

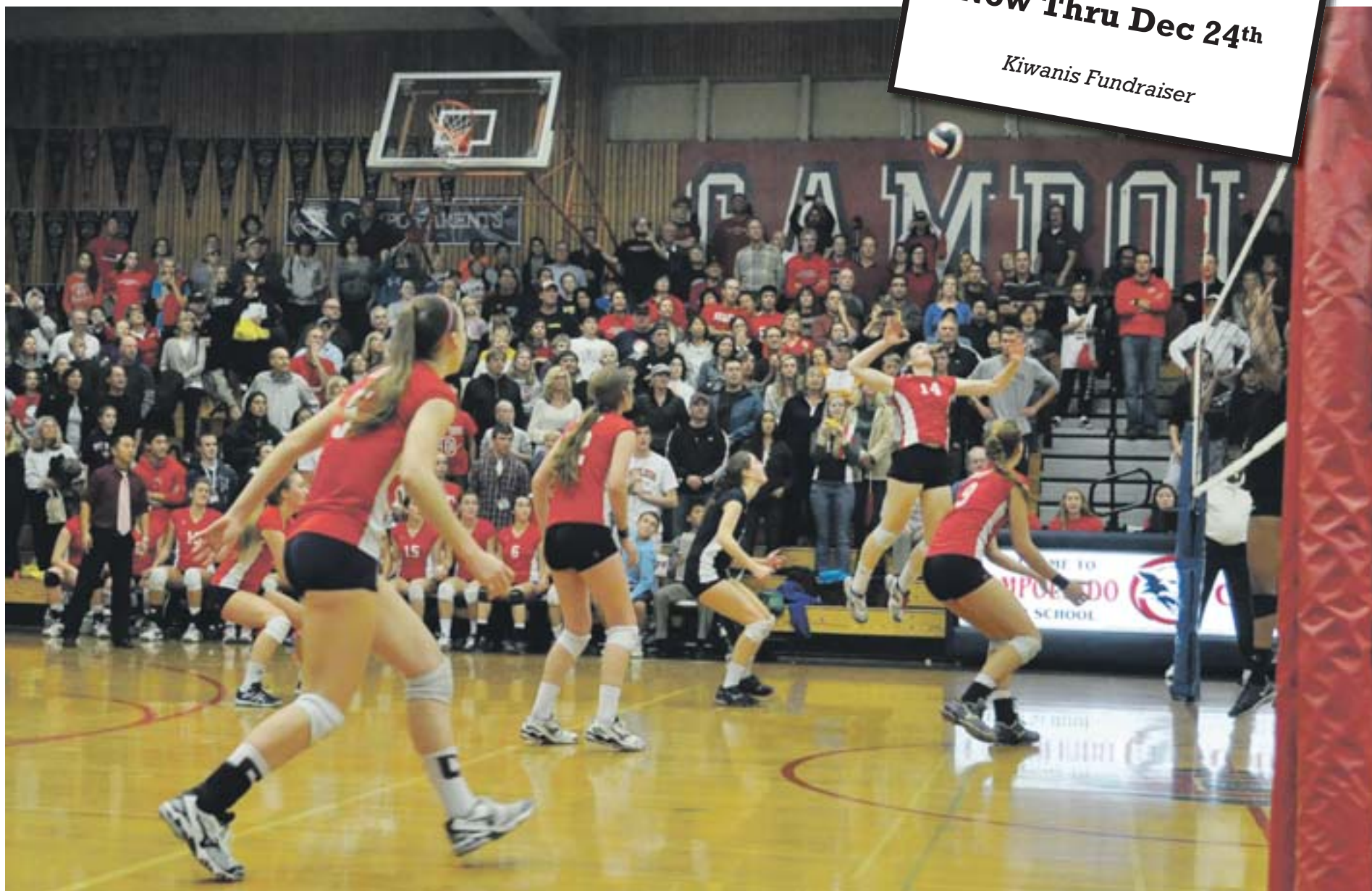
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FREE

See's
In Moraga
Rheem Center
Now Thru Dec 24th
Kiwanis Fundraiser



Senior Annie Shurtz goes up for the game-winning hit in the fifth set of the NCS championship match.

Photo Andy Schreck

Campolindo Volleyball Wins NCS

The Cougars won their second title in three years by defeating Bishop O'Dowd in five sets Nov. 17. NorCal championship play began last night—check our website for updates, www.lamorindaweekly.com. Other NCS champions include Campolindo girls' water polo, Miramonte boys' water polo, Acalanes girls' cross country, and Miramonte boys' cross country. See pages C1-C3 for details.

Quote of the Week:

"We also extend our appreciation to all the candidates and their supporters who expended time, energy, and money bringing democracy-in-action to our community."

Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Advertising

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LAMORINDA

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Classified	C2
Love Lafayette	C4
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Thankful for Life Saving Emergency Medical Help

By Cathy Tyson

"Needless to say, I am really glad to be here," said Jim Engelhardt, referring to his near-death experience at the Art & Wine Festival in September. He was at a recent City Council meeting to personally thank all those involved in his survival, with a special shout out to Contra Costa Fire personnel—"Nice job on the old chest." In poignant remarks, Engelhardt summarized just what it means to be the recipient of life saving measures after his cardiac arrest. "I spent 29 years in law enforcement and fire – unless you have been on the other side, you can't know how proud you deserve to be." Clad in blue uniforms, officers from various departments that played a role in his life saving event lined the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for the ceremony that honored them for their service.

... continued on page A12



From left: Office of the Sheriff Captain Mark Williams, Lafayette Officer Debra Williams, survivor Jim Engelhardt, Lafayette Officer Jacqui Dennison, Lafayette Community Service Officer Cathy Surges, Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen.

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Celebrate!

The next few weeks are brimming with festive events in Lamorinda! Pages B8-B9



Sports C1-C3

Winter Sports

This week we preview women's basketball at SMC and Lamorinda's high schools. Page C2



Our Homes D1-D8

Light Up Your Life!

Tips for a merry and bright holiday! Page D1



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Lafayette
Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Nov. 26, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, Dec. 3, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Nov. 26, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m.
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
Stanley Library
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Someone's Watching, Surveillance Cameras on Campus

By Cathy Tyson

Most folks think we live in a fairly safe community, but recently the governing board of the Lafayette School District approved a proposal from DecoTech Systems for installing motion-activated surveillance systems at Burton Valley, Happy Valley and Springhill elementary schools and adding to more cameras to the Stanley Middle School campus.

"Anecdotal evidence suggests

that we have had less vandalism and theft at Stanley and Lafayette schools, where we have already installed cameras," said Dr. Fred Brill, superintendent of the Lafayette School District. The cameras will cost approximately \$60,000.

"I am confident that there will be a cost savings. With less theft, graffiti and vandalism, our custodians and maintenance staff will be able to spend more time maintaining safe

and clean learning environments for our students," said Brill. "In addition to having copper wire, solar panels, and computers stolen over the years, there have been several incidents of 'smash and grabs' (purses stolen from cars) in our parking lots."

Vandals and thieves beware, Brill wants to spread the message that, "We have these cameras and we have used them to catch those individuals engaging in criminal behavior."

"We're enthused and excited, vandalism has been a problem here," said Office Manager Marsha Dahl of Burton Valley Elementary School. At times there have been small fires set on the Burton Valley playground, spray paint on doors, and the letters in the signboard out front changed into different messages. The semi-rural campus is set back from the street in a quiet residential neighborhood.

Big Turnout for Thanksgiving Breakfast

By Cathy Tyson



Steve Falk and Jay Lifson

Photo Andy Scheck

It was a full house of city leaders and the business community at the 33rd annual Community Thanksgiving Breakfast last week. This once a year opportunity to pause and give thanks, to break bread and muffins, is always inspirational.

After an invocation by Pastor Marylee Sheffer of the Lafayette United Methodist Church, Police Chief Eric Christensen offered moving remarks that started with a surprising travelogue of countries where he was stationed while in the military and lessons learned. As a

young man stationed in Panama, he noted the locals appreciated simply having adequate food, while in Honduras, the government was clearly over-stepping bounds – "That just can't be right," noted the chief – and finally in Korea he learned how people live in fear.

Reflecting on his years in law enforcement in the U.S. he surmised it's all about community acceptance – what the community will tolerate, pointing out that there just aren't teenagers wandering the streets of Lafayette and causing trouble late at night. "There's a level of expectation here that you can walk down the street at two in the morning and not get mugged. You've got so much to be thankful for in Lafayette – you've laid the groundwork that the community cares about children, and expects them to be under control."

Christensen concluded by re-

mind everyone that he and the entire police department are here to help and to be thankful for friends and family, not to waste opportunities to remind folks how much you care.

"Pay attention to the place you hold in community life," advised Reverend Dan Senter from Our Savior's Lutheran Church to the collected group of local merchants, school officials and municipal representatives. "Your work matters to all of us."

The Thanksgiving breakfast was dedicated to Barbara Bupp. Organizers wish to thank the Lafayette United Methodist Church for sharing its facilities, ManorCare for generous sponsorship, along with lovely music provided by harpist Wendy Tamis and a delicious breakfast by Dave's Cuisine and chef Dave Krider, caterer.



Police Report

Week of
Oct. 28-Nov. 10, 2012

Accident

- 11/6 Olympic/Pleasant Hill (major injuries)
- 1st St/Deer Hill Rd (hit & run)
- 11/9 1000 block Stuart St (hit & run)

Animal	10/28 3600 block Mt Diablo Bl (cruelty)	10/31 3200 block Lucas Dr (twice)	3500 block Mt Diablo Bl
	10/31 Glenside/Reliez Station Rd	11/1 100 block Lafayette Cir (auto)	1100 block Bacon Way (auto)
	11/6 El Nido Ranch Rd/Mt Diablo Bl		1100 block Rahara Dr (ID)
Burglary/Theft:	10/29 3300 block Mt Diablo Bl (commercial)		4100 block Coralee Ln (ID)
	800 block Tanglewood Dr (ID)	11/3 Olympic/Pleasant Hill (auto)	11/5 1200 block Pleasant Hill Rd
	3600 block Happy Valley Rd	11/8 3500 block Mt Diablo Bl (shoplift)	3500 block Springhill Rd (twice)
	3900 block N Peardale Dr		900 block Oak Hill Rd
	100 block Lucas Ct (grand theft)		3600 block Mt Diablo Bl
	100 block Lucas Ct (burglary)		3700 block Mt Diablo Bl
	10/30 3600 block Happy Valley Rd (forgery)		1100 block Laurel Dr (prowler seen)
	3200 block Lucas Cr (auto)	11/10 500 block Silverado Dr	

Drunk in Public:	10/28 3300 block Mt Diablo Bl	11/2 3500 block Mt Diablo Bl
DUI	11/3 Brown Ave/Mt Diablo Bl	11/3 1000 block Brown Ave
	3200 block Mt Diablo Bl	1100 block Upper Happy Valley Rd
Hit & Run:	10/30 900 block Hough Ave	11/5 400 block St. Mary's Rd
Public Nuisance:	11/2 3600 block Mt Diablo Bl	11/9 1100 block N. Thompson
Vandalism	10/29 100 block Reliez Valley Ct	1100 block Oak Hill Rd (twice)
		100 block Dollis Park Rd

More than 103 traffic stops recorded Oct. 28 to Nov. 3; more than 96 traffic stops recorded Nov. 4 to Nov. 10.



Lafayette Volunteer Vacancies

Community Center Foundation is dedicated to renovating and expanding the Lafayette Community Center.

Downtown Street Improvement Master Plan Implementation Committee (DSIMPIC) The Downtown Street Improvement Master Plan, adopted in 1988, guides developers and staff in making improvements to street frontage in downtown Lafayette to develop a cohesive, positive visual image for Lafayette's downtown while providing amenities to make the downtown a more comfortable, safer and enjoyable place.

Crime Prevention Commission studies safety issues in the City and works to educate the public.

Emergency Preparedness Commission coordinates preparation and planning efforts to mitigate the effects of natural and man-made disasters.

Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission - Reviews and supports effective management and operations of existing park facilities to maximize public enjoyment, continue to seek funding and develop the Community Park, Trail System and other City parks.

To learn more about these volunteer opportunities and to obtain an application visit the City's website www.ci.lafayette.ca.us or call Joanne Robbins at 925-299-3210. Positions open until filled.



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Safeway Expands Parking onto Valero Corner

By Cathy Tyson



View of existing Valero gas station on the corner of Mt. Diablo and Oak Hill Road with Safeway in the background
Photo Cathy Tyson

Although the Lafayette Safeway currently meets the strict parking requirements necessary for an establishment of its size, corporate management has been negotiating with the owners of the Valero gas station at the corner of Oak Hill Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard to lease the property, demolish the structure, and turn it into more parking spots. The proposal is currently working its way through Lafayette's review process.

City rules require 152 parking stalls given the square footage of the grocery store; Safeway currently has 156 stalls. By expanding onto the Valero property owned by Gus Shahidi and the Bocci family, 40 stalls could be added - 36 standard sized and four designated handicapped spaces. New rows of double-sided parking stalls would mimic the existing rows that run parallel to Oak Hill Road.

"We will lease the Valero property from the existing

owner/operator to convert the gas station to additional Safeway parking," said Todd Paradis of Safeway's Northern California Division Real Estate Department. "We anticipate obtaining city approval by the end of the year and constructing sometime next year."

Part of the expansion includes extending the landscape treatment along the perimeter and clarifying circulation concerns for delivery truck access and unloading. In addition, the Circulation Commission asked the retailer to make pedestrian-friendly sidewalk improvements and enhance the existing bicycle racks in front of the store.

There are a number of environmental regulations that will have to be satisfied. Paradis is well aware of the process and assures, "The improvements and tanks will be removed during the conversion and backfilled with clean soil and given a clean bill of health from the Regional Water Quality Control Board."

Cleaning Up After the Tanks

Guidelines for a permit to close an underground storage tank (UST) are specific and lengthy, from written notification to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, to soil and groundwater samples to be analyzed by a state certified laboratory and much more. Contra Costa Health Services Hazardous Materials Program is the designated local agency that protects the public from exposure to hazardous materials and potential groundwater contamination from substances stored in USTs. This agency is responsible for annual inspections and issues operating permits for installation and removal or repair.



Lafayette Planning Commission Vacancy

The City of Lafayette is looking for a volunteer to fill a vacancy on the seven-member Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is charged with development of the General Plan, implementation & administration of the Zoning Ordinance and review of development applications including subdivisions, land use permits, and hillside development permits. Applicants must be residents of Lafayette. The Commission typically meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month in the Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center located at 3491 Mt. Diablo Boulevard. For more information about the Commission's duties, please contact Niroop Srivatsa at 925.299.3206 or nsrivatsa@lovelafayette.org or Greg Wolff at 925.299.3204 or gwolff@lovelafayette.org.

Applications can be downloaded from the City's web site at <http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us/>. The deadline for filing applications with the City Clerk is Friday, December 14. Interviews will be scheduled in January 2013.



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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Nov. 28, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, Dec. 3, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Nov. 26, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Police Report

Honda a goner, 11/13/12 An Ascot Dr. resident parked his Honda Accord on the curb in front of his place at around 10 a.m. When he returned to the vehicle it had vanished. Police checked the area for witnesses or leads, but nothing was discovered.

Theft, 11/12/12 A Donald Dr. resident parked her car in her carport at around 4 p.m. When she went out the next day around noon, someone had entered her unlocked car and took some undisclosed items from inside the car. Mystery items totaled about \$450. No physical evidence or leads at this time.

False alarm, 11/12/12 Just after midnight, an alarm was sounding on a Sanders Ranch Road home. Police went to check it out and found everything locked up with nothing unusual going on. A burglar would have to drive through the attended security gates to exit the neighborhood. Maybe it was just a cat burglar – as in kitty cat?

Drunk college kid, 11/09/12 Alert the media! Moraga police were dispatched to Saint Mary's College to assist the Moraga Orinda Fire Department with an 18-year-old intoxicated female student. When fireman found her, she was awake and responsive; she declined to be taken to the hospital for a medical evaluation.

Loud party, 11/11/12 Neighbors complained of a loud party, still going strong past midnight on Ascot Dr. Cops could hear loud noise and saw about 50 people inside the home. After giving the hosts an official warning, there were no further complaints.

Drunk man, 11/09/12 Police and the fire department responded to a home on Windeler Ct. to check on an elderly drunk male who had fallen and was refusing medical treatment. The fellow was in front of his own home and had a head injury. Police determined he was unable to care for himself and managed to convince him to be transported to John Muir Hospital.

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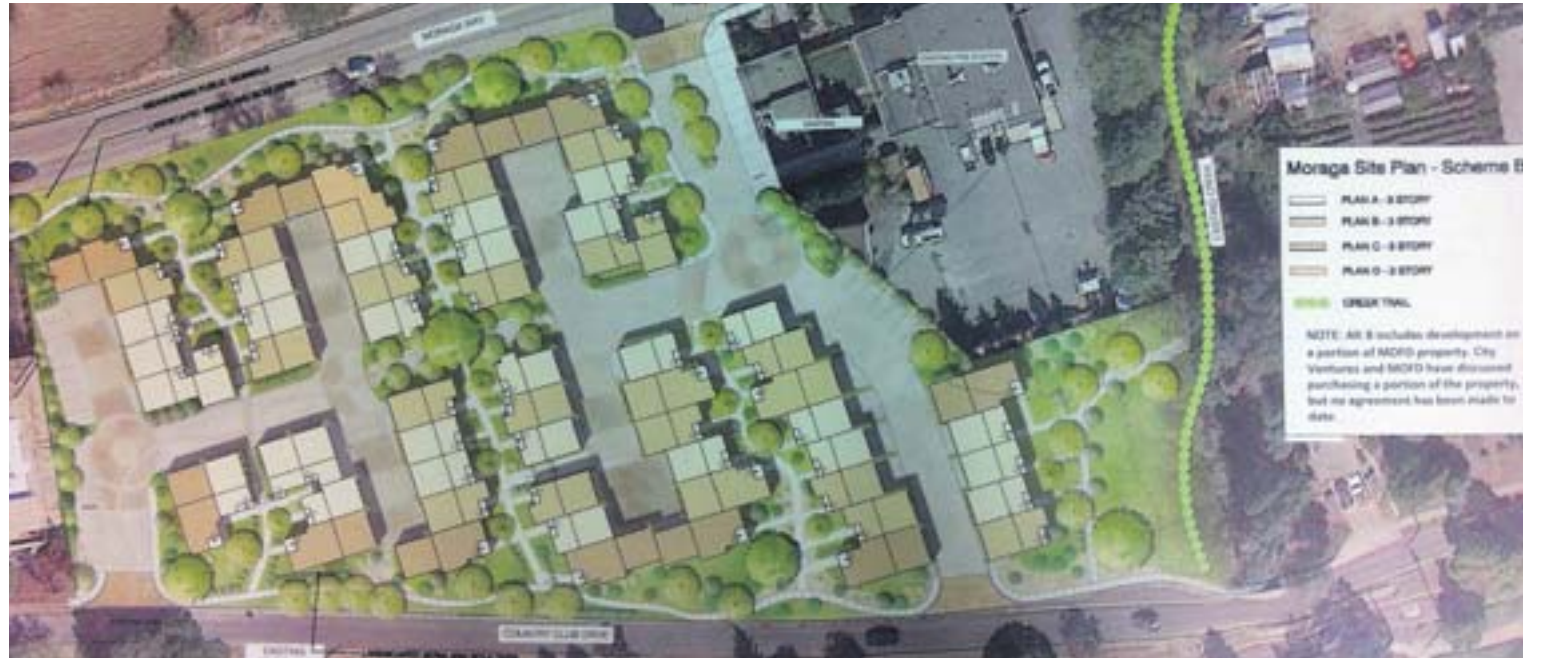
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Thumbs Up for 50+ Units of Housing

By Sophie Braccini



City Ventures' conceptual development plan for Town Center Homes

Image provided

Moraga's Planning Commission and Design Review Board agreed at a recent joint meeting that preliminary plans for 50 to 55 condominium units proposed by City Ventures, next to the fire station on Moraga Way, look good. The planned density for the roughly three-acre parcel is consistent with the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) that the Town approved two years ago. Commissioners and board members liked the design proposed by a developer who is experienced in such projects and has produced some attractive high-density districts in other Bay Area communities.

The Moraga project proposes about 50 multi-family units, two and three stories high, each with two or three bedrooms and two-car garages;

a possible alternate plan is for 55 units. "I am very passionate about what we do with municipalities at City Ventures, which is in-fill development," said City Ventures' Philip Kerr in the opening of his presentation at the joint meeting. "A lot of what we do is work with small towns as they develop their downtowns. How do you develop as towns grow toward the core? It's more complex because you have adjacencies." Kerr said that developing housing near shopping and parks is what it takes to develop a sense of place.

The big adjacency to this project is Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Station 41. Not only is it a facility from which fire engines and paramedic vehicles may emerge at any time with blaring sirens, but the

station is also a training ground for fire fighters. Former MOFD board member Brook Mancinelli, an Orinda resident, opposes the project. In a letter to the Planning Department he wrote, "Routine and extended use of heavy machinery, fire apparatus, chainsaws, aerial ladders, high volume water flow, and the recently acquired fire simulation props and high-rise training tower will easily overwhelm any rational mitigation measures and are genuinely incompatible."

Planning commissioners and Design Review Board (DRB) members expressed concerns about the noise, asking about mitigation and also about MOFD's position. Kerr presented pictures of numerous fire stations in the Bay Area located in the

middle of developments. He indicated that mitigation would include walls around the perimeter of the station, windows and wall insulation in the homes, and plantations. "We have a station in the middle of a residential area in Orinda," noted MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley who attended the meeting. "The residents love to have us there."

The commission and board agreed that the project's density of about 17 units per acre is appropriate under the MCSP, which designates this parcel for housing/office use with a density of 12 to 20 units per acre.

Because the project is located along one of the town's scenic corridors, Moraga Way, questions were asked about the look of the project.

... continued on page A12

More Moraga Civic News on Page A9

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Moraga School District Issues Public Apology

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga School District is not out of the woods yet in the aftermath of the abuse of Kristen Cunnane in the 1990s; but on the night of Nov. 13 it made significant steps toward an honorable resolution of the crisis that started a few months ago with the uncovering of the failure to report possible abuse, as required by law, by school administrators at the time. The school board, through the voice of Board President Charles

MacNulty, offered a long-awaited apology to Cunnane both for what she suffered as a student and for what he called a grave mistake in the district's initial response to her lawsuit.

MacNulty announced that the district is seeking mediation of the civil suit brought forth by Cunnane. "Each of the parties involved within the district, including our insurance company, have agreed to mediate the claim," he said. "There is no guaran-

tee mediation will achieve resolution, but we are hopeful that we will reach a resolution that satisfies all."

"The district is deeply sorry about what happened to students in our care. These students were entrusted to us. We are parents; knowing that children were subject to sexual abuse in our district is painful and disturbing," said MacNulty in a statement he read on behalf of the school district. ... continued on page A9



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DANVILLE
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MORAGA
Moraga Center

COUNTRYWOOD
Treat & Bancroft

CLAYTON ROAD
Vineyard Center

ORINDA
Village Square

MONTCLAIR
6211 Medau Place, Oakland



Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Nov. 27, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, Nov. 28, 6 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
City Hall, 22 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District

Monday, Dec. 10, 6 p.m.
OUSD Office
25 Orinda Way, Suite 200
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org

Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



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City Works to Respond to Housing Requirements

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda City Council acted early this month to head off a potential loss of \$408,000 in federal transportation funds by authorizing the hiring of a consultant to prepare an overdue report for California's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The material was to have been submitted by staff in reply to HCD's 12-page letter of Dec. 6, 2010 notifying city leaders that the agency was dissatisfied with Orinda's efforts to revise its General Plan Housing Element.

According to city staff, work began on the response to the extensive changes HCD demanded to the city's October 2010 Housing Element draft, but "slowed after September 2011 due to staff reductions in the Planning Department."

The \$408,000 cattle prod that got things moving again was the August 2012 discovery by staff "that the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) changed the prerequisites for local agencies to receive federal transportation funds through the One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG). The new requirements are that cities have a HCD-certified Housing Element by January 31, 2013, unless a request for

a one-year extension is submitted by November 1, 2012 and that cities either adopt a 'Complete Streets' resolution that incorporates specific elements pertaining to an integrated transportation network or update their General Plan to comply with the Complete Streets Act of 2008."

What's the problem with the housing element?

Orinda was directed by HCD in October 2010 to adjust its zoning policies for emergency shelters and identify zones where transitional and supportive housing would be permitted moving forward.

Staff suggested adding the definition of emergency shelters to Orinda's Municipal Code (OMC), and proposed creation of either a new zoning district or an Institutional Overlay zone to allow emergency shelters, or amending "an existing zoning district to allow emergency shelters on all properties in the district."

Staff also advised the council that, "Transitional housing may be designated for a homeless individual or family transitioning to permanent housing ... including group housing or multifamily units, and may include supportive services to allow individuals to gain necessary life skills in support of independent living....

'Supportive housing' means housing with no limit on length of stay, that is occupied by the target population (i.e. low income persons with mental disabilities, AIDS, substance abuse or chronic health conditions or persons whose disabilities originated before the person turned 18), and that is linked to offsite services that assist the supportive housing resident in retaining the housing, improving his or her health status, and maximizing his or her ability to live and, when possible, work in the community."

Recommending that Orinda update its OMC single-family and multifamily residential definitions, staff added that housing applications would "be considered and processed as residential projects and be subjected to the same restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone." Although "the emergency shelter and transitional and supportive housing program described in the Draft Housing Element may not satisfy the requirements," staff wrote, Orinda churches do engage in noteworthy efforts to assist homeless families and seniors, including Winter Nights which provides "a clean, safe, and warm facility at night and a daytime services center during the winter."

Now what?

On Oct. 23, City Manager Janet Keeter wrote to ABAG requesting an extension of the deadline, to April 2013, for Orinda to obtain HCD certification.

At its Nov. 7 meeting, the council approved a contract with urban planning consultant Barry Miller, whose bid was the lowest of three. Miller recently assisted Danville and Piedmont in obtaining housing element certification, and has helped other cities update general, zoning, and environmental plans. He will review Orinda's Housing Element, conduct research, prepare a revised draft Housing Element for HCD submission, and assist city staff in preparing and presenting reports to the City Council and Planning Commission. Miller's services will draw \$15,720 from the General Plan Update Fund with an additional \$1,440 for an Initial Study and Negative Declaration as part of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review.

The revised Housing Element draft may be presented to Council within the next 60 days. The City's Public Works and Engineering Department plans to present the other required component, Orinda's draft Complete Streets plan, to the council Dec. 18.

Community Unity



In a burst of civic pride, candidates for the Orinda City Council and School Board came together with fellow Orindans on both sides of the aisle to watch early election night returns and celebrate community unity Nov. 6 at Europa. From left: Orinda City Council Member Sue Severson, Measure L Campaign Co-Chair Cassandra Forth, Mayor Steve Glazer, Council Member Victoria Smith, Orinda Union School Board Member Matt Moran, and Carol Penskar, chair of the Orinda Finance Advisory Committee. Not pictured, but also on hand: Vice Mayor Amy Worth, Council Member Dean Orr, and Orinda Union School Board candidate Sarah Genn Butler.

Photo Ohlen Alexander

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Police Report

A walk on the Wilder side, 11/2/12 Orinda police stopped a 28-year-old woman driver along Highway 24 at Wilder in the wee hours. Her car had no license plate and she failed to use her turn signal. She exhibited objective signs of intoxication and performed poorly on field sobriety tests. Her preliminary alcohol screening showed a 0.17 blood alcohol content. She was arrested and taken to Orinda Police Department, where her blood alcohol level was logged as 0.16. The woman was transported and booked at Martinez Detention Facility; her late model SUV was towed and stored.

Warrant arrest, 11/08/12 A 51-year-old male driving a late model SUV along El Camino Moraga was arrested on an outstanding warrant just before 9 a.m.



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Orinda Honored with International Award for Best Senior Housing Community

Eden program set to start construction in December

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda, long an incubator of gold medal-winning Olympians, is now glittering brightly in a new arena – international architectural design. Orindans learned at the Nov. 7 Orinda City Council meeting that, in June 2012, Orinda’s Eden Senior Housing program was awarded the Gold Nugget Grand Award for Best Senior Housing Community – On the Boards.

“Since 1963, the Gold Nugget Awards have honored creative achievements in architectural design and land use planning for residential, commercial and industrial projects,” reads the staff report for the meeting. Judges pointed to “the design challenges posed by the sloping site,” as they praised plans by the Dahlin Group, the architects selected to transform Orinda’s old library site at 2 Irwin Way, for their “successful integration of the building into its natural and built environment.”

Eden “really fits in with the community,” echoed City Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu as he urged council and community members to take pride in the award. Orinda’s affordable senior housing program competed against other designs from Pacific Rim countries and 14 western U.S. states.

The City Council also learned from Ursu and Eden’s Senior Project Developer Woody Karp that, “financing from all sources has been committed to the Project and closing on the construction financing is scheduled for December 14, 2012.” The council subsequently reviewed and approved Eden’s \$22,506,166 Financing Plan and Development Budget.

Forty-five of the 66 one-bedroom units planned for the property will be occupied by residents at 50 percent of AMI (area median income), paying \$831 in monthly rent.

Age restrictions dictate that at least one member of each household be over 62 years old. The rent for the 67th unit – a two-bedroom manager’s unit – will be set at market rate.

Karp announced earlier via an Oct. 24 letter to the city’s leadership that Contra Costa County’s Housing Authority “has agreed to create with Eden a site based wait list, allowing people who express interest in living at this property to apply for housing and not simply draw from the housing authority’s existing wait list. This means that qualified [applicants] living in the Lamorinda area will have an opportunity to apply.”

“I’m thrilled that we’re actually here at this spot,” said Council Member Dean Orr. Vice Mayor Amy Worth described Eden’s development efforts as “a solid plan for both construction and operation.”



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Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community!



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

Editor:

Our thanks to *Lamorinda Weekly* for giving us such excellent political coverage prior to the recent election. Between articles, ads, and letters we believe we had ample opportunity to get to know local candidates and to understand local issues.

We also extend our appreciation to all the candidates and their supporters who expended time, energy, and money bringing democracy-in-action to our community.

Marolyn and Ed Hartman
Moraga

Editor:

Most Moragans are probably aware by now that Dexter Louie was reelected to the Moraga School Board on November 6th and then submitted his resignation the next day. This has understandably raised many questions and concerns, particularly among supporters of Dr. Louie's campaign. I actively supported Dexter's campaign because I know that Dexter is selflessly dedicated to improving the educational experience for the children of Moraga. All of you who supported Dexter can be assured that your faith in his integrity and commitment to our schools was not misplaced. Dexter made the decision to run for another four years because he felt strongly that his many years of experience would be particularly valuable to the District in the many challenges it will face, including implementation of a new Strategic Plan and possible passage of a new parcel tax.

Throughout the campaign Dexter remained optimistic that he would be able to continue to serve if he was elected. His subsequent decision to resign from the Board was extremely painful to him but became necessary for very personal reasons. For those of you concerned about his health, let me assure you that Dexter is in good health and continues to be very active both professionally and with his other volunteer commitments. I would ask that everyone please respect Dexter's privacy now that he has made the difficult decision to step down from public office. In fact, I hope if you run into Dexter you will thank him for his many years of service. He has served our community with compassion and integrity for 14 years and deserves our gratitude.

Trish Bare
Moraga

Editor:

About Negative Campaigning

Pursuant to last night's election results and recent articles and blogs regarding the dislike of negative campaign signs around Moraga, I would just like to raise a concept for everyone to consider.

Posting signs that read "Defeat Mendonca" is really no different than posting ones that read "No on Prop. 50". As a candidate for political office, one must realize that they are making themselves the political commodity. As an incumbent, one must be prepared to run on his or her record and be willing to accept the fact that some people will not agree with the decisions they've made in their position. Stating "No to X" or "Defeat X" on a 18" x 24" yard sign is done to simply grab your attention and hopefully get you to look into the issue or candidate further -- and then make up your own mind. Apparently, this worked.

For those who insist on deeming this a personal attack issue, that idea is of your own making -- and I couldn't disagree more. You might consider that without some kind of negative campaigning, incumbents would be essentially unbeatable. Only those few who show up to Town Council meeting would ever see firsthand what their shortcomings are. And, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely" ... let's not forget.

And so, congratulations are in order to Mr. Arth, Wykle and Metcalf -- 2 of 3 who will be much needed fresh faces on the Moraga Town Council. Govern well, gentlemen, in the interest of the majority of your citizenry, and with careful cost/benefit analyses. Pursue not personal agendas to the contrary. Moragans are paying attention.

Douglas Home
Moraga

Editor:

I fear that the dreadful election activity in Moraga this year will reduce even further the number of individuals willing to run for the Town Council; most Moragans would never subject themselves to the kind of treatment that Karen Mendonca received this year. Criticism goes with the job, but I believe we owe them -- and ourselves -- more than that. Our nice little town is developing a bad reputation. We shouldn't let single-issue fanatics take over. Thank you Karen and thank you Howard Harpham for serving on our governing body; I'm sure that most voters don't realize how much time and conscientious effort you have devoted to this work. Congratulations to the two new council members, Roger Wykle and Phil Arth; I hope that among your personal attributes is thick skin.

Dale Walwark
Moraga

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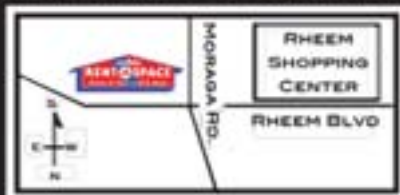


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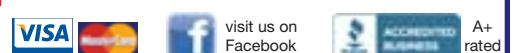
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Civic News Moraga

Moraga's Plan for the Adobe Takes Shape

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council has a plan to save the Joaquin Moraga Adobe from becoming a private club house for 13 homeowners, wanting it preserved as a historical treasure that is open to the public for educational purposes. Trouble is, the Adobe is in Orinda—so last week the Town Council sent a letter to the City of Orinda.

The Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA) recently appealed the Orinda Planning Commission's approval of the development of the Adobe property; the appeal will be heard by the Orinda City Council in January.

Introducing the agenda item at the council's Nov. 14 meeting, Town Manager Jill Keimach said that Moraga was respectful of Orinda's process and that the letter was an effort to start a discussion while proposing very specific strategies aimed at preserving the Adobe as a historical site. The staff report reads in part, "The first goal is to provide public access to the Adobe structure in order to educate and showcase the Adobe structure as it was initially built in 1841, in conformance with the Historical/Cultural Resources Study by the Architectural Resources Group." The second goal is to preserve the view from the Adobe's porch.

The council believes the best solution is for FJMA to purchase both the Adobe and Lot 12, a piece of land where the developer plans to build a house that would, according to FJMA, annihilate the panoramic view

from the Adobe's porch—the view that drew Joaquin Moraga and his family to that location in the first place. FJMA would restore and maintain the building as a museum, with help from the Moraga Historical Society. Many cited the Sonsara development across the street and to the north with its large greenery buffer between the homes and the street. "This is not Sonsara," said Kerr, "this is multifamily housing. But we propose to create a large green space along Moraga Way, with a meandering path, comparable to what the country club has done."

Certain elements particularly appealed to the commissioners, such as the fact that the project will be LEED Gold, with solar panels providing energy to the homes, and a proposed trail along the creek that borders part of the development. They asked for some modifications such as additional guest parking, a play area for kids, and not allowing access to the development directly from Moraga Way to mitigate traffic impacts.

The project will come back to the Planning Commission and Design Review Board for final approval. If it is determined to be compliant with the Moraga Center Specific Plan, no Environmental Impact Review will be required. This is the third high-density housing project that the Planning Department has been actively working on in recent months; the MCSP projects the eventual construction of 700 new housing units in the downtown area.

Moraga School District Issues Public Apology

... continued from page A5

"We (are also) sorry about our initial response to one lawsuit. We made a terrible mistake by including two defenses that were entirely inappropriate. We never believed that the victims in these cases bear any responsibility for the abuse they suffered. We are committed to making sure it cannot happen again.

"Insuring the safety of our children will become the cornerstone of all the work we do, as long as we are a district," MacNulty concluded. He introduced the members of the Student Safety Committee, created by the district at the end of last school year and comprised of parents and district staff, who presented the results of their work.

Parent and committee member Jim Obsitnik outlined the training staff would go through twice a year regarding children's safety and mandatory reporting. Rebecca Eirich reported on information the district is providing to parents through its website and conferences, and on the search for adequate curriculum to empower children. It was also indicated that the committee would discuss possible barriers to reporting with teachers and staff.

The district is proposing to sanction staff members who do not report suspicion of abuse by noting in a former employee's personnel file that he or she should not be rehired.

Ryan Cunnane, Kristin's brother-in-law, told the school board, "You cannot change the past, it is the student today and the student of tomorrow who need your help, make sure they're protected. The only way to do it is to investigate how Correa and Witters (the two abusive teachers) were able to hide in the open, how they slipped through the cracks, who knew what when." He concluded by saying that his family, knowing the pain that comes from abuse, would do anything to make sure it never happens again.

When asked after the meeting why the district had not offered an apology sooner, Burns replied that dealing with litigation was challenging and can occupy the full focus of a board or any defendant. "The statement Charles (MacNulty) read was from our hearts and I hope it wasn't diminished for not having come immediately in what has been a difficult process," he said.

Dexter Louie Resigns from School Board

Just days after being re-elected to the Moraga School Board, Dr. Dexter Louie resigned his position. In a recent interview with *Lamorinda Weekly*, Louie indicated that his decision to resign was linked to the developments in the sexual abuse scandal. "There were so many complex issues, and I can't disclose a great deal because of the pending litigation and privacy concerns," he said. "I thought about not running again, but Mr. (Dennis) Kelleher had already indicated he was not running for re-election, and I felt experience was needed on the board." Louie wouldn't say what changed between the time he decided to run again and the time he resigned. He was aware of the Cunnane suit when he decided to run, "and the newspapers said she was at Campolindo (which is in a different school district) when the Correa abuse occurred," he said.

Recently two new, anonymous, plaintiffs came forward to accuse the district of negligence. "I have done nothing wrong," affirmed Louie. "I want to thank all those who have supported and trusted me all these years. The day after the election, I had a talk with Mr. Charles MacNulty, the vice president of the board. Later that day I made a very difficult decision, I believe the right decision for the district, to resign. It was a very painful decision, and my reasons were very personal. At some point, I hope I will be able to explain further." Louie added he loved serving on the board for 14 years and had hoped to serve one more term.

At the Nov. 13 meeting, Superintendent Bruce Burns indicated that the board would soon decide on a procedure to replace the seat left vacant by Louie's resignation. It could decide to either appoint someone or convene a special election. Three members of the community asked that Parker Colvin, who came in third place in the recent election, be appointed to the board.

A Town Reflects



Mayor Mike Metcalf presents the proclamation to Ryan Andresen. Photo Mina Lucacher

An unusual wave of emotion swept over the Moraga Town Council Nov. 14 as it presented 18-year-old Ryan Andresen with an official proclamation honoring him for the anti-bullying Tolerance Wall he installed at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School.

The council often recognizes residents or groups and it is customary for the public and council members to comment. The acts of the young man standing before them, who appeared happy and moved to be so appreciated, touched every commentator; each talked about personal challenges and suffering, recognizing the fabric that weaves us all together in our strengths, weaknesses, and regrets. The 288 tiles of the Tolerance Wall were made by students, teachers and staff. *S.Braccini*

State of the Town



Mayor Mike Metcalf recently presented the annual State of the Town address to a large crowd gathered at the Moraga Country Club. There were no surprises. Metcalf said that last year's big concern was roads—how to fix them and where to find the money to pay for it—and next year's first task will be to implement the road repair plan made possible by voter approval of Measure K. The event also featured recognition of the many volunteers serving on town boards, committees and commissions. *S.Braccini*

Photo Mina Lucacher

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Two Orinda Residents Honored at Contra Costa Council Philanthropy Awards

Submitted by Molly Walker



Kay Aaker
 Photos Robert Temple Photography



Judy Lazarus

More than 310 people attended the Contra Costa Council's 2012 Contra Costa Philanthropy Awards breakfast celebration Nov. 8 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Concord to honor eight award recipients, including Orinda residents Kay Aaker and Judy Lazarus.

Aaker, who was awarded Outstanding Volunteer of the Year, has been volunteering with Hospice of the East Bay over the past 28 years, clocking more than 750 volunteer hours since 2004. A retired grade school teacher for over 40 years, she has also volunteered for Meals on Wheels, Caring Hands at John Muir Hospital and the American Cancer Society. "She positively and creatively impacts at least one other person's life every day, and she does it with dignity, grace and style," noted the Council at this year's event. Last year, Aaker earned an award from the Culture to Culture Foundation for extraordinary voluntary service within Contra Costa County.

Lazarus, who was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award, founded the Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center in Martinez in 1993, moving to its present location in Orinda in 1996. Serving Alameda and Contra Costa counties, the center offers therapeutic horseback riding for children with disabilities. She started the program at a borrowed barn on borrowed horses, with only two students and herself as the instructor. Through 18 years of commitment and energy, the center now has seven part-time instructors, a licensed physical therapist and five program-owned therapy horses. It serves 48 students each week, with a wait-list for services. More than 120 volunteers work at the center weekly, including many teens whom Judy has recruited from area high schools.

Contra Costa TV will air the awards breakfast program at 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 22 and Monday, Nov. 26. For more information about the Contra Costa Council, visit www.contracostacouncil.com.

Kiwanis Installs 2012-13 Officers

Submitted by Stan Holcenberg



Kiwanis Lt. Governor Cherice Gilliam installs 2012-13 officers, from left: Secretary Mike Metcalf, 2nd Vice President Gloria Eive, Treasurer Barbara Van Sickle, and President Graig Crossley. Not pictured - 1st Vice President Jason Evans.

Kiwanis California-Nevada-Hawaii Division 26 Lt. Governor, Cherice Gilliam, conducted the installation of the officers and board members at the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley's annual Installation Dinner Sept. 27. The master of ceremonies was early Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley member, and 1999 Moraga Citizen of the Year, Dan Rego.

Graig Crossley, current Hacienda Foundation president and former Moraga mayor, was installed as president. Other officers include 1st Vice President Jason Evans, 2nd Vice Pres-

ident Gloria Eive, Secretary Mike Metcalf, Treasurer Barbara Van Sickle, and Past President Karen Reed.

Mike Metcalf was presented with the 2011-12 Kiwanian of the Year award by last year's winner, Bob Reynolds. The award is given to an individual who is very active in the club's fundraising and service projects, and who fosters the efforts of Kiwanis in the community. Metcalf has been club secretary for many years. In addition, he has served as mayor of Moraga twice, been on the Moraga Planning Commission, and has

served in many other government and community service organizations.

Many Kiwanis members are very involved in town activities. During the holiday season each year, members manage a See's Candy store in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center, and they recently participated in the building of the Rancho Laguna Park play structure. The local Kiwanis Club contributes a significant amount of money each year for scholarships and to local agencies that focus on improving the lives of children.

NCL Shares High Tea with Moraga Royal Residents

Submitted by Grace Southwick



Seventeen members of Lamorinda National Charity League's Class of 2015 and 49 residents of Moraga Royal gathered together and shared a homemade assortment of finger sandwiches, scones, sweet

treats as well as wonderful conversation Nov. 4 at the Moraga Royal assisted living facility. Following high tea, the residents enjoyed a performance and a sing along with songs from the musicals Guys and Dolls

and Annie. The annual tradition and is a special opportunity for the teens to spend time with their Moraga Royal neighbors. The National Charity League is a mother daughter philanthropic organization.

Community Service

Grant for Ballet-Inspired Senior Events

By Cathy Tyson



Back row, from left: Diablo Ballet Development Coordinator Erika Johnson, LCF President Teresa Gerring, Diablo Ballet dancer David Fonnegra, Diablo Ballet Artistic Director Lauren Jonas, LCF Assistant Treasurer & Grants Committee member Laurie Baker, and dancers Robert Dekkers and Mayo Sugano. Front row: dancers Rosselyn Ramirez, Derek Sakakura, Hiromi Yamazaki, Edward Stegge. Photo Melissa Ridenour

Grandma in a tutu? Not quite – sneakers and regular attire will be just fine for the free events coming this summer, sponsored by a grant from the Lafayette Community Foundation to the Diablo Ballet.

"Diablo Ballet is thrilled to bring the power of dance to Lafayette," said Diablo Ballet Artistic Director Lauren Jonas. "This free program will offer seated movement exercises [for seniors] lead by Diablo Ballet dancers, along with classic dance movies. We look forward to entertaining and enriching the lives of our wonderful friends in Lafayette!"

A check was recently presented to Jonas to begin the part-

nership. The Lafayette Community Foundation is all about charitable giving for the residents of Lafayette, promoting civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of the city.

The free Diablo Ballet Movie Matinee is more than just the screening of an award-winning film. Before the lights dim, "Diablo Ballet's Artistic Director will discuss fascinating facts about the making of the movie, including insight into the dance styles and dancers featured in the film. Diablo Ballet dancers will lead the seniors in a series of gentle, seated stretches and mild exercises after the film," explained Diablo Ballet Development Coordinator Erika Johnson.

SANDRA TOM'S SUCCESS STORY

Sandra Tom of Orinda tells her Living Lean story in her own words.

"After a lifetime of being naturally slim, my metabolism started to slow down with age. I could no longer stay in shape with moderate exercise alone nor could I just eat what I pleased without gaining weight.

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by Sheena

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Samira Says

Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

Helping you be the Caregiver

I met Jody in a doctor's office waiting area—both there for different reasons, when we began a casual conversation. I told her what I did and who I worked for. She then asked if we provided any home care services because her husband (who was next to her) was going to be having cardiac surgery and she needed some help with bathing and incision bandage changing, but that she would do the majority of the caregiving. Needless to say I was shocked! At that point I took the opportunity to educate her on what is available to her husband and how it could help her as the primary caregiver.

Caring for a post-hospital loved one can be emotionally and physically draining. Successful intervention to prevent stress often relies on the ability of the caregiver to "take a break". Those caregivers' in charge of the day in and day out needs of their loved ones may forget to care for themselves, and that could jeopardize the caregivers' health.

I told Jody about how our cardiac recovery services use an individualized approach to deliver medical and rehabilitative care to patients with cardiac diseases or after surgery. Our team works with the patient, family and their physician to develop an individualized treatment program. These programs are designed to assist patients in reaching their highest level of quality of life and helping them return back home with the knowledge and skills needed to remain independent.

There is a lot to manage for a post-surgical patient and can be a burden to the caregiver that might not have the skills, knowledge or time needed to care for their ill loved one. Most often after a surgery patients have physical restrictions, new medication and new signs and symptoms to look out for or monitor—sometimes you just have to have the skills to protect your loved one and yourself.

Our interdisciplinary team will focus on your individualized care plan along with the hand on experts like our 24 hour RN's, Physical and Occupational therapist. Our licensed nurses and therapist can do caregiver training and education before their transition back home. We do not only focus on the patients' inpatient needs but also make sure those patients and their caregivers' have the needed resources available to them after their discharge. We want everyone's discharge back into community to be safe and successful and that includes a healthy and educated caregiver.

If you or a loved one are going to have surgery or just want to be prepared for an unexpected medical event please feel free to contact me for more information. You should be aware of all the resources and option that are available to you for a successful outcome. We are here to help you get back to your life!

For more information please visit www.manorcare.com.
For a short video visit us on YouTube: www.youtube.com/hcmanorcare

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Lamorinda's Election Winners

Local election results as of Nov. 17, 10:19 a.m. with all precincts reporting, per Contra Costa Elections Division. At press time results remain semi-official. Winners are in boldface, (I) denotes incumbent.

Lafayette City Council (three seats)

Mike Anderson (I) – 8,180 votes (30.38 percent of voters)
Traci Reilly – 7,679 votes (28.52 percent of voters)
Mark Mitchell – 4,839 votes (17.97 percent of voters)
Robert Lobron – 3,851 votes
Yolanda 'Jolie' Vega – 2,284 votes

Lafayette School Board (two seats)

Jean Follmer – 7,198 votes (34.31 percent of voters)
Nancy Wallace – 5,806 votes (27.67 percent of voters)
Quinlan Tom – 5,589 votes
Don R. Wolff – 2,318 votes

Moraga Measure K

Yes – 5861 votes (70.55 percent of voters)
No – 2447 votes

Moraga Town Council (three seats)

Roger Wykle – 4,711 votes (26.24 percent of voters)
Mike Metcalf (I) – 4,016 votes (22.37 percent of voters)
Phillip Arth – 3,863 votes (21.52 percent of voters)
Karen Mendonca (I) – 2,845 votes
Seth Freeman – 2,468 votes

Moraga School Board (two seats)

Shari Simon – 4,850 votes (40.57 percent of voters)
Dexter Louie (I) – 3,937 votes (32.93 percent of voters)*
Parker Colvin – 3,142 votes
*Dexter Louie resigned after the election (see page A5)

Orinda Measure L

Yes – 7,415 votes (69.43 percent of voters)
No – 3,265 votes

Orinda City Council (two seats)

Steve Glazer (I) – 6,605 votes (42.68 percent of voters)
Victoria Smith (I) – 5,865 votes (37.90 percent of voters)
Linda Delehunt – 2,903 votes

Orinda School Board (two seats)

Matt Moran (I) – 4,865 votes (32.72 percent of voters)
Sarah Genn Butler – 3,625 votes (24.38 percent of voters)
Bekki Van Voorhis-Gilbert – 3,291 votes
Jason Lurie – 3,048 votes

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... continued from page A4

Many cited the Sonsara development across the street and to the north with its large greenery buffer between the

homes and the street. "This is not Sonsara," said Kerr, "this is multifamily housing. But we propose to create a large green space along Moraga Way, with a meandering path, comparable to what the country club has done."

Certain elements particularly appealed to the commissioners, such as the fact that the project will be LEED Gold, with solar panels providing energy to the homes, and a proposed trail along the creek that borders part of the development. They asked for some modifications such as additional guest parking, a play area for kids, and not allowing access to the devel-

opment directly from Moraga Way to mitigate traffic impacts.

The project will come back to the Planning Commission and Design Review Board for final approval. If it is determined to be compliant with the Moraga Center Specific Plan, no Environmental Impact Review will be required. This is the third high-density housing project that the Planning Department has been actively working on in recent months; the MCSPP projects the eventual construction of 700 new housing units in the downtown area.



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Thankful for Life Saving Emergency Medical Help

... continued from page A1

"At the hospital, the doctor said, 'you are damn lucky.' There's a less than 10 percent chance of survival in the best of circumstances," said Engelhardt of the 98 percent blockage of his heart's main artery.

Contra Costa County Emergency Medical Services Nurse Pam Dodson commented, "the stars aligned," that so many community safety personnel just happened to be at the Art & Wine Festival at that moment.

Lafayette Community Services Officer Cathy Surges-Moscato and Sergeant Dan Nugent responded to the scene immediately, where some bystanders were already giving CPR. Surges-Moscato grabbed the automated external defibrillator while officers Jacqui Dennison and Debra Williams continued with CPR, then the defibrillator was activated three times until Engelhardt was revived.

Engelhardt shared with the audience that when he was "a young pup" he played professional baseball with the California Angels. At every game, he'd hear the National Anthem – his favorite song. Recently, post-heart at-

tack he was at a Stanford football game, heard the National Anthem and just started to lose it. "I'm so glad to be alive – every time I hear that song, I'll be thinking of you (the responders who saved his life). Thank you for all that you did," he said, adding that he has so much to be thankful for - a lovely wife, kids, grandkids, Christmas, Thanksgiving, the Giants and A's.

The city officially recognized and honored all those involved in this gentleman's survival: The Lafayette Police Department's Dennison, Williams and Surges-Moscato, Contra Costa Fire Protection District Crew Captain Beaty, firefighters Palant, Smith, Nelson, Hern and Ingram, and American Medical Response paramedics Gomez and Caluya.

Engelhardt concluded in a note sent to Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen, "I'm doing great, eating healthier, walking three miles a day again, enjoying the A's and the World Series, Stanford Football games on idyllic fall days and looking forward to the holidays with my family."

Thanksgiving Traditions of Yore



Thanksgiving is a time of tradition – and lots of food, for that matter. Families and friends gather around tables and fireplaces, in living rooms, and maybe even in front of TVs to watch a game or two. One tradition in the Borrowman household is to craft limericks while the turkey is roasting and recite the occasionally clever works around the holiday dinner table. The *Lamorinda Weekly* staff took the challenge to write a few of their own. We hope you enjoy them, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

“Lamorinda Thanksgiving”

A handsome young turkey named Tom,
Handled life with the greatest aplomb.
When faced with an ax,
Which he named “turkey tax,”
Took off running...and dinner was gone.

Mashed potatoes and gravy and mince,
Enough food to make anyone wince.
We first, of course buy it,
Then get others to try it,
Each Thanksgiving is fit for a prince!

The Pilgrims from olde Plymouth Rock,
Their first winter depleted food stocks.
When they tired of jerky,
The Natives brought turkey,
Which they ate from handmade earthen crocks.

Myles Standish, a Pilgrim from yore,
Wore his shoes, though they scuffed up the floors.
Cried “I’m having no luck”ll,
Will someone please buckle,
My boots or I’ll be sent outdoors!”

Area hillsides, in spring,
With the sounds of wild turkeys do ring.

But approaching November,
Gobbles die off like embers,
Somehow those dumb birds use their wings!

The squash that you carved Halloween,
Three weeks later might look a bit green.
The insides – all goop,
Make a great orange soup,
To be served from a pumpkin tureen!

What may follow the Macy’s parade,
Is your uncle’s long football tirade.
The relatives hellish,
Your cranberries relish,
Though they seem an unending brigade.

Families and neighbors and friend,
So much food that each table will bend.
Now this...this is living,
A Happy Thanksgiving,
To all Lamorindans... Amen!

C. Dausman

“The Feast”

Hungry families hailing from Lamo,
Table laden with items de carbo.
So ready to dish,
Calories delish,
Yes please, I’d love more swiss chard, Joe.

Novice chefs afraid of cranberry,
Few guests pitching in as pie-fairy.
With help from Grandma,
Yikes, the turkey’s raw!
Preparing the feast not so scary.

C. Tyson

“Memories”

Grew up loving my Mom’s candied yams,
Served lovingly with turkeys and hams.
A part of our holiday food medley,
their caloric effect was deadly -
Turning to piano legs my formerly nice gams.

L. Snyder

“Foreigners’ Thanksgiving”

Foreigners had heard all year long,
Of a tradition proud and strong.
When at last time came to party,
Everyone’s with their family.

Downtown aimlessly they wander,
And finally found each others.
They did purchased the last turkey,
And found in friends new family.

S. Braccini

“Giving Thanks”

There once was a table so round,
Where family and friends could be found.

They ate and they drank,
After each giving thanks,
For what wonders in life did abound.

One boy sat with a smile on his mug,
In his chair he did wriggle and shrug.

Then he blurted it fast,
Scared his moment would pass,
"I give thanks for my family – and bugs!"

J. Wake

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A Transportation GEM: Going Electric in Lamorinda

By Cathy Dausman



Orinda residents Justin Joss, 15, and driver Jason, 17, enjoy a moment in their family's GEM. Photos Cathy Dausman

Jon and Allison Joss of Orinda have four sons and three cars, but they still have a handle on their gas and auto insurance bills thanks to a GEM, or Global Electric Motorcar. "I would estimate we save about \$500 to \$1,000 a year when we insure our three teenagers using a GEM as their primary car," Allison said. A GEM looks as if it belongs on the golf course. In fact, it does belong on the golf course, but it is also fully street legal.

In accordance with 1998 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration rules, the car is equipped with

headlamps, tail lamps, stop lamps, reflectors, mirrors, a parking brake, a windshield, and seat belts.

Jon Joss golfs, so his GEM includes an after-market golf rack. Allison Joss chose the color red when she and her husband bought the two-speed model E-4 in 2007 from a now-defunct Martinez Chrysler dealer. Their oldest son, Alex, was 15 when his parents bought the car five years ago, and he found it "embarrassing." Younger siblings Andy, now 19, and Jason, 17, thought the GEM was cool. It seats four and its new "souped-up" battery allows what son Jason calls an

"exhilarating top speed" of 30 to 35 mph, depending on terrain. The car gets 20 to 40 miles on a single overnight charge and has 5,000 miles on its odometer.

"That's pretty good," said Kregg Williams, owner of California Speed Sports in Livermore. "Considering the average driver puts just five miles on the car in a day, it takes a while to get that mileage."

Williams said Chrysler built the first GEM cars 10 years ago as a "gas credit" to offset their production of larger, gas-guzzling automobiles. They sold only 50,000 units nation-

wide. Then Polaris bought the GEM division, and Williams sees almost limitless potential for the Low Speed, or Neighborhood Electric Vehicle. He says they're perfect for campuses, apartment complexes, parking structures and gated communities. "Livermore Labs has lots of GEM cars, as does Stanford University," he said. Brother Dominic Berardelli of Saint Mary's College drives a Ford Think electric cart. He began using his personally-named "BroMobile" seven or eight years ago when he had difficulty walking across campus. Trinka Courtemanche, campus workflow coordinator, says the college owns a second Think and six other carts made by EZ Go.

Orinda Country Club has the Precedent by Club Car for use only on its golf course. Moraga Country Club members drive carts made by

Yamaha.

Rossmoor has a rental fleet of 30, also Yamaha-made, said Director of Golf Mark Heptig. Some Rossmoor residents drive their own privately owned low speed vehicles within Rossmoor, said Communications Manager Maureen O'Rourke.

If there is a down side to owning a GEM, Jon Joss said it means they have to park another car outside. "The soft side doors are fairly easy to take on and off, but if they were easier, that would be a huge plus."

And Jason's friends sometimes "relocated" the GEM when he drove it to baseball practice. Yet even without a heated cab and minus power steering the GEM is the Joss family go-to car for running local errands. Justin, 15, the youngest, doesn't have his license, but knows he too will drive the GEM.



Brother Dominic Berardelli drives a Ford Think, nicknamed the "Bro-Mobile"

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Creating Community through Conversations in French and Italian

By Laurie Snyder



Nicole Collins teaches exclusively at the Orinda Community Center. From left: Jerry Merrill, Gerry Azaro, Nicole Collins, and Margaret Mahoney.

Nicole Collins is a gardener – but not in the sense one usually imagines. Collins is a gardener of dreams.

A native French and Italian speaker, she was born in Milan and moved with her family to France when she was 14. Eventually, she met her husband – a Californian – and moved to Orinda in the early 1990s. While raising her daughter, she began building her reputation as one of the most rare of teachers – one who is able to coax students out of their shells to not only enjoy the sub-

jects they are studying, but to try things they thought were impossible.

Collins, who holds a degree in comparative literature, has been presenting conversation classes at the Orinda Community Center since her earliest Lamorinda days. So beloved by her students, she now teaches beginning through advanced level Italian and French year round. "My mission is to create a friendly and relaxed experience for people to learn or brush-up on French or Italian, the way these languages are spoken today," she says. Fall, winter, and spring sessions are 10 to 12 weeks long; summer sessions, five to six weeks.

Many of her pupils come from as far away as Marin; others are from Berkeley, Danville, and Rossmoor. "At the moment, I have three language teachers in my class," she says. Physicians and opera buffs are also big enrollees; still others are professionals hoping to develop Italian or French skills to help them succeed in the corporate world, or native French and Italian speakers wanting to maintain their language skills while living among their English-speaking neighbors.

"Basically, my class is a brain gym," she says. Participants "just want to keep their brains elastic and ready to go." Her oldest student is 89.

Her classes are also very popular with travelers. Having the skills to get out of hotel rooms to interact with new people, catch a train, hop on a bus at the spur of the moment, or even just sit in a quiet café in a quaint town somewhere soaking up the atmosphere while bantering with local residents has helped learners like pro-

fessional photographer Ohlen Alexander to become even more outgoing than usual.

Several have told Collins, "This has been on my bucket list." While researching family histories, others have met cousins, forming new bonds that only a common language can provide. Collins will even help students interested in genealogy to help translate census records, old letters, and other documents uncovered in their research.

Small study groups form, classmates get together at the coffee shop below the Orinda Library, friends are made. Says Bobby Deibert, "The French IV class with Nicole Collins is the highlight of my week. We have a wonderful group of very interesting people and Nicole is a great and talented professor."

"It's become a little community," says Collins. "We have movie nights." They even organize potluck dinners and holiday parties at each other's homes. "A lot of my students come back year after year – so I have to make it fun for them. It keeps me on my toes – it keeps my lessons fresh."

Collins and her students also keep in touch via email and Facebook. No textbook purchase is required. Best of all, there are no grades or tests – just a little bit of friendly competition between study buddies. Although she hopes for fluency from her students, Collins realizes that this is not always the goal for the participants in her classes. "All it takes is to have just a little bit of a language," she says.

New sessions start in January. For details, visit www.nicolelan-guage.com.

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A Disturbing Trend: Teens Seek Cheaper High with Heroin

By Lou Fancher

Lamorinda kids are graduating in record numbers, but not in the way most parents dream of – except in their worst nightmares.

Kids in this “A.P.” course are light years beyond sneaking a sip of dad’s beer and well past perusing the family medicine cabinet for prescription drugs. They have moved on to heroin.

Dr. Alex Stalcup, medical director of the New Leaf Treatment Center (NLTC) in Lafayette, has seen about a dozen teens in the Lamorinda area addicted to heroin, but insists the number of kids using the drug isn’t the point. “We’re seeing the end of a disease process; a treatment failure dating back to 2004.”

The fiasco is a cascading world of trouble, he suggests, with children as young as 15 resorting to lying, stealing, prostitution and dealing to support their habit. “They’re getting it from friends, Oakland, Pittsburgh, the waterfront side of Martinez, and Antioch, because it comes up I-5 and that’s the first place it’s dropped off,” he says.

Douglas Bodin, CEO of Los Altos-based The Bodin Group, with an East Bay office in Lafayette, says his clients are local, national and even international. “While opiates were a factor in one of 20 clients many years ago, it is now one out of every two or three. Treatment providers all report to us an explosion in their patients with opiate and heroin addiction.”

Although there is a stigma about heroin, Stalcup and Bodin say the drug’s low cost and intense high are irresistible.

“OxyContin is \$300 a day. Heroin is \$20. It’s one of the most dangerous drugs in the world,” Stalcup says. “You have to go through a sickness when you stop and each time it’s worse. You realize you can’t stand detoxing again because it’s intolerable.”

Instead, they go from snorting to other means of administering the drug. Street heroin in Lamorinda is

tarry, so kids dilute it with Visine and put it in their eyes or drip it on their tongues. Soon, it’s harder to get high. They begin to smoke it.

“At the end of the road, you go to the needle,” Stalcup warns.

Ask both expert journeymen where the stop signs are when a kid is addicted to heroin, and they respond in unison: “Missing.”

If Stalcup and Bodin could say one thing to parents and schools, it might be “Wake up!”

“Schools need to understand this epidemic,” Bodin insists. “It is widespread and complex, and one-shot simple solutions won’t work. Looking the other way and avoiding confronting their students is doing them a grave disservice.”

Stalcup is less reserved. “Schools should sit down with the kids and say, ‘We see sloppiness, poor grades, throwing up in the hall. What do you want to do?’ If they saw a kid demonstrating the symptoms of diabetes, what do you think they should do? Ignore it?” he asks.

Parents are equally responsible. “They can stop ignoring it. It’s mind-numbing to me how these upscale parents can say, ‘But his grades are ok,’ or ‘She’s a really good kid, she wouldn’t lie to me.’ It’s willful ignorance!” Stalcup exclaims.

Moments later, emphasizing that the family is “going through hell” in these circumstances, he softens, but argues, “I speak in neon, but these kids are showing extreme deviations.”

While Stalcup is skeptical about parents who send their drug addicted teens away to treatment camps or institutions, Bodin, whose company

specializes in designing treatment plans that include these options, has a different attitude. “If a child is placed in ‘the system,’ there are risks of exposure to other, worse off kids,” he acknowledges. “But there are other approaches and treatment options to minimize that risk. The most effective ones will address the family situation and break the codependent lifestyle that prevents sustained recovery.”

Stalcup is hopeful that a recent study out of UCLA will lead to new, more effective treatment.

Suboxone, made by Britain’s Reckitt Benckiser and used as a detox step-down or in long term opiate replacement therapy, became available for use in the U.S. in 1990. The UCLA study supports the hope he is placing in the drug.

“It’s like half an opiate,” Stalcup says. “If you use too much, it will make you sick, so you can’t abuse it.” The problem, he insists, lies with health care providers who do not understand that a patient must stay on the drug for a year to derive the 97 percent success rate studies have shown is possible. “If you stop under a year, there’s a 100 percent relapse. The key is to get off in such a way that you don’t have recurrence.”

Until the pharmaceutical possibilities expand, or universal health care covers more of the expenses related to treating alcohol and drug addiction in teens, Stalcup’s answer to one question – the shortest answer he gave – could motivate parents and schools in Lamorinda to pay attention.

Asked if he’d had a patient die this year due to an overdose of heroin, Stalcup says, “Yes, two.”

Resources for Families

For more information, to get help, or to inform your family or school about drug addiction, visit:

- <http://www.nltc.com/>
- <http://www.thebodingroup.com/>
- <http://medicineabuseproject.org/>
- <http://harmreduction.org/our-work/overdose-prevention/>

Goodwin’s Dream of a Princess at the Paramount Theater

By Sophie Braccini



Jonathan Goodwin improvises a piece on his concertina.

Photo Sophie Braccini

If you don’t know Jonathan Goodwin yet, you likely won’t forget him once you meet him. A fierce emergency preparedness advocate and talented clock repair specialist, the tall Canyon resident is probably one of the only middle-aged men in the area sporting a magnificent, long dark mane, coupled with a long beard – a look that can intimidate. But as soon as the soft-spoken and articulate gentleman starts talking about one of his passions, even the stiffest of Lamorindans succumb to his charm.

An accomplished musician, Goodwin composed a touching ballad called *Dream of a Princess* that will be sung by the Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir in December.

“I decided to follow music because it is a context within which I had the clearest sense of transcendence,” says Goodwin. Music has been part of his life since his formative years. Raised in New England, Goodwin was exposed to fiddle music before learning the instrument himself. Later in high school the baritone joined the choir and continued studying classical music at the University of Maryland.

“I was close to New York City, so I tried a career as a professional singer,” says Goodwin, who worked as a chorister for a few years. “I sang under the direction of many,” he remembers. “Most

were fine, but one in 10 times you got to work with someone exceptional, and then the experience became a wonderful thing.” He still remembers the talent of Zubin Mehta and Leonard Bernstein.

“These maestros pushed their art further,” he says. “In music you deal with something that has invisible roots, back over centuries. You can draw into the unconscious in ways that you can’t with other things. The esthetic aspect also brings out the idea of balancing, and refining to reveal more and more of the beauty. You end up engaging in life at a deeper level, you excavate your own capacity to perceive beauty. The more you do it, the richer your life becomes.”

This deep connection was felt one Sunday morning at a Sausalito farmers’ market by Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir Director Bob Geary and his wife, Sue, as they heard Goodwin play the English concertina.

“I was there to play with a friend of mine, and we started playing one of my pieces, *Dream of a Princess*,” Goodwin says. The music came to him while driving on a cold January day in 1995 when he heard the radio announcement of Rose Kennedy’s death. “The melody just came to me then,” he remembers. “I pulled over and started taking note of it.”

When she heard the tune, Sue Geary approached Goodwin and asked if she could arrange it for the choir. He agreed, but as time passed the Gearys were busy with other endeavors, so Goodwin offered to do it himself.

“I went to a volume of William Blake, and found a poem called *The Land of Dreams*, a dialogue between a father and a son as the mother died. It’s simple and fits well with music,” says Goodwin. “The arrangement work went quite quickly; it wanted to happen.”

The Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir immediately took to

the piece and sang it during their tour in Mexico. This holiday season, they will sing *Dream of a Princess* Saturday, Dec. 1 at Saint Paul Episcopal Church in Oakland and Sunday, Dec. 2 at Old First Church located at 1751 Sacramento St. in San Francisco. The Piedmont Choir will also join the Oakland East Bay Symphony Friday, Dec. 14 for a ‘choralpalooza’ at the Paramount Theater.

For more information, call the Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir at (510) 547-4441.



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Hollywood Stars Warm Chilly Fall Day at 15th Annual California Independent Film Festival

By Laurie Snyder



Film icon Connie Stevens positively sparkled at the 15th Annual California Independent Film Festival. Photos Ohlen Alexander

Orinda theatres recently, but they warmed quickly as they basked in the glow of Hollywood screen legends, Connie Stevens and Dawn Wells, at special California Independent Film Festival events Nov. 10.

Baby boomers and a new generation of fans enjoyed a conversation with Wells Saturday morning at the Rheem Theatre, then a select group of 25 movie lovers dined and dished with the two stars at Michael's Ristorante in Moraga. Afterward, back at the theatre, the thermometer climbed when Stevens relived her steamy kiss with heartthrob, Troy Donahue, in the 1961 film *Parrish*. Noting that Donahue was "the hottest thing in the world at that time," Stevens then let fans in on a secret: "We worked together so many times that we were like brother and sister." They remained devoted friends throughout their lives. Stevens also recalled times with America's first and best moon walker, Neil Armstrong, and comedy giants, George Burns, Bob Hope, and Jerry Lewis. "I got to work with two of my own idols – Eve Arden and Sid Caesar" in the 1982 sequel to *Grease*, she said. Stevens' two newest projects as a director-producer-screen-

writer, are *Prairie Bones* and *Saving Grace B. Jones* (coming this December).

Later that same evening, Stevens and Wells received CAIFF awards honoring their achievements in film and television. To find out how you can become involved in the excitement next year, visit www.caiff.org.



No longer in the shadow of the professor on Gilligan's Island as Maryann, author-actress-film company executive Dawn Wells shares a moment with CAIFF founder, Derek Zemrak, before receiving her SLATE Award.

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Top Three from Iron Filmmaker Contest



Photo Thomas Pappas

After an exhausting 24 hours to complete their three-minute films for the Iron Filmmaker Contest, one of the components of the California Independent Film Festival, teams gathered to watch everyone's finished products at the Rheem Theatre. An amazing range of unique films came from the secret ingredient concept "Trick-or-Treat."

"Congratulations to everyone," said organizer Adam Reeves, explaining 24 teams set out with cameras and imagination, only 22 returned to submit their films. And the top three teams are:

First place – "L.I.F.E."
Second Place – "Done in 23"
Third Place – "i.t.t.y.w.y.b.u.d."
 C. Tyson

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Fourth Bore Construction Site Visit Planned

By Cathy Dausman



Photo provided

"It's not every day a tunnel is built in your area," said Fourth Bore Public Information Officer Ivy Morrison. Morrison nearly lost her voice during a recent af-

ternoon phone interview, but that was understandable. Since coming on the job in March 2011, Morrison has given or arranged for more than 80 educational

talks about the Caldecott Tunnel's latest project.

"Since we can't bring the people to the tunnel, we're bringing the tunnel to the peo-

ple," she said.

Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, church groups, professional associations, libraries – you name it, and Morrison has brought them a PowerPoint presentation and collection of rocks, fossils, and material samples used in the fourth bore construction.

Chuck Lay heard Morrison speak at a St. Monica Church men's group in Moraga. Lay is retired, but still drives the tunnel at least three times a week. He found the site history and geology interesting and thought the boring machine was high-tech enough that "it would work well in a Star Wars movie."

Now thanks to Orinda Parks and Recreation, a small group of Lamorindans can visit the tunnel construction site Nov. 28. Morrison emphasized this is only a construction site visit; due to Cal/OSHA restrictions participants will not be allowed into the tunnel.

"Most people seem to be thrilled just to be able to see the Fourth Bore Project from this vantage point, but sometimes people are disappointed, because they think they are going into the tunnel," she said. Participants must be at least 18 and should wear long pants, shirts with sleeves, and protective footwear. Hard hats, vests, and safety goggles will be provided. To register for the site visit, call (925) 254-2445 or go online to <http://tinyurl.com/a44pgxz>, bar-code 13737.

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Local Mom Wins National Essay Contest

Submitted by Candace Morton

Lafayette stay-at-home mom, Candace Morton, won a national essay contest sponsored by Oprah Magazine and Chase Blueprint this summer, and on the heels of her 45th birthday, and 20th wedding anniversary, she and her husband, Greg, were whisked off to New York for a professional photo shoot for 'O' Magazine. Due to the

poor economy, negative home equity, and dwindling investments, Morton wanted to find a way to take control of her life. A few years ago, she started the "College of Candace," which consisted of working with a foreign exchange non-profit, starting her Mary Kay business (learning accounting, sales, and marketing in the process), taking French

lessons, online screenwriting courses, and golf. Her essay about her experience was one of two chosen out of more than 1,500 entries. The first of three articles was featured in the November issue of 'O' Magazine. You can also read more about Morton online at www.oprah.com/packages/chase-blueprint-for-a-better-you.html.

Eclipse Soccer Club Focuses on Leadership

Submitted by Stacy Giglio



Photo provided

Twenty boys and girls, ages 10 to 12, from the East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club, recently participated in a nine-week leadership development program called LEAP (Leadership for Eclipse Athletes Program). The goals of this new program were to help Eclipse players understand what leadership means, develop their own unique leadership style, and create strategies for applying their leadership style within their team and club.

"LEAP taught us how to be a leader and find confidence," said Eclipse U11 player Alyssa Runckel. "I enjoyed every session of LEAP. The teachers always had fun games and ice breakers."

The curriculum, which involved lots of games and interactive activities to engage the student soccer players, focused on several themes including: motivation, responsibility, honesty, communication, compassion and team bonding.

"I learned how to handle problems like a leader and not shy away from difficult situations," commented Giovanni Gasperini, a player from the U11 boys' team.

At one of the final meetings, students were put into groups and matched up with younger Eclipse players, called "little buddies." The LEAP students taught their little buddies about LEAP and then created a group presentation about one of the leadership themes they had learned. Each team, along with their little buddies, gave presentations to the LEAP class at their meeting.

"Parents talk a lot about the amount of time their kids spend with coaches playing sports, and how they wish coaches would also focus on life skills and sportsmanship during their many hours of practice," says Stacy Giglio, parent of an Eclipse U11 player. "LEAP is a welcomed addition to the Eclipse program, and I hope that other sports clubs in our area can learn from LEAP and incorporate players' personal development into their programs also."

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And the Winners Are...



Photo Gladys Calendar

Dozens of chefs prepared their signature dishes and competed for top honors at this year's fourth annual Taste of St. Perpetua cooking extravaganza. This year's winners were: Chris Flitter (pictured is husband Bill) for her Apple Streusel Cheesecake; Graham Westphal for his Dry Rubbed Beef Fillet Sliders; Paz Enjalran for her fresh caught Salt Point Abalone; Jim Bacon for his French Cheese and Bacon Puffs.



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TEEN SCENE

The Aspirations of Teens and Their Impact on the World

By Lucy Portnoff

Artist, celebrity party planner, engineer, President of the United States – the sky's the limit for a teenager's future! When progressing through the journey of high school, teens begin to think about their plans for their careers and later lives.

While on a track to fulfill the task of finding the perfect job, many are faced with the realization that their hopes may not be entirely feasible. Certain limits such as availability of money or talent in an area of expertise may make it difficult to attain their dream job.

But supposing those limits were to be cast aside – if nothing could hold these teenagers back, what are they capable of achieving? History suggests that it is the spark of inspiration that young people bring to their work that enables them to see where others cannot.

Because teens do not have experience in their field of study, adolescents often see only what could go right as opposed to what has gone wrong in the past. They know only enough to have curiosity to engage them in their work. Without previous failures, discouragement is rare as they bring a fresh point of view and outlook.

Teens have an advantage because they are at the point in their lives where they don't have the obligations that adults do. Since most do not have to worry about being self-supportive, they are allowed to pursue their interests without thinking about the practicalities of everyday life. Teens are free to experiment with ideas to effectively contribute to society.

Acalanes High School freshman Sarah Taketa found her passion in cosmology, a branch of physics. With dreams of becoming a leading physicist and professor at Cambridge University, Taketa studies with the extreme dedication that has led so many be-

fore her to success.

"I want to be a physicist, probably a cosmologist, when I get a job because I love learning about physics – I absolutely adore discovering new, mind-bending things about the world around me, and an entire career dedicated to learning these things sounds amazing," she says.

While hard work, dedication, and intellect will play a role in her path to attaining her dream job, it is Taketa's enthusiasm and resistance to limits that will take her far. "It doesn't sound like a job to me – it sounds like doing something I love."

This statement clearly reflects the fresh perspectives that passionate people bring to the workplace. A constant infusion of new ideas by the younger generation will further advance the base of knowledge, in physics and indeed all disciplines.

Without limits, a teen's achievement potential is infinite.

Lucy Portnoff, a ninth-grader at Miramonte High School, is a member of Club Be the Star You Are!®, part of the Public Speaking and Mock Trial programs. Lucy enjoys art and music.



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Bagels for Breakfast, Anyone?

By Susie Iventosch



Cheddar-Olive Bagels

Photo Susie Iventosch

We had house guests over Labor Day who love to cook and eat, and drink good wine. One night over dinner, our friend Chris said, "Hey, how about if I make homemade bagels for breakfast one of these days?"

Homemade bagels? I never even imagined making homemade bagels before, and inquired how he, as the non-cook in the family, knew how to make bagels. He replied that he worked at two different bagel shops on Long Island when he was a student.

That explains it!

I thought this was a delightful surprise and was really excited to learn how to make bagels. Oh boy, these were the very best bagels I had ever had – crunchy on the outside and soft on the inside – absolutely delicious. Immediately, I thought of the Orinda Olive Festival and what fun it would be to demonstrate this recipe at this year's event. Unfortunately, I could not be there, but the 7th Annual Olive Festival was a huge success, in any case.

"This year's event raised \$10,000 to support outdoor environmental education for children and youth," said Kathy Barrett, a longtime volunteer for the Nature Area. "More than 400 attendees were treated to olive oil pressing by the Barrett brothers, while McCauley Olive Growers offered tastings of a variety of flavored olives and Berkeley Olive Growers of Oroville provided tastings of their award-winning olive oils."

Adults and children alike participated in olive games including an olive pit regatta, olive toss and pit spit challenge. And, of course tours of the Nature Center's heritage olive grove, planted by California's first Surveyor General, Theodore Wagner, in the 1880s, was well attended.

Wendy Shay of Herbs & Spices demonstrated how to make mini-olive brochettes, which was a real crowd pleaser. If you missed the festival this year, as I did, you can be on the lookout for the 8th Annual Olive Festival next October. Hopefully, I will be able to demonstrate the olive bagels at that event!

Cheddar-Olive Bagels

INGREDIENTS

Dough
 1 1/2 cups warm water (110-115 degrees F)
 1 tablespoon dry active yeast
 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 teaspoon dark molasses
 2 teaspoons kosher salt
 4 1/2 cups unbleached flour

Kettle Water
 6 quarts water
 1 teaspoon dark molasses
 1 teaspoon salt

Toppings
 1/2 cup Napoleon brand sliced green olives
 1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
 Or, you can also use any of the following toppings:
 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/4 cup sesame seeds
 Finely chopped garlic
 Finely chopped onion
 2 teaspoons poppy seeds
 Coarsely ground salt

DIRECTIONS

- Fill a large soup pot to within 2-3 inches of the top with water and bring to a boil. Add 1 teaspoon molasses and 1 teaspoon salt. Turn down and simmer until ready to use.
- Place yeast, sugar and water in a large bowl. Stir well and let stand, undisturbed, for about 5 minutes.
- Stir in oil, molasses and one cup of flour. Mix well. Add salt and enough remaining flour to make a stiff dough. (You may not need all of the flour.)
- Knead dough for about 8-10 minutes on a lightly floured surface. Cover and let rest for about 15 minutes.
- Divide dough into 8 even pieces and roll between palms to form each into a 10-inch long strip. Form a circle and press ends together to make a whole circle. Be sure to make a good seam.
- Place bagels on a lightly floured surface, cover and let bagels rest and rise for another 10-15 minutes. They will be slightly puffy.

- Bring water back to a boil and preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper, and sprinkle generously with cornmeal. Set aside.
- Line another baking sheet or cutting board with a kitchen towel, for placing bagels on after boiling.
- Place bagels in boiling water, two at a time, and boil for 45 seconds. Flip over with slotted spoon and continue to boil for another 45 seconds. Remove bagels from water and place on towel to drain. Repeat with remaining bagels.
- When cool, transfer bagels to baking sheets and sprinkle toppings over each. I like to place the sliced olives on first, and then generously sprinkle grated cheddar on top. Okay, then maybe a few more olives on top of that!
- Bake 15-20 minutes, or until bagels seem just baked inside and crispy on the outside.
- Cool on wire rack.

These can be sliced and frozen for quick toasting later on.

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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'Tis the Season for Festivities!



Lafayette's 2011 Hospice Tree Photo Doug Kohen

Lafayette

An Evening of Fellowship & Spiritual Music. Alex Cook and Ben Vaughan, Christian musicians from Boston and Canada, with original songs celebrating and defending spiritual identity at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 23 at the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For more info, call (925) 258-9442 or visit www.csorinda.org.

Santa's Bag Boutique. Once again, the energetic Judy Gregersen is putting together the shopping event of the season – the Santa's Bag Boutique. With over 60 vendors, some of the usual suspects as well as new folks, this is the place to shop for gifts for and from the kitchen, Christmas-themed items like personalized holiday stockings, garden and yard art, and lots of cookies and candy. Come early for best selection at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Open all weekend from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 30 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 1-2.

It's a Wonderful Life opens Dec. 1 at the Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St., Lafayette (preview performances Nov. 29 and 30). George Bailey, his life and finances in ruin, decides the world would be better off without him – until he is paid an unexpected visit. For tickets or more info, call (925) 284-5050 or visit www.townhalltheatre.com/main-stage-performances/its-a-wonderful-life.

Annual Holiday Concert and Sing-Along with the Rossmoor and Moraga Community Chorus, presented by Lafayette Senior Services from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 at the Live Oak Room of the Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. All ages are welcome at this rousing sing-along with delicious appetizers, holiday treats and a raffle. Cost: \$3 for members; \$5 for non-members.

Orinda



Wooden birdhouses by Kay Rubin will be among the many items available at the Tarabrook Holiday Boutique in Orinda. Photo Kay Rubin

Holiday Boutique Offers Unique Crafts from Local Artists. The 11th annual Tarabrook Holiday Boutique has moved its location, but is still offering one-of-a-kind hand-crafted gifts and food from over 30 local artisans Friday, Nov. 30 from noon to 8 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 1-2 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 1 Tarabrook Drive in Orinda. Formerly the Overhill Holiday Boutique, this unique crafts faire features local Lamorinda artisans, including many Matador Marketplace alumni. A percentage of the proceeds benefit the National Breast Cancer Foundation. For more information, call Jackie at (925) 254-3944 or email her at bead-smith@sbglobal.net.

Santa Holiday Photos start Friday, Nov. 30 from 1 to 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 2 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Orinda Theatre Square. Bring an ornament for Santa's tree.

Santa Comes to Orinda! The Hospice of the East Bay and Orinda Chamber of Commerce are joining forces once again to sponsor Orinda's annual Hospice Tree Lighting and holiday season kick-off from 4 to 6 pm on Saturday, Dec. 1 in front of the Bank of America at the Orinda Village Shopping Center, 31 Orinda Way. The parking area will be transformed into a pout-free zone as local school choirs warm the hearts of children and adults waiting breathlessly for Santa's arrival.

Sisters-in-Crime Holiday. If you love a good mystery, then sleuth with the scribes who'll be telling their latest tales at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1 at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, Orinda.

Young Artists to Light Up Annual Arts Council Luncheon. The Orinda Arts Council will hold its Annual Holiday Luncheon at the Orinda Country Club from noon to 2 p.m.

Two Trees, One Ceremony

Two for one Tree of Life celebration at new location in Moraga

By Cathy Tyson

While the stately oak near the Round Up Saloon in Lafayette will still be sparkling with lights, the former site of the Hospice of the East Bay Tree of Lights in the Moraga Commons is being relocated to a tree at the Moraga Country Club. There will be one celebration for both trees at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9 at 1600 St. Andrews Drive. For 26 years the Tree of Lights has been a fundraiser for this non-profit organization. Purchasing a symbolic light for \$25 honors a loved one and directly supports end-of-life patient care.

Located near a pond that will reflect the twinkling lights, the Moraga tree will be quite visible from Moraga Way, the gateway to town. The new Moraga tree is dedicated to well-known Lamorinda resident

Michael Vukelich, founder, chairman and CEO of Color Sport Nurseries, who recently passed away at age 61 after being diagnosed with brain cancer. The family used the services of Hospice of the East Bay. In addition to hospice and palliative care services, they offer support and comfort for the patient and family along with social workers, volunteers to assist as needed, massage therapists and more. Low income families never receive a bill for service, that's why fundraisers like the Tree of Lights events are so important.

The Orinda Tree ceremony will be held as usual in Orinda Village by the Bank of America – part of Orinda's community holiday celebration at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1 (see additional listing). C. Tyson

Contra Costa Children's Chorus Winter Concerts.

Gaudete! Rejoice in the season of light as the advanced choirs perform Benjamin Britten's masterpiece, "A Ceremony of Carols" with harp accompaniment, telling the story of the nativity drawn from ancient carol texts, and imparting the hope and innocence surrounding it. Other selections include works by Vivaldi, Ives, lively spirituals, and Hannukah and Christmas carol favorites, at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church – Family Concert featuring all choirs; and at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14 at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church – featuring upper level ensembles. Tickets: Adults \$15; students \$5. For tickets, email programs@childrenschorus.org or www.brownpapertickets.com/. For more info, visit www.childrenschorus.org/.

Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer Christmas Show.

The show will feature Christmas music and entertainment that adults and kids will love and is sure to put everyone in a "reindeer" frame of mind Saturday, Dec. 8 at Mighty Fine Guitars, 85 Lafayette Cir., Lafayette. The doors will open at 7:30 p.m.; the show begins at 8 p.m. Suggested donation: \$25; \$12 for kids under 12. For more info, call (415) 893-9818 or visit www.drelmo.com.

Annual Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church Christmas Concert

at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8 and 9 in the Sanctuary at LOPC, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Tickets are free but required for *God's Promise – In the Night*; visit www.lopc.org and click on "Music." A variety of choral texts will be presented, including the Renaissance motet *Resonant in Laudibus* and Vivaldi's *Magnificat*; also highlighted will be new pieces by the Youth Choir and the Festival Choir along with traditional Christmas carols.

Tuesday, Dec. 4. After enjoying a menu of grilled chicken salad or pumpkin polenta, attendees will be treated to a tasty dessert while the Orinda Idol Singers offer a program of heartwarming holiday music. Highlights from "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" will be performed by the Orinda Intermediate School Bulldog Theater Company Actors. Cost: \$22 per person. RSVP to Myrna Witt by Nov. 26 at keyofm@aol.com.

Orinda Traditions – Cal Shakes Featured at This Year's Annual Historical Society Dinner.

Celebrate Orinda's own beloved Cal Shakes (California Shakespeare Theater) at this year's Orinda Historical Society Holiday Party Wednesday, Dec. 5. Whether you're a history buff or lover of the bard, you'll enjoy hearing those behind-the-scenes reminiscences told only at this popular annual OHS event. Social Hour will begin at 6 p.m. with a presentation of cheeses, seasonal fruits and baguettes, punch, and wine. Dinner offerings include salmon with green goddess dressing, beef tenderloin with balsamic reduction sauce, and butternut squash lasagna, followed by apple pie topped with whipped cream. Cost: \$40 per person. RSVP with payment to the Orinda Historical Society by Dec. 1. Location: Fellowship Hall, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. For information, call (925) 254-1353.

The Twelve Clues of Christmas. Mystery goddess Rhys Bowen dishes up the latest in her Royal Spyness series, "The Twelve Clues of Christmas," at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 5 at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square.

Fingerstyle Guitar with Ace. The Orinda Library kicks off its inaugural Winter Music Series with the acoustic guitar artistry of Ace Batacan at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 5. Groove to the jazz and popular strains of Ace's holiday favorites while warming your bones in front of the Library's cozy fireplace. For more information, contact Ruth Boyer at the Orinda Library: (925) 254-2184.

Handel with Care – Sing-It-Yourself Messiah. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will host a sing-it-yourself performance of Handel's "Messiah" at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7. Directed by Minister of Music Robert Train Adams, participants are welcome to sing along with – or just listen to and be inspired by the Festival Choir, soloists and chamber orchestra. An offer-

The Lafayette Gallery is hosting their Holiday Arts & Crafts "Trunk Show"

from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 8 and 9 at 50 Lafayette Circle. Look for one-of-a-kind gifts and craft items by local artisans and guest artists, which include ceramics and glassware, scarves, hats and much more.

A Festive Mix of holiday music

from singing and ringing choirs at Our Saviors Lutheran Church Christmas Concert from 4 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. "The Song of the Angels: Gloria in Excelsis Deo," A glittering reception will follow in the fellowship hall.

WomenSing holiday concert,

Sing an Endless 'Ave,' from 8 to 10 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12 at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Hear the unexpected combination of steel drum and the vibrant and beautifully blended sounds of WomenSing. Cost: \$30 premium seats; \$25 general admission; \$20 seniors; \$10 students/youth 18 and under. For more info, visit www.womensing.org or call (925) 974-9169 or email info@womensing.org.

Walter the Giant Storyteller.

For kids of all ages, the Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center present an evening of massive storytelling. This free event will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 13 at the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Headliner Walter M. Mayes is also known as Walter the Giant Storyteller, at six-foot-seven inches, he's not exactly petite. Brace yourselves for "Giant book of Giant stories" and find out what happens when he survives being shipwrecked on a Lilliputian-like island.

ing will be taken at this free event in support of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Location: 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. For information, contact the church office at: (925) 254-3370, ext. 10.

Orinda Ballet Academy's "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker."

Get those sugar plums dancing in your children's heads with the Orinda Ballet Academy's two-act holiday performance of "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker" at the Orinda Library Theater, 26 Orinda Way, Friday and Saturday, Dec. 7-9. All tickets \$18. See the Academy's web site for performance dates and times: www.orindaballetacademy.com.

California Independent Film Festival's Classic Film Series – The Bishop's Wife.

Grab someone to snuggle with and head for dinner at Orinda Theatre Square on Saturday, Dec. 15 before catching the 7 p.m. Orinda Theatre showing of *The Bishop's Wife* with Cary Grant, Loretta Young, and David Niven. Buy tickets online at LamorindaTheatres.com, or call: (925) 388-0752.

Books and Crafts – A Holiday Extravaganza at Orinda Books.

Stumped for what to get that person who has everything – or that mom who annually says, "Don't get me anything"? Swing by Orinda Books at 276 Village Square at noon Saturday, Dec. 15, where you'll have the chance to pick the brains of Random House's Ron Shoop, Penguin Books' Wendy Pearl, and Dandy Conway of Random House Children's Books. You're sure to find the right gift for your loved one – and a little something for your own fireside reading. Local craftspeople will also offer one-of-a-kind gifts for sale.

Holiday Tot Hop.

Bring your little ones on over to boogie to holiday tunes before simmering down with seasonal story favorites at the Orinda Library Tuesday or Wednesday, Dec. 18 or 19. Events begin at 10 am, and are open to parents and their children ages 0 to 5.

Gerry Wallace Holiday Ceramics Sale.

Find the perfect gift for the ceramic arts lover in your family at the Gerry Wallace Holiday Ceramics Sale at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square. Browse and buy from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22.



“Warm Up Winter” Campaign Kicks Off

Submitted by Ana Walker



Drop-off site collection bin, created by Venture Men's Goods in Lafayette Photo provided

person who makes a donation of a blanket, socks, gloves or beanies, which will go to Central County Homeless Outreach in Martinez, will receive a two-for-one voucher from Town Hall Theatre (THT) to see its production of *It's A Wonderful Life*. Venture Men's Goods in Lafayette kicked off the campaign at their ribbon cutting ceremony Nov. 15 and will remain a drop-off site through December. Town Hall Theatre, also a drop-off site for warm clothing donations, will serve complimentary DoGood Vines wine from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m., before the 8 p.m. show, Thursday, Dec. 6 and will host a reception for all the retailers and supporters on Dec. 13 from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. to recognize the community's success in coming together to contribute to a very important cause. "We are thrilled to participate with DoGood Vines in this partnership, because this kind of creativity and generosity are central to our purpose as a community theatre," says Clive Worsley, THT's artistic director. Donors will receive 2-for-1 vouchers at all donation sites, including the theatre. Please call (925) 283-1557 for more information.

Throughout November and December, DoGood Vines, a company that gives 50 percent of its net profits to charitable causes, will pour complimentary wine tastings for customers at local retail shops serving as drop-off locations for warm clothing donations. Every

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Moraga



Stanley Middle School seventh-grader Molly Longchamps will perform as Clara in this year's CAPA Nutcracker Friday, Dec. 7. Photo provided

SMC Glee Club and Chamber Singers' Holiday Concert. Directed by Julie Ford and Sharon Kim, the college's award-winning choirs present a program of seasonal sacred music, including Vivaldi's beautiful *Magnificat in G Minor*, as well as holiday classics Sunday, Nov. 25 at 4 p.m. and Monday, Nov. 26 at 8 p.m. in the Saint Mary's College Chapel.

Moraga Tree Lighting. Join Santa and his Moraga Youth Involvement Committee helpers on Saturday, Dec. 1 for cookies and hot cocoa in the Commons Park for the Holiday Tree Lighting. Refreshments and entertainment from the Moraga Community Chorus begins at 6:30 p.m. with the tree lighting at 7 p.m. Sorry, breakfast with Santa and Santa visits were sold out a month in advance!

CAPA Nutcracker. Snow falls onstage and the Christmas tree magically grows to great heights in the beloved annual California Academy of Performing Arts presentation of *The Nutcracker*. The performances will be on Friday Dec. 7 at 7 p.m., Saturday Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. at the Campolindo Performing Arts Center, 300 Moraga Rd., Moraga. Tickets: \$20 and can be purchased at www.ShowTix4U.com. For more info, email lynnkddavis@comcast.net or visit www.capadance.net.

Moraga Presbyterian Church Live Nativity from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8. For more information, visit www.mvpc.today.org or call (925) 376-4800.

Santa Day at 5A Rent A Space. Get a free picture with Santa and enjoy letter writing from 11 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15. Also at 5A, free gift-wrapping from Nov. 26 through Dec. 25. For more information, call (925) 631-7000.

Community Christmas Celebration. During the candlelight celebration, hear the Christmas story anew and songs of the season at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 20 at the Refuge Community Church, 155 Moraga Rd., Moraga. Free. For more information, call (925) 942-1000 or visit www.refugecommunity.org.

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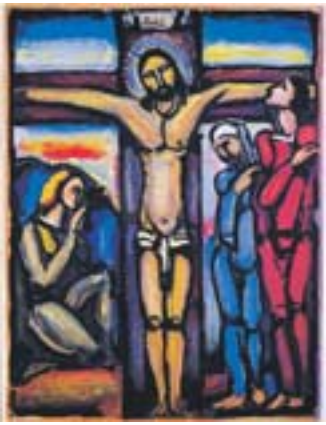
See the Tap Dancing Christmas Trees and the Sonic Rain Deer Band.

Enjoy entertainment beginning at 1:00pm along Lafayette Circle and Mt. Diablo Blvd.

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◆ Not to be missed

ART



Georges Rouault, Le Christ en Croix, 1936.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art Celebrating SMC's 150th Anniversary. New exhibitions on view at Saint Mary's College Museum of Art include The Art of the Cross; Nyame Brown: John Henry's Adventures in a Post-Black World; Missions of Will Sparks, and the William Keith collection. The exhibits will be on view through mid-December, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. Regular admission: \$5; youth, military free. Regular hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more info, call (925) 631-4069.

The Orinda Library Art Gallery Exhibit. The exhibit for November will feature the Kumstanke group.

The exhibit for December will include George Wahbeh's oil paintings, Roland Nunn's hooked rugs, Alexander Walcheck's drawings, and Alex Meckes' Origami. The Gallery is located adjacent to the library at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more info, visit www.orindaartscouncil.org/community_library.

Irresistible – The Gift of Art is the new exhibit at the Lafayette Gallery. You'll find a winter wonderland of sparkling jewelry, handcrafted ornaments, elegant ceramics and a wide array of prints, paintings and sculpture. The event begins Nov. 13 and runs through Dec. 29 at the Lafayette Gallery, 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. There will be a free reception from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 30 with wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music! For more info, call (925) 284-2788 or visit www.lafayettegallery.net.

Flora and Fauna. This art show will highlight artwork of the painter Leslie Swarts' expressionist paintings of trees from around the world and jeweler Laura Paige's fine beadwork created with stone beads through Saturday, Jan. 11 at Moraga Art Gallery, 522 Center Street, Moraga. For more info, call (925) 376-5407 or visit

www.moragaartgallery.com.

MUSIC

An Evening of Fellowship & Spiritual Music. Alex Cook and Ben Vaughan, Christian musicians from Boston and Canada, with original songs celebrating and defending spiritual identity at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 23 at the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For more info, call (925) 258-9442 or visit www.csorinda.org.

SMC Chamber Musicians in Concert. Student instrumentalists and vocalists are featured in a performance of small-ensemble works from the Renaissance to the present Wednesday, Nov. 28 at 1 p.m., Soda Activity Center, Saint Mary's College of California, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. Recently represented composers include Monteverdi, Handel, Beethoven, Dvorak and Brahms. Free.

The New Life Band from Tanzania, East Africa will give their "Kwaheri" (farewell) concert at 10:45 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 25 at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, before returning to Arusha, Tanzania after a seven-week tour in California. Their memorable African rhythm blended with the Christian message moves body and soul. They present traditional and contemporary Gospel music of Tanzania with energy and humor, African drums and close harmony. For more info, visit www.holyshepherd.org or call (925) 254-3422.

THEATER

Saint Mary's College Dance Company in Emblem at 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 29 and Saturday, Dec. 1, LeFevre Theatre, Saint Mary's College of California, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. The fall dance concert, Emblem, features choreography by senior dance majors Cecilia Clasen, Leah Hendrix-Smith, Edgar Mendez, Harmony Negrin, Tashanay Spani

and Sami Ruy. Free.

DVC Drama 2012 - 2013 Season. The Exonerated by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen will be showing Nov. 30 through Dec. 9, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. at DVC, 321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill. Tickets: \$20 general admission; \$15 for faculty, staff, and seniors; \$10 for students. For more info, call (925) 687-4445.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

A Free Throw Competition sponsored by the 41st annual Walnut Creek Elks will take place Sunday, Dec. 9 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at De La Salle High School in Concord. All boys and girls ages 8-13 are invited to participate. (Contestant's age group will be determined by their age as of April 1, 2013). Certificates and prizes will be awarded to all participants and beautiful trophies will be awarded to the top three finishers in each boy and girl category. Free. For info, contact Mike Rittenhouse, tournament director at coach_ritt@yahoo.com or (925) 360-2900.

Boy Scout Troop 57, Orinda Ca. All boys ages 10 (5th grade +) to 17 years old are welcome to attend our open house at 7:10 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 4 at the Orinda Intermediate School Multi-Purpose room. This will be a gathering in which boys who might have an interest in joining Boy Scouts can participate in one of our meetings, and learn more about us. Contact David Finger at (925) 247-0077, davidfinger@speakeasy.net.

OTHER

Self-Discovery and Aging, Creative Writing Workshop. Workshop sessions include writing prompts, feedback and encouragement, and information about the world of writers, writing, and publishing. This workshop is from 10 a.m. to noon the second and fourth Thursday each month in the Cedar Room at the

Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Come Play Mah Jongg! Mah Jongg is a game of skill, strategy, and certain degree of chance. Bring your card, a mah jongg set and a snack to share (optional) every Tuesday from 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Community Center Sequoia Room, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members. For more info, call (925)284-5050.

Hospice of the East Bay Support Groups for Adults. Drop-In Bereavement Support Group meets the first and third Wednesday of the month from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Pleasant Hill Campus, 3470 Buskirk Ave. The Pet Loss Support Group meets on the first Tuesday of the month from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation, 2890 Mitchell Dr., Walnut Creek. Pre-registration is required. For more info, or to pre-register please call (925) 887-5681 or visit www.hospiceeastbay.org.

Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church Taize Service. Come for a respite from the holiday rush to refresh your spirit on the last Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. For more info, email Nancy@lopc.org.

Afghanistan: Gender Equality - A Report from the Frontline with Budd MacKenzie, Thursday, Nov. 29, 7 to 9 p.m., Acalanes Performing Arts Center, 1200 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette. Tickets: \$10 adult; \$5 student, available online through the Acalanes Webstore (<http://acalaneshs.revtrak.net>) or at the door. This is the inaugural event for the Acalanes High School Speaker Series and is cosponsored by the Acalanes High School SAGE Club and Trust in Education.

... continued on next page

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'Tis the Season of Giving

Cycle Recyclery. Each November, Tom and Bobbie Preston of Moraga collect gently used bicycles and tricycles, which are repaired and refurbished and then donated to groups which gift them to underprivileged kids in our area. This year the beneficiaries are Trips for Kids/The Recyclery (in Marin) and the Marsh Creek Detention Facility. At Christmas time TFK gives neighborhood kids bikes for Christmas, often their main or only Christmas gift. Last year 60 bikes were given out at the annual Christmas Party, with many more given during the year. The inmates at the detention facility for minor offenders repair and refurbish bikes, not only learning a skill but providing like-new bikes for the sheriff's department to distribute as Christmas presents to underprivileged kids. This is the 14th year of the Cycle Recyclery, which has provided 2,500 bikes to area kids. Gently used repairable bikes and tricycles or usable bike parts will be accepted until Dec. 1; drop them off in the side driveway of the Preston's home, 1307 Larch, Moraga. No scooters, skateboards, or plastic bikes, please. No need to call the Prestons, but if you need more information, call (925) 376-8474.

Stuffed Animal Collection. The Moraga Police Officers Association along with S.A.F.E. (Stuffed Animals For Emergencies) is collecting new or gently used stuffed animals to help children through traumatic experiences. The stuffed animals are given to local police and fire departments to distribute to children they encounter who have been affected by traumatic events. S.A.F.E also facilitates the distribution of donated stuffed animals for a variety of charitable purposes to help children. This year's annual holiday collection drive begins Nov. 26 and ends Dec. 28. New or gently used stuffed animals can be dropped off at the collection area located in the lobby of the Moraga Police Department, 329 Rheem Blvd. Thank you for your support!

Stockings for Youth Homes. This year Sewnow is joining Youth Homes to provide beautiful monogrammed stockings for the young adults in the Youth Homes TAY aftercare program. Participants at this free sewing workshop, for ages 8 to 100 who have basic sewing machine skills, will sew, embellish and monogram the stockings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27 and from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 28. Stockings will be displayed in the studio and on Sewnow's Facebook page for the community to vote on the one they like best; the winner will receive a \$75 gift certificate to use for a workshop or towards a class. Sewnow will provide all the supplies and set-up, an appliqué and crystal bling lesson, as well as refreshments and a take home gift for all participants.

Blanket & Bedding Drive for Shelter Inc. The following bedding items are needed for Shelter Inc.'s winter program: new or gently used blankets (twin, full, queen); new twin-size bedding (mattress pads, bedspreads, pillows, pillow cases). Donations can be dropped off at the bin in the lobby of Coldwell Banker, 5 Moraga Way until Dec. 5. For info, contact Rick Booth (925) 212-8869 or email Rick@BoothHomes.com.

Need Donations?

Season of Giving announcements will continue through Dec.19. Submissions can be sent to calendar@lamorindaweekly.com.

Not to be missed

OTHER ... continued

Lamorinda Dance Social. Enjoy afternoon dancing and learn some great new dance moves every Wednesday from 12:30 to 3 p.m., the Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$2 members; \$4 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Hearing Screening By Audiologists from Hearing Science/Diablo Valley Ear, Nose, and Throat, Wednesday, Dec. 5 in the Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Appointment required. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

What's All The Hype About Skype? Come to this class presented by Valerie Riveiro, MassMutual Financial Group for a live Skype demonstration and learn how to install it and use it on your own computer to chat with family and friends from 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesday, Nov. 27 in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Free Pet Fix Day – Dogs. Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation will offer free spay/neuter surgeries for dogs on Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2890 Mitchell Dr., Walnut Creek. Please call the Spay/Neuter Clinic at (925) 296-3125 to make an appointment.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance: The public is invited to join veterans groups, Blue Star Moms and the Navy League of the United States for a tribute to survivors of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The guest speaker will be retired Rear Admiral Thomas A. Cropper, a high-ranking Navy aviator and current president of the California Maritime Academy at Vallejo. The dinner will be held Dec. 7 at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant in Pleasant Hill. The cost will be \$35 per person, including wine with dinner, and reservations are required. For more info and reservations please contact Jeanne Sharkey at (925) 228-1375 or bjsharkeyiii@yahoo.com.

Republic of Cake in Orinda Theatre Square is turning 3! Come celebrate our third year with us on Saturday, Dec. 8, from 2 to 4 p.m. There will be a bouncy house for the kids, live music by Tara Linda, and face painting. And the best part of all? It's free!

Will Durst: Elect to Laugh. After the waning of the 2012 election season, join Durst for a night of laughs and bipartisan bashing that is sure to lighten the mood from 5:45 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11 at the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Cost: \$22 standard; \$12 for members; \$7 for students with valid ID. For more info, call Karly Huff at (415) 597-6727 or visit <http://bit.ly/ElectToLaugh>.

Positive Living Forum, Happiness Club. Brighten your day and take part in this interactive gathering which features speakers on a wide range of topics that encourage and guide participants towards a more ideal and positive life experience from 10:30 a.m. to noon Thursday, Dec. 13 in the Lafayette Community Center Sequoia Room, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

HOLIDAY EVENTS AND GIVING

(For local events, see special Holiday Section on page B8.)

Annual Holiday Concert presented by the Walnut Creek Concert Band at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27 at Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. Tickets: \$12-\$17. For more info, call (925) 943-7469 or visit www.lesharartscenter.org or www.walnutcreekband.org.

Annual Holiday Home Tour. Showcasing six delightfully decorated homes in the Alamo, Danville & Walnut Creek area, this year's tour from 10am until 4pm Friday and Saturday, Dec. 7-8 has something to please everyone; from trees decked-out entirely in Poland Glass ornaments, to rooms devoted entirely to model trains. Tickets: \$30 adults; \$25 for seniors. For more info, call (925) 876-8862 or visit www.aauwdaw.org/hhtour/hht12.html.

Valley Art Gallery's 47th annual Holiday Crafts show and sale features many well known Bay Area craftspeople at Valley Art Gallery, 1662 Botelho Dr., Walnut Creek (1/2 block west of California Blvd.) through Dec. 22. The fine crafts available include decorative as well as functional ceramics, glass, jewelry, wood, and fabric items. In addition, there are over 300 paintings available for sale and for rent. Valley Art is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion and support of visual and tactile artists of the greater Bay Area. For info, call Julie Armstrong at (925) 935-4311.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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The Writing Studio

By Sophie Braccini

Writing well requires thinking well, and can lead to overall success in school and in life. The essay, for example, is an important aspect of college admissions, yet while Lamorinda communities thrive on excellence and have many private specialized schools for math, none are dedicated to writing – until now. On Oct. 28, Shoshana Mark opened The Writing Studio at 3455 Golden Gate Way in Lafayette. The writing school trains third- to 12th-grade children, emphasizing creativity for its younger students, critical reasoning for older kids.

Mark is a former English teacher from New York who went on to different writing-related jobs before moving with her family to Lafayette 10 years ago. While raising her two children, she worked as

a writing instructor for Lafayette Arts and Science Foundation – now Lafayette Partners in Education – for many years. “We have wonderful teachers here, but teaching one-on-one is impossible for them, and some kids fall through the cracks,” says Mark, adding that over all her years working for LASF she was saddened to see so many kids who were not proficient writers.

Now that her own children are older, she decided to open her own studio. “I love teaching kids of all ages,” she says. “With the younger ones, we’ll learn to use our five senses and to allow them to become natural writers, connecting with their own voice.” She believes that elementary school years are the time for creativity and narrative writing, while middle and high school students should focus on ex-

pository essays.

“As students mature,” she says, “organizing their thoughts before even starting to write becomes crucial.” Mark describes the essay as a funnel: the introductory paragraph starts wide, narrowing as writers become more specific, leading toward their thesis statement.

Mark groups students by age and works with them twice a week. “The first session, the children come in and I tell them that this will be the only time they’ll hear the sound of my voice,” she says. “After that, every interaction, even the most trivial one, will be done in writing. This becomes my mantra, and this is how they connect with themselves; they do not speak, they write.”

The students come back to work with Mark one-on-one a few



Shoshana Mark in front of The Writing Studio Photo Sophie Braccini

days after the group lesson. “I do not give homework; I want to see the process, and we go over every word, every paragraph. That’s how they learn.”

Cost for a 10-week session (two

days a week) is \$375. For information, call (925) 385-0211.

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

business briefs

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

Holiday Open House at Venture 3571 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette (925) 385-0259

Venture Men’s Goods of Lafayette is getting ready for its Holiday Open House on Thursday, Nov. 29. “We’ll have the founders from Taylor Stitch shirtmakers of SF, wine from Rock Creek Vineyards, appetizers from Postino, and paintings from local artist Tom Matousek,” says co-owner Rosylyn Stenzel. Venture is also participating in the holiday warm clothing drive organized in partnership with DoGood Vines and Town Hall Theatre (see story on page B8).

Yan’s Restaurant Opens in Orinda 1 Orinda Way (925) 253-9852

You remember when Yan’s Restaurant closed in Lafayette? While Susan Yan had two other restaurants that were also started by her parents in Walnut Creek and Alamo, she could not leave Lamorinda. A few weeks ago, Yan’s re-opened, this time in Orinda, at 1 Orinda Way. Yan promises the same high-quality cooking that made the Lafayette restaurant so popular. Her dad still cooks using his own recipes. For more information, visit www.yansrestaurant.com.

G.J. Gardner Homes Opens in Lafayette 3704 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Suite 312 www.gjgardner.com

One of California’s largest custom home builders, G.J. Gardner Homes, will open a new franchise in Lafayette owned by father-son team and Lafayette residents Lance and Jordan Engeldinger. “I’ve been both a long-time resident of Lafayette and a veteran of the construction industry. I’m honored to be a part of the G.J. Gardner team,” said Lance Engeldinger. “And, most importantly, I’m excited to be working alongside my son in an industry that we both share a passion for.” The company offers clients the ability to design and build a new custom home at affordable prices; it also works with several banks that offer both land and home/land financing. G.J. Gardner Homes has been operating worldwide for over 25 years. Each G.J. Gardner Homes office is owned and operated by local licensed custom homebuilders.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

Annual Holiday Mixer from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12 at Wells Fargo Bank 3630 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Admission: \$10,

or free with a donation of three canned food items.

Ribbon cutting for Lan’s Skin Care at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 6, 3416 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga

Holiday Party sponsored by Mechanics Bank from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 6 at the Moraga Country Club. “There will be dancing, countless appetizers and wine,” says Chamber administrator Kathe Nelson. Cost: \$10 per person. Reservations required by Friday, Nov. 30 to kathe@moragachamber.org. Optional: Please bring a new, unwrapped toy for donation to Toys for Tots.

Orinda

Hospice Tree Lighting ceremony at 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, 31 Orinda Way, in the Bank of America parking lot. Every year, the Chamber and Hospice of the East Bay bring local school choirs and Santa together to welcome the holidays.

Holiday Party at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 6 at Mechanics Bank, 77 Moraga Way. All are welcome and encouraged to bring guests interested in joining the Chamber. For info, visit www.orindachamber.org.

Lynn’s Top Five

Creating Family Memories and Charitable Giving: The Perfect Holiday Recipe

By Lynn Ballou, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

At this time of year we are all looking for ways to spend time with friends and families and celebrate the holidays without taking our budgets to the brink. Folks in our community are particularly charitably minded, so I really think this column will resonate well with all of you. In fact, I wish you were here with me as

I’m writing this, because I bet you have a whole bunch of other great ideas I didn’t list!

But just to get the conversation and creative juices going, here are five ideas for how to spend quality time with your loved ones, add value to things that matter to you at this time of year, create a lifetime of wonderful

memories, and, oh yeah – not break the piggy bank!

1) Give to someone’s favorite charity in their name. My brother and I had been sending each other assorted muffins, cheeses and the like for years. By the time we were done with the packaging, the shipping and the sales tax, we’d each spent a lot of

money for a little gift. Finally we said “enough!” Now what we do has so much more meaning to us both: we gift to our favorite charities during the holidays in each other’s honor. It took us both being brave enough to be the one to say, hey, do you really want another cheese roll this year? Or can I find a better way to honor you? My brother, despite being the “foodie” that he is, immediately embraced the charitable gifting idea, leaving me to wonder, what took me so long to ask him?

2) Volunteer together. For those of you blessed to live close to family, I personally love this idea. Working together on behalf of your favorite organization builds a lifetime of memories and really leaves a lasting legacy. Whether it’s volunteering to serve a meal at a shelter, or singing carols at a nursing home, you’ll never forget the event and the time you spent together, all the while doing something truly wonderful for someone else.

3) Collect coats or canned goods at your party. Another personal favorite, I love being invited to someone’s home with the “hostess gift” being a donation for a worthy cause. From coats, to canned goods, to spare change in your pocket, many great ideas resonate well with your guests. One friend tells me that she often says “yes” to parties she might otherwise not go to just to be able to bring a donation hostess gift!

4) Take your grandkids (or children!) shopping for a Toys for Tots present. This always puts a smile on my face. I loved doing this with my family, and it was so great to see my kids learn to buy something for someone less fortunate than themselves. This is especially meaningful for grandparents to do with their grandchildren. So, after they sit in Santa’s lap or you hit the movie theater, take your children or grandchildren to a toy store and pick up some gifts for less fortunate kids. Then deliver them to

the fire station or other drop-off location with your children or grandchildren. This doesn’t have to be expensive! Give them a budget and let them enjoy shopping for someone in need. They’ll remember for years both spending this great time with you and how good it made them feel to do something for someone else.

5) Clean out the house and give it away! Make it a scavenger hunt in reverse: challenge each family member to find three things they never use that someone else might enjoy. It could be the obvious clothing or toys, or it could be dishes you don’t use anymore or even excess office supplies! Books and magazines can be donated to our libraries while other goods can be given to our local Goodwill, Salvation Army and drop boxes at some local churches. Less clutter and a memorable charitable family event? A win-win!

Wishing you all a memorable, charitable and meaningful holiday season! Cheers!

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Campolindo Volleyball Wins NCS

By Marissa Harnett



Photo Andy Scheck

It took more than two grueling hours and five sets, but the No. 1 seeded Campolindo volleyball team overcame Oakland rival No. 2 Bishop O'Dowd to win the NCS Championship. Saturday's match-up marked the second time Campolindo (27-4) has won the title in three years.

Amid the thunderous roar of competing fans, the Cougars came out aggressively, earning two early wins, 25-18 and 25-13.

In the first game, O'Dowd (29-7) captured the coveted early points and a mental edge as Campo senior powerhouse Annie Shurtz's kill attempts were foiled by the Dragons.

Campo head coach John Vuong remarked on the importance of the mental game. "Volleyball is 80 percent mental. You could be a great hitter or passer, but when you let your opponent get into your head, it is hard to focus and be productive," Vuong added, "We have to be poised throughout the game regardless (of) what the outcomes are."

O'Dowd's momentum continued until Campo's first time-out at 5-10. Campo regained their composure and took control after the timeout.

Sophomore Maddie Browning served to win five straight points, evening the score. The teams battled back and forth until senior Rachel Hua stepped up to serve, earning an-

other five points. At game point, O'Dowd's communication broke down. The ball dropped giving Campo the game.

Game two mirrored the first, with a slow start for the Cougars. Junior Natalie Meniktas turned it around with her low, flat serve. Campo earned nine consecutive points to take the lead. Hua served to finish the game, winning eight straight.

Games three and four began similarly with close exchange of points. But mid-way through each game, O'Dowd gained traction and erased Campo's momentum, winning 25-20 and 25-21 to force a fifth game.

Although losing control of the match in the third and fourth games, Campo was not overwhelmed. "We practiced being behind and fighting to catch-up with (the) other team. It was not a surprise with our players," Vuong said.

The team increased their intensity for the deciding game. The Cougars took control from the start and held onto the lead. Shurtz, who Vuong described as "the team backbone," came up with four of her 22 kills in this crucial game.

At 14-8, match point, Campo thought they had won, and were surprised when the ball sailed back over the net. One more point, however, cinched the win, 15-9.

Vuong stressed focus and poise as the major reasons for their success. He also added that serving was important. "Our serving was excellent. It was the key (to) our victory," he said.

Also key was the outstanding overall team effort, led by strong performances from Shurtz, who added three blocks to her 22 kills, sophomore Kelley Wirth, who had 10 kills and eight blocks, and senior Sophie Seiberth who had 39 assists.

Campolindo advanced to the State playoffs as the top seed in CIF State Girls Division III, northern California bracket, and played Shasta High School last night, Nov. 20 (after press deadline). Check our website for update information, www.lamorindaweekly.com. If the Cougars beat Shasta, they will play the next round at home Nov. 24 at 7 p.m.

Acalanes also played in the NCS tournament falling to Sir Francis Drake in round one, 25-16, 25-9, 22-25, 25-16.

Assistant coach Jessica Mall was proud of how well her team played.

"Overall it was a good match. Many girls had what I thought was their best match. Although our opponent was tough the girls battled it out," she said. "We have had a great season."

Miramonte Boys' XC Wins NCS

Submitted by Alison Zamanian



Tyler Hanson beats course record. Photo Isabella Lee

Miramonte had a successful run at the DFAL championships at Hidden Valley Park in Martinez. Senior Tyler Hanson broke the three-mile course record, finishing in 15:18. The varsity boys' team finished third overall and the varsity girls finished fourth.

Both teams advanced to the NCS championships.

Despite the worst conditions in years, Miramonte shined at the NCS championships at Hayward High School. The Nov. 17 races involved warming up in pouring rain, sliding on mud, and falling in puddles.

All of the Miramonte girls performed well against the toughest competition, finishing sixth overall. Acalanes finished first and Campolindo finished fourth.

The boys ran later in the day. Three boys finished in the top 10. Hanson led the way with a third place finish. The top finishes helped secure a first place finish for the boys. Miramonte boys' cross country has not won an NCS Championship since 2001.

Acalanes boys finished second and Campolindo boys finished fourth.

Urban Knight Earns All-Region Honors

Submitted by Rob Garcia



Jenny Bergren Photo provided

Following her stellar sixth place finish at the NCAA Division II West Regional Championships in Academy of Art University's first post season appearance, senior Jenny Bergren, an Orinda native, was recognized by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association as All-Region award winner for cross country in Division II. Bergren was also named PacWest Runner of the Year. Bergren pioneered the ART U

program by being the first Urban Knight to qualify for NCAA Nationals.

"The feeling of making it to Nationals is like none other," Bergren said. "This has been goal of mine for some time so when I found out I had a good cry!"

The recipient of an NCAA All-Region honor for her performance, Bergren headed to the NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships held on Nov. 17 in Joplin, MO.

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Girls Basketball Preps for Preseason

By Conrad Bassett



Miramonte

The upcoming girls' basketball season in Lamorinda promises to be every bit as exciting as last year as each of the three teams returns a solid nucleus of players and the addition of new talent.

A year ago the **Miramonte** Matadors won every game they played in pre-season and the Diablo-Foothill Athletic League on their way to a berth in the Northern California championship game in Sacramento and a 31-2 overall record.

Head coach Kelly Sopak recognizes the pressure to repeat. "We have a lot to prove again this year. We will do so in the same fashion as last year," he explained. "We are going to run, shoot and press. We are deeper than last year and as a team we are much quicker."

With a target on their backs, the Mats return some key players from last season. Senior point guard Carly Gill will lead the speedy Mats and will be accompanied by fellow all-leaguers, juniors Breanna Alford and Megan Reid.

Sopak is challenging the team in several high-caliber tournaments. In addition to taking on last year's Division II state champion Archbishop Mitty, they will play in Phoenix at the Nike Tournament. They host their own Lady Mats Tipoff Classic and will play in the top-rated Diamond Division of the West Coast Jamboree.

The team looks to fill the voids left by high-scoring Janine Loutzenhiser, who is playing at Rider University, and Devon McDonald, who is running track at Bucknell.

The program has also lost assistant Drew McDonald, who has stepped over to head the boys' program at Miramonte.

Still, Sopak is confident in the talent of his team. "In my 10 years of coaching high school basketball in the area I have never seen as much talent at tryouts as we have this year," he said.

Over in Lafayette, head coach Chris Russell returns for his second season at **Acalanes**. He will be looking to improve on last year's team that went on to the NCS tournament and won 15 games.

He will be looking for players to step up to replace several key graduates, including Sophie Taylor, who is now playing at Loyola-Marymount University.

"Senior Grace Francis impressed me last year in our loss to Bishop O' Dowd in the NCS semi-final, and has really worked over the summer and fall, and I am expecting her to have a bigger role," Russell said.

Russell also returns three senior leaders in Marie Paladino, Jamie Jacobs, and Molly Martin.

"This year's team is better as a team, so I'm hoping when we need a big shot, rebound, or play, I can count on any one of the five girls who may be on the court at any given time," added Russell.



Acalanes

Photos Ohlen Alexander



Campolindo

The team will stay in northern California for all of their tournaments—including trips to Ukiah, Brentwood and local West Coast Jamboree.

Campolindo's head coach, Elgin Leslie, also returns for his second season as varsity coach. The Cougars return senior Laura Hickey and junior Ashley Ewing, who both started every game last year and Leslie is happy to have them back.

"They bring experience and leadership to our team, and both present match-up problems for other teams because of their ability to play multiple positions," he explained.

Senior Kelsey Wixsom and junior Sierra Regan are also returning. "[They] will be looking to step in and contribute more than last year," said Leslie.

The Lady Cougars will be challenged in their pre-season. They will play powerhouses, including Piedmont, McClymond's and Castro Valley. They will participate in tournaments at Northgate and the West Coast Jamboree.

The balance of the competition will remain strong in the DFAL. Dougherty Valley went 21-11 last year with the only blemishes in league coming from two- and three-point losses against Miramonte.

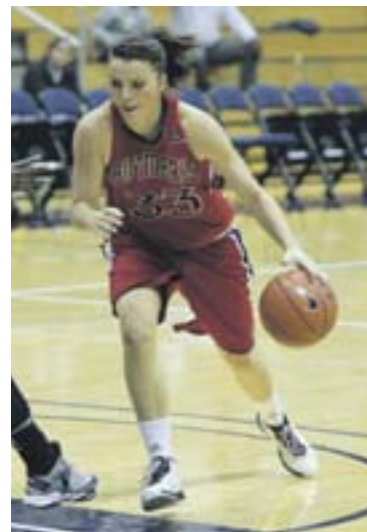
"Dougherty will be tough again. Doug Vanderhorst is a great coach and will have the Wildcats ready. Dublin returns everyone so they might be the favorite," said Sopak.

Regular season play begins in January, but in the meantime, Lamorinda teams will spend preseason preparing for DFAL play.

Saint Mary's Basketball Opens Season on Road

Returns home Saturday

By Michael Sakoda



Ashlee Smith Photos Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's women's basketball finished last season with a 22-11 record, and went 11-5 in conference play. They qualified for the WNIT and knocked off UNLV in the first round, before falling in the second. The Gaels look to improve on last year's success and, returning three-of-five starters, they are in a good position to do so.

In addition to sophomore forward Carli Rosenthal and junior forward Danielle Mauldin, returning to the starting line-up is junior guard Jackie Nared, who averaged 13 ppg, 7.5 rpg and was an All-WCC selection last season.

The Gaels also welcome back redshirts junior forward Ashlee Smith and junior guard Kate Gaze.

On her return, Gaze said that she is ready to play. "I feel really prepared. I feel like I haven't missed a beat," she added, "We worked really hard as a team."

Head coach Paul Thomas said that there is less emphasis on starting than on capitalizing on playing time. "You need to do your job when you're on the floor, whether it's one minute or 39 minutes...that's how our team views it."

As for the plan this year, Thomas said that they plan to stick with last year's strategy. "We're not going to stray too far from what our base philosophy and system is. We're just going to try to improve it," he explained.

The Gaels opened season play Nov. 9 at Washington, their first of three non-conference games against Pac-12 opponents.

Mauldin pointed out that one of the team's strengths is rebounding. Against Washington, Nared pulled a game-high 17 rebounds, and got help from senior guard, Morgan Hatten, who finished the game with 15 rebounds. Mauldin grabbed 11 boards



Kate Gaze

of her own. The Gaels outrebounded the Huskies 60-34, but their effort wasn't enough, as they lost 70-68.

The tough loss to the Huskies was followed by a 78-69 victory at Oregon on Nov. 11. Thomas said the team learned from its mistakes. "We took our experience from Friday night at U.W. and over a course of less than 48 hours learned, and did a good job at Oregon," he said. "I was very pleased with that."

Mauldin, who finished the game at Oregon with 20 points and 16 rebounds, was named the WCC Player of the Week for her efforts. "I just see what we need...and then do what's needed to help win those games," she said.

On Nov. 15, the Gaels faced number #12 Cal, and suffered an 89-41 loss.

Thomas noted that the team play allows for potential blow-out losses. "We don't play a style that beats teams by 20 or 30 points. We're just not going to," he explained, "if we don't take care of the ball...we can be blown out a lot easier than we can blow teams out. It's all up to us."

The Gaels were not able to take care of the ball in the loss, and Cal forced the Gaels into a season-high 24 turnovers.

Looking towards the future, Thomas doesn't set his sights far, emphasizing the importance of practice. "My expectations right now are to go out and have a really good practice today. We'll put ourselves in a good position to be where ever this team deserves to be at the end of the season," he said.

However, he did note the team has the potential to be a successful season. "I think this team is very capable of accomplishing a lot this year, and it's going to be up to them," he said.

The Gaels next game is their home opener Nov. 23 against Butler.

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Mats Boys' Water Polo Win NCS

The Miramonte Matadors defeated the Acalanes Dons 12-6 in the semifinals of the NCS tournament, before taking on San Ramon Valley in the finals for the second year in a row. The Mats eeked out a 9-8 win to earn the title. Junior Tyler

Kirchberg sunk the game-winning goal with 1.53 seconds remaining in the game. This is the seventh time in eight years that Miramonte has earned the title, 13th in 18 years.
C.Graveson

Campolindo Girls Win Water Polo Title

Submitted by Lyle Nishimi



Front row, from left: Allison Stevens, Head Coach Kim Everist, Christy Faoro; second row: Assistant Coach Cat von Schwarz-Arroyo, Sam Flower, Brooke Presten, Rachael Lewin; third row: Dennae Wiczynski, Anya Morrill, Marley Thuma, Bailey Moran, Madison Tagg, Sara Torchio, Hannah Buck; back row: Annika Jensen, Sarah Rasmussen, Natalie Seidemann, Cessie Nishimi, Assistant Coach Jessie Cima.
Photo Lyle Nishimi

The members of the Campolindo High School girls' water polo team began their preseason with preparation. The players committed themselves to working together, like the parts of a hand, as a single unit. In doing so, they adopted the motto "one hand, one team, one vision."

Under the guidance of head coach Kim Everist and assistant coach Cat von Schwarz-Arroyo, and led by the team captains, seniors Sam Flower, Christy Faoro, and Sara Torchio, the play-

ers worked as a cohesive team all season long. Displaying a balanced offensive attack and solid defense against many of the finest teams in northern California, Campolindo compiled a 26-1 record. The Cougars captured the league title in the always competitive DFAL and won the Nor-Cal Water Polo Championships title. Last Saturday, Campolindo capped off its season by winning its second NCS Division II championship in the past three seasons in a thrilling, 8-7 victory over a formidable team from Acalanes High School.

Lafayette Aces Repeat as State Champs

Submitted by Shannon Vicencio



Top row, from left: Ryan Burnett, Charlie Konstantino, Coach John Whelehan, Matt Burns, Gavin Shipp, Matty Vicencio, Jarrett Leon, Ty Whelehan, Manager Mark Vicencio; bottom row: Kevin Clancy, Robby Rowell, Sam Mink, Bryan Woo, Henry Canalin.

The Lafayette Aces repeated as Fall State Champions at the USSSA tournament in Manteca. The Aces played solid baseball all weekend, going undefeated against a strong field. The 13U Open Title was achieved with a combi-

nation of a relentless offense, flawless defense and great pitching. The Aces totaled 49 hits to their opponent's 19, while outscoring them 33 to 14. In their final fall tournament, the Aces went on to beat Petaluma 5-4 in a thrilling win in Sunnyvale.

For the Love of the Game

Submitted by Corinna Bekiers-Sassano



From left: Coach Roberto Zambrano, Brett Donat, Shane Nelson, Mark McCurdy, Owen Hansen, Vince Bianchina, Nicholas Bamont, Kyle Jasper, Kai Digrande, Jack Daugherty, Sean Donovan, Kellen Clancy, Erik Voss, Luke Miles, Jack Muren.
Photo Matt Hansen

For the LMSC BU 11 Navy team it isn't about winning or losing. Most of the boys have played together for nearly four years in the Lamorinda Soccer Club's competitive program. The rewards of fun and friendship and the passion of soccer have kept these players coming

back, despite having won only two league games last year. However, the team's hard work and commitment has paid off this year. They are currently 17-2-1 (9-0), sitting in first place in the Nor-Cal Gold Division. They placed second in two northern California fall tournaments

Lamorinda Football Season Ends in NCS Playoffs

By Simon Tryzna



Andrew Zolintakis

Photo Karen Drinkwater

The first week of November marks not only the start of the playoffs for high school football, but the beginning of poor weather and Lamorinda teams fought both opponents and conditions in the first two rounds of NCS playoffs.

On Nov. 9, while cross-town rival Campolindo defeated Terra Linda 38-19 in Moraga, the No. 8 Acalanes Dons battled No. 9 Bishop O'Dowd. In frigid conditions, neither team was able to get anything going on offense.

Bishop O'Dowd was set to take the lead in the first quarter but their fake field goal attempt was stuffed by Acalanes.

Acalanes mustered offense behind its two solid running backs. Deshawn Johnson followed a 26-yard run with a 16-yard run. After a 22-yard scramble by Don's quarterback Robbie Stern, Peter Mitchell was able to break loose and score on a 27-yard run. Behind its strong defense, Acalanes took its 7-0 lead into halftime.

However, as the game wore on, Bishop O'Dowd was able to make big plays on offense. Facing fourth and ten, the Dragons converted and scored with 1:22 left in the third quarter. However, O'Dowd was unable to convert the point after and still trailed 7-6.

The Dragons took the lead momentarily in the fourth quarter, but Mitchell scored once more to give the Dons a 13-9 lead. Clinging to the four point lead, Acalanes forced the Dragons into a fourth and 21 on the Acalanes 36-yard line late in the game. However, Dominic Mirogolio was able to convert with Kevin King, who caught the pass on the one-yard line and stretched in for the 16-13 win.

"We played really well," said Acalanes coach Mike Ivankovich. "We didn't lose that game. [O'Dowd] made the play. Their two best guys were able to convert."

Despite losing in the first round, there were numerous positives moving forward for the Dons. With 11 starters coming back, and roster openings being filled by members of the junior varsity team that went 9-1, Acalanes will once again be in the mix for a league title next season.

"We lost a total of four games by a total of fourteen points," said Ivankovich. "There isn't much space between where we are now and where we want to play for a league championship."

After dismantling Terra Linda, No. 4 Campolindo hosted Analy. The momentum was short-lived as the Tigers raced out to a quick 14-0 lead in the first quarter.

Andrew Zolintakis, filling in for senior quarterback Brett Stephens, got a touchdown for the Cougars on a seven-yard pass to Phillip Rei, but the Tigers responded with a touchdown of their own.

Zolintakis combined with Rei once more before the end of the first half to bring the Cougars within seven at half time, 21-14.

After an Analy field goal, Zolintakis connected with Matt Yoklavich on a 40-yard score to bring the Cougars within three points, 21-24. The teams then traded touchdowns.

Later, a 65-yard touchdown drive in 58 seconds, orchestrated by Zolintakis, gave the Cougars hope. A blocked point-after attempt forced the Cougars to score a touchdown to win the game, instead of being only down a field goal.

On cue, the Campolindo defense forced Analy to go three and out and give Zolintakis one last drive to give the Cougars a win. But Analy's defense held on to the lead to earn the 38-34 win.

Despite the loss, in Coach Kevin Macy's eyes, this was a good year for his squad. "It was an eerie year," said Macy. "No one came to the games. Everyone thought this year was going to be ugly. Everyone anticipated that nothing right would happen."

After winning the Division III NCS Championship last year, the Cougars returned few starters, including Stephens. However, after Stephens was lost to an injury, the team faced adversity. Zolintakis stepped up big and, combined with a young receiving corps, kept the Cougars in the playoffs.

"You look at everything we have done this year," said Macy, "it has been an incredible performance by the team. Every game we won was a surprise."

After a 35-7 win over No. 10 Tennyson, No. 7 Miramonte traveled to face No. 2 Marin Catholic. After an 82-yard touchdown from quarterback Drew Anderson to Zati Williams, everything went south for the Mats. After a blocked point-after attempt, the Wildcats scored 59 unanswered points to blow out Miramonte 59-6.

Signing Day at Campolindo

Submitted by Sue Tenerowicz



From left: Trent Shelton, Robbie Tenerowicz, Brett Stephens, Shannon Stabler, Sophie Leksan, Sven Campbell and Camille Triebisch (not pictured Steven Stumph) Photo Ohlen Alexander
Several Campolindo athletes sealed the deal Nov. 14, signing letters of intent to play their respective sport at the collegiate level:

- Sophie Leksan** - Loyola Marymount - Soccer
- Robbie Tenerowicz** - CAL - Baseball
- Trent Shelton** - Oregon State - Baseball
- Brett Stephens** - UCLA - Baseball
- Camille Triebisch** - UCLA - Crew
- Steven Stumph** - USC
- Shannon Stabler** - Cal Poly - Soccer

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 19 Wednesday, November 21, 2012



The Home Designer: Bathroom Remodeling ...read on page D5

Holiday Lights: Festive, Merry and Bright

By Cathy Dausman



Holiday lights on display at Orchard Nursery in Lafayette

Photo Andy Scheck

Festive, sparkling, colorful. The very words connote holiday celebrations, but they can also be used to describe lighting itself. Whether indoor or outdoor, low voltage or incandescent, temporary or permanent, lighting sets the mood in our homes and affects the very mood of our guests.

Light ambiance comes from both its source – a floor lamp, an overhead fixture, candles, luminarias, a wall sconce or footlight – and color spectrum, from the cool blue of fluorescent tubes to the soft orange flicker of a candle.

Suzanne Warrick of Interiors in Lafayette says Christmas lighting goes “above and beyond what you live with daily.”

“It’s a more joyous occasion and holiday lighting gives you a focus – a tree, wreath or garlands,” she explains. Warrick suggests adding votive and decorative candles as accent pieces to introduce romance to a room and a multi-sensory feel from the candle’s smell and flicker. Candles placed in carved pomegranates or pumpkins, or candles set in hurricane lamps filled with bird seed or cranberries can highlight your home’s color scheme, she says. Take a cue from jewelry stores that use skylights or low-voltage lights to make everything sparkle.

Peggy Hoffman brings the weather inside her Moraga home by hanging “snow” lights from Orchard Nursery in her living room windows. “They are tubes of lights hung vertically and then individual lights in the tubes light up sequentially so that it looks like a snow flake falling to the ground,” she says, adding they’re “lots of fun and different.”

... continued on page D4

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	9	\$785,000	\$2,000,000
MORAGA	9	\$202,500	\$1,300,000
ORINDA	13	\$625,000	\$1,740,000

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

- 3231 Camino Colorados, \$785,000, 3 Bdrms, 1527 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-19-12
 667 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,205,000, 3 Bdrms, 2135 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 10-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,057,500, 05-15-09
 1901 Hunsaker Canyon Road, \$2,000,000, 10-24-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 08-15-06
 3269 La Canada, \$1,680,000, 2 Bdrms, 2298 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 10-11-12;
 Previous Sale: \$850,000, 03-30-12
 3372 McGraw Lane, \$1,974,500, 4 Bdrms, 3127 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-24-12;
 Previous Sale: \$650,000, 12-04-98
 1108 North Thompson Road, \$829,000, 4 Bdrms, 2427 SqFt, 2001 YrBlt, 10-16-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,295,000, 04-17-06
 1483 Shulgin Road, \$875,000, 1905 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 10-22-12
 591 Silverado Drive, \$957,500, 3 Bdrms, 1910 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 10-23-12;
 Previous Sale: \$383,000, 05-10-89
 1141 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$1,550,000, 5 Bdrms, 4558 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-24-12

MORAGA

- 2063 Ascot Drive #214, \$211,000, 2 Bdrms, 1082 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 10-10-12;
 Previous Sale: \$275,000, 07-12-02
 2063 Ascot Drive #217, \$202,500, 2 Bdrms, 1082 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 10-12-12;
 Previous Sale: \$355,000, 11-04-04
 1499 Camino Peral, \$461,000, 3 Bdrms, 1697 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 10-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$655,000, 04-04-07
 96 Courter Lane, \$1,195,000, 4 Bdrms, 2880 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 10-16-12;
 Previous Sale: \$999,500, 12-15-00
 119 Donald Drive, \$802,000, 3 Bdrms, 1672 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-16-12;
 Previous Sale: \$331,500, 12-31-97
 2045 Donald Drive, \$975,000, 4252 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-11-12;
 Previous Sale: \$103,000, 12-21-73
 28 Lance Court, \$840,000, 4 Bdrms, 2722 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$295,000, 07-05-96
 75 Lynwood Place, \$1,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 2766 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-12-12;
 Previous Sale: \$460,000, 05-01-92
 243 Sandringham Drive #N, \$925,000, 4 Bdrms, 2353 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 10-23-12;
 Previous Sale: \$339,000, 08-12-87

... continued on next page

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

LAFAYETTE

Moraga Road, 94549, Bank of New York, 10-24-12, \$913,750, 4674 sf, 4 bd

ORINDA

Barbara Road, 94563, HMI Properties, 10-15-12, \$544,500, 1796 sf, 2 bd



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**Sale
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12 Spring Rd,
Orinda
Represented Seller
and Buyer



1002 Santa Monica Ct, Pleasant
Hill, Represented Buyer

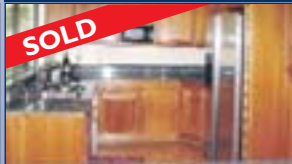


**SOLD by
VLATKA
in 2012**

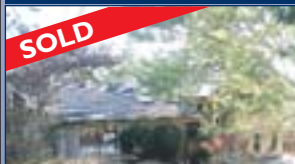
114 Lucille Way, Orinda
Represented Landlord & Tenant



44 Lucille Way, Orinda
Represented Seller



9 Loma Linda Ct, Orinda
Represented Buyer



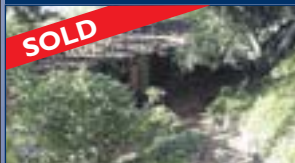
9 Ewart Dr, Lafayette
Represented Buyer



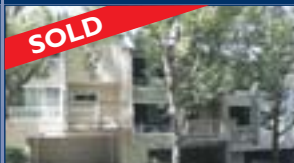
917 Veterans Dr, Martinez,
Represented Buyer



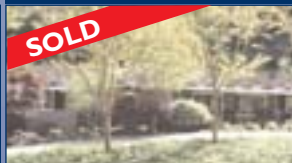
234 El Toyonal, Orinda
Represented Buyer



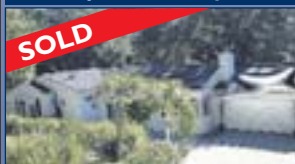
485 Woodminster Dr, Moraga
Represented Tenant



94 Devin Dr, Moraga
Represented Buyer



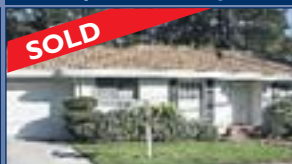
255 La Espiral Dr, Orinda
Represented Buyer



20 Birch Ct, Orinda
Represented Seller



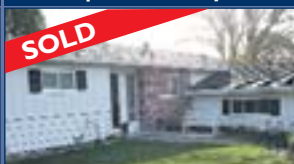
17 El Camino Moraga, Orinda
Represented Buyer



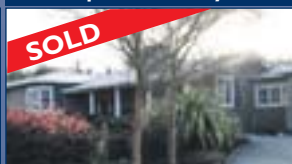
136 Spring Rd, Orinda
Represented Seller and Buyer



9 Wanfleete Ct, Orinda
Represented Buyer



122 Lombardy Ln, Orinda
Represented Buyer



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

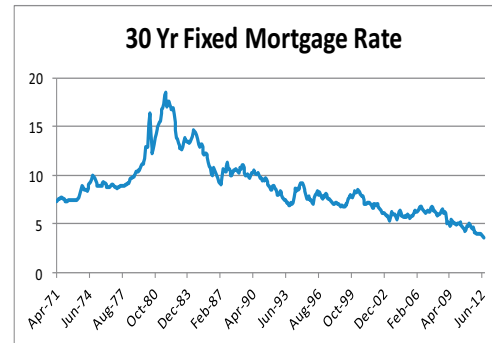
ORINDA

- 2 Calvin Drive, \$859,000, 4 Bdrms, 2068 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 10-16-12
 3 Easton Court, \$989,000, 4 Bdrms, 1917 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-10-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 07-10-08
 30 El Verano, \$781,500, 2 Bdrms, 1640 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 10-19-12;
 Previous Sale: \$439,000, 05-15-98
 17 Kittiwake Road, \$625,000, 4 Bdrms, 1719 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-15-12;
 Previous Sale: \$956,000, 07-13-05
 11 La Fond Lane, \$1,260,000, 4 Bdrms, 2875 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-17-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,395,000, 03-29-05
 67 Loma Vista Drive, \$855,000, 4 Bdrms, 2266 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-19-12
 159 Lombardy Lane, \$1,555,000, 4 Bdrms, 3486 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-12-12
 255 Manzanita Drive, \$750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2376 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-23-12
 412 Ridge Gate Road, \$1,390,000, 3 Bdrms, 2950 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 10-18-12;
 Previous Sale: \$725,000, 06-08-00
 241 Village Gate Road, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 2075 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 10-17-12;
 Previous Sale: \$425,000, 12-01-97
 11 Vista Del Mar, \$1,740,000, 5 Bdrms, 3415 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 10-10-12;
 Previous Sale: \$415,000, 10-02-80
 11 Westover Court, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1874 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 10-24-12
 118 Zander Drive, \$1,110,000, 3 Bdrms, 2285 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-24-12;
 Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 07-14-05

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	October 2011	October 2012	% Change
Lamorinda:			
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Average Sale Price	\$889,000	\$1,033,000	16%

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Zestimate Schmestimate

by Andi Peterson Brown

Last week I met with some prospective sellers in Orinda to discuss putting their home on the market next spring. Like many sellers, they had printed out their home's Zillow Zestimate before our appointment. When I sat down, I saw it—on the table but off to the side, looming and waiting to pounce. I've done battle with the dreaded Zestimate before, and in fact, I have a handout for just such an occasion entitled *Why Zestimates are Inaccurate*. I had initially used stronger language in the headline, but I was advised over the shoulder by the husband that it was "off-putting."

In reality, I had already looked up the Zestimated value of their home and knew that they would be pleasantly surprised. My price opinion of their home was significantly higher by about 20%, but oftentimes my opinion is lower than the Zestimate. A Zestimate is a home valuation and price created by zillow.com's algorithm. It is based purely on numbers and recent sales in the area. While not always inaccurate, it is usually inaccurate.

When I give my opinion on a home's value, not only do I think about recent comparable sales, but I also take into consideration overall condition, appeal of layout and finish quality, lot usability, perceived negatives, deferred maintenance, a budget to get it ready for market, supply, demand, interest rates, the overall lending environment, and the overall economic environment. Zestimates don't take any of that into consideration, and that is why they su—, I mean are inaccurate.



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Holiday Lights: Festive, Merry and Bright

... continued from page D1



Festive white bulbs light up the outdoors.

Photo Cathy Dausman

Local electrician Rob Omo likes to drive around during December just to see what people do with outdoor lighting. He admits he's not a big fan of the programmed lights and music shows some homeowners put together, saying "it takes away the peace, quiet and tranquility of the season."

Light options today are myriad. Incandescent bulbs emit light as a byproduct of their heated filament. Neon, fluorescent and CFL lights use a gas filament. Halogen bulbs are bright – and plenty hot – and the bulbs themselves are fragile. The new LED, or light-emitting diode lights, deliver a computer chip glow and are basically cool to the touch. These low-power, high-efficiency lights may be shaped like a traditional bulb, but are also manufactured in strips and round "pucks." LEDs packaged in waterproof casings can be used outdoors and even underwater to highlight

pools and waterfalls.

Elemental LED's Director of Marketing Jim Puchbauer says LED technology uses 25 percent less power than traditional filament lights, and last roughly 50,000 hours. He says LEDs work well for libraries and art gallery displays since they emit neither harmful ultra violet rays nor damaging heat. REACH, Elemental LED's philanthropic arm, recently partnered with Orinda Arts Council to install LED lighting in the Orinda Public Library display cases.

Steve Lambert, owner/designer of Orinda's Garden Lights agrees that the new generation LED is the way to go outside, as they offer color tone, longevity and weatherproof lighting. He suggests residents use white lighting, which "brings out the nature of the landscape," or add a bit of temporary color to their exterior light scheme using colored lenses.

Exterior pathways and steps should be lighted first for safety, Lambert says, before moving on to decorating the trees. He suggests homeowners minimize "light pollution" – unwanted light spilling into your neighbor's yard – when designing outdoor illumination.

Simply winding inexpensive strands of low-power lighting around tree trunks and along branches gives a yard an almost Disneyland feel at night. And neighborhoods can also create area-wide magic by setting out luminarias made of tea candles set in sand-filled paper bags. Home improvement stores offer a plastic version as well. Moraga's Rimer Court has had a luminaria display for the past nine years (see the Dec. 8, 2010 Lamorinda Weekly story at <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0420/pdf/Moragas-Luminarias-a-Bright-Christmas-Tradition.pdf>).

Any discussion of holiday lighting would be incomplete without including Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights. Rabbi Alissa Miller of Lafayette's Temple Isaiah explains the candles on the menorah are cumulatively lit over an eight day celebration. "The menorah is set into your window so everyone can see it," Miller says, recalling the powerful symbolism of light from a limited source at this darkest part of the year. Traditionally comprised of wax candles or wicks set in oil, electric menorahs are also available for safety reasons.

So look up, and light up your indoors and yards. Who knows, it may even ward off that year-end stress. Star light, star bright – fill your surroundings with decorative light!

*The Home Designer*

Bathroom Remodeling - Keep It Smart ... And Save

By Brandon Neff

Second only to kitchens, the bathroom is the most used, and the most valuable piece of real estate in your home. Many think of it as a purely utilitarian space - a necessity of life. Others, like myself, consider the bathroom a place to indulge and luxuriate.

Unfortunately, if I had a nickel for every time a client would wax poetic about a particular bathroom he or she longed for after staying at a posh hotel - all the while living with a bathroom akin to a Por-To-Let - I would be a rich man.

It seems most Americans believe a beautiful bathroom is something to be admired, but is either too expensive, or not worth the effort. Uttering the words "bath remodel" can reduce most men to tears - their respective wallets clamping shut as they imagine hemorrhaging bank accounts and endless construction. I'm here to tell you otherwise.

Depending on your tastes and expectations, rewarding yourself with an updated and beautiful bathroom can be a relatively painless and satisfying project. Have I got your attention? Whether you choose to work with a designer with a vision, or tackle it DIY style, there are a few key factors to keep in mind. Making smart choices can lead you in the right direction. Read on.

House proud. First, consider the architecture of your home. We've talked about this before - know the style of your home and work with existing architectural details. Is it cottage or contemporary? Suburban ranch or Georgian Revival? It's important to respect the lines of your home when doing any updates to ensure both continuity and to keep it from becoming the Winchester Mystery House. There was a good reason why you chose the home you're in, so look to those details when approaching your renovation.

Look for clues such as crown molding, ornate base molding, smooth or textured walls, window mullions (the dividing wood trims between smaller panes of glass within the window), original building materials such as brick and hardwoods, and metal finishes throughout the home. Honoring the architecture will guide you through the innumerable choices out there, and can inspire your design.

Truly, if you live in a California-style split level house and long for a French Rococo bathroom then I suggest you call your real estate agent and start looking for something new - forcing period architectural details into a home designed in a completely different style can be very tricky to pull off, and most often ends up looking a bit kooky.

Go toward the light. Is your bathroom a dark cave with one exposed bulb guiding you to the toilet? Is there any natural light? Is your only source of light coming from above?

... continued on page D6



A classic pedestal sink and recessed cabinet make the most of a small bungalow bathroom.
Photo courtesy Brandon Neff Design



Bathroom Remodeling - Keep It Smart ... And Save

... continued from page D5

Lighting a bathroom properly is essential - for most people their first glimpse of themselves as they rise to greet the day is in the bathroom mirror. It should be a soothing start not a frightening jolt. For example, I often remind clients that sconces placed at eye level flanking the bathroom mirror is tremendously flattering as opposed to the overhead florescent most subject themselves to, and a small investment worth making.

There's a saying in the theater I refer to: light from above on stage equals tragedy. More specifically, when light strikes your face from above it can leave you looking drawn and shadowy. No one wants that. Am I right?

Instead, let lighting work with you to highlight both the best features of your space and your face. Additionally, step away from the fluorescents and embrace halogen lighting or LED. Advancements in lower energy LED lighting have made them a desirable choice for many of today's homeowners for their style and versatility. And, most importantly, put everything on a dimmer - the most inexpensive, and effective decision you'll ever make. Check out

Lutron systems for their function and design. You can thank me later.

Lay the ground rules. When considering the overall scope of a bathroom reno, the easiest way to cut costs is to keep existing plumbing locations where they are. Moving sinks, drains and shower plumbing is where the money begins to flow, and quickly. Most bathrooms have a good layout - generally speaking. With only three major components - the sink, toilet and shower/bath enclosure - there aren't too many options for their respective positions. Where limited space is a consideration, changing the location of the plumbing may not yield any discernible gains, and the task at hand may be purely functional and cosmetic.

Creating the illusion of more space can be the key to making it work. For example, removing a vanity and replacing it with a wash basin, or pedestal sink can open up a bathroom tremendously. Most wash stands feature towel racks below and integrated open shelving for additional storage.

If closed storage is an issue, look to narrower medicine cabinets made to install between wall studs, or add shelving between studs - this trick is rarely utilized by contractors, but can offer great storage solutions for a small space. In addition, newer, smaller profile toilets are now available to improve space planning while comply-

ing with lower water usage restrictions.

Toto and Kohler are two manufacturers that are leading the charge toward more economical and slimmer styles. Lastly, consider installing a frameless glass shower enclosure - a dramatic way to improve the sight line in a bathroom freeing it from visual barriers and

creating a more open feel.

Tile me up, tile me down. If you've decided that tiling your bathroom is the way to go for a new look, but you're worried about the high cost of labor and materials, I have a couple of ideas for you.

... continued on next page



A mix of modern mosaic tiles and old school finishes make this Craftsman style bathroom feel modern

Photo courtesy Brandon Neff Design

First, labor costs begin to climb in line with more elaborate patterns and materials. Keep it simple. As a purist, I prefer bathroom tile to err on the cleaner and more elegant side. I recommend pure white marbles (avoid Carrera marble with its muddy gray background), white ceramics or even white quartz materials are great options for all of your major coverage. Keep the pattern and color choices restricted to walls, window coverings, fixtures and accessories.

I like to choose a classic white marble subway tile, say Calacutta, for the shower walls. It always looks timeless, and can go from trad to mod with ease. To save money on floor tile go with large scale - fewer cuts means fewer dollars. Even in small spaces I prefer oversized floor tiles grouted with a minimum seam for an overall larger-than-life effect.

For economy in bath and shower surrounds, pick up less expensive ceramic tiles from any "big box" store and mix in a classic natural stone trim, or liner, set at 60"-65" H (this height falls above thermostatic controls and below the shower head.) You'll get the look of a custom tile installation at a fraction of the cost. Again, I recommend keeping grout width to a minimum for both aesthetics and maintenance.

My general rule with any home improvement is to always buy the very best quality you can afford and to hire the best help. Your bathroom is a place you spend a lot of "quality" time in, and it should reflect your personal style, as well as function beautifully.

Keep in mind that designing a smart space isn't about spending a lot of money, but rather it's about making good choices. Do your homework. Ask for help. Make good choices.



Brandon Neff is a Bay Area based Interior Designer. He can be reached at BrandonNeffDesign.com or at brandonneffdesign@yahoo.com.



Sleek travertine and a wall of glass make this modern bathroom feel airy and chic.

Photo courtesy Brandon Neff Design

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50 Camino Don Miguel

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ORINDA



270 Camino Sobrante

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ORINDA



81 Van Ripper Lane

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ORINDA



71 Camino Don Miguel

Beautifully renovated trad. charmer on priv. lane in heart of OCC. Custom detail throughout - fabulous redone kitchen, gorgeous mstr ste, formal LR & inviting FR. Lovely lvl garden w/ expansive brick patio + outdoor fireplace.

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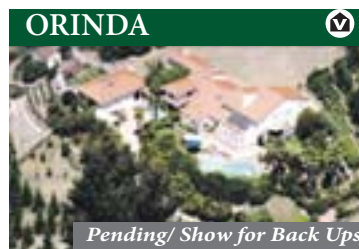
ORINDA



65 La Espiral

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60 Coachwood Terrace

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LAFAYETTE



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LAFAYETTE



3278 Sweet Drive

Spacious hm in charming nghbrhd. Entirely renovated 4bd/ 2.5ba, hdwd flrs, sep. mstr retreat, tons of natural light. Great for family living & entertaining. Seamless in/outdoor living w/spacious decks, lvl yd + an extra bonus rm.

Offered at \$889,000

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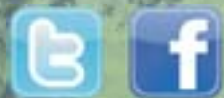
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