

# LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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**Home '14 expo**  
 Sunday, January 26, 2014  
 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Veterans Memorial Building  
 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette  
**FREE to the public!**  
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Photos Andy Scheck

## Dry Conditions Pose Risks Beyond Water Restrictions

By Cathy Dausman

While the threat of water restrictions are top of mind for many local residents, other dangers loom in these dry conditions, including the threat of wildfire, said Moraga-Orinda Fire District fire marshal Kathy Leonard. “Ninety-eight percent of California is now in drought,” she wrote in an email. “According to the National Climatic Data Center, California is facing the driest year since accurate records began in 1895. CalFire reported

more than 4,700 separate fires for 2013, 1,300 more than the annual average.”

And wildfire conditions will likely continue into the winter. “Without rain, the vegetation is still very dry and could ignite under the right conditions,” Leonard said. “Recent fires in Big Sur, Napa and Humboldt County are proof that cold temperatures have no effect on reducing the incidence of wildfires.”

MOFD fire engines are still carrying “the full complement

of wild land firefighting equipment. In a winter with normal rainfall, this equipment would have already been removed from the trucks, Leonard said.

“MOFD reminds all homeowners to remain vigilant about keeping dry vegetation and other combustible materials” away from their homes and properties, she said, and encouraged homeowners to request a free wildfire risk assessment.

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### Quote of the Week:

“Do we all want to see our kids work hard and be successful? Of course. Do we want that at the cost of their mental health? Of course not.”

Read Parenting for Authentic Success - page B6

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## Challenging Job to Decide Fate of City Parcels

## Challenging Job to Decide Fate of City Parcels

By Cathy Tyson

Shortly after Mayor Don Tatzin described how the goal of the Old Library Reuse Task Force is ultimately to make a recommendation to the Lafayette City Council and develop an action plan for how to use the structure on Moraga Road and the parking lot parcel with a former doctors’ office across the street, it became very clear that doing so won’t be easy.

Numerous options and constraints will have to be considered and some creative solutions, like a land swap or perhaps using proceeds from one property to enhance another, are on the table. New mayor Tatzin and former mayor Mike Anderson provided guidance, suggesting subcom-

mittees to create a matrix quantifying impacts, costs and more to compare the various options side by side, and a public outreach committee to keep the public informed, review assessments, examine shared uses and compatibility with the downtown specific plan.

With so many moving parts involved in making a recommendation, like considering a longer term vision, finding a suitable partner for the city, defining and deciding what the highest and best, and most fiscally responsible, use actually means is overwhelming at this point. The hope is that the all-volunteer task force can narrow options and will agree on a

recommendation to deliver around May of this year. It will be up to the City Council to make a final decision, and whatever is decided will still have to be reviewed like any other structure in Lafayette through the design review process and Planning Commission.

The city has a total of more than \$4 million invested in the two parcels: \$2.3 million for the aging doctors’ office and parking lot on the west side of the street and \$1.97 million, a price that was agreed upon in the 1990s with Contra Costa County, for the old library building and its parking area on the east side of Moraga Road.

Volunteers bring a range of ex-

pertise to the task force – right off the bat, architect Tom Lee had valuable input along with construction and affordable housing professionals; the Chamber of Commerce, the Lafayette Community Foundation, the Methodist church that is adjacent to the west parcel, the Lafayette School District, the police, an investment banker and representatives from senior services, Parks Trails and Recreation, and the Planning Commission round out the group.

A call was made for proposals late last year and to date 12 have been received; to be fair, future proposals will still be accepted.

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#### WWI at SMC

From the trenches of the "war to end all wars" emerged powerful art - page B1.



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#### Girls' Season Update

Lamorinda girls fight for top spots in basketball and soccer - page C2.



### Our Homes D1-D12

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