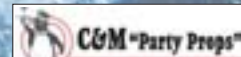
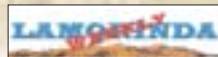
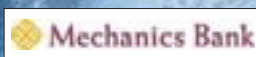
Bike Parade & Contest
Stanley Middle School
(11am - 11:30am)

- ❖ Festive parade to Lafayette Library - any bike, scooter, stroller, etc. welcome!
- ❖ **11:30am departure.**
- ❖ Awards for best eco-decorations
- ❖ Everyone receives free Chinook Book

Also: tour the Lafayette Community Garden; electric car shuttles run 2-4. More information at: www.sustainablelafayette.org

Hosted by Sustainable Lafayette, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Lafayette.

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Lamorinda's Religious Services



See also Easter Service advertisements on page B11

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Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am
Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm
Reading Room/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat 10 - 1

www.christianscienceorinda.org

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422 www.holyshpherd.org



8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
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10:45 a.m. Contemporary Service
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APRIL 15
8:30 and
10:45 a.m.



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The Orinda Community Church

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ART

Moraga Art Gallery's new show, "Beautiful America," features the oil paintings of gallery member and 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.

Upcoming aMFA exhibits: "City Life comes to Orinda," an exhibit of Urban Scapes by award-winning artists Erica Pollock and Barbara Fracchia Thursday, April 12, with an Artist's Reception from 5-7pm at Shelby's Restaurant; "Parallel Affinity," a Modernist exhibit Saturday, April 14; Artist's Reception from 4-7pm aMFA Orinda Theater Square; "Earth Day; Art Day": Northern California Landscapes Saturday, April 22, 1-5pm Opening, aMFA Berkley 1318 10th Street Berkeley.

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.

An Art show and fundraising event April 21 and April 22 will feature local high school artists as well as Serge Gay Jr., a Haitian born artist who is behind the award-winning music videos of Cee-lo Green, Train, GreenDay, and more, at the Lafayette Gallery and the Art Room, 50 Lafayette Circle in Lafayette (across from Chow).

In affiliation with Civic Arts Education, CAG will offer its spring sale at the Artists' Market April 27-29. A reception features live music, light refreshments, and a flower arranging demo 5-9pm, April 27. The sale continues April 28 from 10am-7pm and April 29 from 10am-4 pm at the Civic Park Studio, 1313 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. (925) 943-5846, www.clayarts-guild.com.

MUSIC

For its final concert of the 2011-2012 season, Pacific Chamber Symphony, Lawrence Kohl conductor presents a pair of works by two musical giants: "Water Music" by George Frideric Handel and Symphony #41 "Jupiter" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sunday, April 15 at 4pm in the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Boulevard Lafayette. Tickets: \$30 general, \$25 seniors (65+), \$10 students (with ID). To purchase tickets visit www.BrownPaperTickets.com or call 1(800)838-3006. For more info, visit www.pacificchambersymphony.org, call 1(800) 630-7836 or email info@pacificchambersymphony.org.

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 for reservations. \$3 Members/ \$5 Non-Members.

Enjoy the sounds of the '40s as Generations In Jazz Foundation presents The Rossmoor Big Band. The show be-

gins at 8pm April 20 and features some of the finest senior musicians working with their student associates. Dancers and listeners are most welcome. Tickets are \$10 and available from the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce or at the door. Call (925) 284-7404.

Solo and chamber music, Friday, April 27, 10:30am, Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. The program opens with a Beethoven trio for violin, cello and piano. Bach's Chaconne in D minor for piano appears next. Brahms' piano trio, also for violin, cello and piano, concludes this classical chamber concert. Free to the public, www.ccpas.org.

THEATER

Come see Performers for Progress at 7:30pm April 12 and 13 in the Miramonte High School Theater. Per4Pro is a student-run organization that puts on cabaret shows to showcase local student talent and raise funds for charity. The spring show benefits The Sophia Project, an organization that serves children and families at risk for recurring homelessness. Proceeds support two specific programs: the new High School Program and the Respite Care program as well as transportation for the teens, food, materials for the training and a small stipend of \$25 for each teen. Tickets: (purchased at the Miramonte Theater door): \$6 Student, \$12 Adult. For more information, you can email perforpro@gmail.com. (See article, page B2).

"Opening Our Eyes," a documentary about eleven ordinary people who are making a positive difference in the world will screen at 7pm Saturday, April 21 at the Community Hall in the 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. For info, contact 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. Tickets: \$10 General, \$7 students/seniors. Tickets may be purchased online at www.dramadons.org or at the door.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

"Male" writing versus "Female" writing: Some perspective on politics, gender, identity, and the act of writing consciously: a Craft Conversation with Samina Ali," presented by the Saint Mary's College of California Creative Writing Reading Series at 2:30pm, Wednesday, April 11, in Hagerty Lounge. The same evening at 7:30pm a reading will be held at the Soda Center. Both events are free and open to the public.

Saint Mary's College of California

presents a "Dialogue about the Death Penalty: The Future of Capital Punishment in Our State" from 7:30- 9pm Thursday, April 12 at Dryden Hall, Saint Mary's College of California. The forum, which is free and open to the public, features perspectives from a death penalty abolitionist and a death penalty proponent on the necessity of capital punishment in California. Free and open to the public.

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. 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. Tickets \$15 (\$10 children).

Understanding China; A Cultural Transformation Perspective is the topic for First Friday Forum, presented by Dr. Zhan Li, Dean of the School of Economics and Business Administration at Saint Mary's College at 1:30pm Friday, April 13, in the Sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments will be served at 1pm in Fellowship Hall. For info, call (925)-283-8722 or visit lopc.org/News and Information/More News Events at LOPC.

The Orinda Library hosts a talk by Marie Whelan on "Life in Imperial Rome" at 6:30pm Wednesday, April 18, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. You are invited to discover interesting, unexplored and unromanticized aspects of life in ancient Rome - from the common farmer to the emperor of the world. Immerse yourself in Roman life by learning the proper way to wear a toga, getting a recipe for an everyday Roman meal, and examining ancient Roman coins. Free, no registration is required. For more information, visit the library website at cclib.org or call (925)-254-2184.

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@holden-high.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 continue until April 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.orindaartscouncil.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.

... continued on next page

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... continued

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Join us at the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Spring Open House and Hot Dog Lunch from 10am-2pm Saturday, April 14 at Station 45 - 33 Orinda Way, Orinda. (See article page A11)

2012's 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 is at noon, Friday, April 20. 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" 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.

EARTH DAY (for additional local events, see our Earth Day pages B8 and B9)

Tap into your inner Muir at the John Muir Birthday-Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 21 at the John Muir National Historic Site, 4202 Alhambra Avenue at Highway 4, Martinez. Participants will enjoy live entertainment, self-guided tours of the 1882 Victorian Muir home, a nature walk with Doc Hale and National Park Service Junior Ranger activities. The Keynote Speaker is Rona Zollinger, co-founder of the New Leaf: A Sustainable Living Collaborative. Admission and parking are free. For directions, visit www.nps.gov/jomu.

The Orinda Garden Club is inviting the community for a Walk-Around at Orinda's Lake Cascade at 10am Saturday, April 21. 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.

Whether you want a 50K or a 5K you won't want to miss the **Diablo Trails Challenge** benefiting Save Mount Diablo on Saturday, April 21. Save Mount Diablo preserves, defends and restores Mount Diablo's natural lands for people and wildlife to enjoy. Hit the trail and preserve your playground while taking in the natural beauty of Mount Diablo. All proceeds benefit Save Mount Diablo's land preservation programs. Day of registration begins at 6:30am and events begin at 8am. To register or for more information, visit www.SaveMountDiablo.org or call (925) 947-3535.

OTHER

Join a **National Park Service ranger for three free** early-morning two-hour wildflower walks at 9am Saturday, April 7, 14 and 28 at John Muir National Historic Site. The walks begin 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.

Views on the Environment Contra Costa County Supervisor Candidates Forum, moderated by Lisa Vorderbrueggen, Contra Costa Times political reporter and columnist, 7pm, Thursday, April 12, San Ramon Community Center. Visit act.greenbelt.org/forum to RSVP. For info, call Matt Vander Sluis at (925) 932-7776 or mvandersluis@greenbelt.org. This is a free educational event.

The **Lafayette Rotary Club** will feature **guest speaker** and TITANIC historian Richard Shaw at noon, Wednesday, April 12 at the Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Enjoy lunch, hear from Mr. Shaw and learn about Rotary. Cost: \$20 for lunch (or come at 12:45pm for the free presentation). Reservations required. Call John Sherry at (925)-765-2833 by April 11, to reserve a seat.

Candlelight Labyrinth Walk - Friday, April 13. Celebrate spring by walking the Chartres-style labyrinth at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. As you walk, listen to classical music and relax, reflect, meditate or pray. There will be contemplative readings in the chapel. Come-and-go event between 7-8pm. For info call Karlene Paufler at (925) 820-4332.

Golden Gate Audubon Society presents **The Grizzlies** of Yellowstone featuring Michael Leach from 7 to 9pm Thursday, April 19 at 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 nweeden@goldengateaudubon.org.

St. Mary's College Guild's Annual Fashion Show, Saturday, April 21, Soda Center (cocktails 11am, lunch at noon). Fabulous spring collection courtesy of Chico's, Walnut Creek. Great Mariachi Music - Samba and Swing into spring. For reservations, call Cyndie Harrison (925) 820-8002 or Libby Townsend (925) 825-5853.

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

The **Moraga Women's Society** is presenting an **appointment-only** appraisal event by Michaan's Auctions from 4 to 7pm April 27, Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Certified appraisers are donating their time as a public serv-

ice. Discover what your heirlooms or garage sale treasures are worth! Six certified appraisers will give verbal appraisals for items from the following categories: Fine Art, Furniture and Decorative Art, Jewelry, Stamps and Coins, Asian Art, and Miscellaneous. Proceeds go to Moraga Schools. For information call Jean, (925)376-7961. For appointments, call Tammie Chambless, (510)740-0220.

Volunteer a few hours April 28-29 to learn about Sudden Oak Death, and assist in the survey for infected trees in areas of your choice. Training: Saturday, April 28, 10am-noon, Garden Room of the Orinda Community Center. Learn about SOD, including preventative measures, and how to identify possibly infected trees from UC expert and research scientist Dr. Matteo Garbelotto. Collect leaves during the rest of the weekend from suspect trees during times and in areas of your choice. For information about SOD and results of previous surveys visit http://nature.berkeley.edu/garbelotto/english/sodblitz.php. Contact William Hudson (wllhh@ymail.com) for a reservation.

CLUBS

Margaret Race, PhD. 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, Moraga.

The **Montelindo Garden Club** will host a lecture by **Robin Stockwell** at 10:30am Friday, April 20 (lecture on succulents is preceded by a plant sale and social hour starting at 9am), 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.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorinda weekly.com

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Upcoming Special Events at:



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

Bunjo's Comedy All Star Show @ the New Rheem

Come see some of the best stand up comedians from the Bay Area and Beyond!

Saturday April 28 8:00 pm
(doors open at 7:00 pm)

Headliner- Samson Koletkar
The World's Only Jewish Indian Standup Comedian



Beer and Wine Bar!!

Tickets- \$15 advance or \$20 at the door.

For a limited time only, all regular movie tickets are \$7 on Tuesdays.

Check www.lamorindatheatres.com for all movie listings

Richard McLean:
Master Artist Tribute IX
April 22 - June 17
at the NEW Saint Mary's College Museum of Art



Western Tableau with Rhodisian Ridgeback, oil painting on canvas, 48 x 70 inches, Louis K Meisel Gallery, NYC

Sunday, April 22, 2pm
McLean in Conversation
Reception Following

more exhibits-

River of Words: Youth Poetry & Art in affiliation with The Library of Congress

Master Artists I - VIII: Wayne Thiebaud, Nathan Oliveira, Manuel Neri, Frank Lobdell, Ruth Bernhard, Stephen de Staebler, Carlos Villa, and Bert Monroy.

William Keith: California Oaks

For information visit the museum website at smarys-ca.edu/museum or call 925.631.4379.

Museum Hours: Wednesdays - Sundays, 11 AM - 4:30 PM

Admission: \$5 adults; K - 12 graders and members free

Sustainable Florist Opens in Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Arash Misaghi (brother), Sina Panah (son) and Mitra Misaghi in front of store

Photo Andy Scheck

Seasonal and locally-grown food is now part of everyone's vernacular, if not something on everyone's dinner plate. But using local seasonal flowers for your home or for your wedding? That's a rather new concept, and it's what Mitra Misaghi is doing.

An Orinda mom, with kids at Del

Rey and a background in interior design and flowers, Misaghi believes supporting local flower agriculture is important for the local economy and for the planet. In her newly opened shop at 99 Brookwood, #2, in Orinda, she offers flower arrangements for all occasions using locally-grown flowers 80 percent of the time.

"I was raised in Europe before coming to this country," said Misaghi. "I have a degree in architecture and practiced before I had children. After their birth I studied sustainable business practices. This raised my awareness. I decided to start with one of my passions: flowers."

Misaghi says that she shops mostly with local flower growers. "There are a lot of flower farmers along the coast in Half Moon Bay or Watsonville," she said. "Life is hard for them, but they produce some of the most fresh and beautiful flowers that have more character and are different with the change of the seasons." Since our region has such a wonderful climate, Misaghi can offer interesting seasonal bouquets year-round.

Misaghi has experience with big events as well as with designs that will enhance the home. Her store can propose flower arrangements for all occasions, as well as everyday bouquets. "And we try to keep it affordable."

Misaghi likes contributing to a more sustainable planet and practices re-using and recycling in her business. "We have been spoiled," said the young mother. "We want all the fruits and all the flowers all year long without questioning where it comes from and how it was produced. Working where I live and where my kids go to school is the best way I have found to balance my work and my family life."

For more information, contact her at (925) 255-5353.

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

Pimp My Ride!

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

How often do you hear of a random act of kindness in this tough world? When it happens, it seems almost too good to be true.

Lafayette's Professional Automotive owner David Watson has been getting coffee at Starbucks every morning at the same time every day. That's when he met Howard Hipkins. "He frequents the same store at the same time I do," said Watson. "Suffice to say, I kept seeing his car pull in and noticed that it was in great need of a paint job and a few other repairs. As we continued to learn more about each other, it came to me that this 90-year-old sweetheart of a guy and character deserves a surprise."

Since Professional Automotive offers car detailing along with collision repair and vintage/classic restorations, Watson offered to detail Hipkins' car – a beloved 1978 Oldsmobile Cutlass sedan that Hipkins has continuously driven since he

bought it brand new on April 26, 1978. "That year (1978) General Motors had a problem with the paint, and my car was paint-less on the top and back," said Hipkins.

What Watson didn't tell Hipkins, however, was that his car was going to receive a full repaint, repair and detail. When he saw his car, Hipkins was shocked and delighted. The car looked as beautiful as when he first bought it nearly 34 years ago. "Dave (Watson) did it for my 90th birthday," said Hipkins. "He did a beautiful job on it. It's amazing!"

"Professional Automotive does this a few times a year for various people in need or randomly along the lines of 'Pimp My Ride' to surprise unsuspecting owners with a gift," said Watson.

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

business briefs

College Counselor Jan Russell is Back

www.choicesacc.com

Jan Russell retired a few years ago as director of college counseling and teacher at The Athenian School in Danville. Loving the work she did for 23 years in the college admission planning and guidance profession, Jan decided to keep herself busy by beginning an independent consulting business in our community. Information about her professional background and educational philosophy can be found on her web site. Russell can be reached at (510) 701-5247.

New Development Next to Chef Chao

337 Rheem Boulevard, Moraga

Last summer, the Chao family, owner of the beloved Chinese restaurant in the Rheem Valley, purchased the retail space located directly next to their restaurant, where Mondello used to operate. They pondered what to do with it for a while, but the cat's now out of the bag as they applied to open a cafe and a beauty salon. No opening date has been set.

Val Cook-Watkins Earns President's Council Award

5 Moraga Way and 2 Theatre Square Ste. 211, Orinda

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage announced that Val Cook-Watkins, managing broker of the company's Orinda office, has earned the President's Council Award for her office's success in 2011. The designation is awarded to the most successful managing brokers from more than 750 national offices and is based on total profit, return on revenue and mortgage usage categories. A 40-year Bay Area real estate veteran, Cook-Watkins has managed the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Orinda office for more than 17 years and has received the coveted President's Council Award for the past 14. Under her leadership, the Orinda office was named a Coldwell Banker Premier Office for 13 consecutive years. Cook-Watkins has also received the Manager of the Year award and holds the distinguished Certified Residential Broker and the Certified Residential Specialist designations. The two Orinda downtown offices incorporate a team of 75 full-time real estate professionals

Two Realtors Ranked Highest in Top Sales

5 Moraga Way and 2 Theatre Square Ste. 211, Orinda

Also from the same Coldwell Banker Orinda office, two top-producing Lamorinda realtors have been ranked in the top one percent of top producing agents in Northern California for 2011 sales. Glenn Beaubelle (The Beaubelle Group) and Elena Hood (The Hood Team) from Orinda have outpaced more than 3,600 agents in Northern California. "The East Bay offices of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are filled with the best and brightest in local real estate," said Rick Turley, president of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage. "To rise to the top of such a distinguished group of professionals is a tremendous accomplishment."

If you have a business brief to share, please contact

Sophie Braccini at

sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

Alain Pinel Realtors Launches Newly Redesigned Website

apr.com

Alain Pinel Realtors (APR) has launched their newly redesigned website, apr.com, showcasing many new enhancements including expanded property search capabilities, as well as a modern and sophisticated look. The site's expanded property search offers refinement options such as school district search, most recent listings, and keyword search. Also featured are an open house search of all MLS-listed properties in the Bay Area, an international property search which offers the ability to find homes worldwide, and an agent/office search which helps consumers find the right agent and/or office for their needs. "Our new site puts an unprecedented amount of information and resources in the hands of the online consumer," said Stephen Skinner, APR Vice President of Technology.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

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

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

• Ribbon Cutting for Mike Rose Auto Body, April 26, 5 to 5:30 p.m., 3430 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga

Registration is opened 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 or contact Ellen Beans at ellen.beans@gmail.com. Still a few spots available on the colorful 96-inch banner that will hang on Moraga street light poles starting April 21. Download the flyer online at moragachamber.org or contact Jane Russell at JaneRussell57@aol.com. The car show also needs your antique car. Please contact Brad Noggle at (925) 631-7000.

Orinda

Orinda Chamber Networking Mixer, Tuesday, April 17, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Quarry House at Wilder. The evening will feature New Chamber Member Epicurean Exchange & Chef/Owner Charles Vollmar.

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

SUMMER CAMPS 2012 / #2
 Half Day Camps & Classes on page C3-C7

Campolindo Seniors to Play College Baseball

By Alex Kozela



From left: Austin Rei, Josh Cushing, James Marvel and Cole Rider Photo A. Schreck

Campolindo High School has had its fair share of success the past couple of years and baseball is on the list of teams that truly make the Cougars a powerhouse in high school sports.

The two-time defending NCS Champions have begun their current season atop the DFAL standings with a 3-0 record, 10-1-1 overall, demonstrating extraordinary poise and experience, in large part because the players know each other so well.

"We've kind of been with the same guys the last two or three years - some of us four years - and this year is showing that chemistry can pay off," said senior pitcher James Marvel, the reigning league MVP.

All of the team's starters are returning varsity players. Twelve freshmen have played on varsity over the last four years.

"For all the hard work they've put in here [at Campolindo], they were pretty good when they got here," said head coach Max Luckhurst. "It was a

learning curve to play varsity baseball, but they all played at a pretty light level coming into high school."

Of the 19 players on this year's team, only four are seniors and will move on to college after this season. While those four players will be missed, the team's core won't change, meaning a more mature Cougars baseball team in the future.

"The ones that are coming back will have more experience, and the younger guys are getting experience, getting to be around older players to learn from," said Luckhurst. "The experience from playing some really good teams is putting them in a position to contribute next year."

As for the four players that are moving on, they have exciting college careers ahead of them. Pitcher and first basemen Marvel is headed to Duke, outfielder Cole Rider is headed to Johns Hopkins, while shortstop Josh Cushing and catcher Austin Rei are slated to attend the University of Washington.

Juniors on the team that have signed letters of intent include Brett Stephens (UCLA), Trent Shelton (Oregon State), and Robbie Tenorowicz (Cal).

"It's just a cool experience to have your dream of first playing high school, then college, baseball come true," said Marvel.

"It's always your dream to play some of the best competition in the nation, so to get the chance to play at a Pac-12 college is really exciting," added Rei, who said he knew he'd be attending Washington the second he stepped on campus.

Rei and Cushing, both four-year players under Luckhurst, will carry their friendship and familiarity with one another from Moraga all the way up the coast to Seattle.

"I know his strengths, I know his weaknesses, he knows my strengths, he knows my weaknesses," said Rei. "It's going to be nice because right away you have someone to talk to. There's always going to be a buddy there for me."

While there is a lot to look forward to in the future, the players will look to close out their time as Cougars in winning fashion.

We walked in to the season with one goal, to win our last game, that being the NCS championship," said Cushing. "We're hoping to close it out that way."

Campo finished off second in the DFAL standings, rival Acalanes, 12-1 before the break. They return to action on April 17 when they host third-place Dougherty Valley at 4 p.m.

Miramonte, Campolindo Tennis Teams Neck-and-Neck for DFAL's Top Spot

By Marissa Harnett

Like clockwork, the start of high school boys' tennis seemed to trigger the season's rains. Now at the midway point, having squeezed in make-up matches between downpours, the three Lamorinda teams are racing toward the championships.

Defending DFAL champion Campolindo is in a head-to-head battle with cross-town rival Miramonte for 2012's top DFAL spot. Each team has just one loss. Toss in the dark horse, Dougherty Valley, also recording one loss, and a three-way battle for first is underway. Miramonte and Campo have identical 6-1 records. Acalanes logged a win over Las Lomas making their DFAL record 1-4.

The Mats enjoy a slight edge over the Cougars overall record, boasting a 15-1 record compared to Campo's 14-2.

Miramonte's one loss came on Thursday, March 22 when Campo hosted the Mats in their first dual match meeting of the season. The Mats took on Campo in an early season tournament and took a solid, 6-1 victory. Feeling confident, the Mats hoped to defeat the Cougars in similar fashion the second time around. The Cougars had other ideas and took home the 5-4 win.

Head coach Petro Petreas was pleased with the victory. "The Miramonte match went exactly according to plan; we won the matches I thought we could win, and we had a shot in the ones I thought we would lose. It was nice to avenge our loss to Miramonte in a tournament early in the season."

On the other side, Miramonte

head coach Mike McCollom expected certain wins that didn't materialize. "Tennis is never the same. It's who shows up on a given day. It's highly unpredictable. Much respect to Campo."

There were nine close matches (see sidebar for results). With the conclusion of the #2 singles match, the teams were tied 4-4.

In that deciding match, all eyes were on Miramonte senior Michael Krakaris and Campo freshman Tilden Oliver. Oliver pulled out that set 7-6 (7-5) and then the second set and match, 6-2.

Krakaris admitted, "I kept looking for his weaknesses. He had a good day. It was a tough loss." Both players handled the pressure with class. Krakaris confessed, "There was definitely some pressure and I knew it was the deciding match. I just played my game."

Despite the loss, McCollom couldn't be happier with his team this year. "We are having an amazing season. Each class is remarkably strong creating a real balance of talent."

Although the Mats lost a large number of players to graduation last year, the team gained five talented freshmen. McCollom looks forward to staying strong in the coming years seeing growth and improvement.

"We have more depth, but lack of experience. We keep getting better," said co-captain Trevor Rechnitz.

Like Miramonte, Campo lost four top players to graduation last year, but filled the vacancies with skilled freshmen. But unlike Miramonte, the Cougars will lose another big group of seniors again this year.

Petreas recognizes the need to take advantage of his current talent. "We have to go for it this year. We have the personnel, we just need to step up and play good tennis when it counts. Our league has gotten more competitive, which will force us to be extra serious about every match."

Both teams are hoping to finish well in DFAL and go into the NCS tournament with a good seed. The rivalry continues on April 24 when Miramonte and Campo will meet again in their final regular season match.

Results of Miramonte at Campolindo:

Singles				
L. Bohhuslav (M) d. M. Tsvetkov (C)	6-2, 6-2			
T. Oliver (C) d. M. Krakaris (M)	7-6 (7-5), 6-2			
McCormick (C) d. P. Martin (M)	6-4, 6-4			
H. Aasman (C) d. T. Rechnitz (M)	6-1, 6-3			
L. Boersma (M) d. N. Elliott (C)	6-2, 6-0			
A. Lilichenko (M) d. P. Rei (C)	6-4, 6-2			
Doubles				
A. Tan/K. Rechnitz (M) d. Limino/Howard (C)	6-1, 6-3			
Tobin/Sienkiewicz (C) d. N. Weikert/B. Hummer (M)	6-3, 6-4			
Weiner/Mano (C) d. D. Stein/L. Kelly (M)	6-3, 6-2			

Divers Compete in Dual Meet

Submitted by Marie Estorge

Divers from Campolindo, College Park, Las Lomas, Acalanes and Miramonte (CLAM) hosted a dual dive meet with San Ramon High School and Monte Vista High School on March 29. Acalanes' Kate Seperack took first place in the girls' junior varsity competition.

Athlete	School	Division	Total Points	Place
Girls - Junior Varsity				
Kate Seperack	ACAL	JV	171.25	1
Addison Naton	CAMPO	JV	152.35	2
Girls - Varsity				
Maren Kjell	Campo	V	400.90	1
Fiona Caufield	MVH	V	388.00	2
Morgan Matranga	Campo	V	376.35	3
Carley Roberts	Miramonte	V	263.65	4
Boys - Varsity				
Asher Lichtig	Acalanes	V	424.90	1

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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

Lamorinda Rugby Bay South Conference Champion

Submitted by Doug McKinley



Lamorinda varsity gold rugby pulled off an upset win to take the Bay South Conference Championship. On March 23, ranked #20 by *Rugby Magazine*, Lamorinda defeated #2 San Francisco Golden Gate (SFGG).

SFGG led at the half, 10-8. Lamorinda came into the second half with a revived intensity and quickly scored three tries in ten minutes, giving them a 27-10 lead.

With just 11 minutes to play, Lamorinda had a commanding 34-10 lead. SFGG refused to go down quietly and scored two more times before time ran out. Still, Lamorinda held on to win 34-22.

The team traveled to Argentina over spring break and returned on April 10. They will compete in the playoffs on April 26.

Photo Karen Drinkwater

Moraga Baseball Association Box Scores

March 10

Bronco Division:

Orinda Angels 12, Moraga Yankees 8

Angels Highlights: Max Levy, 2-for-4, 1 RBI, 1 R; Andrew Hoff, 1-for-2, 3 R; Jayson Fernbacher, 1-for-3, 1 RBI, 1 R.

Yankees Highlights: Kyle Leuteneker, 3-for-3; Jake O'Balle, 1-for-2, 1 RBI, 2 R; Quinn Finnane, 1-for-3, Dbl, 2 RBI.

Mustang Division:

Cardinals 9, Giants 5

Cardinals Highlights: Max Weaver, 4-for-4, 2B, 2 RBI; Brady Manz, 2-for-4, HR, 2 RBI; Xander Goldman, 1-for-2, 2B, 2RS.

Giants Highlights: Kellan Clancy, 2-for-3, 2B, 1RBI; Michael Holloway, 2-for-3, 3B, 1RBI; Charlie Craig, 2-for-3, 1 RBI, 1 RS.

Pinto Division:

A's 17, Cubs 13

A's Highlights: Adam Harper, 4-for-4, 3 RS, 2 RBI; Dylan Rusconi, 2-for-4 2 RS; Luca Rago, 4-for-4, 1 2B 3 RS; Mason Fara, 3-for-3, 3 RBI

1 RS; Sebastian Aguirre, 2-for-3, 1 RBI, 2 RS. Cubs Highlights: Quinn Panos, 4-for-4, 4 RS; Connor Fritch, 3-for-4 1 3B, 3 RS; Cooper Lenahan, 3-for-3 1 2B, 2 RS; Duke Okamura, 2-for-3 2 RS.

Pirates 22, Giants 13

Pirates Highlights: Jack Williams, 4-for-4, 2 RBI; Xavier Esquer, 3-for-4, 4 RBI; Julia Ortega, 4-for-4, 2 RBI; Sal Meehan, 4-for-4.

Giants Highlights: Jack Erickson-King, 2-for-3, 4 RBI; Scott Linden, 3-for-3, 2 RBI; Luke McCurdy, 3-for-3, 1 RBI; Nate Powers, 3-for-3, 1 RBI; Evan Louis, 3-for-3, 1 RBI.

March 3, 2012

Pinto Division:

Pirates 13, Yankees 12

Pirates Highlights: Julia Ortega, 4-for-4, 3 2Bs, 2 RS, 2 RBI; Dylan Wilkalis, 3-for-3, 2 2Bs, RBI, RS; Ryan Kang, 2-for-3, 2RS.

Yankees Highlights: Ben Jules, 3-for-3, HR, 4 RBI, 2 RS; Tyler Kivelson, 3-for-3, 2 RBI, RS; Jack Beaty, 2-for-3, 2 RS.

Lamorinda Boasts CYO Basketball Champions

Submitted by Lisa Dirito



From left, back row: Steven Dunn, Scott Kontny, Eric Schueler; Front row: Jack Stone, Chris Rogers, Ian Archer, Charlie Koch, Tim Kobolasky, Garrett Dunn, Justin Bocks, Carson Kontny, Will Schueler.

St. Perpetua's fifth grade boys' team won the Dioceses championship. The boys' defeated Christ the King. In order to qualify for the championships, the team fought back from down 20 points to Santa Maria in the semi-finals.

Submitted by Dawn Brightbill



From left, back row: Colin Fogarty, Nico Brightbill, Nathan Edwards, Wyatt Nevins, Brendan Supple; front row: Coach Tim Fogarty, Jackson Taylor, Ryan Shaw, Wyatt Wilson, Joey Christensen, Coach Doug Edwards.

St. Perpetua's eighth grade boys' National team won the Regional Tournament of Champions on March 10, in Brentwood. The tournament included winners from West Diablo, East Diablo, Misson Valley and South Alameda County Dioceses.

Riders Jump into Spring Success

Submitted by Heather O'Donnell



Marieka Maesen and Bam Bam Photos provided

The hunter-jumper show season has begun in California and local horsewomen have enjoyed early wins. Marieka Maesen, a Camino Pablo third grader riding for Redwood Ranch, entered the Skye Valley Hunter-Jumper Show in Castro Valley on March 25th. Maesen and her pony, Bam Bam, won seven ribbons in eight judged classes on the cross rail and 1'6", including one first place, one second, four fourths and

one fifth.

Hannah O'Toole, an eighth grader at Orinda Intermediate School, also rode for Redwood Ranch at the Skye Valley show. O'Toole and her Connemara pony, Tallula, won two first places, one second and one fourth in her 2'6" Hunter Jumper division. O'Toole also won overall Reserve Champion in the 2'6" division, including a small cash prize sponsored by Western Saddlery.

Gabrielle Cirelli, a tenth grade Bentley

student from Moraga, riding for Shady Lane Farm, travelled to Thermal, California to ride in the HITS Desert Circuit over Feb 28-March 11. Gabby and her horse, Famko, placed sixth in the \$1000 Lamborghini Challenge Child/Adult Jumper Classic and sixth out of 44 horses in the Marshall & Sterling Child Jumper Classic. Cirelli also placed in five additional 15-and-under Jumper classes with third, fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth place finishes.



Gabby Cirelli on Famko

Submitted by Tom Stack



The St. Perpetua's seventh grade boys' #1 team won the Diablo West National League Championship this season. After finishing 8-2 in the regular season, they knocked off the 10-0 St. Perpetua's #3 team in the semi-finals, then shut down the 11-0 St. Mary's squad from Walnut Creek to take home the trophy.

Submitted by Jana Perry



Back Row, from left: Coach Ron Concepcion, Ryan Jeter, Kaleo Nelson, Jeremy Gundersen, Luke Campo, Billy Woolsey, John Campo; front row: Will Weaver, Ian Concepcion, Tommy Raftis. Not pictured: Coaches Jeffrey Weaver, Jay Jeter & Kin Robles.

St. Monica's Spartans fifth grade boys' basketball team competed in the prestigious Oakland Diocese 2012 CYO NIT-Tournament of Champions in Brentwood. Many of the top teams throughout the diocese went head-to-head in a single elimination tournament to determine who would be "Top Dog." The Spartans ran the table and finished as Champions by winning in the final game, 21-19 over a formidable Santa Maria team from Orinda.

Mother, Son Earn Gold Medals

Submitted by Thomas Westernoff



Arleen Thomas and her Son Kai

Photo provided

Karate team members of the Karate & Fitness Place USA, Arleen Thomas and her son, Kai, returned home from the 2012 Lone Wolf Karate Gold Cup Championships in Albany, California, on Saturday, March 10 with three first place medals. Arleen earned first place in Kata and Weapons. Kai earned first place Kata.

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Lafayette Little League

Submitted by Todd Bequette

Majors Division

White Sox 7 Phillies 3

The White Sox surged past the Phils behind the solid pitching of Colin Kuiken, Nikki Wixsom, and Michael Bone. Nick Davidson and Tommy Hawkins also turned in brilliant defensive plays to snuff out Philly rallies.

White Sox 2 Indians 0

The Sox continued their winnings ways with a shutout of the Tribe. Hawkins scored the winnings run with a daring steal of home. Daniel Flaherty, Jake Finegold, Wixsom and Bone combined for a three-hit shutout. For the Indians, Matt Burns continued his torrid hitting streak with a triple off the wall in left-center.

AAA Division

Orioles 15 Cubs 7

The hot-hitting Birds clubbed the Cubs last Saturday. In a losing effort, Jack Franz was perfect at the plate, going three-for-three with two runs batted in. Will Easley starred on the mound. He did not allow an earned run in two innings. The game was called due to darkness after five innings.

SUMMER CAMPS

2012 / #2

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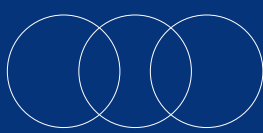
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www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue601/pdf/Lamorinda-Summer-Camps-2012_full-day.pdf). If your child's summer plans include sleeping in or days filled with swim team, the half-day camps and classes in this issue will give those water-wrinkled fingers a chance to dry out and might even convince sleepy-head to get up and try something new!



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Specialty Camps and Classes ... continued

Orinda Academy (Orinda)

Students may take two semester classes or one full-year class from the courses listed in the following subject areas: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English for all grades, U.S. History, Spanish (all levels), Art, Music, Middle School and High School Prep. Personalized instruction with 9:1 student-to-teacher ratio. Orinda Academy classes meet state requirements for credit and are UC-approved. Dates: Two 17-day sessions: June 20-July 12 and July 14-Aug. 5 (9am-1pm).
Phone: (925) 254-7553 x 305
Website: www.orindaacademy.org

Ocean Adventures (Orinda)

Enrichment Program Ocean Adventures! An exciting curriculum designed to allow children (K-5th grade) to look on and under the world's seas! Program includes skill and appreciation development in the visual and performing arts, building, modeling, drawing, zoology, botany, geology, woodworking, and much more!
Dates: June 18-July 13, 9am-noon.
Phone: Orinda Parks & Recreation (925) 254-2445
Website: www.cityoforinda.org

Sewnow! Fashion Design (Lafayette)

Learn fashion design and sewing at sewnow! fashion studio (3534 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette). We offer a variety of one-week camps for juniors (2nd & 3rd grade), kids, and teens. Have fun, learn new skills and walk away with unique personalized fashion items. Camps include workbook, fabrics, notions, computerized custom-fit patterns, and custom embroidery. Email: info@sewnow.com
Dates: June-August
Phone: (925) 283-7396
Website: www.sewnow.com

Shakespeare For Kids (Lafayette)

Two-week camp for kids ages 6-14 interested in singing, dancing or acting in short Shakespeare scenes, and more. Tudor faire, feast and dramatic production for families at the grande finale, 7pm, July 20!
Dates: July 9-20, 9:30am-12:30pm
Website: www.Shakespeareforkids.us

Summer Bridge Math (Moraga)

This program, intended to be both fun and educational, is designed to reinforce previous math concepts, while introducing future ones. Manipulatives and interactive problem solving will be a part of each session. Groups will consist of no more than seven students and will meet four times over the summer. Mr. Lorie will lead the sessions.
Dates: various dates and times are available
Website: www.lorietutors.com

Did we miss your favorite camp?
On May 23 we will list all full day, half day camps and classes. Reach 60,000+ in Lamorinda and advertise with us. Call (925) 377-0977 or email wendy@lamorindaweekly.com.



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SUMMER CAMPS 2012 / #2

Part 2, Half-Day Camps & Classes (Part 1, full-day and overnight camps, was published on March 14, 2012)

Specialty Camps and Classes ... continued

The Art Room (Lafayette)

Students enjoy the creative process while learning art skills in a nurturing environment. Our goal is to achieve a balance between process and product while building self-esteem and a love of art!

Come have fun with us!

Dates: Our flexible summer program starts June 18.

Phone: (925) 299-1515
Website: www.TheArt-Room.com

Lindsay Wildlife Museum Science Camp (Walnut Creek)

Enjoy new adventures with live animals, science experiments, crafts. Held in the museum's large air-conditioned community room, two private classrooms, and outdoors in adjacent Larkey Park. Four weekly half-day sessions include Creepy Crawly Critter Camp (ages 4-6), Getting Down to Earth & Animal Adaptations (ages 6-9), and Wildlife Hospital Behind the Scenes (ages 10-12).

Dates: See website for dates, times and fees.
Phone: (925) 935-1978
Website: www.wildlife-museum.org

HORSE/FARM CAMPS

Rancho del Lago (Briones)

Rancho del Lago's riding camp teaches classical riding for beginning and intermediates riders in a safe environment with gentle horses and ponies. Two riding sessions a day, horse care, crafts and a show create a fun exciting week. We have many repeat campers!

Dates: Six one-week sessions

Phone: (925) 370-6439
Website: www.rancho-del-lago.com

Roughing it - Hello Horse Camp (Lafayette)

Part of the Roughing It Family of Camps. One-week, half-day introductory western riding camp. Beginning riding lessons and horsemanship, animal care, crafts and more! Designed for busy families that cannot attend our full-day horse programs.

Dates: various dates available from 2:15-5:15pm

Phone: (925) 283-3795
Website: www.roughingit.com/horse

Sienna Ranch (Lafayette)

Lamorinda's own ranch camp experience. Camp choices include activities in nature immersion, primitive arts, survival skills, horse riding and care, farm animal interaction, archery, carpentry, and more! Serving campers ages 4-14, Sienna Ranch offers week-long, full-day or half-day camp options. All adult, professional staff and amazing, convenient location.

Dates: various dates and times available

Phone: (925) 283-6311
Website: www.siennaranch.net

Trails to Success (Briones)

Build confidence and leadership skills at the "School of Horsology," a Horse Power Summer Camp for children ages 8-18 who want to take their riding and horsemanship skills to the next level. Learn the psychology behind horse behavior, earn their trust and respect, and become a true partner with your horse! We will foster confidence, personal insight and effective leadership skills on the ground and in the saddle.

Email: jesspinto.trails@gmail.com

Dates: July 23-Aug. 3
Website: www.TrailstoSuccess.com

SPORTS CAMPS

DON's Camp 2012 (Lafayette)

The Acalanes coaching staff invites incoming 3rd-8th graders to be the very best football players you can be. At our camp you will learn skills, techniques, rules and how to perform to the best of your ability. There are daily camp awards and all athletes receive a T-shirt.

Non-contact, \$125. Contact Head Coach Mike Ivankovich.

Dates: June 18-20, 9am-noon

Email: mivankovich@acalan.es.k12.ca.us

Football Camp (Moraga)

The Cougar Youth Football Camp, directed by Head Coach Kevin Macy, for grades 4-8 will run from July 9 through July 20, 1:30-5pm at Campolindo High School. All equipment is supplied, t-shirt is included. Registration forms can be found at campofootball.com.

Phone: (925) 932-1579

Summer Tennis Camps with Lynne Rolley (Berkeley)

Berkeley Tennis Club -no membership required: ages 4-18. We welcome ALL player levels & will be grouped accordingly. NEW afternoon & evening sessions coming! Quick Start Program for 10 and under.

Email: lynne.btc@sbcglobal.net
Dates: June 11-Aug. 24, weekly sessions (M-F) 9am - noon.

Phone: (510) 841-9023
Website: www.berkeleytennisclub.org

Oakland Strokes (Oakland)

The Oakland Strokes summer program is a half-day summer camp. It is offered five weeks during the summer. The program is open to any child 6th through 12th grade. The program is a "learn to row" program, focused on taking kids from never rowing, to being proficient. We teach the basics and include conditioning in our program.

E-mail: oaklandstrokes@gmail.com
Dates: various dates and times available

Website: www.oaklandstrokes.org



Summer Junior Tennis Camps with Lynne Rolley

Weekly Sessions
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
June 11th to August 24th
ALL levels of play are welcome
Grouped by Age & Ability

NEW *afternoon & evening sessions coming!*

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DATES: July 9 thru July 20 (M - F)
TIMES: 1:30 - 5:00 P.M.
FEES: \$320 (T-shirt included)

FOR REGISTRATION FORMS, CONTACT:

925/280-3950 x-5163, kmacy@acalan.es.k12.ca.us
or download registration form at campofootball.com

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www.lamorindaweekly.com

SUMMER CAMPS 2012 / #2

Part 2, Half-Day Camps & Classes (Part 1, full-day and overnight camps, was published on March 14, 2012)



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1-5 PM
955 MORAGA RD
 Lafayette United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall

EBSAF.COM

CHAPTER 06, A nonprofit organization supporting Women's Education

Hands-On Learning 'New Normal' for Summer Camps

Galileo Summer Quest Program Opens in Lafayette



With a hand from camp staff, campers test go-karts they create at Galileo Summer Quest.

Photo Galileo Learning

Kids are benefiting from focused curricula in today's summer camps, whether they are building advanced robotics, or cooking gourmet meals, there is something exciting to learn for kids of every age. And camps are utilizing the most advanced systems and techniques that give students an understanding of what they can accomplish in the world.

This year, Galileo Summer Quest, which empowers campers to try their hands at real-world skills such as Web Design, Fashion Design and Digital Filmmaking, is opening several new locations in the Bay Area, including one at Stanley Middle School in Lafayette. The camp gives entering fifth- through eighth-graders a chance to work with industry mentors who will guide them as they learn specific skills.

"Having a singular focus for middle-schoolers is important," said Kellee Quane, Camp Director of Galileo Summer Quest in Lafayette. "The campers are at a developmental stage where they want to explore things in detail and create something original and innovative. In Fashion Design, for example, we teach them how to design, use

sewing machines and put on a fashion show -- all within a week! Having that depth of focus really helps the campers to complete their week-long majors with projects they love."

Digital photography students use tools of the trade such as DSLR cameras, studio lighting kits and Adobe Photoshop Elements 6, learn to plot, shoot, polish and present their work, for example. Go-Kart Maker students begin with a go-kart kit as their foundation, learn how to safely use key-hole and straight cut saws, power drills, sandpaper, rasps and files to construct your kart and its wheels, steering column, axles and hubs. Students work with fellow crew members to test and re-design their kart, then use semi-gloss acrylic paints to customize it.

"We focus on using technology as a tool that allows campers to express themselves more fully," said Glen Tripp, Founder and CEO of Galileo Learning. "But the key goal is empowering kids to turn their ideas into reality, and we do that with both our high-tech and low-tech subject matters."

Campers immerse themselves in developing their own personal project, while cultivating the skills, knowledge and confidence to make their ideas reality. "Technology is infused into the curriculum," Quane said. "Technology helps make this camp different from more traditional camps."

When kids collaborate to complete a meaningful project, they build their confidence and ability to create something special, added Tripp. "The project becomes a metaphor for larger life challenges."

This summer, Galileo will also operate the Chabot Space & Science Camp at the Chabot Space & Science Center in Oakland, featuring hands-on space, science and technology classes for rising third- through seventh-graders. Galileo is also operating The Tech Summer Camps, hands-on science and technology classes for incoming fourth- through eighth-graders, at The Tech Museum in San Jose. For more information or to enroll, call 1-800-854-3684 or visit www.galileo-learning.com.

- J. Wake



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www.mvptennis.org

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2012

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 Information: MagicCamp.org (925) 455-0600

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SUMMER CAMPS 2012 / #2

Part 2, Half-Day Camps & Classes (Part 1, full-day and overnight camps, was published on March 14, 2012)

SPORTS CAMPS ... continued

Sherman Swim School (Lafayette)

A tradition since 1961, Sherman Swim School is a family business in Lafayette which has taught swimming to over 38,000 students and has produced numerous diving champions. Our teachers love to work with children and receive extensive in-water training. The combination of one-on-one instruction with patient, encouraging teachers, and extremely comfortable water (90°-94°), creates an ideal learning environment. Voted "Best of the East Bay," Diablo Magazine. Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 283-2100
Website: www.shermanswim.com

SMC Summer Camps (Moraga)

SMC offers 30-plus sports camps on one of the most picturesque campuses on the West Coast. Saint Mary's offers boys and girls Overnight, Day, Team, and Specialty Camps for ages 4-18. Summer 2012 offers All Sports, Baseball, Basketball, Golf, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Tennis and Volleyball. Email: smccamps@stmarys-ca.edu
 Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 631-4FUN (4386)
Website: www.smcgaels.com, click "camps"

Stars' Basketball Academy for Girls (Lafayette)

High school coaches Clay Kallam (Bentley), Kelly Sopak (Miramonte), Elgin Leslie (Campolindo) and Dan Middleton (Northgate) will run a series of camps at the Bentley School this summer. E-mail: clayk@fullcourt.com
 Dates: High school camp, June 11-15 and June 18-22 (two one-week sessions) 11-1pm; Youth camps, June 11-15, June 25-29 and July 16-20 (1-3pm).
Phone: (925) 935-7370
Website: www.calstars.org/page/show/86855-stars-basketball-academy

Tennis Camp - Moraga Valley Swim and Tennis Club (Orinda)

This three-hour program from 11:30am-2:30pm includes tennis instruction from USPTA certified coaches and a swim/ lunch period with fun and games. Hourly classes are also available.
 Scott Borowiak USPTA Certified Coach.
 Dates: Weekly sessions June 11- July 10
Phone: (925)284-1102
Website: WWW.mvptennis.org

VARIETY CAMPS

Camp Saklan (Moraga)

Located on the campus of The Saklan School in Moraga, activities are designed to incorporate our mission to think creatively, act compassionately and live courageously. Camp programs and activities are lead by a well-trained, dedicated staff in a caring, safe environment. Weekly themes include Science, Drama, Magic, Circus Arts, Lego Engineering, Movie Effects, Swim Lessons and much more. Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 376-7900
Website: www.saklan.org

Orinda Parks & Recreation (Orinda)

A variety of half-day camps offered for ages 3.5-15: OK Camp, Enrichment Program - Ocean Adventures, Art, Babysitting, Basketball, Bridge, Carpentry, Chess, Chinese, Computer & Multimedia, Cooking, Dance, Engineering (Lego & Erector), Filmmaking, Flag Football, Golf, Gymnastics & More, Jewelry Making, Lacrosse, Music, Musical Theater, Rock 'n' Roll Band, Science, Soccer, Multi-sports, Tennis, Theatre & Circus Performing, Volleyball, and Writing Camps! Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 254-2445
Website: www.cityoforinda.org

City of Lafayette - Recreation Summer Camps (Lafayette)

Soccer - Cheerleading - Cooking - Dance - Fencing - Jewelry Making - Theater - Lacrosse - Mad Science - Spanish - Engineering - LEGOS - Tennis - Critters N Clay - Music - Robotics - Hip Hop - Game Design - Basketball - Chess - and more!
 Registration opens April 16.
 Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 284-2232
Website: www.LafayetteRec.org

Moraga Parks & Recreation Summer Camps (Moraga)

Parks Make Life Better . . . and so do fun summer camps! A variety of camps are offered through the Moraga Parks & Recreation Department: Eurosoccer, baseball, Moraga Sports Camp, magic, cartooning, movie making, drama, flag football, volleyball, jewelry making, cheer, tennis, SCUBA, fishing, and much more!
 Registration is currently open.
 Dates: various dates and times available
Phone: (925) 888-7045
Website: www.moraga.ca.us

The Lamorinda Weekly Summer Camp listings are not paid advertising. Our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. In the event we have inadvertently printed misinformation please let us know. LW is not liable for errors or omissions.

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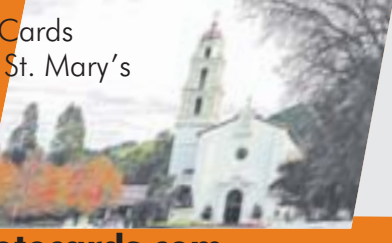
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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 3 Wednesday, April 11, 2012

Q1

The Real Estate Q1 2012 in Review ...read on page D6

Attracting Birds to the Native Backyard

By Sophie Braccini



A Bewick's wren in Al Kyte's garden

Photos Al Kyte

A couple of chickadees fed to their little hearts' content on a suet feeder, unaware of the couple of humans, Bill and Claire Gilbert, observing them from their breakfast nook.

They flew away, soon to be replaced by a woodpecker and later a nuthatch. Pigeons arrived at the nearby bog for their daily baths. A hawk (Sharp-shinned) was once spotted bathing in that gravel-filled bog. Attracting birds to a backyard is a constant source of pleasure and awe for those who know how to do it. Three local garden owners, featured in the May 6 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, share a conviction that a native landscape is the most favorable to attract our winged friends.

"Thirty years ago I went to a class on birds taught at the UC Berkeley Extension," reminisces Moraga gardener Al Kyte.

... continued on page D4

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	12	\$275,000	\$1,699,000
MORAGA	10	\$196,000	\$1,475,000
ORINDA	4	\$786,000	\$1,195,000

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

- 3649 Boyer Circle, \$275,000, 2 Bdrms, 1014 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 3-15-12
 1676 Foothill Park Circle, \$1,135,000, 6 Bdrms, 3119 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-16-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,210,000, 09-26-06
 693 Glorietta Boulevard, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1648 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 3-9-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,025,000, 04-06-07
 1117 Hillcrest Drive, \$749,000, 5 Bdrms, 2947 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$380,000, 07-17-96
 1142 Martino Road, \$1,140,000, 3 Bdrms, 2800 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-9-12;
 Previous Sale: \$945,000, 04-28-03
 881 Moraga Road, \$513,000, 3-19-12
 3211 Palomares Avenue, \$750,000, 5 Bdrms, 2260 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 3-5-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,075,000, 06-06-07
 1089 Rahara Drive, \$1,699,000, 4 Bdrms, 3448 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,905,000, 05-26-05
 3376 Ridge Road, \$615,000, 3 Bdrms, 1728 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 3-13-12;
 Previous Sale: \$235,000, 12-20-96
 1167 Sierra Vista Way, \$515,000, 3 Bdrms, 1406 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-14-12;
 Previous Sale: \$311,000, 06-20-97
 1108 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,185,000, 5 Bdrms, 3102 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$710,000, 01-14-00
 40 Terra Teresa, \$950,000, 5 Bdrms, 2877 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 3-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 09-30-03

MORAGA

- 2063 Ascot Drive #216, \$196,000, 2 Bdrms, 1106 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 3-6-12;
 Previous Sale: \$139,000, 06-03-98
 936 Augusta Drive, \$765,000, 3 Bdrms, 2470 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 3-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$950,000, 11-21-05
 675 Carroll Drive, \$685,000, 3 Bdrms, 1392 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-8-12;
 Previous Sale: \$876,000, 06-03-05
 798 Crossbrook Drive, \$975,000, 4 Bdrms, 2471 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-16-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,162,000, 10-12-07
 123 Donald Drive, \$540,000, 3 Bdrms, 1344 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 3-5-12
 330 Draeger Drive, \$1,475,000, 4 Bdrms, 2991 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-14-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,375,000, 09-04-03
 485 Kingsford Drive, \$1,060,000, 4 Bdrms, 2275 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$599,000, 10-28-99
 1825 St. Andrews Drive, \$931,500, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$655,000, 08-04-99
 26 Whitethorne Drive, \$803,500, 4 Bdrms, 1790 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$830,000, 05-11-09
 14 Willow Springs Lane, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 3031 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 3-9-12;
 Previous Sale: \$680,000, 08-10-93

ORINDA

- 3 Donald Drive, \$1,195,000, 3 Bdrms, 2359 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-9-12;
 Previous Sale: \$100,000, 10-15-04
 567 Miner Road, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 2083 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 3-8-12;
 Previous Sale: \$799,000, 06-27-01
 42 Tarry Lane, \$860,000, 4 Bdrms, 3326 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 3-12-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,425,000, 08-23-06
 9 Williams Court, \$786,000, 4 Bdrms, 2640 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-14-12

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

MORAGA

- Wickham Drive, 94556, RWW Properties, 03-06-12, \$834,200, 2820 sf, 5 bd



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Sold, 122 Lombardy Ln, Orinda,
Represented Buyer



For Sale 44 Lucille Way, Orinda
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Sale Pending -234 El Toyonal,
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Sale Pending, 136 Spring Rd, Orinda,
Representing Seller and Buyer



Sale Pending, 4075 Poplar Ave,
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Recent Sales and Listings



New Listing



3497 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette
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Pending in 7 Days



3155 Indian Way, Lafayette
Beautifully remodeled and expanded ranch style home offering 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths with fabulous 2700 sq. ft. single level floor plan. Andersen windows, gourmet kitchen, hardwood floors and exposed beam ceilings. Steps to elementary school, swim clubs and Lafayette Trail. **Offered at \$1,349,000**

Pending in 9 Days



15 Candlelight Lane, Lafayette
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Sold Pre-Market



663 Glenside Drive, Lafayette
Opportunity knocks! Rare pancake flat half acre with Lafayette Trail access. This spacious 4 bedroom, 2 bath, 2150 sq. ft. home has "good bones" and ideal expansion potential. **Sold for \$830,000**

Pending



960 Hawthorne Drive, Lafayette
Trail Neighborhood charmer! Single level 3 bedroom, 2 bath traditional home on lovely oak-studded .25 acre lot just steps to town, trail and schools. **Offered at \$679,000**

Sold



3376 Ridge Road, Lafayette
Recently remodeled 4 bedroom, 2 bath home with upgrades galore. Surrounded by natural beauty and heritage oaks, this home offers 1728 sq. ft. of living space **Offered at \$649,000**



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Attracting Birds to the Native Backyard

... continued from page D1

“The presenter said that the native plants are the best environment for birds to come to gardens. It made a lot of sense to me, and that’s how my passion for gardening with native plants began.” Kyte is a veteran advocate and teacher of native gardening who’s been featured in the Tour for years. He believes that there are a lot of elements to attracting birds to a backyard.

Water is essential according to Lafayette resident Bill Gilbert. “Probably the biggest attractant has been the waterfall, bog, and pond we had installed,” he said. “The year-round source of drinking water is very important to birds, especially during the dry summer months when water sources are few and far between.” Gilbert and his wife Claire observe that the sound of falling water seems to act as a magnet for some bird species, especially warblers.

Bird feeders are also a must to please the winged guests (in different forms and with different feeds depending on what is to be attracted); one can also procure nesting boxes, but that is not enough.

“The overall design of the plantings may be the most important element,” says Kyte. “A design that provides a wide variety of nesting sites, cover, and feeding options has the potential for bringing in the most species.” Kyte has worked to develop a backyard concept of an oak and pine woodland with some areas of open space. “Oaks and pines each attract species that might not otherwise come, and dense shrubbery offers protection from predators and weather and draws reclusive birds, such as Spotted Towhee and Hermit Thrush,” he said. “The berries from certain shrubs attract additional birds, including Cedar Waxwings and robins. Low flowering plants bring hummingbirds as well as ground-feeding birds. Providing some open ground is critical to quail, doves and bluebirds.”

Orinda gardener Elizabeth O’Shea says that thinking about how plants flower is also important. “There are lots of things that bring birds to gardens. We are lucky to have a large lot bordering Moraga Creek, near open space,” she says. “We have planted native plants over a twenty year period. We do try to have plants that flower over long periods and that hold seeds for a while. We also have water for the birds, bird nest boxes and feeders. We spend a lot of time watching the bird with binoculars.”

Gilbert agrees. “Of course, vegetation on a property is very important to birds for natural food, natural nesting sites, and cover to avoid predators. We have documented Nuttall’s Woodpeckers nesting in natural cavities in our Valley Oaks, and other cavity nesters likely also have nested,” he says. “Regarding value as a food source, studies have shown that when non-native shrubs and trees are planted in an area, far fewer species of insects come to them than to the native shrubs and trees.” And less insects, mean less birds.

To find out more about the gardens and the birds, go to Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour web site at www.bringingbackthenatives.net. The Tour is on Sunday, May 6, registration ends mid-April. The Tour is free, but donations are appreciated.



A bird rests in Elizabeth O’Shea’s garden

Photos courtesy of the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour



A quail with her chick



The Gilberts’ garden is enhanced by a water feature that draws thirsty birds



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2 Family Rooms

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Dramatic living room with soaring ceiling

Large, lovely dining room

Chef's kitchen with state-of-the-art appliances

Adjoining eating area and family room

Master suite with private dressing area and bath

Cozy study with extensive built-ins and glass door to courtyard

2nd bedroom/bath nearby

A large second family room in the heart of a second bedroom area

3 additional bedrooms and two baths (one a private bedroom suite)

Separate laundry room, wine cellar closet

High ceilings, skylights, hardwood floors, generous storage and built-ins

Brick pathway and patio, deck with seating, decks for barbecue and viewing

Spectacular .69 acre setting with stately oaks, fragrant bay trees,

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Forbes Magazine listed Lafayette #3 in the Nation in 2011 for BEST SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR YOUR HOUSING BUCK in the \$800,000+ category. (Top category)

**Per Appraisal

*Per Public Records



Make Way for Multiples

by Andi Peterson Brown

As I've written about in previous columns this year, the Lamorinda real estate market is heating up. The combination of lower inventory, lots of buyers, and growing confidence in the marketplace has increased competition for many homes. As a result, many buyers and sellers this spring have found themselves in a multiple offer situation, which requires a different level of strategy.

For buyers, it is important to ask if the listing agent has set a specific date and time to review offers—you may need to act quickly. In addition, write your best and cleanest offer up front. Minimize contingencies and asking for little extras, and find out what's important to the seller. Have your financing preapproval letter attached, as well as a summary of terms for easy review. Most importantly, try not to fall completely in love with the house.

For sellers, it is important to know which factors are your highest priority. An all cash, quick close offer may be more appealing to you than one with a higher price but more uncertain financing. If a few offers seem like they might work, submit a counter offer to them and see who can step up to the plate and strengthen their terms. Always remember to weigh your options—you have them and that is a great place to be.



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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS

The first quarter of 2012 showed a huge increase in activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate with supply way down, pending sales way up, closings up and the average sales price higher in Moraga and Orinda and about the same in Lafayette versus the period a year ago.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from Jan. 1 through March 31, 2012, 43 single-family homes closed in Lafayette which was an increase from 36 closures last year. Sales prices ranged from \$275,000 to \$2,950,000 and averaged 41 days on market versus 70 days in the first quarter of last year, and 65 days in 2010. The average sales price was \$971,889 which was nearly identical to the first quarter of 2011 of \$973,341.

There were 21 single-family closings in Moraga, down only one from 1Q2011 when 22 closed. Prices ranged from \$540,000 to \$1,400,000. The average sale price was \$959,857, a huge increase from a year ago when the average was \$894,892. The average marketing time was 72 days, down from 85 days a year ago.

Single-family closings in Orinda were down to 24 from 35 a year ago. Sales prices ranged from \$335,000 to \$1,680,000 with an average price of \$934,541, compared to \$894,857 last year. It took an average of 67 days on the market to sell a home versus 58 in the identical quarter in 2011. (There was one sale of a property listed at \$2,125,000 where the sale price was not reported to the Multiple Listing Service and that sale is not reflected in these statistics.)

So far this year, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$384 per square foot, Moraga homes sold for \$388 and Orinda was at \$379, compared to last year's figures of \$384, \$374, and \$366 respectively.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had two closings at \$345,000 and \$415,000, Moraga had 13 ranging from \$110,000 to \$596,000 and Orinda had two—a low of \$215,000 and a high of \$249,000 (both on Brookwood).

As of April 5, there were 127 homes under contract per the MLS in the three communities combined with asking prices of \$149,000 to \$3,690,000 compared to 92 pending properties at this time last year. It should be noted that there are 23 "Potential Short Sales" that are currently pending and were subject to lender approval. The time for short sales to be approved has shortened in some cases, but the waiting time often remains several months. Six of the pending sales are REOs (bank owned

properties.)

Inventory, however, has decreased dramatically to the current supply of 115 properties. (Supply was 180 in early April 2011; 215 at this same time in 2010.)

There are only 61 properties on the market in Lafayette. There were 80 properties on the market in Lafayette in April, 2011 and 114 properties on the market at this time in 2010. Asking prices in Lafayette currently range from \$420,000 to \$8,498,000. Of these, 11 are distressed sales—attempted short sales or REOs. In Moraga, buyers have their choice of only 19 homes or condominiums listed between \$325,000 and \$3,600,000. A year ago at this time there were 45. There are no short sales currently on the market in Moraga and only one bank-owned property.

In Orinda there are 35 on the market, down from 55 last year, and 75 in April, 2010. The list prices range from \$489,000 to \$6,195,000. Only three are bank owned or short sales.

As is the case nearly every quarter, the most active properties are in the more affordable price range. At the high end, only two homes sold above \$2 million in the three communities combined. Both were in Lafayette. A year ago there was one sale in the \$2 million-plus range in the first quarter—in Lafayette. There are 20 currently available above this amount in the three communities combined.

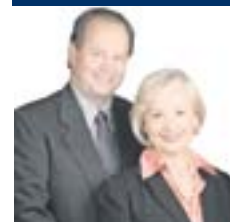
Interest rates continue to be attractive and many corporations continue to relocate families both in to and out of the area. The third piece of the real estate market puzzle—the bank owned property segment—is appearing less often in Lamorinda but continues to be high in nearby communities.

Lastly, it is important to look at what homes are selling for versus their list prices. Often homes come on the market at unrealistic prices, and they do not sell, but in the first quarter of this year many homes have had multiple offers and have sold at or above the list price.

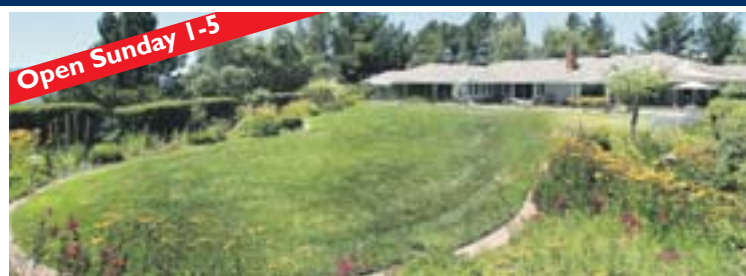
Of the 43 sales that closed in Lafayette in the first quarter of 2012, 13 sold at or above the list price. In Moraga, 11 of the 21 sales were at or above the asking price and in Orinda, eight of the 24 sold at or above the final listing price.

This will typically happen when a house goes pending in the first week to ten days on the market. There are 128 currently pending sales in the three Lamorinda communities combined and of these, 51 pending in ten days or less—pointing to a high likelihood of a continued trend in homes selling above the asking price.

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2 Altarinda Circle
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