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Olivia Williams finished the 6-and-under 25-yard butterfly in 23.47 seconds.

Photo Kevin Nguyen

Lafayette Swim Conference's First Championship

By Rebecca Eckland

Last weekend, you saw the sights and sounds of any swim meet: the smell of chlorine, the flicker of a swimmer's body through the water, and excited cries as athletes neared record-breaking finishes. But this swim meet was unlike any other. Five Lafayette teams—Sun Valley Swim Team, Springbrook, Rancho Colorados, Lafayette Moraga Youth As-

sociation (LMYA) and Oakwood Swim Team-- competed together in the first-annual Lafayette Swim Conference (LSC) Championship meet at the Steve Heaston Aquatic Center.

A new innovation of the LSC is its methods of scoring. In addition to traditional scoring methods, LSC has added new categories. Teams are now ranked according to improved or "pop"

times and points per swimmer. There is also a "spirit award" which was granted to Sun Valley Swim Team for the unrelenting enthusiasm of its athletes and coaches.

Springbrook took the LSC Team Ranking crown, earning 5,310.5 points. Rancho Colorados was the runner-up.

... continued on page C1

Quote of the Week:

"Running, as opposed to serving, is a gauntlet for those who choose public service in retirement."

Read Harpham Decides One Term is Enough, page A5 (election updates for Lafayette and Orinda can be found on A2 and A7).

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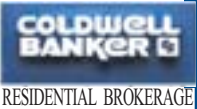
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Town Okays Sales Tax Measure for November Ballot

By Cathy Tyson

The Moraga Town Council enthusiastically agreed to put a one-cent sales tax measure, that would sunset in 20 years, on the November ballot to fund road and storm drain repair. It's no secret to residents that according to The Pothole Report, Moraga's roads rank in the lowest 15 percent of Bay Area roads.

Calling it a "team effort" Town Manager Jill Keimach noted that the endeavor started four years ago with RECON—Revenue Enhancement Community Outreach to Neighborhoods—which was organized to address Moraga's crumbling streets. RECON looked at cost cutting measures and a variety of possible revenue-raising scenarios including an ad valorem tax, a bond measure, a Community Facilities District and a sales tax.

RECON's recommendation came after surveys, extensive community outreach and focus groups showed support of the Town's effort to find a way to fix the roads. In a Town-sponsored survey by Godbe Research in May of 2012, a majority of those that responded supported a \$0.01 sales tax.

There's no extra money available to keep up with the \$25 million cost of road maintenance when the entire budget to keep the Town running is \$6 million annually. To deal with its own state-wide budget issues, government officials in Sacramento have taken nearly \$5 million from the Town of Moraga since 1992. Due to recent declines in property values the Town has seen a slight dip in annual revenue, while the cost of providing public safety, parks and recreation and road

repair has gone up.

"In order to begin addressing the \$25 million backlog in street and road repair needs out of the general fund would require the entire elimination of all other services the Town provides – for over four years," said Keimach in her staff report for the July 25 Town Council meeting. "The Town of Moraga continues to live within its means—never spending more than the current revenue would allow, but as a consequence the streets have fallen further into disrepair. Delaying maintenance and repairs to Moraga's local streets and roads only increase costs in the long run – without additional funds, our street and road condition will decline and the cost of repairs will triple in ten years." ... continued on page A4

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Holy Shepherd Goes Green

Canyon Construction and Holy Shepherd team up for a new building. Cathy Dausman reports. Page B1



Sports C1-C3

New Mats Coach

Conrad Bassett catches up with Drew McDonald. Page C2



Our Homes D1-D8

Fix it or Fill it?



Cathy Dausman dives into pool remodeling. Page D1

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Lafayette Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, August 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, August 6, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Tuesday, August 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Police Report



Week of July 15-21

Lafayette Police Incident Summary
Report, week of July 15-21 included
the following:

Burglaries:

- 3300 block of Victoria Avenue
3100 block of Somerset Place
100 block of Camellia Lane
3600 block of Mt. Diablo Blvd.
(commercial burglary)
1400 block of Sunset Loop (auto burglary)
3200 block of Palomares Street

Petty thefts:

- 4000 block of Mt. Diablo Blvd,
100 block of Lafayette Circle

Suspicious Circumstances/

Vehicle/Subject:

- 1000 block Upper happy Valley Rd.
3200 block Hillview Lane
100block of Middle Road
100 block of Silverwood Drive
3600 block of Mt. Diablo Blvd.
900 block of Mountain View Dr.
(vehicle)
El Nido Ranch Road/Hwy 24 (vehicle)
3300 block S. Lucille Lane
100 block of Chapel Drive
Edwards Court at McGraw Lane
(vehicle)
Black Hawk at Meadow Lark (vehicle)
3300 block Moraga Boulevard
3400 block School Street
Hwy 24 at Mt Diablo Blvd
3800 block of happy Valley Road
1000 block of Oak Hill Road
600 block of Murray Lane (vehicle)
400 block of Tahos (vehicle)
100 block of Camino diablo
(vehicle)
100 block of Camino Justin
(vehicle)
100 block Lafayette Circle
3800 block Los Arabis Drive
500 block St. Mary's Road

Traffic Stops:

Over 141 traffic stops logged within the same week.

Changes Ahead for City Council

Anduri announces that he, like Federighi, will not seek re-election

By Cathy Tyson

At the July 23 City Council meeting, 10-year City Council Member Carl Anduri announced he won't be running for another term.

ing to City Clerk Joanne Robbins as of July 24, Mike Anderson, Traci Reilly and Mark Mitchell have pulled nomination papers for the election, but she cautions, "Pulling papers and turning them in are two different things."

"I have a great day job," explained Anduri, adding that he logs

about 200,000 air miles a year as President of Lex Mundi, an association of global independent law firms. He noted that the current five members of the Council have a combined total of 66 years of service. Anduri is looking forward to more personal time and thanked residents for their support over the years.

Those considering a run for office should have a few extra days to prepare their papers. The rules say that if one or more incumbents do not file nomination papers by the August 10 deadline, the deadline is extended until August 15. Potential candidates should contact Robbins at (925) 284-1968.

Conflict Continues as Downtown Plan Wraps Up

By Cathy Tyson

Passionate discussion over the Downtown Specific Plan continued with last week's full house at the Community Hall. There doesn't seem to be much common ground between homeowner groups, especially the Lafayette Homeowners Council, and the City, mostly due to requirements to meet state mandated affordable housing numbers.

concern about traffic congestion, air quality and school funding made it unanimous - audience members are clearly not in favor of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP).

At the prior City Council meeting considering the DSP in June, Council members asked staff to provide answers to specific questions related to a proposal prepared by the Lafayette Homeowners Council (LHC). Specifically, how will the LHC proposal impact the city's ability to meet the states regional housing needs allocation?

Niroop Srivatsa, Building and Planning Services Manager, answered those questions at length in her staff report prepared for the July 23 City Council meeting and verbally for the benefit of the audience. The

lengthy answers are best examined via the staff report available online, through the City's website, www.lovelafayette.com.

In its June 25 letter the LHC argues, "Increased density with its projected impacts on our downtown remains a threat to our small city's viability." They recommend a 25-foot height limit for properties fronting Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

The staff report prepared by Srivatsa responds in part, "a lowering of the height limit allowed by right will significantly reduce the City's ability to meet the State's regional housing needs allocations. The reduction in the height limit will likely be viewed by the State as a constraint on the development of housing for all income levels."

The report points out that this concern was examined by the Planning Commission during its analysis, back in 2010 and 2011. The bottom line: the Planning Commission believed the height question should be dealt with through design guidelines and the City's discretionary review process, and that lowering the height limit to 25 feet would discourage private investment in the downtown. "Greater height does not equal greater density," emphasizes the report, "the DSP's maximum of three stories guarantees this."

The public hearing on the DSP will continue at the August 13 City Council meeting, 7 p.m. at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall. A decision on the Plan is slated for September 10, 2012.

Vantastic New Vehicle for Lamorinda Seniors

By Cathy Tyson



The trio of Spirit Vans ready to serve seniors in Lamorinda. Because the van on the far right is so new, identification above the windshield isn't ready yet. Photo provided

With two vans that have racked up a combined total of over 430,000 miles, it seemed like the best birthday gift ever when the newest Spirit Van arrived at the Senior Transportation Program in Lafayette. Tricked out with a built-in grocery rack to help elders handle packages, a smoother ride and better gas mileage, the first-ever brand new van is already popular, providing rides to seniors for medical appointments, errands and the senior lunch pro-

gram in Walnut Creek. While Moraga and Orinda contribute to the cost of the program, Lafayette pays the largest share; inexpensive rides are available for any senior in Lamorinda, \$5 each way; or, for those going to the C.C. Cafe at the Senior Center in Walnut Creek, round trip rides are free and the lunch is only \$2. The program has been steadily gaining ridership and now boasts roughly double the amount of patrons who

were served in 2006, helping seniors independently age in place as long as possible.

Mary Bruns, Lamorinda Senior Transportation Coordinator, was able to get the van for a fraction of the purchase price; and over 88 percent of the cost, or \$54,889, was paid by a federal grant. Bruns had been patiently waiting for the grant to come through since she applied for it back in May of 2009 - apparently the wheels of the federal government turn mighty slowly.

The newest ride couldn't have come at a better time. The original van is a 1999 model that was donated to the Senior Transportation Program by County Connection. The second van is slightly newer - a 2002 model also from County Connection. The oldest van will now serve as back-up, in case of break-downs or maintenance.

It takes a village to run the program. "We have two new volunteer drivers in training which will bring us up to 13 volunteer drivers," said Bruns. "By September, 2012, we expect to have all the shifts covered and will be able to offer morning and afternoon service Monday through Friday."

She's always on the look-out for grants and donations to help with fuel and maintenance costs. In May, gas to keep the two vans busy ferrying seniors cost \$1,243. To schedule a ride or get more information call (925) 283-3534.

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Constructing a Local Legacy

By Cathy Tyson

When Peter Branagh, president of Branagh Development, and his wife Mona, owner of Pacific Bay Interiors, tragically died in a plane crash July 14 Lamorinda residents mourned their passing. Branagh construction projects throughout the area will remain as a testament to their vision of quality craftsmanship.

“Peter and Mona believed in quality craftsmanship and simple but elegant design that enhanced the lives of families who lived in the homes they built with passionate attention to detail,” said son Matt Branagh. “They loved to participate in the process of helping a family realize their dream. They designed their homes and other projects with the whole community in mind, working enthusiastically and carefully to balance development with preservation and the natural beauty of Lamorinda. They left big shoes to fill but the Branagh Development legacy will continue. We do what is best for the people we serve. Timeless design. Better living. Enduring quality. Proven value with generations of integrity.”

The projects were at various stages of development, some were built, others under construction and

some in the proposal stage. Completed projects in Lafayette include the 21 well-appointed homes surrounded by preserved mature oaks and laurel trees in the Hidden Oaks development off of Olympic Boulevard, the Branagh’s own lovely home in Happy Valley, Springhill Manor homes and more. A number of residential projects have been completed in Moraga as well.

Under construction is an office building on Risa Road and Mt. Diablo in Lafayette, and a single family home on Happy Valley Road. The largest Branagh project is approved, but on hold – 55 spacious condominium units in the Woodbury located behind the Veterans Building on the west end of town, along with nearby EcoVive West – an almost 10,000 square foot office building nearby and two single family homes on Prado Way. Branagh was also part of a group that purchased the historic 20-acre Moraga Adobe property in Orinda.

Beyond Lamorinda, Branagh was involved in a luxury mixed use condominium project in Walnut Creek and had extensive interest in commercial and residential developments in Pleasanton.



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1043 Camino Pablo, Moraga
\$1,298,000



SOLD!
1099 Sanders Rd, Moraga
4BR/2BA, 1967± sq. ft., \$750,000



SOLD!
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83 MARIE PL
132 WHITTHORNE DR
8 LOUISE CT
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1218 RIMMER DR
1224 RIMMER DR
1234 RIMMER DR
133 SHUVEY DR
89 SHUVEY DR
70 SHUVEY DR
24 CARR DR
39 BUCKINGHAM DR
1076 SANDERS DR
24 FRETAS DR
4 WANDER DR
149 WALFORD DR
108 WALFORD DR
4 SPARROW CT
11 KEITLEN
8 PIMENTEL CT
133 WESTCHESTER
15 BRECK CT
830 AUGUSTA DR
1144 LARCH AVE
1160 LARCH AVE
1027 LARCH AVE | 1024 LARCH AVE
1148 LARCH AVE
1204 LARCH AVE
1054 LARCH AVE
1090 LARCH AVE
6 LARCH LN
1843 JOSEPH DR
9 FLUETI DR
479 MORAGA RD
454 MORAGA RD
137 PASCO DR, BLDG
1426 DE LA CRUZ
107 NATALIE DR
257 SANDRINGHAM
238 SANDRINGHAM
235 SANDRINGHAM
1072 COUNTRY CLUB
1080 COUNTRY CLUB
398 BIRCHWOOD DR
248 BIRCHWOOD DR
13 DONALD DR
1924 ASCOT DR
1939 ASCOT DR
1977 ASCOT DR
2047 ASCOT DR
1958 ASCOT DR
2043 ASCOT DR
2135 ASCOT DR #28 | 2135 ASCOT DR #17
2135 ASCOT DR #20
2135 ASCOT DR #27
2135 ASCOT DR #28
2087 ASCOT DR #224
2087 ASCOT DR #124
2091 ASCOT DR
1018 RIVER ROCK LN
94 G ELDER
1409 CAMINO PERAL
1403 CAMINO PERAL
1418 CAMINO PERAL
1465 CAMINO PERAL
1437 CAMINO PERAL
1414 CAMINO PERAL
1475 CAMINO PERAL
1515 A CAMINO PERAL
234 VALLEY GLEN
180 VALLEY GLEN
203 VISTA GLEN PL
950 OAK VISTA
545 PALO ALTO PL
7 EL CAMINO FLORES
20 JUNIPER WAY
20 ROSS DR
3 WOODFORD DR | 19021 SCHUESTER DR
3428 BICKERSTAFF
67 LA CRESTA
895 STONEGATE CIR
31 COLORADO
210 CARMEL
529 OAKSHIRE PL
1729 BELIEF VALLEY
2211 TICE VALLEY
1715 139TH ST
2277 STAR AVE
4255 WILSON LN
2 AGHAJEE LN
1018 RIVER ROCK LN
1919 IGNACIO VLY RD
309 CORTE GABRIEL
3545 BOYER CIRCLE
938 MOHR LN
3549 BADDING RD
3 ROBERTS CT
459 FERNWOOD DR
1798 ST ANDREWS DR |
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Check, Please for Hungry Hunter



Photo Cathy Tyson

First went the parking area, then the restaurant, now the Hungry Hunter Restaurant is officially demolished. The former home of prime rib and cheesecake at the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard

will soon be the home of a 23-unit townhome project by Signature Properties on the one and a half acre site. Five three-story Craftsman style buildings will surround a central common area for residents. C. Tyson

More Lafayette Civic News on Page A9

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Questions with home care?

DEAR VANESSA:

My uncle has been diagnosed with Parkinson's for over a year, he has a slow progression, beginning of stage two and is showing symptoms that include slight tremors, slow movement, mild memory loss and speech problems. He is beginning to become depressed. We are the only family he has and we live out of state. Recently he has been beginning to withdraw and become less social. He lives alone and does not have many friends around anymore. What can we do to help with his ability to continue to be social? Are there any programs that he can become involved with that will encourage activity and more interaction with others? What else can we do as a family to help with the issues that may arise with the progression of this disease? Are there any community resources available for patients with Parkinson's? I believe Parkinson's should not keep the affected away from society/social interactions, and therefore I am seeking guidance from you regarding this sensitive situation. Thank you for all of your help. EDEN

DEAR EDEN:

Parkinson's symptoms manifest differently in different patients. Many patients experience some symptoms and not others, and even the pace at which the disease worsens varies on an individual basis. We are most familiar with the motor symptoms as they are the most evident signs of the disease from the outside; these symptoms include tremors, slowness of movement, impaired balance, and rigidity (these can hamper coordinated and effortless use of the body). There is an increased awareness of the importance of other symptoms that are called "non-motor" symptoms which can have a major impact on people. These include cognitive impairment, ranging from mild memory difficulties to dementia, and mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety. Also common are sleep difficulties, loss or sense of smell, speech and swallowing problems, unexplained pains, drooling, and low blood pressure when standing. Your uncle's speech may have been perceived by others as hesitant, slow, quiet, garbled and repetitive. These speech problems may have contributed to problems with social interactions which could isolate him. Many people develop negative impressions about individuals with Parkinson's, based solely on how they communicate. These perceptions limit opportunities for social interaction and full participation in society for those with the disease, reducing their quality of life. Have you talked to him about speech therapy? This non-drug treatment has been viewed as an intervention that can greatly enhance speech and overall quality of life. Consult with your uncle's physician and others involved in his overall treatment plan

Exercise and physical therapy are the most frequently recommended non-drug treatments for Parkinson's. Exercise programs can help your uncle stay active and relatively limber, and improve his balance and motor coordination. Ask his doctor regarding muscle-strengthening exercises. Exercise may have positive effects on some of the non-motor symptoms by reducing sleep dysfunction and improving emotional well-being. Occupational therapy can help your uncle in a variety of tasks that impact daily living and quality of life, from physical movement to handwriting to adaptation of utensils and other household items. Psychological therapy and counseling can be helpful to treat depression and anxiety; these intrinsic symptoms should not be left untreated.

As much as possible, your uncle should get among other people, if only by taking walks in public places or going out to shop. This kind of interaction provides an important sense of connectedness. This helps to sustain self-esteem and to take your uncle's mind off the Parkinson's for a while. If your uncle enjoyed being around other people before his diagnosis, he will still enjoy this interaction even if it becomes more difficult. Given his situation, hiring an in-home caregiver is a good option at this point. A Parkinson's diagnosis is a life-changing event for everyone affected. A caregiver/companion can provide social interaction for him; he or she can be involved in providing assistance or treatment to improve your uncle's life and help with the tasks of daily life that may become difficult or impossible. A caregiver serves an invaluable role as the doctor's day-to-day eyes and ears as well.

Here's a website that will help you find a support group and relevant Web resources: <http://www.michaeljfox.org/>. The Parkinson's Institute in Sunnyvale is another relevant resource: <http://www.thepi.org/>. It is America's only independent non-profit organization that combines research and patient care for Parkinson's Disease under one roof. Avenidas' Parkinson's Support Group provides a supportive environment in which persons with Parkinson's can share some of the difficult and discouraging issues involved in living with Parkinson's (<http://www.avenidas.org/services/health-wellness/support-groups>).

Coping with Parkinson's is a challenge but it can be managed. Parkinson's can't be cured but its symptoms can be treated. There is hope! VANESSA

Got Questions & Answers about Home Care is written by Vanessa Valerio, RN, VP and COO for Patient Care at Home Care Orinda. If you would like more information about senior care and how home care can help, please email Vanessa Valerio at vanessav@careindeed.com, call her at (925) 317-3080 or visit their website at www.homecareorinda.com/.

Ask Vanessa

Thrive socially with Parkinson's...



Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, August 8, 7:00 pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, August 6, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Monday, August 13, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

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Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Police Report

Car burglary, 7/26/12 Apparently the Beatles tribute band at the Moraga Commons was not enough to keep bad guys at bay for a fellow who parked his car near the Commons for the weekly Thursday music fest. The car was parked near the skatepark on Moraga Road from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. A smashed passenger side window greeted the car owner; unfortunately his laptop, iPad and iPad keyboard did not greet him, since they were stolen.

Extortion, 7/26/12 An unknown male caller contacted an employee of Saint Mary's College and told her that he had abducted her brother and sister-in-law and was holding them hostage, and that he'd release them in exchange for \$2,000 sent via Western Union. Turns out both brother and sister-in-law were safe – one was at home and one at work. Police are investigating.

Parked with pot, 7/17/12 At the end of Donald Drive at Mulholland Ridge, police were on patrol just after 11 p.m. and found a car parked in this secluded locale. Three 18-year-old males were in the car, along with visible bottles of beer, and the lingering cologne of burnt marijuana. A bit of the evil weed was left in the center console. Driver and passengers were cited for possession of less than one ounce of marijuana and open container. Note: cops are well aware of all the "party" spots in town.

Slow learner, 7/22/12 A pick-up truck was stopped on Woodminster Drive for a broken brake light. Astute officer notices the smell of alcoholic beverage on the driver. He "fessed up" that he had enjoyed two beers approximately four hours prior to getting behind the wheel. The fellow was on probation for a prior DUI. He took a breathalyzer test and scored .044 – less than half of the threshold for impaired driving; he was cited and released.

Backpack with bong found at golf course, 7/18/12 Moraga Security personnel found three backpacks and a black plastic bag while looking for an errant golf ball. Surprise, surprise – the backpacks contained a glass bong, lighters, sunscreen, bug spray, plastic containers and candy. The goods were booked into evidence as found property. If you happen to have lost your backpack bong on the golf course, feel free to contact police to get it back.

Stolen or just rollin'? 7/18/12 A gentleman parked his car at the Orchard Supply Hardware store, and stepped inside for approximately 10 minutes. When the driver came back to the car, it had been moved about fifty feet south of the original parking place, stopping against a tree. Thankfully, no noticeable damage to people, other drivers, the errant vehicle, or the tree. After the reporting person notified an OSH manager, he put the car into park from drive. Driver insisted his car was stolen and could not have been left in gear...

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Planning Commission Approves Hetfield Subdivision

By Sophie Braccini

It took only six and a half years for The Wyro Company to get the conceptual design of the subdivision of the Hetfield Estate past the Moraga Planning Commission. The seven-lot plan that the Commission approved in mid-July is quite different than the original— the overall footprint and lot sizes are smaller, the impact on existing slides has been diminished and the size of the homes should not exceed 4,000 square feet. Early opponents of the project, the non-profit Preserve Lamorinda Open Space and some of the neighbors along Sanders Drive, said at the meeting that they could work with the plan. One of the participants described this project as a good example of give and take, leading to a compromise.

Staff opened the discussion at the July 16 meeting with a new conceptual plan for the 58.20-acre property located off Sanders Drive, along a creek. The property, which includes six large slides, offers a scenic landscape and is zoned MOSO, the Moraga Open Space Ordinance, which limits development on undevel-

oped lots and hill sides.

At an April meeting John Wyro, representing the owners, proposed six large lots that would have been able to accommodate large homes, under a Moraga rule that sizes a home in proportion to the land it occupies. Town staff offered up an alternative plan for eight smaller lots with smaller homes. The purpose of reducing the global footprint of the development was to avoid disturbing three slides that will need to be excavated and stabilized, a serious endeavor that will move tens of thousands of cubic yards of dirt. The new 7-lot plan proposed by staff should leave one of the remaining 3 impacted slides undisturbed.

"We will not oppose staff's plan," said Suzanne Jones on behalf of Preserve Lamorinda Open Space, a group that had been against the development of the Hetfield property.

Some of the neighbors expressed deep concern over having homes built across from their back yards. Others moved closer to a compromise solution. Bob Hellerbeck indicated that he

could support what he called a well thought-out, 7-home plan. "It would be my hope that the neighbors can work with Mr. Wyro to insure the least impact on the environment and a positive outcome for everybody," he said.

Wyro adopted a more conciliatory position as well. "I, too, appreciate the process," he said. "The comments that are made affect our thinking...In the spirit of moving this plan forward and making things happen, we are willing to accept staff's recommendation for 7 lots with a maximum house size, including garage, of 4,000 square feet."

The commissioners debated the opportunity to further limit the size of the homes, since one of the major concerns of the neighbors was that the new homes would be out of character with the rest of the neighborhood in which homes average 2,100 square feet. "What is the maximum size allowed for the homes on Sanders Dr. if the owners wanted to remodel?" asked Commissioner Jim Kline. Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read did a quick calculation using the

average size of the lots along that street and answered, "About 4,200 square feet." Kline responded, "Then I don't see why we should limit the size of the new homes below what the neighborhood is authorized to build."

This reasoning persuaded his colleagues. The Commission also limited the number of adjacent two-story homes in the development, and required the planting of native evergreen trees to provide winter screening of the new structures.

The last concern was that the site might suffer the same fate as the Vista Encinos project. That property was approved for subdivision for the Wyro Company, resold to a new developer that carved home pads and has since left the site disfigured and unattended. Staff proposed to add a yearly review of the project and obligation to take care of the landscaping until homes are built.

Next steps for the project include approval of the general development plan and precise development plan.

It's Hard to Get a New Commercial Sign in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

According to Nick Ghassem, the Town of Moraga has delayed for months the approval of his application for a new sign for the Valero gas station that sits at the southeast corner of the intersection of Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard. The Planning Commission approved the plans for the gas station renovation in February. The Design Review Board subsequently decided to allow him to display only one sign bearing his gas prices—one that is significantly smaller than that of any other gas station in town: 30 square feet, compared to an average of 37.50 square feet for existing signs. Ghassem appealed to the Planning Commission, which denied the ap-

peal July 16.

Moraga's previous Planning Director tried fruitlessly to amend the sign ordinance a few years ago. The Planning Commission decided nonetheless to rely on the only existing text in Moraga that defines how businesses can advertise their services.

"We are not a policy-making body," said Planning Commission Chair Stacia Levenfeld. "We are here to interpret the code."

"This process has taken four months, during which I could not do any business," said Ghassem, who planned to open the new gas station, complete with mini-mart and car wash, in late June.

Ghassem indicated that he was ready to do everything else that the Design Review Board demanded of him. "We will paint the canopy and building trim in a dark gray color rather than the standard Valero bright teal, to be in keeping with the semi-rural character of the town," he said. He also agreed to have his sign lit with an exterior light rather than an interior one for esthetics. But requiring him to build a new smaller sign was, in his view, a lot for the Board to ask.

Resident Gordon Nathan spoke in favor of the applicant. "If everybody else has multiple signs, it seems to me that it would be only fair to give him the same opportu-

nity to advertise in a very competitive market," he said. "In the name of fairness I hope that you would find it in your heart to cut him some slack."

Assistant Planner Kelly Suronen explained that the existing stations have signs that predate the sign ordinance and will have to follow the rules when they update their signs, but "this is an opportunity to bring signs into compliance and make them more semi-rural in character as the General Plan calls for," she said.

The Commissioners agreed and denied the appeal of the DRB decision. Decisions of the Planning Commission can be appealed to the Town Council.

Town Okays Sales Tax Measure for November Ballot

... continued from page A1

She points out benefits of a \$0.01 sales tax – giving Moraga local control of local revenue raised to fund road and storm drain repair and maintain other town services; money raised cannot be taken away by the State. The additional sales tax doesn't apply to groceries, prescription drugs, professional services or rent, so it shouldn't be a burden for those on a fixed income. The statewide sales tax is currently 8.25 percent; if passed, the new rate in Moraga will be 9.25 percent.

In addition, there are a number of stores in town that draw people from outside of the community, shoppers that drive on Moraga's roads – providing a way to share the cost. The ballot measure includes independent audits by a Citizen's Oversight Committee and the Audit and Finance Committee.

Neighborhood streets in this

bedroom community would be the lucky recipients of repair. Moraga Way and Moraga Road are classified as arterials – so they can receive State or Federal funds for repair. For example when 3.2 miles of Moraga Way was resurfaced in 2008, it was mostly paid for by a Surface Transportation grant of over \$1 million along with a grant from the California Integrated Waste Management Board – which incorporated bits of tires that would have gone to landfill in the rubberized asphalt.

Throughout the auditorium at Joaquin Moraga Middle School, audience members were entirely in favor of placing the measure on the ballot. "Our roads are falling apart now – we need to do something or we will end up like Orinda," said Richard Olsen. "Streets and storm drains desperately need an on-going source of revenue," said Dale Walwark.

Bill Snider, a Moraga resident and owner of two local stores, supports the measure wholeheartedly, he spoke of the importance, not only of maintaining the roads, but shopping Moraga first.

All the Town Council members in attendance eagerly chimed in with their support. "It's up to us – we're not going to get help from the County or Sacramento,"


said Mayor Mike Metcalf. "I think we should go for it with everything we've got."

(Editor's note: Reporter Sophie Braccini, who was unable to attend this meeting of the Town Council, was lauded by council members for her outstanding coverage of Moraga's infrastructure issues.)

Tentative language for the measure reads:

To keep local streets from falling into disrepair and maintain Town services, including: fixing potholes and cracks; maintaining neighborhood police patrols and response times; repairing neighborhood streets; maintaining recreation programs for youth and seniors; other general Town services, shall the Town of Moraga enact a one-cent sales tax for 20 years with authority to incur debt to accelerate infrastructure projects, with annual audits, citizens' oversight, no funds for Sacramento and all funds spent only for Moraga?

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Planning Commission Approves Development of SMC Rec Center

Neighbors remain concerned about light, noise

By Sophie Braccini

Saint Mary's College will celebrate its 150th anniversary during the coming school year. One of the projects planned for the sesquicentennial is the building of the new Joseph L. Alioto Recreation Center, and neighbors have not been shy about expressing concerns related to noise, parking, traffic, and the use of lights—especially with the recent completion of the new sports field. The Planning Commission approved the development permit July 2, and will require the College to remedy noise and lighting problems. Hearings on these issues will begin August 6.

The 60,000 square foot recreation center will be located in the northwest portion of the campus and will include a swim center and a baseball seating facility. Along with the recently constructed field, the athletic center and offices will create a recreation corridor and pedestrian plaza. The project will require the excavation of approximately 24,830 cubic yards of soil from an existing borrow pit and the grading and filling of the project site to match the elevation of Filippi Academic Hall.

Saint Mary's College (SMC) will eliminate 37 parking spaces on the south side of the baseball field spectator facility to allow construction of the building and proposes to convert 18,600 square feet of existing landscaping along the north side of St. Mary's Parkway into 62 (net) new parking spaces.

Public meetings have been held to discuss the project and neighbors have expressed concerns that the new construction will only exacerbate existing problems. In general, comments focused on light, glare and noise impacts generated by the evening operation of SMC's new field.

"The recently opened sports fields have caused significant inconvenience to my family and the proposed student recreation center will amplify the problems," wrote Joseph Drive resident Darrell King. "Due to our proximity to the sports fields, we are subject to the glare of the huge stadium lights and hear the full spectrum of noise coming from the field activities," which he said disturbs the sleep of his young children.

J.D. O'Connor, who makes his home on Fernwood Drive, expressed additional concerns with

the potential for more noise and traffic impacts. He reported that during the construction of the baseball field, work sometimes started as early as 5:30 a.m. "For some time I have wondered why it was so hard for the College to come to terms with the impact its practices and policies are having on the surrounding neighborhoods," wrote O'Connor in an email to the Town Manager. "I think we can safely say ... that the College's sentiments about being good neighbors have fallen way short."

Phil Arth, who also lives on Joseph Drive, added that his complaints have been ignored in the past. He suspects that the plan submitted now by SMC is only a first step and that the ultimate goal will include even more lights and noise. "I can foresee Saint Mary's coming back to the Town seeking lighting for the baseball field if not for all the athletic fields," he wrote. "Why go to the expense of constructing a baseball field with an attendant 950-seat grand style structure and not provide lighting?"

The outpouring of concern was such that the Town started discussions with campus officials regarding noise and lighting impacts of the sports field outside the context of the current project. The Planning Commission decided to give SMC the opportunity to remedy the problem on its own, and the College hired a lighting consultant who will produce a report before the August 6 meeting.

When the sports field was approved a year ago, the conditions of approval allowed lighting until 10 p.m. unless neighbors filed significant complaints—the hours could be cut back to 9 p.m.

"The residents of the Bluffs community are relieved that St. Mary's College (SMC) has recognized that the performance of the light fixtures on the intramural field has been undesirable," wrote Frank Comprelli after the College hired the consultant. "We concur with SMC that the original lighting design process may have been faulty and that adjustments need to be made, including equipment modifications, equipment additions, or perhaps a new design."

Other areas of concern have been addressed by the conditions set for the approval of the development. To mitigate a potential

increase in traffic SMC must contribute a fair share towards the construction of a roundabout or alternative control at the intersection of St. Mary's Road and Rheem Boulevard. The College will also have to develop a Special Event traffic and parking plan.

With regard to the construction's potential noise impacts, work is permitted only during the week between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., and on Saturday until September 1. Multiple conditions of approval regarding environmental aspects are addressed in documents that can be found on the Town's website at moraga.ca.us.

Harpham Decides One Term is Enough

Mendonca confirms she will seek re-election

Council Member Howard Harpham wrote in a recent email to reporter Sophie Braccini that he will not seek re-election to the Moraga Town Council, noting that "running, as opposed to serving, is a gauntlet for those who choose public service in retirement."

As of July 26, according to Town Clerk Marty McInturf, Harpham's Council colleagues Karen Mendonca and Mike Met-

calf, along with residents Seth Freeman and Phil Arth, have pulled nomination papers. Mendonca has declared her intent to run again.

The deadline to file nomination papers is August 10, but if one or more incumbents fail to file the deadline will be extended until August 15. Potential candidates should contact McInturf, (925) 888-7022.

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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, August 7, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, August 28, at 7:00 pm
Tuesday, August 14 cancelled
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August, 22 at 6:00 pm
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
City Hall, 22 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

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

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Orinda City Council Approves 10-Year Plan to Fix Roads and Drains

City hopes voters back sales tax increase

By Laurie Snyder

At its July 17 meeting, the Orinda City Council paved the way for Orindans to make their voices heard again regarding the City's aging infrastructure by adopting a 10-year "Roads and Drainage Repairs Plan" and authorizing staff to place a half-cent sales tax hike measure on the November ballot.

If voters approve the initiative, Council members say Orinda's 92.5 miles of paved public roads would gradually be restored from their current overall Pavement Condition Index (PCI) ranking of 49 (poor) to a good rating of 70. (Entirely new roads are assigned PCIs of 100.)

According to staff reports, the City's policy has been to focus its limited pavement rehabilitation dollars – about \$2.3 million per year out of a roughly \$10 million total City budget – on arterials, collectors and school routes because those streets have the most impact on residents. As a result, Orinda's 64.3 miles of non-private residential streets have dropped to an even lower PCI of 37 – poor or very poor condition.

The "City would need to spend an estimated \$52 million (in today's dollars) on pavement rehabilitation over a 10 year period," reads the staff report, in order "to bring the City's entire public road system (arterials, collectors, school routes and non-private residential roads)" up to the good PCI of 70.

Phase one would be supported by the proposed half-cent sales tax in-

crease with funding for phases two and three covered by \$19.8 million bond or parcel taxes in 2016 and 2020. The final phase would cover ongoing maintenance.

Although revenue generated by this tax increase "cannot be committed to a specific project or single purpose" since, by law, "a general sales tax must be placed in the General Fund and must be available for any and all municipal purposes," the staff report states that "this Council has expressed a desire that the money would be annually allocated for road and drainage infrastructure."

The new tax would be authorized for 10 years, would sunset in 2023, and "requires an annual audit of the sales tax, which must include the amount generated and all allocations made from the tax. Second, it requires the City Council to establish via res-

olution by April 1, 2013 a Citizens' Oversight Commission to review the expenditures or to assign these duties to an existing City Committee or Commission."

Currently, Orinda receives just one percent of its current 8.25 percent sales tax rate. In 2011, this amounted to roughly \$924,853. Staff estimates that, if voters agree to the tax hike, the additional revenue generated would rise from approximately \$540,000 in 2014 to \$702,000 in 2022.

As expected, Orinda Citizen Infrastructure Oversight Committee members spoke in support – as did residents who had previously voiced their opposition.

"I think we're moving in the right direction with the sales tax," said Vince Maiorana who also urged the Council to ensure that the ballot's wording will articulate that the fund-

ing generated will be used on roads in the worst shape.

Richard Colman again cautioned against overtaxing citizens and stated his preference that the ballot measure require two-thirds backing by citizens rather than the 50 percent simple majority being sought, but ultimately also expressed support. "I believe that fixing Orinda's roads is a high priority."

Council Member Victoria Smith prompted chuckles as she noted that Council may have witnessed a first – a meeting at which all residents presenting their thoughts did so in favor of the overarching infrastructure improvement strategy.

Vice Mayor Amy Worth and Council Member Dean Orr were chosen to draft the language that will be used for the November ballot measure.

Multi-Phase Approach to Fund Orinda's Road and Drain Repairs

Phase 1: 2012 Half-Cent Sales Tax Measure with 10-year sunset (appropriated annually by Orinda City Council from General Fund)

Phase 2: 2016 \$19.8 Million Bond or Parcel Tax (enabling Orinda to draw down \$4.95 million annually for four years if passed by two-thirds of voters)

Phase 3: 2020 \$19.8 Million Bond or Parcel Tax (enabling Orinda to draw down \$4.95 million annually for four years if passed by two-thirds of voters; raising Orinda's PCI to 70 by 2024)

Phase 4: 2022 Extension of Half-Cent Sales Tax for ongoing maintenance (appropriated annually by Orinda City Council from General Fund)

Source: City of Orinda 10 Year Roads and Drainage Repairs Plan (Draft)

Manzanita Bridge Replacement Project Moves Forward

By Laurie Snyder

Following a public hearing July 17 to consider the planned replacement of a crumbling bridge near the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) Orinda Water Treatment Plant, the Orinda City Council adopted the initiative's proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, and voted 4-0 to authorize staff to open the construction bidding process for the project (Council Member Sue Severson was absent).

Council members and staff recalled the amount of time and effort involved in getting this project approved by various review authorities. Public Works Director Chuck Swanson observed, "It's finally come to this.... I think we have everything ready to go."

Vice Mayor Amy Worth noted that the project is part of the larger effort to repair and upgrade all of California's bridges statewide.

Constructed over San Pablo Creek in 1937, Manzanita Bridge is now seismically unsafe with a deck located within a flood zone. When completed, the new structure will be 15 feet wider and 12 feet longer. According to the 170-page staff report, its replacement will "alleviate hydraulic, structural and alignment deficiencies, provide a five-foot higher elevation to avoid flooding and improve flood water flow, and provide a pedestrian sidewalk on one side of the bridge."

But, because this upgrade has such potential to harm wildlife – including the California red-legged frog, Alameda whipsnake, western pond turtle, dusky-footed woodrat, special status birds and bats, and the yellow-legged frog – planning has crept along at a banana slug's pace. Nearly 50 general and specific "Avoidance and Minimization Efforts" for just these animals alone have been spelled out over five pages of the "Manzanita Drive Bridge Replacement Project Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration," along with further measures to preserve trees and jurisdictional waters. Additionally, rock slope protection and landscaping are planned to limit erosion.

Work will initially involve construction of a one-lane bridge, asphalt concrete roadway, and grading and drainage – all temporary to provide a detour route in preparation for the removal of the existing bridge. In addition to creating a sturdier structure a chemical transfer line will be installed, for which the City will share the cost with the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration stipulates that "all work in the creek must be done in the 'dry months' with all construction in the creek between April 15 and October 15. The current estimated work duration for the entire project is 180 working days and will likely occur over a period of two years."

Swanson indicated that he anticipates bringing a recommended project bid back for Council's approval by mid-September.

City personnel have secured State grant funding to cover

\$2,479,198 of the project's estimated \$3,022,653 cost, which is expected to cover 1.25 acres of temporary and replacement bridge sites, roadways, and landscape areas.

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Council Sees Red?



Photo Ohlen Alexander

Buddy the Blood Drop and Marilyn Wright of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints urged attendees at the July 17 Orinda City Council meeting to support the second annual American Red Cross Interfaith Community Blood Drive. July donations from

80-plus locations will likely top 2011 results – the single largest drive in the Northern California Blood Services Region's history. The Interfaith Blood Drive was held after press time, July 31 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Moraga. *L.Snyder*

Smith and Glazer Seek to Serve

While a few of the incumbents in Lafayette and Moraga have decided not to run again, both Steve Glazer and Victoria Smith have expressed their intent to seek re-election to the Orinda City Council in the November General Election.

The deadline for nominations is August 10. In the event either of the incumbents fails to file nomination papers, the deadline will be extended until August 15. According to City Clerk Michele Olsen, only the incumbents had pulled papers as of July 26.

Potential candidates should contact Olsen at (925)253-4221.

OAC ARTS IN BLOOM...IN THE PARK 2012



Art fans of all ages turned out in droves for the Orinda Arts Council's annual Arts in Bloom Festival at the Orinda Community Park July 17. Scoping out displays by area artisans while snacking on goodies from Loard's, attendees also were treated to a concert-in-the-park by 2012 Orinda Idol finalists on a perfect midsummer's eve. Photo Ohlen Alexander



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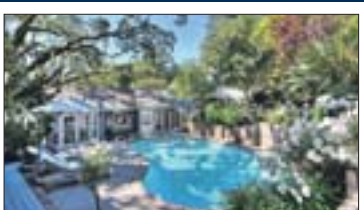
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Editor:

Best Use of Our Police?

This morning I was standing next to my car in the parking lot of Rancho Laguna Park around 9:20 in the morning and was talking to a young woman about her plans of an upcoming trip to Budapest. In the middle of our discussion a young policeman came up to us, rudely interrupting our conversation and asked me, "Sir, are you familiar with the Municipal Code?" I thought it was a trick question. Then I realized he was talking about off-leash hours. I answered him that dogs are allowed off leash before nine and after six. That's right, he said but you sir didn't put your dog on leash until 9:03AM. I didn't know how he would know that, but since I had my back to the parking lot around nine, I didn't see the police car driving in, he must have seen me putting the leash on my dog a few minutes late. I suggested that if we were all remiss just by a few minutes in observing our municipal codes, how great that would be. He advised me that he will not give me a ticket this time, however he asked me for all my personal information. I felt sorry for the young officer, we all get from time to time dumb assignments and I thought this was one of those examples. To send out two squad cars to hassle Moraga citizens in Rancho Laguna Park because they are three minutes late putting their dog on leash is a waste of police time.

Laszlo G. Bonnyay
Moraga

Editor:

- On Saturday, June 30th, I showed the Lafayette PD the exact location of a fire pit in the creek.
- There were also benches, garbage cans, bottles, shovels and tables in this location.

- On Monday, the park department cleaned up some of the mess but not the fire pit.
 - On July 14, there was a large fire in another area of the park. Captain Caravantes of the fire department told me that they were lucky that the fire did not get away from them. He called for assistance and a 12,000 gallon tanker came to help put out the fire. If that tanker could not stop the fire, they would not be able to stop it. There would not be enough water. A large tree was burned down.
 - After that fire, the park department pushed all the debris into the creek right on top of a tadpole habitat with live tadpoles.
 - So we have just increased the pollution in the creek. Currently, there is uncontrolled serious crime (lighting fires) being committed in the park.
- There were rusty paint cans floating in the creek along with old tennis balls, beer cans, cigarettes butts and more. So we have uncontrolled crime, plus pollution in the creek. I have been told by members of the park department that they do not have the manpower or money to protect the creek from these crimes or to stop the pollution. For example, car tires have been in the creek for a long time and never picked up. The fire pit is still there. While all this is going on, there is an agenda to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a BMX park which will increase the number of people that will be coming to this area.

I believe, if we increase the number of people to an area that currently cannot be properly patrolled by the police and is already polluted, we will only increase the crimes committed in this park and increase the pollution.

It is time to stop funding this boondoggle.
John Briggs
Lafayette

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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.

Orinda Academy Helps Clean Up Orinda Creeks

Submitted by Ron Graydon



Photo provided

Orinda Academy put its philosophy of Community Service into action March 23 when students and faculty members braved mud and

stinging plants to help out their community by participating in a cleanup of San Pablo Creek. Guided by the organization Friends of Orinda Creeks, students and teachers donned work gloves to pull out invasive species, gather trash, and spread mulch. Orinda Academy students broke into groups that removed non-native and invasive plants like ivy and poison oak, while another group raked, turned, and spread mulch on bare or muddy areas. Still another group picked up and bagged the usual litter of water bottles and napkins as well as bike parts, a commercial blender and several brand new, left-foot tennis shoes. Students were rewarded for their hard work with a pizza picnic in Orinda Community Park.

Little Hearts with a lot of Love

Kristi's Run for SHELTER Event Helps the Homeless

Submitted by Caroline Conner



Kristi's Run for SHELTER participants, from left: Gabby Sandberg, Nick Pearson, Ella Dunderdale, Kristi Conner (the event's founder), Kendall Keely, Luke Pearson, and Cole Hink. Photo Caroline Conner

Kristi's Run for SHELTER, a three-mile run organized by Kristi Conner, an incoming third-grader at Lafayette Elementary School who wanted to find a way to raise money for homeless families in the Bay Area, will begin at 9 a.m. August 19 at the Lafayette Reservoir. Helping Kristi in this endeavor are Ella Dunderdale, Cole Hink, Kendall Keely, Nick and Luke Pearson, and Gabby Sandberg, a group of 8-, 9- and 10-year-old friends also from

Lafayette Elementary School. They are running as a team with the common goal of raising \$10,000 for SHELTER Inc. (www.shelterinc.org), a non-profit dedicated to helping the homeless in Contra Costa County, serving over 5,500 people last year alone with over half of them being children.

Kristi's Run for SHELTER first began July 31, 2011 when then 7-year-old Conner ran three-miles around the Lafayette Reservoir and raised \$3,000 for SHELTER Inc. After seeing the homeless in San Francisco, Conner was moved to try and make an impact on the homeless in her community. Conner came up with the run because she had seen her parents support friends doing similar fundraising efforts for worthy causes. This summer Conner wanted to expand the Run by inviting her friends to join her. They jumped at the chance to help. Conner said, "If I can raise \$3,000 by myself, just think of how much more money we can raise for the homeless if my friends run, too. And it will be that much more fun to run with other kids!" The kids have been busy with training runs and are looking forward to the run and trying to reach their common fundraising goal. And their parents are excited about the feeling of accomplishment this will hopefully bring to their children. By learning generosity, empathy and compassion for others at such a young age, the parents hope their children will become more well-rounded, responsible, and caring teenagers and adults.

For more information about the run, visit www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/kristisrunforshelter/2012.

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Civic News Lafayette

Evidence Found at Site of Community Park Fire



Photo Cathy Tyson

It could have been much worse. Past playground equipment and kids playing soccer, surrounded by vegetation and dry grass, is a secluded glen tucked into the over 50-acre Lafayette Community Park. All that's left of a recent small fire are charred remains including beer cans, a broken Smirnoff bottle, cigarette butts, a condom package, toothpaste and candy wrappers spotted through the bits of ash last week.

This was just one of at least three small fires in the rugged natural section of the Burton Valley area park. At a recent City Council meeting Police Chief Eric Christensen speculated that local teens were responsible and, if apprehended, their parents would be liable. Mayor Carol Federighi added that the City is taking the fires seriously and would continue to monitor the area. C. Tyson

Jazz Camp is 'Where It's At' for Budding Musicians

By Cathy Tyson



Sullivan Fortner (piano) and Tom Scott (sax)

Photo Nathan Haese

Now in its 14th year, the Lafayette Summer Music Jazz Workshop at Stanley Middle School really is bigger and better than ever. This year, a record number of attendees – 202 student musicians, 47 teachers who are professional musicians, along with 25 volunteers will come together for the week in intensive day-long programs that culminate in a free concert for the community, parents and friends this Friday afternoon and evening, August 3. Because of the large number of camp attendees, the final concert starts at 3:30 p.m. and runs until 8:30 p.m. or later to accommodate the 24 – count 'em, combos that have practiced all week and will be performing in the school's multi-purpose room. Those coming straight from work can grab a casual dinner provided by Chef's Touch on site.

so Stanley Music Director Bob Athayde extended the invitation, and asked their teacher to select musicians that might be interested. Through a network of "amazing volunteers" they have transportation and a place to stay, said Julie Athayde. Also some college students from USC and San Jose State will be on a "work/study" scholarship.

She extends special appreciation to Cayford Burrell who does a fantastic job as Director of Operations, Jazz Curriculum Director Frank Sumares, "Idea Man" Mo Levich, Lafayette Rotary and countless donors and volunteers who make the program possible.

It's a whirlwind week: auditions started on Sunday, July 29 for combo placements, camp started at 9 a.m. the next day. Music campers age 12 and older were welcome and throughout this week will have full days of instruction, snacks and lunch provided by Chef's Touch Catering. Friday is the big finale concert, and on Saturday volunteers are back to clean up and return borrowed music stands and equipment to various schools. Then both Julie and Bob Athayde are off to another music camp at Stanford on Sunday.

With very generous support from the Generations in Jazz Foundation, this year 50 of the 200 students will receive scholarships – some will go to talented student musicians in Oakland and some to students from New Jersey, and beyond. A very talented New Jersey school happened to perform after the Stanley students at the Next Generation Jazz Festival in Monterey,

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Lynn's Top Five:

Time for a Mid-year Financial Planning Tune Up!

By Lynn Ballou, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Too hot to go outside? Have that nagging feeling that there's something you should be doing that you've forgotten? As we are lulled into that peaceful part of the summer, it's easy to see why at tax time we shake our heads and wonder "what was I thinking?!" about a few things that happened during the prior year. Now's the time to take stock of where you are and have some "ah ha!" moments so that you can avoid that tax season lament next year. This is a great time to dust off our financial goals and see if everything's okay and on track. Here are a few things you might want to check up on and ask yourself:

- 1) Am I on target with my income tax withholding?** Whether you have taxes taken out of a paycheck or you pay quarterly taxes, be sure you are withholding the right amount. Owing too much to the government at tax time can derail your budget and be costly in penalties and interest as well. Check in with your tax pro, or use your own talents with your favorite tax software, and see if you need to adjust withholdings or estimated taxes. If you are overpaying, think about reducing your future quarterly taxes so that you don't give the government an interest free loan
- 2) Am I saving enough?** Sometimes when the unexpected happens we tend to drift away from our savings goals. Whether money for investments is being taken out at work through retirement plan contributions such as 401(k)s or you are proactively investing with your after tax earnings, remind yourself of what you need to put away each year and break it down monthly. If you are behind in your goals this year, don't be discouraged, you still have a good chunk of the year left and instead think about the best ways to get caught up. For example, if you are turning 50 at any time this year, you'll qualify for higher contributions to IRAs, 401(k)s and other retirement plans. If you need to save on your own, you can set up automatic investment contributions to make it as painless as possible. Maybe you need to say no to some "wants" (or buy them less expensively) to free up some cash flow to get focused on your future. Don't let time drift by without action --- you'll regret it later on and it will be too late to get caught up.
- 3) When was the last time I chatted with my insurance agent?** You are busy --- and you get a big

intimidating renewal package in the mail from your casualty insurance company. If you are like me, the excitement of reading through and trying to understand it all wanes with time! And how many of us really understand all the line items on these policies anyway? And don't we often wonder if there are coverages we should have but don't? The cure is simple: have a chat with your insurance agent. If they don't reach out to you, then pick up the phone and call them. Ask for an explanation of each line item and talk about your situation and how your life, assets and circumstances have changed. Ask your agent what else they need to know to do a thorough job for you. Sometimes we are very private and reluctant to give our agent the full picture. But it's hard for them to do a great job for us if we don't share the details of our financial situation. If you feel that your agent is brushing you off, shop around for a better fit. You'll learn a lot in the process.

- 4) I will open my investment statements!** Volatility in the markets is here to stay in my opinion. The swooning we experienced this year after a great first quarter has been disheartening to many. But that's not a reason to stick your head in the sand and not look at how things are doing! Not only do you want to be realistic about the progress of your net worth, but you also can use this as a great time to think about your portfolio design and specific investment choices. Do they reflect your true risk tolerance and are they allocated in a fashion that you feel appropriate? If not, make educated changes, and if you need help, reach out to a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional or other trusted advisor to help you launch an in-depth review. Yes, it's an election year. Yes, we have a lot of uncertainty about tax laws, the Euro and a million other things. But tell me what period of history is exempt from worry --- yup, none. So open your statements, take a breath, take a peek, and move forward --- you will feel better by knowing what's going on.
- 5) Take stock of what you own and what may need replacing or updating in the next few years.** It amazes me how as humans we are always so surprised and offended when a major auto tune-up is needed, the roof needs to be replaced or something like the washing machine decides to die at what

is always an inopportune moment. Solution: plan ahead now! What should be on your radar of future unwelcome guest expenses? Once you know, you can plan. Start saving up for those costs and get the money into savings by setting aside money monthly in a "future expenses" account. If it's something big --- like a kitchen remodel --- and more than you can afford to save up for in advance, perhaps this is time to take advantage of very low interest rates and put a HELOC or other line of credit in place for future use. And while you are doing that, think about your current debts. Any that can or should be paid off because the rates are too high? Any loans that you can or should refinance to a better rate? Think it through, though, because a new 30 year loan at a lower rate when you only have, for example, 17 years to go on your current mortgage, may not save you money in the long run. So, run the numbers, and check it out --- but do check it out!

So, between summer reading, movies in the air conditioned theater, camping trips and the like, take advantage of those few quiet "in-between activities" moments to treat yourself to a mid-year financial check-up. Even if nothing needs adjusting, you'll be glad you did your homework and you'll be able to rid yourself of those nagging feelings that maybe something needs your attention. Then put it away, and go out there and get back to your summer fun!



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 and a separate entity. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

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New Church Building Will Also Support the Community



By Cathy Dausman



Shovels in hand, from left: Associate Minister Joshua Serano, Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer, and groundbreaking Master of Ceremonies Jack Pease. Chris Avant looks over the shoulders of Serano and Glazer. Photo Andy Scheck

Church members, dignitaries and guests gathered July 23 at Orinda's Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church for a groundbreaking ceremony for a new Community Support Building – the church's first new structure since the 1960s that will double as a post-disaster emergency center for Lamorinda. The inspiration for that use came after church members volunteered to aid Hurricane Katrina victims and found it difficult to access bathing facilities.

The Holy Shepherd building will accommodate temporary showers and have a generator.

"It's absolutely a wonderful program," said Moraga Orinda Fire District Chief Randy Bradley. Bradley applauded church members "who had the foresight to think about this kind of building." He hopes this will encourage more emergency responder/faith based group partnerships for the area.

"I join you in the excitement and pride in reaching this milestone," said Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer, who spoke about the power of community to achieve great things and the capacity to expand "not only physical space,

but faith, tolerance and love." Soon after honored guests hoisted golden shovels and posed for the camera a backhoe took its first bite into the soil. A slab will be poured and the walls will go up within the next few weeks.

The building will be LEED certified with evaporative water cooling system, indirect lighting, low-E glass, and ADA compliant bathrooms and will exceed state-mandated seismic requirements.

The structure will be built of ICF (Insulating Concrete Form) concrete with an R-50 insulation value (the highest resistance to heat flow), and will feature 60-foot steel trusses. The 7,200 square foot addition will hold offices for clergy and church board, a library, a chapel, and conference room, coffee kitchen, meeting hall and storage space.

Its construction should alleviate the now daily reconfiguring of existing church spaces, said Tom Gilbertson, project manager for the church. Chapel pews are movable. A three pane etched glass window depicting The Good Shepherd will be placed behind the altar. One exterior wall will feature a cubit-sized metal rod, 18-inches long.

Canyon Construction of Moraga is the general contractor. "There is nothing sweeter than to build in the community in which we live," said Chris Avant, Canyon Construction owner and president.

"This building's a long time coming," said Gilbertson. Eight years in the planning, the building should stand complete by mid-November.

Although the best is yet to come, church property manager Gerry Perry saw one immediate bonus: "We don't have to weed this [property] anymore!"

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Lamorinda Theatres Make Strides toward Digitalization

By Sophie Braccini



Wells Fargo gives \$10,000 to CAIFF, from left: Joan Edelson, Charlotte Holden, Derek Zemrak, Sherry Shahrooz, Edy Schwartz, Judi Kanter, Julie Novak, Vincent Townsend, Jay Ingram, and Steve Hitchcock Photo Sophie Braccini

Last December, Lamorinda Theatres—the New Rheem and Orinda Theatres—embarked on a quest for funding in order to convert to digital projection. They had a deadline of April 2012 to start the process. The owners of both theaters, the California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA) explained that major studios will stop distributing the traditional 35mm films by the end of this year; if CAIFFA wants to continue to offer block-busters movies, it has to purchase the equip-

ment at \$70,000 a machine, one for each of the seven screens.

Thanks to GLL Real Estate Partners, owners of Theatre Square and the walls of the theater, Orinda will have its three screens equipped in the fall. In Moraga, fundraising efforts have produced enough for one digital projector and CAIFFA President Derek Zemrak is confident that the continuing campaign will allow the Association to purchase a second one in time to benefit from some financial return from the movie studios.

"We are very grateful that GLL understood that they were making the right investment for their property by purchasing the digital equipment," said Zemrak. "The effort they have made in the Square to attract the right businesses is in the same line with having a cinema here that will continue to offer the newest releases. It makes good strategic sense." CAIFFA needs to have 50 percent of each theater equipped in order to get the virtual print fees back from the movie producers.

In Moraga, the fund raising effort conducted by Charlotte Holden, Judi Kanter, Edy Schwartz and Shari Simon has allowed CAIFFA to purchase its first digital projector that will be installed mid-August in the middle theater on the second floor. "It is an operational decision to install it there, because we usually move the movies upstairs," said Zemrak. "The next objective is to raise enough to equip the main theater."

On July 12, Steve Hitchcock, Territory Manager for Wells Fargo, gave a \$10,000 check to CAIFFA to contribute to the Digital fund. "We are here to help out the arts and the community," he said. "Most of our donations are focused on non-profits that help the underserved population, but a small portion goes toward the arts, and Derek has done a lot for the arts in Lamorinda."

The donation was secured by Judi Kanter who sits on the San Francisco's Symphony Board with Wells Fargo executives.

The August 25 Moraga Funfest—a family-friendly, all-day event featuring live performances, special screenings, activities and games—will be the next big fundraising event for the digital equipment. "The line-up includes Juice Box Heroes, the local Moraga dads who rock out to familiar tunes with parodied kid-friendly lyrics," said Stephanie Kusinski of Creative Acorns, "and the live band phenomenon will continue into the evening with an acoustic performance by Jay Whitlatch of Aspect, edgy and eclectic sounds from Dream Posse, Kiki Stack & Friends, and local rockers." The large empty lot next to the theater will house carnival games, kid friendly activities, crafts and famous food-trucks.

For details about the FunFest, visit MoragaFunFest.com. For more information about the theaters and to become a member, visit lamorindatheatres.com.

CAIFFA Names New Program Director

The California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA) named Joanne Foy as the new Program Director for the 15th Annual Festival. Foy is currently a board member for the Association and has been a key contributor to the success of all the annual festivals during the past 10 years. "Joanne has expressed her desire to get deeper into the daily operations leading up to the festival and has the Association's full support in her new and expanded duties" said Derek Zemrak, president and founder of CAIFFA.

"My passion for film festivals goes back to the start of Sundance when they screened films in the library. I look forward to taking CAIFF to the next level and making CAIFF known as the film festival to see the 'Best of Best' independent films from around the world. I have begun a strategic alliance with the Palm Springs ShortFest, the Cannes Film Festival and the Seattle International Film Festival," said Foy.

"I have worked with Joanne for the past two years since the festival came to the Rheem Theatre. Joanne has worked every job related to CAIFF, which brings an invaluable asset to our team," said Edy Schwartz, Community Liaison to the Rheem Theatre. "Along with her experience, she has her passion for Independent Film and her knowledge of the importance of community involvement for the success of the festival."

For more information pertaining to the next festival, scheduled November 8-11, visit the California Independent Film Festival website at www.caiff.org.

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For a list of Finalists visit www.OrindaArtsCouncil.org

See More of the 2012 Winners & Finalists This Fall!

- 8/25 Orinda Theatre Square Performance
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Hearing Loss is Prevalent, and No Laughing Matter

By Laurie Snyder



Lafayette resident Marilyn Finn understands the challenges of hearing loss. Photo provided

tural changes that occur due to aging or injury, and even as a side effect of a medication.

Lafayette resident Marilyn Finn's hearing impairment was first diagnosed 60 years ago, at age 14. "My youngest brother already had a significant loss due to a high fever as an infant. Bob and I were given lip reading lessons in high school. Later, I lost a significant amount of hearing with the birth of each child."

Finn developed what is often referred to as "nerve deafness" – a profound sensorineural hearing loss in both ears. Following total knee replacement surgery in February, she says, "I noticed very loud tinnitus noises almost immediately, louder than I have experienced before, waking me up in the night. During the day, I was constantly missing things that I should have

been able to hear." Following additional testing, she learned that she had lost an additional 30 percent of her residual hearing with the surgery. "I was told that many older people do experience a loss in hearing with surgery and that it comes back in many cases within six months to a year. I am not there yet."

Certain drugs can also permanently or temporarily damage hearing. According to various sources, there are currently more than 200 over-the-counter and prescription medications available which may be ototoxic, including certain antibiotics and the beta blocker Propranolol. The first sign of a problem may be tinnitus – a ringing in the ears.

In speaking to a study underway since 1986, researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital,

Harvard and Vanderbilt universities, and the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, also pointed to the regular use of the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) ibuprofen, as well as acetaminophen and aspirin. Reported in "Pain Medications Tied to Hearing Loss in Men" – a March 2010 "Arthritis Today" article, researchers observed that, for men 50 and younger, regular acetaminophen use "nearly doubled the likelihood of hearing loss. Regular aspirin use increased the chances of hearing loss by 50 percent, and regular NSAID use made hearing loss 61 percent more likely."

How Do I Know if I Have a Hearing Loss?

"If you have a hearing loss, sounds may seem loud enough, but not clear.

... continued on page B5

"Can You Hear Me Now?" is amusing when parodied in a cell phone commercial, but there's nothing funny when an audiologist asks that question in real life, especially when the answer is "no." Hearing loss is a genuine problem in our community and across the nation, and it is not just a result of aging.

According to the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), while one out of three people aged

65 or older have hearing problems, approximately two to three children out of every 1,000 are hard of hearing or deaf. Roughly 36 million adult Americans report "some degree of hearing loss" with 60 percent of those "either in the work force or in educational settings."

So prevalent, it is now the third most common physical condition after arthritis and heart disease, and can be caused by exposure to noise, infection or earwax buildup, struc-

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Flowers, Fauna and Firearms

Submitted by Josephine (Jo) Mele

I've heard travel broadens the mind and that there's always something to be learned. Several years ago we went to Bolivia to visit friends. What did I learn on that trip? My husband can sleep through anything; and getting home alive can be the best part of any vacation.

After staying two relaxing weeks visiting our friends in Cochabamba, Bolivia, my husband and I caught an international flight to Miami, which required a connection in Santa Cruz. Our friends stressed that there was only one Miami flight daily and that we shouldn't stay in Santa Cruz any longer than necessary as it was the cocaine and crime capital of Bolivia.

From the air, Santa Cruz looked normal enough. We collected our luggage, and headed for customs. We were the only ones there: no other passengers, no customs agent, just the two of us. I went to the airline counter and asked where the customs agent was. The woman shrugged her shoulders. "When will he return?" I asked hopefully. I got a big smile: "Manana."

Even my husband knew that much Spanish. No customs agent meant no Miami flight for us today. We watched the plane being loaded and the doors closing. We called our friends who helped make reservations for us at a small hotel hidden behind a high whitewashed wall covered with purple Bougainvillea. It looked safe enough. We spent the day reading and napping, and after dinner fell asleep to the scent of flowers coming through the louvered window.

I woke to the sounds of heavy footsteps stomping down the concrete stairs outside our room; the clock glowed 2 a.m. I could see through the slightly opened window and noticed several pair of boots stopped on the lit stairwell. It seemed their owners were listening to something.

They began to whisper. Trying to translate when you're half-asleep and hyperventilating is very difficult, but I managed to hear a deep voice say, "Quickly, follow me and for God's sake be quiet!" Then more running, then quiet. My heart was beating so loudly I was sure everyone in the hotel could hear it, except my husband.

I got out of bed, waited for more sounds and peered through the peep hole in the door. I saw nothing! I knew I would have an indentation around my eye I was pressing so hard. When my feet felt like ice on the tile floor I went back to bed and to my still-snoring husband.

I ran through the possibilities: college kids having a good time, drunks trying to find their room, a police raid on known drug lords, robbers looking for the stranded American tourists. I vowed to stay alert until sunrise.

I was jolted awake by what sounded like, Pop, pop, pop! I shook my snoring husband and whispered that I thought I heard gunshots. He sat up, looked around, and said, "I don't hear anything." Then he rolled over and told me to go back to sleep because we had an early flight. Yeah, right! How could I sleep? How could anyone sleep?

I thought about calling the desk and asking if anyone had heard shots or been killed lately but didn't know the Spanish word for gunshots. I decided to take a shower, get dressed, repack my suitcase, and wait for daylight. A shower seemed the most sensible thing to do at least if they shot me I would be clean and dressed.

A few hours later, I was surprised to find no blood, no chalk outline, and no dead body in the hallway. Believe me I looked everywhere. I decided not to ask anyone at the desk if there had been a problem and carefully eyed everyone's footwear. The clerk asked if we had a good rest; I almost wept. I wanted to leave immediately. My husband opted for breakfast since we had the time and the hotel food was great. Men really are from Mars!

When we finally deplaned in Miami and passed through U.S. Customs, I was happy to see those serious-looking, uniformed agents. "How was your trip?" one agent asked.

"I'm happy to be home," I said with a smile - and my brain silently added - alive. No wonder the Pope kisses the ground on his return to Rome. Wonder if he's ever been to Bolivia?

Jo Mele is a Moraga resident. The opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

Vacation Stories Good and Bad

Lamorinda Weekly wants to hear about your memorable vacations - exhilarating or exhausting. Send your unique stories (500 words or less) and trip pics to cathy.d@lamorindaweekly.com by August 9 and prepare yourself for a different type of vacation experience - one you can read about!

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The Watch

By Derek Zemrak



Jonah Hill, Ben Stiller, Richard Ayoade and Vince Vaughn star in *The Watch*.

Photos: Melinda Sue Gordon - TM & © 2012 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation.

Does a great cast guarantee a funny movie?

Everyone could use a strong comedy and enjoy a few laughs at the movie theatre after the tragic shooting on July 20 in Aurora, Colorado. Our hearts go out to the victims, their families and the community.

From the outside, *The Watch* has all the elements to become this century's *Ghostbusters* with funny guys Ben Stiller (*Meet the Fockers*), Vince Vaughn (*Dodgeball*) and Jonah Hill (*Superbad*) forming a neighborhood watch team after a bizarre killing at their local Costco. Yes, they do end up battling a gooey alien.

The Watch is the perfect example, how-

ever, of excess not being the guarantee of a funny movie.

Yes, you might laugh at the Costco jokes but what could have been a humorous PG13 comedy like *Ghostbusters*, *The Watch* pushed the envelope with sexual and potty-oriented jokes to earn an R rating. What else can be expected from co-writer Seth Rogen (*Superbad*, *Pineapple Express*)?

Does adding more sugar to the cake make it taste better? Unfortunately, *The Watch* had potential but falls short.

Derek Zemrak is a Film Critic, Film Producer and Founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news.



A neighborhood skater kid (Johnny Pemberton, center) easily gets the better of his hapless interrogators, Evan (Ben Stiller) and Franklin (Jonah Hill).

TEEN SCENE

Consider This: Prestige and Education

By Steven Zhou

What do these institutions of higher learning have in common?

Prestige.

Admittance at many four-year campuses ordains an unexplainable, automatic aura of respect and power. When asked what school one is attending next year, "the chosen" are proud to pronounce their prestigious university, while basking in the laudatory responses and imminent comments of "Wow! You must be super smart!"

On the opposite end of the spectrum are those who are not applauded upon proclaiming admission to a two-year community college such as local Diablo Valley College. A friend who will be attending DVC endured "oh, I see" to "good job...I guess" to "at least you are staying in school."

Judging intelligence by the college attended is so deeply ingrained in our culture that, verbalized or not, it affects our perception of accomplishment.

"Community college is looked down upon because stereotypically, the students have lower GPAs or are considered to have been too lazy to apply to any 'real colleges,'" said Miramonte senior Desiree C. "However, community college is actually a more logical choice for several reasons."

Such benefits include the lower price tag. "The general education is cheaper at only \$48 per unit," continues Desiree, "plus the flexibility to work part time while attending classes is a huge plus." Other DVC-bound seniors point to other selling points as motives for choosing a community college: the lower levels of stress-inducing pressure, the proximity to home, and the ease of transferring to a four-year university when ready.

Yet a general comment heard from numerous Lamorinda interviewees was that stuck between the choice of going to a four-year college, that doesn't fit their goals or to a community college, they would accept anything

to avoid the stigma that comes with being a "community college student."

"Looking down on community colleges is just plain dumb," said a Lafayette resident. Senior Kristin C. believes "teens should not go to their safety school. If they really want to study at a specific school, they should work to get in by attending a community college first. Being offered admission by only one university or wanting to move out of the house are not reasons to choose a safety school."

Jonathan D. also defends the community college system. "On a job application, community college attendance is not as impressive as a four-year university degree, even though community colleges do a great job of teaching. People need to be evaluated on their talents and capabilities, not the school they attended." Although prestigious universities claim many exceptional and famous alumni, four-year institutions are not prerequisites to guaranteed achievement.

Seventy-six percent of Lamorinda seniors will attend four-year universities. As we congratulate all our graduates, let's remember that it's not the college that determines success; it's our determination to be successful.

Is the pedigreed diploma the definition of accomplishment?

Consider this: Steve Jobs!

The administrator and host for Express Yourself! Teen Radio, Steven Zhou graduated in June from Miramonte and will be attending Pepperdine University on a scholarship this fall.

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

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

Lafayette Students' Artwork among Caldecott Tunnel's Winning Designs

By Cathy Dausman



Springhill student Chaya Tong holds her winning Caldecott Tunnel Fourth Bore Medallion design
Photo Cathy Dausman

Two Lafayette students – Chaya Tong, age 8, of Springhill Elementary School, and Daniell McCann, age 16, of Acalanes High School – will have their artwork permanently displayed over the entrance to the new Caldecott Tunnel as winners in the Caldecott Fourth Bore Project Medallion Design competition.

The competition, which was open to students in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, announced six winners July 23. Tong and McCann joined Pleasant Hill Middle School's Penelope Watson as winners in Contra Costa County. The three Alameda County winners were 8-year-old Nuala Gorshow and 11-year-old Aoife Gorshow of Thornhill Elementary School, and Ellina Bartholomew Couts, age 10, of Frank Otis Elementary School.

Six hexagonal three-foot medallions, three on each side of the tunnel, will be installed. More than 300 elementary, middle, and high school students from throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties submitted their de-

sign proposals. Three judges from each county evaluated entries from their respective counties.

An online survey eliminated all but 70 entries; judges then chose the top six. The Art Deco theme was chosen by an online public survey earlier this year. Contra Costa Transportation Authority Chair, and Lafayette City Council member, Don Tatzin said winning entries also reflected similar 'subthemes' of Mount Diablo, nature and the sun.

Tong, who recently completed third grade in Mrs. Vann's class, is already an old pro at art competitions. Three winning bookmark designs for Lafayette Library and Learning Center decorate her family's wall. "I like to draw," she said. Tong and her mother Moona Nandi researched Art Deco before submitting her simple black and white design of rolling green hills, bright sun, and plants. She plans to "make all my friends drive through 'my tunnel'" when her medallion is installed.

Caldecott Fourth Bore Public Information Officer Ivy Morrison

said an awards ceremony is scheduled for the fall at Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

The Caldecott Fourth Bore construction is a partnership between the

Federal Highway Administration, the California Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation

Commission, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, and the

Alameda County Transportation Commission. The new tunnel is scheduled to open late 2013. To view the winning designs, visit www.caldecott-tunnel.org/medallion.

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Local Students Awarded Scholarships

The Northern California Scholarship Foundation recently awarded Courtney Laurel Tran of Miramonte High School with a \$32,000 scholarship. Tran will receive \$8,000 per year for four years. Additionally, Moraga native Amy Louise Holm, an honor student at Western Washington University, was awarded a total of \$3,000 in scholarships for the upcoming aca-

demical year, and Moraga senior, Annie Ye, was named winner of the Siemens Merit Scholarship in June. A Campolindo High School student, Ye was one of 150 students in 25 states who won the scholarship, which provides each student with \$4,000 for tuition over the course of their college years, given in installments of \$1,000 per academic year.

Hearing Loss is Prevalent, and No Laughing Matter

... continued from page B3

People may seem to be mumbling or talking too quickly," writes Donna S. Wayner, Ph.D., in "An Overview of Hearing Loss – Its Signs, Causes, Implications and Solutions." Wayner goes on to say that you "may hear some people's voices better than others" or "find that facing the speaker helps you to hear better." Another sign is having difficulty making out snippets of conversation in the midst of background noise.

If you think you or a loved one may have a hearing problem, talk to your physician about arranging for an appointment with an otolaryngologist (ear, nose and throat doctor) or an audiologist. You may be required to sign a waiver if you choose to go to an audiologist first before seeing your doctor, due to current FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) regulations.

Your doctor may be able to determine whether or not you have a problem and its likely cause; however, if your physician does not find

a cause and fails to refer you for further testing, make the appointment yourself. Research your options and have an audiogram done as part of a full evaluation by a qualified hearing professional.

HAAA issues this sound piece of advice: "If anyone, doctor or someone else, tells you that nothing can be done about your hearing loss and you should just learn to live with it, seek another opinion."

The following resources offer more information about hearing loss:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: www.asha.org/

Hearing Loss Association of America: www.hearingloss.org/

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A Young Woman's Endeavor: Creating a New Dental Office

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Charmen Brummer and Dr. Julia Hoang

Photo Sophie Braccini

Julia Hoang set an objective for herself as she finished dental school: buy someone's practice within four years. But life sometimes takes a different path. After working for a few years in someone else's practice in Orinda, she could not find anyone ready to retire—the usual way to become independent. So Hoang chose a slightly harder path: starting a new practice from scratch in nearby Moraga, with cutting edge equip-

ment, and the energy and enthusiasm of a brave young heart.

"It seems that dentists are delaying their retirement plans and I could not find someone in Lamorinda ready to pass the baton," says Hoang. Deciding to create a new practice became the only alternative. "It's something you can't do alone. In order to succeed you need to have the right team," says the dentist.

One of the first people who

helped her is Charmen Brummer, a dentistry equipment specialist who's navigated the route to creating a new practice with other dentists all over the Bay Area. "We have been working together for a year and a half," says Brummer, "even before Julia had a space."

"I didn't know where to even start. Charmen put together my broker, my attorney and even helped work with Wells Fargo Bank," adds Hoang. "I couldn't have done it by myself; you need a support system."

Hoang chose to lease 1,600 square feet in the business condo building across from the Rheem Valley Shopping Center, at 533 Moraga Road. Her space on the second floor opens onto a balcony, the rooms are large and full of light, and when in the chair, all you see are trees on the Moraga hills and the sky.

"What is nice when you open a new practice is that you start fresh and you can choose cutting edge equipment. You don't have to rely on old technology," says Hoang. "My purpose is to give the most information possible to my clients, educate them and make the best decisions together."

Hoang believes that attitudes and thoughts about dentistry have changed a lot over the last 20 years. "Nowadays we know that what's best for the tooth is your natural material, so we cut much less," she says. "The patients have also changed. They are more aware of their health and want to be involved in the decision making, so I have installed equipment that will help to visualize and educate." When the patient is in the chair, he/she can see their own X-ray on a large screen to their left, and Hoang explains how to read it.

"I also have a small intra-oral camera the size of a pen that can take pictures and films inside the mouth," she adds. "It has a dual purpose: it gives easy to read information to the patient, and it also shines fluorescent light on a tooth to reveal the structure and possible decay."

Other state-of-the-art equipment

includes a Panorex X-Ray machine that can capture whole mouth images with no film put in the mouth, in one sitting. "It has a very low radiation level, it gives the dentist complete information, and is very convenient for children, special need patients and of course everyone else," says Hoang.

While she installs the new office and trains her assistants, Hoang continues to work part-time in Petaluma. "The banks work with doctors with dental-specific loans, but they like to see a doctor who maintains a current practice," says Hoang. "It is a lot of work, but it is worth it."

Hoang is checking every aspect of her new space, from the latex-free environment to the paperless office and the Mojave Dry Vacuum. "Julia (Hoang) has invested a little more money in this device that is used to create jets and suction for the patient's mouth," says Brummer. According to Hoang, a normal water vacuum wastes thousands of gallons of water just to create the vacuum. The device she chose uses only a fraction of that.

"Dr. Julia is a fabulous, trustworthy, meticulous dentist," says Orinda resident Ksenija Olmer adding that she will drive to Moraga to continue seeing her. Hoang says she takes all types of insurance and that she's maintained her network of referrals with specialists in the area. She started taking new appointments at the end of July. She can be reached at (925) 247-5343.

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

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business briefs

Carol Tomlinson Named Moraga Employee of the Month for July



Carol Tomlinson (center) is pictured with McCaulou's store managers Tracy Per Lee (left) and Carol Evans, Rotary President Frank May and Moraga Chamber of Commerce Vice President Kevin Reneau.

Photo Cynthia Lammi

Carol Tomlinson, a popular sales associate at McCaulou's, has been named the Moraga Employee of the Month for July. Tomlinson is the fifth recipient of the monthly employee award, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Moraga and the Chamber of Commerce. Other winners have included Al Pyne of Moraga Royale, Mike Hamiche of Safeway, Ana Trinidad of Total Clean and Inge Olson of CVS Drug Store. Tomlinson oversees the women's and lingerie department and maintains inventory and markdowns as well as serving her many customers. She has served the store's clients since 2004 and consistently has attracted praise and loyalty from her customers. "Carol gives a lot of tender, loving care to our customers, whether a sale is involved or not, and they recognize that she makes them her top priority," said McCaulou's store manager Carol Evans. "She is such a friendly, personable individual and is always upbeat. A lot of customers stop in to say 'hi' to her, even if they are not shopping." In winning the award, the Rotary and Chamber will award Tomlinson a \$50 gift card to Safeway as well as a \$50 gift certificate to Ristorante Amoroma in Moraga. Tomlinson will be presented with her award and gift cards at the Moraga Rotary luncheon on Tuesday, August 21.

Fashion-Forward for Fall 1048 Brown Avenue, Lafayette

Lafayette Glamorous Boutique and Mary Kay are presenting a fashion show to benefit Shepherd's Gate, a Women's Services Organization Saturday, August 25. The show will present the newest styles for the upcoming season, including casual, resort and formal wear. Contra Costa County's most innovative buyers and stylists have created beautiful looks that are runway inspired, yet practically suited for real living. Raffle donations and proceeds from the event will go directly to help women in the community. For more information, call Susan Lenser at (925) 691-4333.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Social Media Workshop on Internet Security. Wednesday, August 15 at 8 a.m. at the Library and Learning Center, guest speaker Evan Corstophine will present "Internet Security and Password Protection." Register at LafayetteChamber.org.

Free Summer Concert Series on the Plaza: Friday, August 3, from 3 to 9 p.m. Jazz Camp Concert presented by Stanley Middle School; Friday, August 10 from 6 to 8 p.m. The Floorshakers; Friday, August 17 from 6 to 8 p.m. Mixed Nuts; and Friday, August 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. Night Fever.

Save the date for the Annual Art & Wine Festival: Saturday and Sunday, September 15 and 16. Sponsorships available: Contact the Chamber for more information.

Moraga

Chamber BBQ at the Moraga Commons from 6 to 9 p.m. August 28.

Orinda

Chamber Ribbon Cutting Event for Care Indeed Thursday, August 9 at 4 p.m., 61 Moraga Way #9, Orinda. For information, call Dee Bustos or Amrita Sanyal at (925) 317-3080.

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St. Giles' New Priest Explores Modern Issues and Looks to the Future

By Cathy Dausman



Reverend Justin Cannon

Photo Cathy Dausman

The Reverend Justin Cannon is easy to spot in a crowd. The 6'6" bearded redhead with glasses and the Roman collar is the newest leader of St. Giles Episcopal Church, a "church without walls" which meets in the chapel of Saint Mary's College in Moraga, as it has since 1982. Cannon says he would like to "encourage people to explore modern issues," while remaining a respectful guest of the college. Religious inclusivity is important to him.

"For me it has to do with being faithful to Christ," he says, quoting Matthew 11:28: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Cannon is the author of *The Bible, Christianity & Homosexuality*, and editor of *Homosexuality in the Orthodox Church and Sanctified*. He founded Holy Hikes, a Bay Area eco-ministry supported by St. Giles parish, and Inclusive Orthodoxy, an

organization that "seeks a revitalization of faith grounded in the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ – a message of love, a proclamation of hope for the oppressed, an invitation towards all regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation," according to its website.

Asked whether the homosexual community feels ostracized by mainline churches, Cannon replied: "I cannot speak for the LGBT community, so I'm not sure. One of the hurdles LGBT people face is that so many feel they have to choose between their faith and who they know themselves to be. Since we cannot change who we are at our core, so many LGBT people give up on faith, which is quite sad. My call is before all to seek and serve Christ and my neighbor... gay or straight."

He says a local congregation like St. Giles can help by offering "a community where anyone can come – re-

gardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or disability."

Technically "Father Justin," as he prefers to be called, is a part-time "Priest-in-Charge," beginning his first post-ordination call to serve a community through the Contra Costa Deanery of the Episcopal Church. Cannon is a 2009 graduate of Berkeley's Church Divinity School of the Pacific. His assignment to St. Giles began June 16, and will last three years, at which time the parishioners have the option to extend his stay. "St. Giles has asked for my presence, and Saint Mary's has welcomed me," Cannon says. Although he has no official school role, St. Giles' rents an office space on campus and Cannon has been invited to make himself available to students when they return, in collaboration with campus ministry. He will be introduced at the school's fall Eucharist service.

Reverend Salvatore Ragusa, Chaplain for Saint Mary's calls Cannon "young, energetic, and passionate about the gospel of Jesus Christ." He says the college has been "blessed with wonderful and pastoral priests from St. Giles and Father Justin will build on those relationships."

Ragusa and Cannon have already spoken about finding ways to bring their faith communities together for prayer and service. Ragusa even hopes to "have time to plan our homilies together." The largely Lamorinda-based St. Giles congregation numbers 30 to 40 members on any given Sunday. Cannon says it already "feels like a family."

"While our core tenants unite us as Christians," Cannon says "the saddest thing is that we isolate our-

selves." Cannon is already practicing inclusivity, reaching out to potential congregants by updating the St. Giles website and adding Twitter and Facebook accounts to attract 20- and 30-

something aged congregants, whom he calls "the church's future."

For information, you can visit the St. Giles' website at www.stgiles-moraga.org

Local Authors

Lafayette Author Pens Exciting & Informative Summer Read

By Cristina Kim



Author Linda Riebel Photo provided

"I didn't set out to hobnob with hairy apes. Well, maybe some of my past boyfriends might qualify. I just set out to help a colleague. Given what I do for a living, that happens a lot, but it's usually more tame and civilized." So begins Linda Riebel's novel *The Lie-Catcher in the Primate House*, written under the nom de plume Lindsay Crane. Full of intrigue and excitement, Riebel's thriller about endangered animal smuggling is also an intimate portrait of her heroine and narrator, Julie Heidebrecht. An effervescently energetic voice, Dr. Julie Heidebrecht is a UC Berkeley professor of psychology who is a specialist on human deception and a veritable "lie-catcher."

Capable of reading people's body language, physical ticks and voice patterns, Julie, as she insists everyone call her, becomes part of a government task force that aims to stop poachers and smugglers from bringing animals into the United States. Although she is at first hesitant to become involved, Julie becomes a passionate animal and human rights advocate as she learns more and more about wild

animal trafficking. Traveling around the world, from the Bay Area to Uganda, Julie learns, and subsequently informs readers, about psychology, primates, the international illicit animal trade, and even the Lord's Resistance Army's Joseph Kony.

As a professor and professional the novel's heroine admits, "I also have a passion for precision...I drill students about this, insisting that they must use real evidence." Riebel, a Lafayette resident, takes after her protagonist or vice versa. The local author, who has advanced degrees in human psychology and has traveled extensively around the world helping to rescue wildlife and habitats, clearly draws from her own life and experiences in the novel. It thus comes to no surprise that due to her own professional training or perhaps as a nod to her heroine's exacting personality, Riebel culminates the novel with a note that directs readers to journal articles on deception studies and information on how to help save endangered species.

The Lie-Catcher in the Primate House is a thoroughly researched and plausible, if fantastical, novel that provides readers with real information regarding the state of the world's

endangered animals. Although both academics and professionals have a reputation for dry and pedantic writing, Riebel's writing is quick, witty and reflective of the chaotic pace of life. Her personal passion for endangered animals and the preservation of natural habitats resonates from each page in a persuasive manner that inspires readers to think about wild animal conservation in a new way. For instance, Riebel invites readers to ques-

tion what truly differentiates animals, particularly primates, from humans and therein frames ongoing debates on animal testing and habitat conservation in a new, thought provoking, light.

At its heart, *The Lie-Catcher in the Primate House* is undeniably a conservation novel that aptly positions a local, Bay Area heroine within a web of international intrigue and mystery to show the need for wild animal conservation. For those already interested in such issues this Lindsay Crane novel will undeniably resonate and for those readers who have not really thought about conservation, the novel provides an entertaining introduction into some of the dangers facing exotic animals today.

As August and summer weather finally arrive in Lamorinda, *The Lie-Catcher in the Primate House* is the perfect summer read. The loveable sleuth, exciting plot, and informative prose will keep your fingers turning the pages until the very end. The novel is currently available at Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com as both a paperback and in electronic form.



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A Tiny Pursuit: Fostering Hummingbirds

By Cathy Dausman

Imagine a bird's nest small as a hockey puck. It is made from feathers, lichen, fibers and spider webbing, which allows the nest to "grow" with its occupants. Imagine baby birds the size of kidney beans. Now imagine keeping those tiny, fragile beings alive by feeding them every 20 minutes, dawn to dusk, from a syringe with a needle smaller than angel hair pasta.

That is the challenge one Lamorinda area volunteer has faced the past 24 years while raising Anna's hummingbirds from home. The hummingbird foster mom, who asked not to be named, says it is a "very big privilege" raising these spry little hyperactive birds, even with all the work it entails. It is something "anyone can do as long as they learn how to do it," she says. Fostering baby birds has opened up a new knowledge and awareness for her. But she warns that while adult hummingbirds may

be a garden novelty and are certainly fascinating to watch, and the babies may look cute and sweet, they are not pets.

Keeping native wildlife is against the law without a Department of Fish and Game permit. Lindsay Wildlife Museum keeps

the permit; its animal foster parents do the work. Each bird is numbered and dated upon receipt, and each has a different personality. The tiniest babies nest on a heating pad. Feeding them sometimes involves crushing fruit flies and doling out specialized food

and medicine. Slightly older birds, or fledges, are placed inside a bird cage draped with window screen mesh to prevent their fragile wings from being damaged when they brush the cage bars. Older, stronger birds are transferred to a standard 4 x 4 x 8 outdoor aviary.

After a week in the cage, flying ever faster and more furiously, they are finally released. For us Lamorindans, that means

Anna's hummingbirds will be found in our gardens. If you happen upon a grounded bird, don't play with it, feed it or give it water. And leave it alone if it's not in obvious danger.

To learn how to become a Lindsay Wildlife Museum volunteer, attend the next free orientation August 11 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. at 1931 First Avenue, Walnut Creek or visit wildlifemuseum.org/get-involved/.



Hummingbird in outdoor aviary

Photos Cathy Dausman



Two baby hummingbirds keep each other company

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Moraga Ranch Swim-A-Thon a Huge Success



Swim-A-Thon coordinators and coaches, from left: Darlene Bennett, Swim-A-Thon Coordinator, Adam Streeter, MRSC Senior Assistant Coach, Dave Brown, MRSC Head Coach, John Schonder, Richmond Sailfish Head Coach, Gabriela Campo, Swim-A-Thon Coordinator

Photos provided

More than 145 swimmers ages 5 to 15 participated in this year's Moraga Ranch Swim Club Swim-A-Thon July 20, raising more than \$13,000 to benefit the Richmond Sailfish – a non-profit USA swim team that works out at the Richmond Plunge. Moraga Ranch Swim Club Senior Assistant Coach Adam Streeter suggested helping the fellow swim team members in Richmond, who were in need of swim equipment including starting blocks, bumpers, pace clocks and kickboards. The Swim-A-Thon also raised money to support swimmers by offering grants to help offset swim team registration fees and other costs.

"In Moraga, kids have goggles, swim suits, and can afford the cost of swim team," said Swim-A-Thon Coordinator Darlene Bennett. "Adam thought this was a good cause because it's good all around for the kids' self-esteem, personal health, and can even help support the Learn-to-Swim program [in Richmond], offering a way for kids to learn how to swim. He thought it was a fantastic way to get involved and help them."

Participants, including several swimmers from the Richmond Sailfish team, swam laps and collected pledges. Several swimmers also manned lemonade stands at Safeway and Loard's Ice Cream to raise additional money. - J. Wake



New Delhi Worth a Visit



Roos Pal (Terzetto Cuisine) reports that she and husband PJ, who makes a very nice naan (flatbread), were up for 48 hours preparing for the grand opening of New Delhi Bistro. The tables filled quickly at lunch time on opening day.
Photo Andy Scheck

Roos Pal opened New Delhi Bistro to a crowd last week. If you've ever noshed on delicately spiced Samosas or creamy Chicken Tikka Masala while wandering through the Moraga Farmers' Market, you've tasted Pal's food and you'll find many of the menu items familiar.

New Delhi Bistro is light and welcoming. Don't be fooled by the lunch meat that fills the first half of the display case—although you can certainly get a decent sandwich if that's what you're looking for, the real treat-

ures lie just beyond.

The menu features traditional Indian dishes such as Chana Daal (lentils), Aloo Gobi (potatoes and cauliflower), and Chicken Korma (cooked in yoghurt sauce). There are only about a dozen items available right now, but Pal plans to expand her offerings over the next few weeks to include tandoori plates, vegetable pakoras, and a selection of desserts.

Don't miss the home-style Baigan Bhurta (often spelled baingan bharta), a delightful, robust dish made with smoky,

roasted eggplant. Lamb Kofta Saag, dense lamb meatballs in a bright, flavorful spinach sauce is also quite tasty; you can get a similar dish with chicken—it's the spinach that will have you wiping your plate with a piece of fragrant naan.

Heat-seekers may not be satisfied – much of the food lacks the fire that some lovers of Indian cuisine look for; spice is applied with a deft but light hand. There's an upside to that: my kids polished off the Chicken Tikka Masala in short order and clamored for more.

The question asked at my house when we try a new restaurant's food or a new recipe is always, "Do we want to eat this again?" Since we are looking forward to sampling the full menu at New Delhi Bistro, the answer is definitely "yes!" - L. Borrowman

New Delhi Bistro

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(The website, www.Newdelhibistro.com, is still under construction)

Crazy for Cookies!

By Susie Iventosch

The way I see it, you can never have too many cookie recipes in your goodie arsenal!

This recipe was created by Debby Dyar, partner of Moon Dance Baking Company, when her children were young. Back then, she loved to cook for swim team and other kid activities, but now enjoys cooking for a much larger audience such as the many customers of Diablo Foods, Whole Foods and Lunardi's, where her cookies are locally featured.

While she was in Florence, Italy nearly 20 years ago, she visited The American Bakery, a shop where Italian cookies were adapted to suit American tastes.

"This gave me the idea to try making my own biscotti adapted to American tastes," Dyar said.

This passion of hers resulted in a baking business, Splendido Biscotti, which she started and operated from 1993 to 2003.

Meanwhile, her current business partner and Lafayette resident, Phil Chernin, worked for La Tempesta, the first American company to put chocolate on biscotti.

"This was sacrilege to Italians," Chernin pointed out.

Ultimately, Dyar sold Splendido and in 2005 she teamed up

with Chernin to form Moon Dance Baking Company. Together, they market a host of different cookies from biscotti and butter, sugar and chocolate chip cookies to cookie brittle (oh my, is this ever good ... kind of like a very thin shortbread-buttery and crispy and amazing!), and even red and black licorice!

Chernin, who is also Chairman of Lafayette's Open Space Committee and was on the new library fundraising committee, says Dyar is brilliant at developing new cookie flavors, and I have to agree as Chocolate-dipped Butter Mint, Hazelnut Chocolate Chip and Meyer Lemon come to mind.

To Dyar, the key is loading up on the chocolate chips. "We pride ourselves on the amount of chocolate chips we use," she noted.

Which is why you'll find that this recipe calls for more than twice the amount of chocolate chips a normal recipe uses. (I used combination of milk, bitter-sweet and semi-sweet chips.)

This is a double-double recipe and will make approximately 90 or so normal-sized cookies. I cut it in half and made almost 4 dozen cookies.



Moon Dance Baking Co. Chocolate Chip Cookies

Photo Susie Iventosch

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 pound melted butter
- 1 Tbsp + 1 tsp vanilla
- 4 eggs (room temp.)
- 4 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 4 1/2 oz. packs of semi sweet chocolate chips + 1 cup of chips.

DIRECTIONS

Cream butter and sugars. Add vanilla and eggs. Sift together dry ingredients and add to butter mixture. Add chocolate chips and mix thoroughly. Place by level ice cream scoops full on greased cookie sheet. Bake 12-14 minutes at 325 degrees. Alternately, for a "taller cookie" you can form three balls (each approximately a half of heaping tablespoon size) of dough in your hands and stack on top of each other. Press the dough down about halfway. Bake at 325 for 14-16 minutes.

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

Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com.

These recipe is available on our web site www.lamorindaweekly.com

If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977.



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OTHER ... continued

Returning Veterans of America, a freshly founded Bay Area veterans group organized by recently returning combat veterans, is honored to announce a two-part series of Welcome Home events held on from 10am to 5pm Saturday August 11 and 25 at the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way. The all-day transition social and lunch is open to all returning veterans and their families. For more info, call (415) 852-1642.

Native Trees presented by Greenbelt Alliance. Join Ken Lavin as he shares interesting tidbits and stories about our trees Sunday, August 12 from 1 to 2:30pm in the Arts and Science Discovery Center at the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Free. For more info, visit www.lllcf.org or call (925) 283-6513.

Digital Camera How-to's: Archiving Photos and Choosing a Digital Camera from 11am to 12:30pm August 14 in the Lafayette Community Center Elderberry Room, 500 St.

Mary's Road, Lafayette. This class will teach you how to back up your photos for posterity. You will also learn what to look for when purchasing a digital camera. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members. For more info or to sign up, call (925) 284-5050.

Internet Security & Password Protection Workshop. The workshop will be on August 15 starting at 8am at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette.

Lafayette Physical Therapy is hav-

ing free community lectures. Running Injuries and Prevention lecture with Lisa Gibson, PT, August 28 from 7 to 8 pm, 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite B110, Lafayette. For more info or to make reservations call (925) 284-6150 or visit www.lafayettePT.com.

Campolindo sophomore Sam Larson is collecting new and gently used items for a fall Back to School Give-away shop benefitting disadvantaged families of neighboring San Pablo. Clothing, shoes, accessories, jump ropes, soccer and other sports

balls, toys, and sports equipment for ages pre-school to adult are welcomed. Drop off on the porch at 243 Paseo del Rio, Moraga before Sept. 15, or call (925) 284-8142 for pick up. Thank you for your support!

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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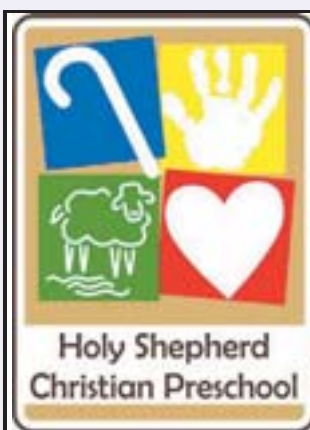


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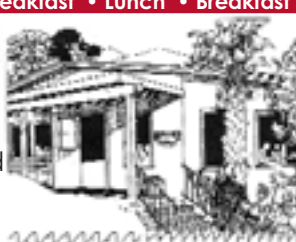
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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Lafayette Swim Conference's First Championship

... continued from page A1



2012 Lafayette Swim Conference Individual & Relay record Breakers.

Photos Kevin Nguyen

Springbrook also won the most improved times, with 70 percent of their performances earning personal records for their athletes. Rancho Colorados finished a close second with 67 percent.

Outstanding awards were awarded to Rancho Colorados Boys 6 & Under 100 Medley Relay featuring Sammy Lee, Paul Kuhner, Jon Mendelsohn and Jacob Boseli as well as LMYA's Girls 11-12 Medley Relay team of Goldie Zhu, Becca Buck, Sydney Smith and Sophia Cavalli.

The first day of the LSC opened with a parade around the pool, not unlike the Olympic opening ceremony, which began the Conference with two emphases: community and excellence.

To celebrate, the coaching staff of Sun Valley Swim team was dressed in monochrome full-body suits to represent, as athlete-parent Leah MacKay explained, the color of the Olympic rings.

MacKay commented that the newly formed league has been exciting. "Everyone has had 'pop' [personal best] times," MacKay said. "The younger kids and older ones-- they swim together and support each other."

The founding of the LSC has brought what is already a strong swimming community even closer. Sun Valley swim coach Warren Wallace said that his athletes have more fun competing against those they know from school.

When LMYA's Becca Buck, age 12, broke the record for the 50 yard breaststroke, she bettered a record from 2000 set by Lauren Beaudreau who is now a coach at Springbrook.

"That just shows that swimmers stick around," said Jon Wheeler, meet director at Rancho Colorados.

The last event of the LSC was the 200 Free Relay for Boys 15-18. The previous record was set in 1982. Luke Inserra, Ryan Connolly, Jake Seroy and Nick Inserra of Springbrook bettered the record by seconds.

The quartet has been swimming together since they were five. "We all started together. We wanted to go out with a bang," said Luke.

LSC Championship Meet

Combined Team Scores

1. Springbrook Swim Team..... 5,310.50 points
2. Rancho Colorados Swim Team..... 2,938.50 points
3. Sun Valley Rays Swim Team..... 2,936.5 points
4. LMYA... 2,725.5 points
5. Oakwood AC.... 622

Top Finishers:

- Olivia Williams (6 & Under): Springbrook.... 72 points
- Joey Bettencourt (6 & Under): Springbrook....72 points
- Caitlin Smith (age 8) LYMA... 72
- Jack Wood (age 8) Springbrook...72
- Jewel Roemer (age 10) Sun Valley Rays Swim Team.... 72
- Jack Larsen (age 10) Springbrook...69
- Murphy Baker (age 10) Rancho Colorados Swim Team... 69
- Becca Buck (age 12) LMYA... 72
- Jacob Parker (age 12) Rancho Colorados ... 69
- Jane Wood (age 14) Springbrook... 69
- Eric Strand (age 14) Sun Valley Rays... 69
- Brady Aiello (age 14) Springbrook...69
- Meghan Hill (age 17) Springbrook ... 67
- Ryan Connolly (age 18) Springbrook...69

Improved/Pop Times:

- Springbrook: 70%
- Rancho Colorados: 67%
- LMYA: 64%
- Sun Valley Rays: 61%
- Oakwood: 60%



Newly Hairless Springbrook Coach Hogs Spotlight

By Kaaren Brickman as told to Cathy Dausman

Joe Natina is proud of his luxurious head of hair, but he willingly sacrificed it Sunday night. The Springbrook Swim Club head coach announced that he would let his team give him a buzz cut if eight of his swimmers qualified to compete in the upcoming Contra Costa County Swim meet August 11 and 12. The Springbrook "Hogs" posted their "countdown to the buzz cut" each time a swimmer qualified during last weekend's Lafayette Swim Conference Championships at the Heaston Aquatic Center at Acalanes High School. In the end, Springbrook had 15 new County Qualifiers after the LSC Championship.

Natina is no stranger to swimming. He grew up in a swimming family and has been competing since age four. He was ranked the fastest 10-year-old in the United States. Natina was an All American throughout high school and competed in the Junior and Senior Nationals. He later swam for Diablo Valley College, and became 200 freestyle and 200 IM state champion. Natina also swam two years at UC Santa Barbara.

Natina's coaching career began at age 14, when he worked with his younger teammates. He coached several years at Alamo's Round Hill Country Club and was Assistant Coach at Meadow Swim & Tennis. Natina became Springbrook's Head Coach two years ago.

For 13 years, Natina has taught learn-to-swim programs. Last fall, he started a Fall Swim Program at Springbrook called the Razorbacks. "He has been an incredible asset to the Springbrook Swim Team, leading swimmers to countless personal as well as team victories," said Kaaren Brickman, board member for Springbrook Pool. Brickman says the haircut ceremony "was hilarious" to watch.



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SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS

Summer Basketball Champions

Submitted by John Merrion



Front row, from left: Kyle Parnell, Deven Kadlic, Adam Machajewski, Isaiah Coleman; middle row: Declan Merrion, Bernard Adri, Jack Berrien; back row: John Merrion (coach), Sam Meyers, Carl Kadlic (coach) Photo provided

The Lafayette Parks and Recreation 5/6 grade boys' basketball champions claimed the title on July 26th at Stanley Middle School.

MCC Hosts Tennis Tournament

Submitted by John Greenblatt

Moraga Country Club will hold the 25th Annual \$25,000 Heritage Bank of Commerce Tennis Championships on August 7-12. The true open event attracts many local NorCal Open, collegiate and satellite professionals.

Formerly called the Stead Open, the event was not held last year due to major renovations

at the Country Club. Net proceeds are donated to the Fore our Schools Foundation, which has raised over \$100K for the Moraga Education Foundation.

"We are delighted to partner with Moraga Country Club in this event and hope for a long term relationship," said Patrick Artiaga, founding member of Fore our Schools.

Sherman Divers at Zone Championships

Submitted by Steve Sherman



From Left: Morgan, Asher, Harrison, Steve, Miranda, Brenna Photo provided

Sherman Divers competed at the Zone Championships, qualifying by placing in the top 15 at the Regional meet in June. Asher Lichtig of Lafayette qualified for the national meet for his age group on the 3m springboard.

Brenna Cetrone (Orinda):
1m: finished 23rd of 44
3m: finished 15th of 41

Morgan Matranga (Moraga)
1m: finished 20th of 41
PF: finished 30th of 35

Miranda Gold (Lafayette)
1m: finished 37th of 40
3m: finished 38th of 40

Asher Lichtig (Lafayette)
1m: finished 15th of 31
3m: finished 10th of 33 (National Qualifier)

Lamorinda United Earn Second Place

Submitted by Matt Hansen



Top Row, from left: Shane Nelson, Owen Hansen, Brett Donat, Kyle Jasper, Kellen Clancy, coach Roberto Zambrano; bottom row: Vince Bianchina, Jack Daugherty, Sean Donovan, Erik Voss, Luke Miles; not pictured: Jack Muren, Kai Digrande, Mark McCurdy, Nicolas Bamont Photo provided

The Lamorinda United U10 boys' Navy came out firing in their first tournament of the year. They earned a second place finish in the San Ramon Valley Classic July 21-22. United was tested in their opening game against Brentwood/Oakley but came out victorious with a 2-1 final. In the afternoon match United breezed to a 7-1 win over the host team San Ramon Valley.

On day two of the tournament, United faced

a tough opponent in Santa Rosa. After going down 1-0 United battled back to win the game 4-2. The undefeated United faced Brentwood/Oakley in the championship match. After going down 3-0 in the first half, United bounced back to net three goals of their own. Deadlocked at 3-3 after regulation time the game then went into sudden death overtime where the Brentwood striker converted on a breakaway.

Master's Water Polo Club Honored

Submitted by Jeannie Johnson



From left, back row: Deborah Simmons, Ann Sharf, Maureen O'Toole-Purcell, Jeannie Johnson, Michele McCarthy, Meredith Rosenthal, Jane Allen, Carole Kay Lynn, Ann Bundy and Susan Anderson-Taylor; Helena Singelstad, Jennie White, Patty Trenkwalder, Shawwna Costanza and Yanira Vazquez-Azpiri Photo Ohlen Alexander

The Soda Moms women's water polo club was recently honored with a dedication by the Orinda City Council for its achievements in International and National competition this year. Members of this team won a silver medal in the Women's 50+ division at the FINA Worlds Masters Championship, held in Ric-

cione, Italy in June. The club also captured the gold medal in the Women's 50+ division and the bronze medal in the 40+ division at the US Masters Nationals Championship, held in Irvine in July. The team practices at the Soda Aquatic Center in Moraga and is coached by Andrew Morris.

Lamorinda United Compete in Europe

Submitted by Benson Chan



The Lamorinda Soccer Club United 95 U16 girls prepare to leave from the San Francisco International Airport. Front, from left: Kristen Chan, Annie Loose, Regan Gong; middle row: Rachel Lindenauer, Carly Moran, Stehania Munoz, Sarah Mills, Jordan Rowley, Courtney Attard, Caroline Runco; Lauren Petite, Julia Reshke, Megan Reid, Emily Orwig, Lindsay Wilson, Jane Fessenden, Mali Tehaney, Katherine Tottle Photo provided

As the world's best athletes come together to compete against each other in the 2012 Summer Olympics, the Lamorinda Soccer Club's United 95 U16 girls experienced their first taste of international competition at the Gothia Cup (Sweden) on July 16-21 and the Football Festival G17 Elite Cup (Denmark) on July 25-29.

Out of 80 teams in the G17 bracket, Lamorinda finished as quarterfinalists in the final round of eight at the Gothia Cup. The following week, Lamorinda captured the championship at the Elite Cup. The Lamorinda Soccer Club was the sole American team competing at the Football Festival tournament.

Olympian Works with Local Swimmers

Submitted by Hector Chao



Kim Vandenberg shares her Olympic medal with LMVA swimmers. Photo provided

With the 2012 Summer Olympics just around the corner, local swimmers were busy getting ready for end of season competitions. Kim Vandenberg, a 2008 Olympic bronze medalist and UCLA All-American, recently joined LMVA's coaches to help team members prepare for the inaugural Lafayette Swim Conference Championship and the upcoming Contra Costa County Swim Meet.

"This community was incredibly supportive during my swimming career; it is my turn

to support future generations of Lamorinda Olympians," Vandenberg said.

Head Coach Marc Cavallero believes the Moraga native's experience will inspire local swimmers to swim with confidence. "We are lucky to add Kim to a group that includes U.S. National and NCAA champion Hayley Peirsol and former Cal men's swim team member and school record holder Peter Davis. I'm confident their big meet experience will serve our team well."

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 11 Wednesday, August 1, 2012

Fix it or Fill it?

Pool Remodeling (or Removal) Can Go Swimmably

By Cathy Dausman

Pools, glorious pools! Perhaps nothing is more alluring to the California homeowner. After all, the Golden State has a long standing reputation for abundant sunshine. And what could be more leisurely than lounging poolside in your own backyard?

Recent records from the Contra Costa County Assessor's Office show 5,430 residential pools in Lamorinda. In Lafayette alone, approximately one out of every four homes has a pool. But when your Lamorinda pool shows a ring around its collar, or starts to leak from advanced age, it may be time to consider remodeling.

Whether homeowners, home buyers and home sellers perceive a pool as an asset or a liability often boils down to the classic realtor comment: location, location, location.

Diane Reilly of Alain Pinel Realtors estimates that approximately one third of her relocation clients look for the "California lifestyle" and have a pool for their kids on their house-hunting wish list. But "Northern California weather is not like Southern California weather," Reilly says, meaning Bay Area weather simply means less use. She says the need for a pool changes even within Lamorinda, where Orinda's hilly topography makes it more difficult to lay out a pool site than either Lafayette or Moraga.

A residential pool doesn't change its appraisal value, says Reilly, and unless the pool is poorly placed on the lot it won't greatly affect resale value. However, given the right home with the right pool, "I might have to arm wrestle you for it," she says with a laugh.

New owners of a home with a pool are quickly confronted with whether to



Current landscaping in the Thomas backyard shows little signs of the pool they removed when they bought their house.

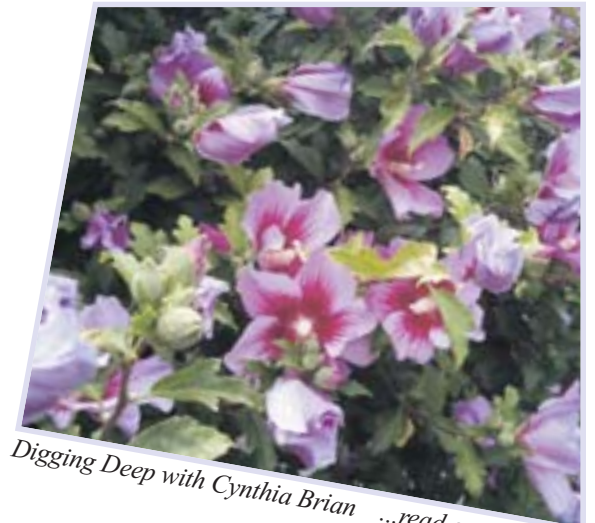
The Thomas family removed their aging Moraga pool when they bought their house.

Photos courtesy the Thomas family

keep it or remove it, leave it "as is," or remodel it. Pool removal can be done quickly and easily with good access to the yard, says Ann Thomas of Moraga. "Filling in [removing] our pool was the first thing we did when we purchased our home four years ago."

Thomas and her husband grew up with backyard pools, but she says having pre-school aged children made it an easy decision to take theirs out, due to maintenance and liability issues.

...continued on page D3



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D4



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SOLD

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City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	19	\$595,000	\$2,700,000
MORAGA	17	\$400,000	\$1,396,000
ORINDA	14	\$320,000	\$1,870,000

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

- 3190 Bavarian Lane, \$990,000, 4 Bdrms, 2334 SqFt, 1976 YrBl, 7-3-12
955 Diablo Drive, \$596,500, 3 Bdrms, 1589 SqFt, 1946 YrBl, 7-2-12;
Previous Sale: \$890,000, 04-11-06
3408 Echo Springs Road, \$2,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 4867 SqFt, 2001 YrBl, 6-25-12;
Previous Sale: \$2,700,000, 08-13-10
3447 Echo Springs Road, \$1,692,000, 5 Bdrms, 3683 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$26,500, 06-23-75
8 Hawks Hill Court, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 3315 SqFt, 2006 YrBl, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$595,000, 04-30-04
1126 Hilltop Drive, \$1,830,000, 3 Bdrms, 3414 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 6-26-12
145 Jordan Place, \$1,535,000, 4 Bdrms, 3213 SqFt, 2007 YrBl, 6-26-12
1071 Laurel Drive, \$655,000, 3 Bdrms, 1278 SqFt, 1951 YrBl, 6-27-12
1975 Marion Court, \$1,770,000, 5 Bdrms, 3679 SqFt, 2001 YrBl, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 07-31-01
1328 Martino Road, \$2,150,000, 5 Bdrms, 4839 SqFt, 2000 YrBl, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$2,500,000, 06-03-05
3360 Mcgraw Lane, \$1,495,000, 5 Bdrms, 2520 SqFt, 1954 YrBl, 6-26-12
1001 Pine Lane, \$888,000, 3 Bdrms, 2554 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$463,500, 12-29-92
1493 Rancho View Drive, \$1,660,000, 3 Bdrms, 2413 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 6-29-12
3500 Silver Springs Road, \$1,599,000, 3 Bdrms, 2299 SqFt, 1957 YrBl, 6-27-12;
Previous Sale: \$495,000, 01-26-96
3497 St. Marys Road, \$955,000, 3 Bdrms, 1683 SqFt, 1971 YrBl, 6-27-12;
Previous Sale: \$625,000, 08-11-11
3332 Sweet Drive, \$595,000, 4 Bdrms, 1495 SqFt, 1953 YrBl, 6-26-12
740 Upper Pond Court, \$875,000, 5 Bdrms, 2735 SqFt, 1996 YrBl, 7-6-12;
Previous Sale: \$593,000, 07-02-99
909 Webb Lane, \$1,010,000, 3 Bdrms, 2437 SqFt, 1939 YrBl, 6-21-12
3387 Woodview Drive, \$800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2694 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 6-28-12

MORAGA

- 720 Augusta Drive, \$615,000, 2 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1974 YrBl, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$745,000, 07-10-06
737 Augusta Drive, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2531 SqFt, 1974 YrBl, 7-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,341,000, 06-20-07
220 Calle La Montana, \$820,000, 3 Bdrms, 1775 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 7-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$395,000, 11-08-91
3985 Campolindo Drive, \$945,000, 4 Bdrms, 2260 SqFt, 1972 YrBl, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$804,000, 05-01-03
4 Dolores Court, \$435,000, 2 Bdrms, 1845 SqFt, 1984 YrBl, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$320,000, 04-07-99
354 Donald Drive, \$806,000, 4 Bdrms, 1978 SqFt, 1970 YrBl, 6-28-12

... continued on page D5

Fix it or Fill it?

...continued from page D1



Peter and Nancy Bennett of Moraga resurfaced their backyard pool with fiberglass nine years ago.



Photos courtesy of the Bennett family

Their priority was a grassy play space for her children. Besides, she says, when her children swim they want to be with friends, so her family joined a swim club. Their backyard pool was gone in three days, says Thomas.

Orinda Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu says, "Most pool demolitions are done in such a way that you can landscape that area afterwards, but not build a house."

Lack of information on residential pool removal led one south Bay Area man to create his own support website several years ago. His website (www.poolremoval.net) discusses demolition costs, how to find the right contractor and whether realtors consider a pool an asset or a liability. The short answer: "It depends. . . ."

Moraga residents Nancy and Peter Bennett remodeled their backyard pool in 2003. They first considered a Pebble Tec finish but settled on a fiberglass refinish.

"They come in and rough up your existing plaster," Nancy Bennett says, "then they fiberglass over it...two coats, I think. It took a week and we have been pleased with it. The water always looks light blue as they said it would." The work came with a 10-year warranty.

Bennett recently heard that pool manufacturers suggest re-plastering every seven years, "but I don't know anyone out here who has done anything to a pool until at least 25 years," she says.

Backyard in-ground pools, whether vinyl, fiberglass, or concrete all require servicing, ideally once a week, says Darlene Simpson of All Pool Services. She says there is "definitely a cost" to keeping a pool and that "maintenance is a year 'round thing." Simpson says chemistry is the key to keeping a pool looking and performing well, and cites one customer's 35-year-old pool that has not even been re-plastered. "It's in great shape," she says.

Ellen and Mason Walters of Lafayette bought their current house in 1998 and updated their pool in 2002. They had the surface redone, got new edging, new tile and re-caulked the perimeter. The Walters also built a pump house that doubles as a repository for emergency supplies. Its insulation minimizes pump noise and hides the gear and chemicals needed to maintain the pool. Walters estimates he spends 90 minutes weekly on pool chores and about \$400 a year on miscellaneous pool-related materials, including chemicals.

When asked if their in-ground pool is an asset or a liability, Walters says simply, "It depends who in this family you ask."



The Walters' pump house Photo Cathy Dausman

Thinking of Removing your Pool? Don't forget the permit.

Moraga:

<http://www.moraga.ca.us/dept/publicworks/docs/PoolRemovalPermitAppRev082310.pdf>

Orinda:

<http://orinda.waterware.com/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4470/Building%20Permit%20Application.pdf>

Lafayette:

Lafayette doesn't have an online building permit process, says Assistant City Planner Michael Cass. For pool removal, applicants submit site plans to the Planning Services Division, and the work is referred to the City Engineer. Approved plans and a completed Building Permit Application Form go to Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department. CCCBID issues the permit. Questions can be directed to CCCBID at (925) 299-0263.

Extraordinary Ordinary

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

"A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles." Christopher Reeve
By Cynthia Brian



Pink Zinnia

Photos Cynthia Brian

In the late 1990s I wrote, produced, and hosted an award-winning TV series called *Live Your Dreams* which featured what I termed "extraordinary ordinary" people from all walks of life who were doing what they loved, not for the money, not for the glory, but for the sole reason that it fed their souls. The show was a hit with the multitudes who wanted to follow their hearts, although it never garnered the sponsorship revenue it deserved. Sex and violence were advertisement manna and that program sorely lacked those ingredients.

Walking through a variety of neighborhood gardens, I reminisced on my passion for the simplicity of that program as I witnessed so many exotic specimens dotting landscapes. Whatever happened to the plethora of popular plant players that filled the summertime yards of my youth? Petunias, zinnias, geraniums, four o'clocks, Mexican primrose, tomatillos? I

wondered if they were considered too ordinary and not sexy enough for the limelight? I decided to share my insights on these soulful, dreamy creations with you to reignite the flame of simplicity.

Relatively speaking, petunias are pest and disease free and are great in hanging baskets, containers, and beds. They come in a variety of colors and ruffles with the Grandiflora class boasting big blooms and the Multiflora showcasing compact numerous blossoms. They are annuals but deadheading spent blooms keeps the kaleidoscope coming until late fall.

Zinnias were a childhood favorite because they easily grew by seed, with both tall and short samples. We grew bi-colors, streaked, and speckled specimens. My mom taught us to pinch off the first flower buds

so that we'd get bushier plants. Since zinnias don't do well in alkaline soil, I toss my coffee grinds on them and they thrive in addition to adding fertilizer every four to six weeks. Zinnias are perfect starter seeds to interest kids in gardening.

Geraniums remind me of all window boxes filled with cascading color that I experienced in Germany. What I love most about this garden staple is how easy it is to grow from cuttings. All the varieties of geraniums and pelargonium's I treasure were clippings I traded with other gardeners. Propagating is so simple, many are scented, and all flower from spring to winter here in Lamorinda when I cut them back almost to ground level.

... continued on page D7



Four O'Clocks

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

MORAGA ... continued

- 10 Harrington Road, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 2717 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 6-26-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 10-12-05
- 407 Kingsford Drive, \$1,380,000, 4 Bdrms, 2907 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 6-25-12;
Previous Sale: \$550,000, 02-29-00
- 1223 Larch Avenue, \$965,500, 4 Bdrms, 2214 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 7-2-12;
Previous Sale: \$454,000, 10-17-97
- 101 Merion Terrace, \$755,000, 3 Bdrms, 1849 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$515,000, 03-09-00
- 176 Miramonte Drive, \$400,000, 2 Bdrms, 1525 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 7-6-12;
Previous Sale: \$485,000, 04-21-04
- 47 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,396,000, 4 Bdrms, 3384 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$374,540, 08-09-84
- 247 Scofield Drive, \$755,500, 4 Bdrms, 1710 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$640,000, 07-05-02
- 1725 St. Andrews Drive, \$550,000, 2 Bdrms, 1262 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 7-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$639,000, 09-24-07
- 124 Via Joaquin, \$500,000, 2 Bdrms, 1354 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 6-26-12;
Previous Sale: \$625,000, 04-26-07
- 132 Via Joaquin #9, \$513,500, 2 Bdrms, 1354 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 7-2-12;
Previous Sale: \$643,000, 04-08-05
- 164 Via Joaquin, \$525,000, 3 Bdrms, 2018 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$290,000, 05-02-97

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- 71 Ardilla Road, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1852 SqFt, 1923 YrBlt, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$440,000, 12-29-98
- 1 Claremont Avenue, \$842,000, 3 Bdrms, 2279 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$799,000, 10-25-07
- 149 El Toyonal, \$512,500, 2 Bdrms, 1361 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 6-22-12
- 429 El Toyonal, \$1,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 4159 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 6-21-12;
Previous Sale: \$395,000, 09-12-05
- 277 Glorietta Boulevard, \$767,500, 3 Bdrms, 1726 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$230,000, 08-04-87
- 221 Hall Drive, \$938,000, 3 Bdrms, 3095 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 6-25-12
- 1 Heather Lane, \$1,870,000, 4 Bdrms, 3486 SqFt, 1945 YrBlt, 6-27-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 06-05-03
- 74 La Encinal, \$963,500, 4 Bdrms, 3064 SqFt, 1991 YrBlt, 6-27-12
- 9 La Plaza Drive, \$1,285,000, 3 Bdrms, 3203 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 6-29-12;
Previous Sale: \$730,000, 08-16-94
- 24 Lavenida Drive, \$899,000, 4 Bdrms, 2277 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 6-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$87,000, 03-22-77
- 600 Miner Road, \$1,828,500, 5 Bdrms, 3977 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 6-22-12
- 5 Overhill Court, \$910,000, 3 Bdrms, 1978 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 7-2-12
- 3 South Trail, \$320,000, 3 Bdrms, 825 SqFt, 1925 YrBlt, 6-26-12;
Previous Sale: \$730,000, 06-07-07
- 31 Tarabrook Drive, \$872,500, 5 Bdrms, 2132 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 7-6-12

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

ORINDA

Via Floreado, 94563, Bank of New York, 07-02-12, \$798,750, 1964 sf, 3 bd

It's Not Easy Being Green

by Andi Peterson Brown

Along with family road trips and daily outings to Loard's (wait, is that just me?), summer is synonymous with home improvement time. If you want to do some value-add projects to your home this summer but tearing up your dated bathrooms sounds way too intense, you might want to consider doing a little bit of "greening" instead. Compared to other house-related projects, greening your home can be much easier, can immediately lead to utility savings, and can still create some long term value. Below are a few ways to easily go green.

- Switch to low flow showerheads and dual-flush toilets.
- Replace lights with CFLs or LEDs. The spiral look not your thing? Don't worry—many brands now offer the traditional bulb style too.
- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors and install weather stripping where necessary.
- Install solar landscaping lights and motion sensor porch lights.
- If possible, replace some grass square footage with native landscaping/low water plants.
- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Plant your own vegetable and herb garden.
- Lower the temperature setting on your water heater to 120 degrees.
- Replace an outdated HVAC system with a newer, more energy efficient model.



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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for August

"The world is a book and those who do not travel only read a page." St. Augustine

August is the most traveled month of the year when in some parts of the world entire cities empty of its citizens. Think Paris in August-forget about meeting Parisians, the city has gone on holiday! You will likely meet someone from Lafayette, California in the Galeries Lafayette Grand Magasin. As an avid explorer of our great globe, and a voracious reader and writer, I agree completely with St. Augustine... EXCEPT... in summer I love staying home in Lamorinda. Our weather is glorious, our gardens are spectacular, and it's the best time of the year to gather with friends and family for barbecues, croquet tournaments, concerts in the parks, swim parties, marshmallow roasts, and wine tastings. Enjoy this peaceful paradise we call "home" before the rush of back-to-school begins. This August, travel the world while day-dreaming in your garden.

- **GRILL** your fresh-picked eggplant, corn, watermelon, and peppers on the barbecue. Brush with olive oil and garlic, sprinkle with salt and sage or cilantro.
- **STARGAZE** between August 12-14 towards the northeast to watch the Perseids meteor shower. Throw a quilt on the lawn and enjoy the free show with the family.
- **PHOTOGRAPH** your end of summer perennials and landscaping. When you are planning your spring plantings this winter you'll be glad you have a record.
- **INDULGE** your adventurous nature with a hike on new trail.
- **TUCK** sun-seeking succulents such as sedum, echeveria, and sempervivum in containers for summer sizzle and easy maintenance.
- **REPLACE** broken wooden handles on shovels, hoes, and trowels.
- **WEAR** clothes that cover arms and legs at dawn and dusk and apply the repellent with DEET to protect from mosquito bites.
- **STRETCH** before gardening. As gardeners we twist, turn, bend, pull, climb, dump, and lift which can cause back strains.
- **SLATHER** on the sunscreen before working in the garden, wear a hat to keep burns and sun stroke at bay, and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- **MUNCH** vine ripened tomatoes while enhancing your resistance to UV rays.
- **DIVIDE** bearded iris this month. Crowded rhizomes produce no blooms.
- **ENCOURAGE** your kids to help you water, weed, and feed. They'll feel proud to contribute while learning about the seasons of life.
- **SOAK** citrus and acid loving bushes like rhododendron, azaleas, and camillias to set the buds for next blooming season.
- **PINCH** mums and zinnias for a fuller fall show.
- **RECHARGE** your batteries in your personal garden oasis. It's free and relieves stress.
- **DEADHEAD** annuals and perennials to keep them blooming.
Be diligent with roses which will bloom until January as long as rosehips are not allowed to form.
- **GRAB** a great book and let your mind travel. You'll find hundreds of free reviews of books for the entire family at http://www.btsya.com/book_reviews.html
- **BUY** a Rose of Sharon in bush or tree form to add instant exotic allure to your yard.
- **ALLOW** carrots to go to seed. Not only are the flowers magnificent, you'll get a yield of luscious new carrots next season.
- **PLANT** another crop of lettuce, arugula, carrots, beans, and beets to harvest through the end of October. There is nothing better than growing your own healthy, nourishing, life-enhancing food.

Explore, experiment, and experience as you entertain family and friends in your home haven. Happy staycation.

Happy Gardening to You!

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Cynthia Brian

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Who doesn't hear the words "summer" and "bugs" and think of a neat line of ants getting ready to trespass on plaid blanket supporting a picnic basket full of delicacies. But pests can be a serious summer problem, and can threaten more than your turkey sandwich and potato salad. Left unchecked, these summer invaders can quickly turn your tree and landscape assets into liabilities. That's why insect and disease management is such an important part of summer tree care. A keen eye is essential, and proactive monitoring goes a long way towards early detection.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping.

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Extraordinary Ordinary

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

... continued from page D4

Hummingbirds are constant companions of my four o'clocks. Unlike their namesake, they don't keep time in my garden, blooming at ten in the morning instead of four in the afternoon. On our country road when I was growing up on the farm, we could tell the time of day by the four o'clocks. They always opened at exactly 4 p.m. Obviously that source memory didn't continue in my heirloom seeds. Although they are considered annuals, they reseed every year producing bigger, better, more fragrant blooms that kill the black beetles and entice the butterflies.

Although many people call them an invasive weed, Mexican primroses are welcome invaders in my large landscape. Growing wildly with diaphanous white or pink petals that grow in any type of inhospitable soil, they naturalize and may take over if left to their own accord. Be forewarned, this may be an extraordinary plant you don't want, especially in a small garden, as once it takes root, Mexican primroses are almost impossible to eradicate. (Unless you bring in the deer!)

What fruit grows inside its own paper sack tasting like a cross between pineapple, tomato, and lime? It's the tomatillo, a distant cousin of the gooseberry and tomato used especially in Mexican salsas and savory sauces. Tomatillos thrive on neglect and produce hundreds of delicious fruits from late summer to late fall. You'll know when it's time to harvest when the papery husks start to pop. Pick and store for six weeks or more, removing the husk only when ready to eat raw or cook. They reseed themselves supplying the essential ingredient for a sassy salsa verde and tangy salad fresca.

Alas, all of my extraordinary ordinary garden delights are also favorite foods, especially the Mexican primrose, of my dear deer. Currently three bucks, a doe, and her twins have taken up residence in my front yard. They have devoured and decimated these underrated beauties, thus I have been forced to grow them exclusively in the fenced back territory.

As much as I admire the antlered nomads, I deem eating my plants violent acts. If I could consider the house finches that hatched in a nest built in my wreath on my back door "sexy," perhaps sponsors would be interested in a resurrection of *Live Your Dreams* as a garden program featuring extraordinary, ordinary plants doing what they love!

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39 Oak Drive
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5 Estabueno Drive
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Offered at \$949,000



43 Canyon View Drive
One of a kind, secluded, Tahoe-like 4bd/3.5+ba hm on 1.25 ac w/views of hills & Mt. Diablo. Sep 1bd cottage, & artist studio/ofc. Fruit trees abound. Stone fireplace. Updated kit/baths
Offered at \$1,439,000



38 Los Altos Road
OCC 4bd/4ba dramatic custom contemporary on 1+ ac nr end of country lane. Pvt, picturesque setting, views of hills. Lg living areas, hi ceilings, wall of glass. Sep in-law apt.
Offered at \$1,495,000



428 Dalewood Drive
What a great home...super for family & entertaining. Meticulously maintained 4bd/4ba in Orinda Downs. Great mstr suite w/spa bath, guest suite on 1st flr, 2 fam rms, updated kitchen, pool.
Offered at \$1,750,000



6 Rich Acres Road
NEW house, NEW price! State-of-the-art energy efficient features incl radiant heat & recirculating wr heating sys. 5bd/5ba on almost 1 ac w/oaks & lawns. Nr town yet totally pvt.
Offered at \$1,795,000



121 Cypress Point Way
Desirable sgl lvl 2+bd/2ba w/hdwd flrs, den, recessed lighting, great MCC loc close to clubhouse, trail, town & more. Updated kitchen, dual-paned windows throughout.
Offered at \$675,000



2 Berkshire Street
Desirable sgl level in MCC. 2bd+ office, 2ba. Hardwood floors, recess lighting, nr satellite pools & walking trail.
Offered at \$699,000



89 Brookfield Drive
Located in popular cul de sac neighborhood. Super-sized 5+bd/3.5ba home w/versatile floor plan on .40 ac. Sm office, lg updated kitchen overlooks yard w/pool. Hdwd flrs, 2 fam rms.
Offered at \$1,319,000



3216 Judith Lane
Lovely classic 3bd/2ba ranch home. Beaut fam rm w/hardwood flr, vaulted ceiling, French sliders to lg level lawn. Expansive side yard. Gorgeous sunset views! Jog to trail.
Offered at \$799,000



3500 Moraga Blvd.
Amazing location nr town, trails, schools, Bart & more. 4bd/3ba hm impressively blt w/high quality materials & the finest craftsman finishes. Lg mstr w/spa-like bath, open kitchen.
Offered at \$1,099,000



1063 Via Roble
Dramatic updated 4bd/3ba contemp on .49 ac landscaped by award-winning Henr Matsutani. Hdwd flrs, 2 masters, fam rm, den. Gardener's paradise near Bart & top schools.
Offered at \$1,295,000



3898 Happy Valley Road
Fab orig owner property in Happy Valley's "Golden Mile". Prime 1.5 ac w/lvl lawn, secluded patio, towering redwoods. Gorgeous vus. Restore 1948 farmhouse or build new dream hm.
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1420 Arbor Lane
Truly special orig custom spacious trad 3bd/3.5ba hm. Enjoy grand sz entertaining allure inside & out. European touches. Fab setting at end of flat cul-de-sac Westside quiet street. Level lot.
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207 Dorchester Lane
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