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## Festivities, Flags and Fireworks!

By Cathy Dausman



Orinda Parade 2012

Photo Othen Alexander

Moraga Fireworks 2012

Photo Kevin Gotta

The entire Lamorinda community is pulling together this year to make the Fourth of July festivities the most exciting ever! The fourth of July parade in Orinda is now 30 years old, and like a good grownup, it has become more inclusive - calling itself the Lamorinda Fourth of July Parade. Orinda Association president and event co-chair Bill Waterman said the name change came about two years ago when the city began soliciting more collaboration among the area nonprofit groups that traditionally assist at the red, white and blue celebration.

To broaden the outreach, the association sought input from Kathe Nelson of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Jay Ingram of Moraga Parks & Recreation and Jay Lifson, executive director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce.

Waterman admits "it's a challenge" and "a balancing act" to plan Fourth of July events in Orinda because the city doesn't want to detract from events in nearby Moraga, which this year includes a pancake breakfast, followed by the ever-popular dog parade and bike parade, community booths, as well as games and jumpies at the Moraga Commons. He credits his co-chair Chris Laszcz-Davis for

making things happen.

Laszcz-Davis called herself a "catalyst for the shift," saying she is "amazed by how much the community gives back," and sees "a lot of energy and momentum toward a common focus."

Waterman said the parade literally involves "a lot of moving parts," including the presence of swim teams, sports clubs, family floats and "more elaborate" local business floats-look for Lamorinda Weekly! Last year's parade featured veterans as the Grand Marshals; this year the focus will be on youth. Five swimmers, each representing an area swim club, as well as the Miramonte High School public speaking team will be honored as the 2013 Grand Marshals. For those who love live marching music, the Volunteer Marching Band is back. Leader Joe Barton expects a turnout of 40 to 60 musicians. Participants include Barton's boss, Lamorinda Music co-owner Colleen McCormick, on clarinet.

For McCormick, it's a family affair - her son Scotty plays sousaphone, her daughter clarinet and her husband alto saxophone. "We've been marching in the parade since 1995, since I was eight months pregnant with my son," she said. The group practices for about an hour before turning onto the route.

"We show up. We just kind of work on marching," Barton added.

He said the parade draws musicians young and old, ages 8 to 80, from this "huge music community." Parade watchers can expect to see a mix of grade school musicians (Burton Valley Elementary students have been past participants) some Rossmoor Big Band members, as well as musicians from local junior highs and high schools.

"Everybody's sight reading," Barton said, adding the band has some "really great musicians" and some who merely aspire to greatness. Barton said this year's band already includes "big fun instruments" like the sousaphone and tuba, plus a ukulele player and flutist.

Other activities include a pancake breakfast, a flag-raising ceremony and activities at Community Center Park. Graduating Miramonte High School senior Phil Hoxie has organized 24 musicians to play at the Orinda Community Center as part of the Fourth of July celebration. High school students from Miramonte, Acalanes, and Northgate, as well as returning college students and other local musicians, will entertain the 4th of July crowds for the third year in a row.

The group, all accomplished musicians, many of whom have played together in the Miramonte Jazz Band, have been rehearsing three days per week for the past several weeks. They are happy to devote the time to raise awareness for the Educational Foundation of Orinda, which sponsors music in the Orinda schools. The Miramonte band teacher Ari Gorman has made necessary equipment available on loan, keeping costs for the performance at zero.

The festivities will culminate at and around the Moraga Country Club for the annual fireworks display thanks to hard work within the three communities to garner the additional funding needed to offset costs. As of June 28, according to Moraga Parks and Recreation director Jay Ingram, the local fundraising drive has raised \$18,500 towards its \$24,000 goal. The Orinda Association will be raising money at the parade as well this year, splitting the funds to support the parade and Moraga fireworks (see related article on page B1).

Looking ahead, Waterman said the Orinda Association expects to keep their Fourth of July celebration going well into the future, thanks to a dedicated group of 15 to 20 volunteers all working together.

"We're not three communities," explained Laszcz-Davis, "we're one community."

## Schedule of Events on the Fourth of July

### The City of Orinda

7:30 to 10 a.m. Orinda Community Center Plaza - Pancake Breakfast  
7:55 a.m. Flag-raising Ceremony  
9:30 a.m. Community Booths and Kids Activities in Orinda Park  
10 a.m. Parade - Orinda Theatre to Orinda Community Center  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Community Center Park Activities

### The Town of Moraga

(Events at Moraga Commons Park, corner of Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road)

8 a.m. MYIC Pancake Breakfast  
9 a.m. Dog Parade  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Community Booths  
10:30 a.m. Bike Parade  
9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Jumpies  
11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Food booths  
11 a.m. Old Fashioned Kids Games  
12:30 p.m. Family Magic Show  
7 p.m. Larry Lynch & the Mob (concert)  
9:30 p.m. View Fireworks (launched from Moraga Country Club)

### July 4th Running Races

#### Moraga

Annual 4th of July Fun Runs: 2-mile, 5-mile, or the exciting Kiddie Race.

These races are sponsored by the Campolindo Cross Country and Track Teams. For race information/registration, visit [www.campotrack.com](http://www.campotrack.com) or contact race director Tricia Peterson at (702) 245-0429 or [triciajpeterson@gmail.com](mailto:triciajpeterson@gmail.com).

#### Orinda

Meet at 8 a.m. in front of the Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, in Orinda for Haley's Run for a Reason (register at [www.angelhaley.org](http://www.angelhaley.org)) and "Boston Strong" Orinda Roadrunners 30th Annual Fun Run.



EFO Big Band members enjoying a short break at weeknight practice. If you are out of town for July 4, you can catch the band playing in the Orinda Community Park on July 16. Photo provided

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