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Photos Sophie Braccini and provided

Lamorinda Couples Share the Secret to Their Longevity

By Sophie Braccini

With the divorce rate in the United States nearing 50 percent, and typical marriages lasting approximately 8 years, what's the secret to a long-lasting relationship? Five Lamorinda couples, all who met as students at Acalanes, Miramonte and Campolindo high schools – with marriages now spanning 10, 20, and 30

years – share what makes their relationships work.

For Karen Blodgett, who met her husband, Larry, in an Acalanes High School Spanish class in 1980, it's all about friendship. "We've grown together, and we are also best friends," she says. After attending class together for a few months, Larry Blodgett built up the courage to ask the

younger girl out and "the relationship has not stopped since," he says. Larry went on to college in Idaho after graduating from Acalanes in 1982 – Karen graduated the following year – but he never stopped thinking about the girl he left behind. "Karen was the only one on my mind," he says.

... continued on page A12

Quote of the Week:

"The pig happens to be my favorite animal and the one used more and more in every kitchen across the world. We can all relate to that animal." Read Words That Change Our World - page B11.

Advertising

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After Impasse, What's Next?

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District board of directors announced Jan. 28 that it had declared an impasse in labor negotiations with its firefighters, represented by the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, Local 1230.

The union has worked under the terms of a contract that expired Dec. 31, 2010, and this is not the first time that the district has declared an impasse in labor negotiations. In June 2012, the district made a last, best and final offer that was rejected by the union. Though the board declared an impasse, no further action was taken by either side. "We mutually agreed to wait until Gov. Brown's pension legislation went through to see how that would change things," said MOFD union representative Mark DeWeese.

But negotiations went nowhere throughout 2013, and an impasse was declared in January after the district presented the union its last, best and

final offer; the union proposed a counter (see sidebar). The union now has until Feb. 27 to formally request that the district go through a state mandated fact-finding process, according to Eddie Kreisberg, the district's labor negotiator.

The fact-finding process is a form of mediation. Each side appoints a member to a panel chaired by a neutral party approved by both the district and the union. The three-person panel conducts an investigation and within 30 days, recommends the terms of a settlement. Its findings are advisory only; "Whatever the fact-finding panel says will be non-binding," said DeWeese.

Not only is the process non-binding; it can be expensive. The hearings can last for several days, and may require the attendance of district staff, witnesses and legal counsel. Plus, both MOFD and the union split the costs of the neutral panel member.

... continued on page A9

Oak Tree Down



In the aftermath of last weekend's heavy rain, this majestic oak came crashing down at noon Monday onto the 90-year-old Casa Vernana building at Camino Pablo and Miner Road in Orinda. Photo and information provided by John Fernbacher

Life in Lamorinda

B1-B14

Survivor's Heart

The story of a long-awaited Purple Heart - page B1.



Sports

C1-C4

Girls' Soccer Heats Up

The DFAL title is on the line tomorrow night - page C2.



Our Homes

D1-D16

Eichler Revival

Lafayette homes with someone in common - page D1.





Lafayette Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room at 1212
Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

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

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KB Project Makes Concluding Rounds

By Cathy Tyson



Rendering of the south elevation, Lafayette Town Center Phase III.

Courtesy of Heller Manus

At a puzzling meeting Feb. 3, the KB Home project slated for the gravel parking lot behind Panda Express went before the Planning Commission to receive comments. Senior planner Christine Sinnette called the situation “unusual” and “very different from anything staff has done in the past.” Planning Commissioners were initially confused because the proposed 69-unit building’s massing and height had already been decided by

the City Council prior to a Dec. 6, 2012 legal deadline and the Design Review Commission had approved the project and will be looking at the finer details of the design as a condition of their approval, leaving the Planning Commissioners scratching their heads over the purely procedural review.

“There is no point in a Planning Commission meeting at this point” said Commissioner Jeanne Ateljevich. “The size and mass were dictated long ago in developer agreements.”

Explaining they are “90 percent” done with the design of the project, project manager Steve Buchholz of Heller Manus Architects clarified that is the reason the Design Review Commission was able to approve the project, and that all of the final drawings along with refinements will come back for a final review by the DRC.

A staff report prepared for the Feb. 3 meeting noted the requirement of the Planning Commission to review the plans, and that DRC will continue to work with KB Home on further design details, including

lighting fixtures, fencing materials, detailed landscape specifications.

It has taken years to get to this point of having nothing to decide at a meeting, aside from brief commentary. Changes have been made to this multi-family complex on a 1.5 acre parcel in the heart of Lafayette with regard to size and ownership. Originally Lafayette Residential Partners proposed development on the site, but sold their interest to KB Homes about five years ago, now the structure is shorter than when first proposed and the number of units has been scaled back from 81 to 69 units. A Development Agreement was amended in February of 2008, which ratified terms that both the city and the developer agreed upon almost 15 years ago; freezing the city’s rules and regulations to the original approval date of April, 1998.

Moving forward, the City Council, on a split vote, approved conceptual architectural plans in late 2012 for a 72-unit, 55-foot tall structure that is the third component of the Town Center development. It has since been revised to a total of 69 one-, two- and three-bedroom units.

Conditions of approval required that both the Design Review Commission and Planning Commission respond to six specific directives to make the project approvable. Directives range from incorporating a grand gesture or organizing element to simplify materials to reduce the verticality and beyond.

Because the relevance of comments was in question, none of the commissioners addressed the list of six directives, noting those items are the jurisdiction of the Design Review Commission. Commissioner Karen Maggio expressed concern about sustainability issues, she wanted the living areas to be “more gracious” and commented about the scarcity of green features such as the lack of natural light and ventilation in the interior corner units, “this design is so 20 years ago.”

The next step for the project is to go before the City Council on Feb. 24 for their review. Changes or amendments can still be made by the City Council at that time by a majority vote. Then it will circle back to Design Review for further refinement of design details.



Lafayette Police Summary, Jan. 19 - Feb. 1

Alarm Reports: 34

Suspicious Vehicle Stops
Recorded: 18

Alcohol:

- 1/29 DUI misdemeanor, Bacon Wy/Springbrook Rd
- 1/30 Drunk in Public, Noah’s Bagels
- 1/31 Intoxicated Subject, Lafayette Cr
- 2/1 DUI misdemeanor, Old Tunnel Rd/Windsor Dr

Arrests:

- 1/22 Warrant Arrest, Safeway
- 1/25 Warrant Arrest, Mt Diablo Bl

Auto:

- 1/21 Hit and Run misdemeanor, Brown Av
- Hit and Run misdemeanor, Lafayette Cr

Burglaries:

- 1/20 Auto Burglary, 3400 Block Monroe Av
- 1/22 Residential Burglary, location not available
- Auto Burglary, Oakwood Athletic Club
- 1/23 Auto Burglary, Oakwood Athletic Club
- Auto Burglary, 4000 Block Mt Diablo Bl (2)
- Auto Burglary, PD
- 1/26 Residential Burglary, Shangri La Rd
- Auto Burglary, 3700 Block Mt Diablo Bl

Disturbances/Public Nuisance:

- 1/24 Harassment, location not available
- 1/25 Juvenile Disturbance, Old Tunnel Rd
- Verbal Dispute, location not available

Panhandling, Safeway

- 1/26 Panhandling, Safeway
- 1/28 Disturbing the Peace, Rohrer Dr
- Verbal Dispute 1st St/Mt Diablo Bl
- 1/30 Verbal Dispute, Moraga Bl
- 2/1 Public Nuisance, Martino Rd
- Public Nuisance, Springhill Rd

Fireworks:

- 1/26 Burton Valley Elementary School

Missing:

- 1/23 Adult, Via Los Colorados
- 1/24 Adult, Wilkinson Ln
- 2/1 Adult, 1st St

Possession:

- 1/23 Paraphenalia, Miller Dr

Reckless Driving:

- 1/19 Golden Gate Wy/Mt Diablo Bl
- 1/22 Deer Hill Rd/1st St
- 1/25 Sweet Dr
- 1/30 St Marys Rd/Glenside Cr
- 2/1 Pleasant Hill Rd/Reliez Valley Rd

Theft:

- 1/20 Petty Theft 3300 Block Mt Diablo Bl
- Petty Theft, location not available
- 1/22 Grand Theft, Deer Hill Rd
- 1/24 Petty Theft, Woodview Dr
- 1/28 Petty Theft, Starbucks
- Petty Theft, location not available
- 2/1 Grand Theft, Oak Hill Rd

Trespass:

- 1/20 3700 Block Mt Diablo Bl

Vandalism:

- 2/1 Brown Av



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

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Circulation Commission, Lafayette Community Center Foundation, Capital Projects Assessment Committee (CPAC), Creeks Committee, Design Review Commission, Downtown Street Improvement Master Plan Committee (DSIMPIC), Environmental Task Force, Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, Public Art Committee, Senior Services Commission, Youth Commission and Lafayette’s representative to the Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging.

Lafayette is a community that prides itself on its strong volunteer participation. For information about these vacancies and the responsibilities of each of these bodies please visit our website. www.lovelafayette.org Applications can be downloaded from our webpage or contact city offices (925-284-1968) and an application will be mailed to you.

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Mayor Plays at Mayor's Concert



Photo Ellen Reintjes

At the 18th annual Mayor's Concert the Stanley Symphonic Band had a special guest artist, Mayor Don Tatzin on the baritone horn. Because this is his sixth time as mayor, he's enjoyed the band over the years as a listener, but this was the first time he was able to unveil his hidden talent as a euphonium player.

With proud parents ringing the band room, Tatzin and the student band members did not disappoint. They played an interesting variety of music that included the majestic theme from "The Man from Snowy River," the "National Emblem" – a

rousing marching band piece – a swashbuckling medley from the Pirates of the Caribbean and Tchaikovsky's "Chanson Triste."

Tatzin had been practicing, but commented on his rustiness, noting the 45 year gap since he last played. He fit right in with the toe tapping students calling it "a great experience." He got high marks from director Bob Athayde, for listening closely and using Smart Music, music education software for students, to get up to speed. No report card for his morning of music, this was strictly an extra credit assignment. C. Tyson

Greenlight on Lafayette School District Parcel Tax

By Cathy Tyson

With a unanimous vote, Lafayette school board members approved putting a measure on the May 6 ballot to replace property tax measures that will sunset in 2015. Voters will be asked to make a decision on the \$539 tax that would include an exemption for seniors, a cost of living adjustment and

have no sunset date to continue to fund key academic programs for the district. Current voter approved measures J and B will expire in 2015, this new tax, if approved, will "continue to maintain programs that we have now," explained board president Teresa Gerrerger.

... continued on page A11

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Moraga Home Price Comparison Between 2012 & 2013

	Under 2000 sq. ft.		2000-2500 sq. ft.		Over 2500 sq. ft.	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Total Homes Sold	28	22	46	49	52	58
Avg. Days on Market	28	14	18	17	37	29
Sold Over Asking Price	11	18	23	29	21	34
Sold Under Asking Price	12	3	17	11	25	17
Sold at Asking Price	5	1	6	7	6	7
Avg. Sales Price	\$747,000	\$844,454	\$911,000	\$1,075,000	\$1,247,000	\$1,360,000
Avg. Sales Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$429	\$493	\$407	\$489	\$390	\$441

Another very exciting year in Real Estate. As you can see, prices increased dramatically especially in the last 6 months of the year. With inventory as low as it is multiple offers are common. If you were on the fence about whether to sell or not this is a really good time.

Thank you for your continued support and your referrals. Never hesitate to email or call.

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
 1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.
 Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
 Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

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

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
 Tuesday, March 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

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A Matter of Transparent Government

Three ad hoc subcommittees will make a big difference

By Sophie Braccini

Three subcommittees will work on topics this year that could heavily impact Moraga's future: the ad hoc facilities planning subcommittee will join elected civic officials with representatives from the Moraga School District, Campolindo High School and Saint Mary's College to discuss cooperative planning of recreation resources; the country club golf course negotiating team will discuss a new rental rate with Moraga Country Club for the "back nine" parcel, which belongs

to the town; and the hillside and ridgeline subcommittee will study potential updates to the town's regulations. Since not more than two elected officials participate on each of these subcommittees, the meetings are not governed by the Brown Act and do not have to be open to the public. However, the facilities planning subcommittee and the ridgeline and hillside subcommittee will hold public meetings in the name of transparency. Subcommittees make recommendations, not decisions.

The initial meeting of the Joint Facilities Planning Subcommittee was set for Feb. 10 at the Hacienda de las Flores. This subcommittee is tasked with taking an inventory of existing resources and recommending both short-

and long-term facilities planning; from joint use agreements to improving and enhancing sports fields/facilities in Moraga. "The public is encouraged to attend," said Jay Ingram, parks and recreation director, who added that the monthly meeting dates will be posted on the town website. Members of the Moraga Sports Alliance and the Park and Recreation Commission will also participate in the discussion. Recommendations from this subcommittee are anticipated in the fall.

The Hillside and Ridgelines Subcommittee will also conduct its meetings in the public arena. Dates have not been determined yet, but the Town Council has hired a consultant, The Planning

Center/DC&E, that staff presented as having extensive experience in planning and zoning for hillside development, technical expertise in geotechnical issues and hazards mapping. The consultant will interact with the subcommittee and will also conduct outreach meetings with residents.

The team that will negotiate with MCC has not started any preliminary work yet. Town staff will first conduct an appraisal of the property. The team will report the advancement of its negotiation to the Town Council during closed sessions; it is therefore unlikely that the meetings will be public. There again, the team will make recommendations, the final decision will be made by the Town Council during a public meeting.



Moraga Police Department

Suspicious credit card transactions, 1/27/14 A call from his bank gave a Sanders Ranch resident a heads up that there were two suspicious transactions on his credit card in January. Oddly enough the fellow had recently received a bank credit card that he had not applied for. The bank stopped the mysterious, possibly fraudulent phantom shopping transactions before completed. The surprising credit card was cancelled. Cops gave the victim an identity theft affidavit.

Senior moment? 2/01/14 It was only 7:30 a.m. when officers contacted an elderly driver blocking a lane on Moraga Road near Ascot. The driver possibly became confused and straddled the concrete center media, hitting a "one way" sign in the process. No injuries to the driver, but repairing the busted sign will cost around \$500. The car was towed from the scene.

D.U.I. 2/01/14 A blue Jeep was paced at 50 m.p.h. in a 25 m.p.h. on Ascot Drive in the wee hours of the morning. Upon contact with the 21-year-old driver, cops could smell alcohol. Officers attempted to give the driver a field sobriety test, but it was stopped for the subject's safety. He was taken to the Moraga Police Department for a blood test, arrested for D.U.I. and later released to a friend.

Identity theft, 1/30/14 A Miramonte Drive resident received a phone call from the Macy's fraud department stating that an account was opened in her name and over \$5,000 was charged. The victim also discovered \$1,500 of bogus charges on her bank account. The case is under investigation.

Unauthorized solicitor, 1/29/14 Cops got a call about a solicitor in the area of Greenfield Drive and Crossbrook Court. Unfortunately the subject was not in possession of a solicitor's permit that is now required by the town Municipal Code. While doing a background check, police discovered the sales person had an arrest warrant for disorderly conduct in Texas, which did not provide for extradition. He got a stern warning and said he would comply with the permit requirement.

Road rage in Moraga? 1/29/14 Reporting that she had been tailgated by a female in an SUV on Moraga Road, a woman reported to police that the tailgater was apparently incensed that she was driving too slow, shook her fists and passed her, and threw a can of soda at her car. The reporting person wisely got the cranky driver's license plate number. Although she requested documentation of the incident, the allegedly slower driver declined to press charges. Cops attempted to contact the registered owner with negative results.

In addition, the following crimes were reported between Jan. 28 and Feb. 4

- Suspicious circumstances**
 San Pablo Ct
 Buckingham Dr
 Augusta Dr
- Theft of mail**
 Roberts Ct
- False alarm**
 Moraga Rd
 Moraga Wy
 Fieldbrook Pl
 Camino Ricardo
 Calle La Mesa
 Brandt
 Larch Av
- Disturbing the peace**
 Ascot Dr
- Elder financial scam**
 Tharp Dr
- Found Property**
 Devin Dr
- Vandalism**
 Rheem Bl
 Moraga Rd
- D.U.I.**
 Moraga Rd at Corliss
- Traffic accident**
 Moraga Rd
 Corliss Dr
 Ascot

Capturing a Piece of the County's \$2 Billion Road Pie

By Sophie Braccini

When it comes to getting a share of the \$2 billion generated by measures C and J, Lamorinda is not very well positioned with its reputation of relative affluence. Additionally, secluded Moraga does not have within its boundaries any of the roads that get the bulk of the funding – the routes of regional significance. This is why the creative members of the Lamorinda Program Management Committee, staff and elected officials, came up with a new concept: the inter-jurisdictional roads, or routes of Lamorinda significance. Time will tell if the new concept is fruitful – if the presentation of collaborative projects to improve these roads is the key to unlocking the county's coffers.

"There is no guarantee of funding," admitted Moraga's planning director, Shawna Brekke-Read, at a January Town Council meeting, "but it is one of the reasons that the committee members were discussing adding different categories and inter-jurisdictional routes. Increasingly Lamorinda is having difficulty being competitive in the grant world (for road projects), because to the question 'is the project on a route of regional significance?' we always respond 'no.' One idea is to bring a new category to the table."

The Lamorinda Program Man-

agement Committee did not completely agree on which roads should be included in the new concept, but some common ground was found that includes Moraga Road, Moraga Way, Mt. Diablo Boulevard and the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail.

The program management committee puts together and updates the Lamorinda Action Plan. It is comprised of one elected official from each city – Mike Metcalf (Moraga), Amy Worth (Orinda) and Don Tatzin (Lafayette) – supported by staff from all three cities. The action plan assesses regional transportation issues within the Lamorinda area, measures the level of service and makes recommendations on improvement projects and programs. The committee's role is also to foster a cooperative planning process under the Measure J program.

"There are other routes that were proposed as inter-jurisdictional roads," Metcalf reported at the Jan. 22 meeting of the Moraga Town Council, "Rheem Boulevard, Glorietta and the Saint Mary's Road-Glenside-Reliez Station-Olympic route." But the committee was divided. "It is a fact of life that these roads are used by commuters from different cities," said Metcalf, "but representatives of Lafayette and Orinda to the Lamorinda Action Plan meeting pointed out that residents living along these roads

consider them as neighborhood streets, not commute paths."

"Do we want to ruffle feathers (in Lafayette and Orinda), or do we want to take a backseat on this?" asked Councilmember Dave Trotter. The Moraga Town Council gave its support to the new concept for Moraga Way, Moraga Road, the regional trail, and Mt. Diablo Boulevard. On Jan. 27 the Lamorinda Program Management Committee agreed to implement the plan.

What Are Measures C and J?

In 1988 Contra Costa County voters approved Measure C, a 0.005 percent local sales tax that generated \$1 billion in funding for transportation projects and programs over 20 years. Measure C also created the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), with a board of 11 elected officials and three ex-officio members to guide the expenditure of the sales tax proceeds in accordance with the voter-approved expenditure plan. In 2004 the voters also approved Measure J extending the sales tax for 25 years, through 2034, and generating an additional \$2 billion.

More Moraga Civic News on Page A11 and A14

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Chief Seeks Part-Time Community Service Officer

By Sophie Braccini

The state of California requires all police departments to properly collect, process, dispose of and/or store evidence. According to Bob Priebe, Moraga's police chief, there are not enough personnel in his department to do this work. "This is a problem," he said at a recent Town Council meeting. "We have several years' worth of narcotics and stored weapons that need to be destroyed and we simply don't have the time to do it." This work is done by the chief himself or by a lieutenant, who will retire in March, when time permits. In

the past, a community service officer has sometimes fulfilled that function, but the position has been staffed on and off depending on funding. The Town Council approved the hiring of a new part-time CSO and the chief is actively recruiting; members of the community are welcome to send their resumes.

The CSO will be a non-sworn civilian employee of the town. Priebe stated at the meeting that the financial impact to the town of Moraga would be about \$40,000 a year. He added that he was not asking for a full time

employee because he didn't want to have to cut that position again. The chief does not expect to hire someone already fully trained for a part-time job. "We will hire someone who has the potential to become a good CSO; we will provide the training and get them to where they need to be." Priebe described the CSO as someone of the highest character, with attention to details.

The full description for the position is posted on the PD's web site with specifics on how to apply; go to police.moraga.ca.us.

Will TSAC Rise from the Ashes?

By Sophie Braccini

Right after the Town Council had an initial discussion about the possibility of sunsetting the Traffic and Safety Advisory Committee due to lack of activity during 2013, a flurry of issues were brought to the committee's January meeting. For Moraga residents concerned about traffic and safety problems they want resolved, TSAC is a sounding board where they can express themselves, be acknowledged, and in some cases achieve resolution without further ado. But the viability of TSAC remains in question, because

only one of the current members has re-applied for next year, current chair John Valentine, and no candidates have stepped forward to fill the four remaining seats.

"Based on the meeting we had in January it would be tragic to lose TSAC, because people need to have some type of public hearing and the Town Council cannot handle everything," said Valentine. TSAC meets quarterly; volunteers need not have traffic experience to serve on the committee.

At the Jan. 15 meeting about a

dozen residents came to share issues they've had with traffic in town, mostly around the schools.

The most complex cases involved residents of the Corliss Drive neighborhood, from all along Rimer Drive and in the Deerfield/Tharp area.

Jesse Gustafson, who lives on Corliss Drive, contacted the town in July over concerns about vehicle speeding along that street, especially during peak hours, when children are present.

... continued on page A8

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Frank Salmen

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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 6 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way

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

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District

Monday, March 10, 6 p.m.

OUSD Office, Vintage Building

25 Orinda Way, Suite 200

www.orindaschools.org

See also AUHSD meeting page A2



Orinda Police Department crime statistics for the month of January will appear in our Feb. 26 issue.

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



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Orinda's Quality of Life Continues to Receive High Marks

By Laurie Snyder

Life is great in Orinda. That was the judgment of 400 Orindans who participated in a poll in late January to gauge residents' level of satisfaction with everything from policing to pothole repairs. These and other findings are available in "Orinda Voter Support for Financing Infrastructure Improvements: Key Findings from a Citywide Voter Survey," an analysis of the results by Fairbank, Maslin, Maulin, Metz & Associates which was presented by staff to the Orinda City Council at its meeting Feb. 4.

Ninety-eight percent of those surveyed described community life as excellent or good. Orindans also still love their library with 95 percent indicating they approve of the facility and its programs. Eighty-nine percent also approve of the police and Parks and Recreation departments. However, only 78 percent, 62 percent and 46 percent were happy, respectively, with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, Orinda City Council and Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. An eye popping 35 percent of those polled, however, said they either did not know enough about the performance of county supervisors to answer the question, or defined the work of their county governing body as "not applicable."

Respondents did make clear that their community's roads continue to be of concern with 70 percent saying they would support "The City of Orinda Road Repair and Safety Improvement Measure" to "repair failing roads and storm drains, fix potholes, and improve traffic safety" if it appears on a future ballot. Twenty-four percent were firmly op-

posed while 38 percent would definitely vote for the bond with another 33 percent stating they would likely support or were leaning in favor of the measure.

Respondents also appear to believe that if Orinda is to truly get its act together where infrastructure is concerned, more skin needs to be put into the game by residents and their government. Seventy-five percent of those who said they would support a \$20 million bond measure indicated that a \$10 million bond would also be an acceptable alternative bond amount in contrast to the 43 percent who said they might get behind an even higher bond - \$40 million. Regarding potential projects to be undertaken, respondents want the worst streets fixed and believe storm drains and water pipes should be repaired at the same time roads are repaved. Seventy-seven percent agreed the repairs would enhance public safety while 71 percent felt the improvements would also protect property values.

Conversely, when asked how much they would be willing to pony up to repair roads and drains, only 26 percent were in favor of employing a real estate transfer tax to help raise the \$52 million still needed to fix Orinda's crumbling infrastructure - even if it enabled the city to repeal the recently enacted half-cent sales tax increase. And only 43 percent said they were personally willing to pay \$60 dollars per \$100,000 of assessed value on their homes annually for the next 20 years - even if that assessment was based on what the homeowner paid for his or her residence rather than its current market value. Seventy-one percent would be

willing to consider payments of \$15 per \$100,000 of assessed value each year.

According to David Metz and Curtis Below, the polling consultants who completed the analysis for the

city, "A \$20 million bond measure to fund the second phase of Orinda's program of road and storm drain repairs appears feasible." The poll's margin of error was plus or minus 4.9 percent.

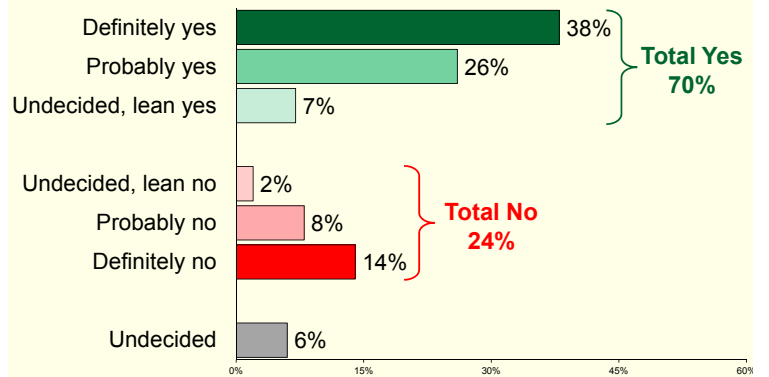
Voters continue to give very high ratings to Orinda's quality of life.

Would you say the overall quality of life in Orinda is excellent, good, only fair, or poor?



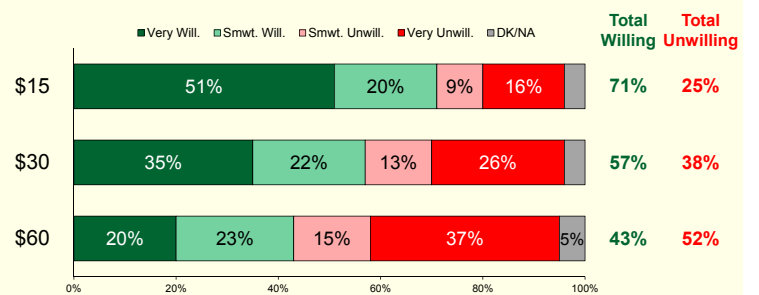
Seven in ten voters would initially support \$20 million bond measure.

If the election were held today, do you think you would vote "Yes" in favor of this measure or "No" to oppose it?



A majority of voters would be willing to pay \$15 to \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed value on their homes, but most would see a \$60 rate as too high.

The final bond amount for this measure has not yet been determined. Would you be willing to pay an annual cost of _____ per \$100,000 of assessed value on your home over the next 20 years to repair and repave public roads and storm drains, fix potholes and improve traffic safety? Keep in mind that your home's assessed value is based on what you paid for your home, and not its current fair market value.



Images provided



NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE ON A CITY OF ORINDA COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE

The City of Orinda is seeking applications from *resident volunteers* to serve on the City's:

- Art in Public Places Committee (1)
- Planning Commission (2)
- Parks & Recreation Commission (3)
- Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission (2)
- Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (3)
- Finance Advisory Committee (3)
- Public Works Aesthetic Review Committee (1)
- Historic Landmark Committee (3)

The City of Orinda is also seeking applications from resident volunteers to serve as the City's Liaison to the following local agencies:

- Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District Trustee (1)
- Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging (1)
- Representative on the Contra Costa County Library Commission (2)
- County Connection Citizens Advisory Committee (1)

Statement of Interest forms are available from the Orinda City Clerk's Office, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563. If you have any specific questions regarding the recruitment, please contact Michele Olsen, City Clerk at 925-253-4221 or molsen@cityoforinda.org.

Application forms may also be downloaded from the City's website at www.cityoforinda.org.

Completed Statement of Interest forms must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by **Friday, February 28, 2014 at 5:00pm.**

Qualified applicants for City Commission and Committee appointments will be invited to interview before the full City Council on **Saturday, March 15, 2014.**

Michele L. Olsen, City Clerk



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City to Memorialize Orinda's First Mayor, Richard Heggie

By Laurie Snyder



Dick Heggie Photo provided

"This evening is one of those rare opportunities when council has choices and options for recognizing a very special person in Orinda's community and in Orinda's history," observed Janet Keeter, city

manager, as she began a presentation before the Orinda City Council Jan. 21. "This is to recognize Orinda's first mayor – and that is Richard Heggie, who passed away in this last year."

Keeter explained that the City Council had, at several previous meetings, met to discuss possible options for honoring Heggie's contributions to the community, directed staff to return with visuals to facilitate city discussions about the memorial, and also obtained input from Heggie's widow, Bea Heggie, and former colleague, Bobbie Landers, with whom he co-founded the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation. Landers, who also served with Heggie on Orinda's first city council before becoming mayor herself was seated in the audience with Bea Heggie during the City Council's deliberations. Councilmember Amy Worth was re-

cused due to her husband's legal representation of Bea Heggie on other matters.

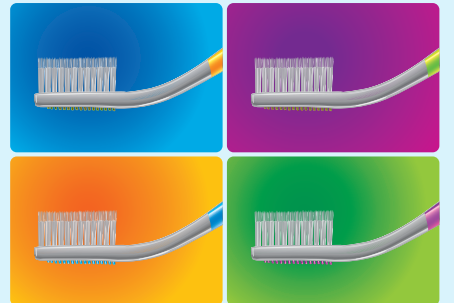
"The option that the council agreed upon in the workshop is to rename the Upper Library Plaza to the Richard Heggie Plaza," continued Keeter. If approved, the city would then schedule a celebration and invite current and former council members, Heggie's family and members of the public.

A graduate of Berkeley High School, Heggie earned a master's degree in international relations at the University of California, Berkeley after serving in the U.S. Navy. He spent 19 years with the Asia Foundation, more than 12 as executive director of the World Affairs Council of Northern California, and was awarded the Order of Leopold II by the Government of Belgium.

... continued on page A11

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ORINDA \$2,175,900
4+/3. New construction. Gorgeous views, close to town. More pics/info at OrindaOaks.com.

The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



ORINDA \$759,000
3/2. Mid-Century charmer. Add your own personal style to this one-level keepsake home.

Brown/Camras CalBRE#01738605/01156248



ORINDA \$1,495,000
4/3.5. Sunny oasis. Remodeled throughout. Pool, spa w/ large deck & lawn for play. Bonus inlaw suite.

Laura Abrams CalBRE#01272382



LAFAYETTE \$1,399,000
3/3. Spectacular Mid-Century Modern in Zen-like Setting. Designed for Enjoyment & Relaxation!

Soraya Golesorkhi CalBRE#01771736

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Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



MORAGA \$829,000
4/2. MCC! Spacious & wonderful 2486 sq. ft detached home, close to trails w/a great family room.

Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



MORAGA \$1,288,000
3/2. Lovely one story contemporary with great views. Lrg rear patio, great for entertaining.

Jerry Wendt CalBRE#00178259



WALNUT CREEK \$975,000
4/3. Charm & character abound in this well maintained home. Iron Horse Trail access. WC schools!

Val Durantini CalBRE#01376796



PLEASANT HILL \$984,900
4/3. Rare, 2962 SqFt on big lot w/ bedroom & full bath on main lvl. Big bonus room upstairs.

Jeannette Bettencourt CalBRE#01154506



ORINDA \$995,000
4/2.5. Creek side setting in heart of OCC area! Great floor plan w/ hardwood floors. Walk to Bart and village.

Jerry Wendt CalBRE#00178259



MORAGA \$1,250,000
4/2.5. Updated 2324 sq. ft home with attention to detail. .50 lot w/ views and great backyard!

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4/4. New construction! Gorgeous view, nice lg yard, quality materials. Cul-de-sac loc. www.orindaoaks.com

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ORINDA \$1,798,000
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Linda Van Drent CalBRE#01051129



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ORINDA \$2,100,000
4/3. New construction. Gorgeous views, close to town. More pics/info at OrindaOaks.com.

The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



LAFAYETTE \$1,150,000
4/2.5. 2300 square feet w/ a lot size of .29 acre, this home offers a very spacious feeling.

Jim Ellis CalBRE#00587326



LAFAYETTE \$1,249,000
4/3.1. Resort-Style Living! Sprawling lot w/ privacy, pool, fire pit, outdoor Kit., water features and much more!

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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:

I hope that the plan to reactivate the Park Theater does work. We need a movie theater in Lafayette. What we don't need is a theater like Rheem or Orinda who are poor re-runs of Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill, where at least the screens are large and the theaters comfortable. This side of the hill needs a good arts theater, one that replaces the Cinearts, where good art and foreign films are shown and changed frequently. (Before the Park died, films ran for weeks.) The Elmwood in Oakland is a good model. There is a good audience out there for this type of venue. I know many people who bemoan the loss of Cinearts and would readily come to Lafayette.

Leonard Dorin
Lafayette

Editor:

I am a longtime resident of Orinda, an avid environmentalist and recycler. Along with my neighbors, every week I place my leaves, grass clippings and green waste in my green bin, along with the food scraps I save to be recycled and turned into compost. Imagine how devastating it was to hear that Lamorinda's yard waste is not being composted at all, but is, instead, being sent to local landfills and being used to cover the daily garbage. Republic, the waste hauler that is supposed to be composting our yard waste, is under contract with the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority to compost Lamorinda's green waste at its Newby Island composting facility. But according to the California Compost Coalition, there is no record of any of our green waste being composted at this location. Our citizens should demand a full investigation and halt any talk of giving Republic a new contract until we can get to the bottom of this fiasco.

Rick Needoba
Orinda

Editor:

Is the MOFD Board of Directors properly managing our medical transport and fire protection services? Consider these facts presented recently by the District's financial manager.

- General Fund revenue is not sufficient to pay for General Fund expenditures due to a structural deficit.
- The District's General Fund was required to borrow from the Capital Projects Fund at June 30, 2013.
- It is projected Capital Projects Fund resources will be depleted during 2016/17.
- In addition, as resources in the Capital Projects Fund are depleted, the District may not be able to properly maintain and replace capital assets.

In sum, if the Capital Fund is bled dry in 2016/17 by excessive operating costs, then we may still have fire fighters, but insufficient funds remaining to buy fuel for the fire engines.

So, what's the Board's plan of action? According to the Draft Budget Development Policy document recently presented to the finance committee, the plan is to develop a preliminary 2014/15 budget in February/March and eventually adopt it in June. In other words, there is no intention, as of yet, to address the structural problem, viz., District revenues cannot cover on-going expenses. As stated by the financial manager, the problem is structural. This means either costs must be lowered (salaries and/or services) and/or revenues must be increased to maintain current service levels.

When this crisis began to intensify a couple of months ago, the Board directed the new Fire Chief to come up with a quick plan to cut overtime costs by reducing staffing from 19 firefighters and paramedics on shift to 17. That helped lower costs but it didn't address the overall problem. Continuing to pass deficit budgets year after year leading to financial collapse in 2016/17 is shortsighted, to say the least.

MOFD Board members are neighbors of ours volunteering to handle what's become a very challenging task. Three of them will come up for re-election this November. I won't be surprised if none of them offer to re-enlist. For the past two elections cycles, none of the MOFD Board elections were contested. So, where are we headed? What say do District residents have in this? By what process can we as an overall community come to reconcile our expectations and our offerings with the cost of doing business? If the MOFD Board doesn't offer a proper forum for community discussion, who will?

Jonathan Goodwin
Canyon

Editor:

The new senior housing complex being built on the old library site in Orinda is a monstrosity. Not even complete, it's height and bulk already loom over and dominate that whole end of Orinda Village, mocking even the concept of "semi-rural character" called for in the general plan. In fact, this development is exactly what the plan was designed to prevent. It's hard to imagine what the city council was thinking of when they approved it, but it certainly wasn't the best interests of Orinda.

Bill Brown
Orinda

Editor:

This is in response to Mr. Keith Jacobsen's January 29th letter. I hope all who read his comments will recognize them as those of an unhappy Orindan who actually wants others to pay more

than their fair share of the fire and emergency medical services the Moraga-Orinda Fire (MOFD) provides. He and his fellow members of FAIRS's Steering Committee have a favorite hobby—blasting the MOFD. His own Orinda City Council has not taken any action on FAIRS's reports for good reason: Their analyses are flawed and their number just to not add up!

Certainly the MOFD's Board has made some major mistakes, in my opinion. Those include the purchase of a property in Lafayette for a proposed fire station (43/16) for which they hope to find a partner some day. I'm not holding my breath on that one! Another was the purchase of a new fire engine a year or so ago at a cost of \$1/2 million, instead of refurbishing an older piece of apparatus that could easily have lasted a few years longer.

Mr. Jacobsen contends that Orindans are paying \$2 million more per year for services than they should. That's nonsense! In his calculations he has willfully chosen to ignore the fact that there are three MOFD fire stations in Orinda but only two in Moraga. Moreover, the first-due service areas of both Moraga fire stations include portions of Orinda, while no Orinda station is first-due into Moraga. Moragans have also shared in the costs of completely replacing an Orinda fire station, the remodeling of another Orinda station and the purchase of new fire apparatus to replace the broken down, barely serviceable units that the old Orinda Fire District brought with it to the new MOFD. Because Orinda's residents have twice chosen not to pass tax measures to replace their antiquated water system and improve fire flow to Orinda's hydrants, the MOFD purchased a 3500 gallon water tender at a cost of over \$350,000 to help supplement water delivery. That Orinda-based apparatus was also partly paid for by Moraga taxpayers. My point- which I could easily extend with multiple other examples- is that Orindans have, in fact, greatly and equitably benefited from their participation in the MOFD.

To remedy his imagined inequities, Mr. Jacobsen is now advocating that the MOFD Board increase the Fire Flow Tax in Moraga, Canyon and a significant portion of South Orinda by five (5) times, while leaving the Fire Flow Tax rate for Central and North Orinda at its present level. That would amount to an estimated \$400.00 per year increase for each affected household! That would indeed be inequitable!

I served on the 1996-7 Moraga-Orinda Fire Study Committee whose work led to voters approving the MOFD formation and since then, the chief beneficiaries have, in fact, been the residents of the former Orinda Fire District. In the bargain they gained paramedics, ambulance service, new equipment, safer stations, and improved fire insurance ratings. There's nothing inequitable about that!

Gordon Nathan
Moraga

Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

Civic News Moraga

Will TSAC Rise from the Ashes?

... continued from page A5

Residents asked for the installation of speed bumps along Corliss Drive to slow down vehicles. The town engineer, Edric Kwan, presented figures from a traffic and speed study he obtained from the police. "We concluded that the speed is within acceptable limits," said Kwan, who advised against the speed bump, recommending instead targeted police survey of the area, especially around school time.

A resident from the Rimer neighborhood, Shirley DeFrancisci, challenged the result of the speed survey. "You use speed tubes that are very visible, so drivers will slow down when they see one," she said. DeFrancisci had come to present a request that additional, more visible, speed signs be installed in the Rimer-Whitethorn-Cedarwood loop, where a similar apparatus had been used to conduct a speed survey.

That loop, formed by three neighborhood streets, is used daily by parents dropping their children at the back entrance of Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School off Rimer Drive. Neighbors claim that parents speed on the streets and pay little attention to pedestrians and cyclists. There again, the measured traffic and speed did not warrant special treatment – but TSAC members still wanted some action taken. In addition to the targeted police enforcement proposed by staff, TSAC asked that the school community receive educational information about speeding. They also asked that the neighborhood around the back entrance of JM be made an official "Safe Route to School," which will qualify the area for possible grant money for street improvements.

The last topic on TSAC's agenda

also had to do with parents anxious about the safety of their children in the same general area of town. Resident Trent Watkins and neighbors expressed concerns over speeds along Tharp Drive, from Camino Pablo to Rimer Drive. They asked for the installation of additional stop signs at the upper intersection of Deerfield Drive and Tharp Drive to reduce speeds. Kwan explained that stop signs are installed to control traffic, not reduce speed, and that the data collected did not warrant additional stop signs.

Residents indicated that the measurements had not been done where the highest traffic is observed. Parents expressed distress over the speeding of neighbors who do not show any concern for the lives of others; they say that they have to drive their children to school because there is no sidewalk and they don't think it is safe for the kids to walk or bike.

TSAC asked that additional measurements be made and the issue be brought back at the next meeting.

The question is, will there be a next meeting? The Town Council will consider the committee's fate again in March. According to the town's police chief, Bob Priebe, if there is no TSAC then the town will revert to its previous process – when a problem arises, residents can contact the police department that will work with public works to analyze the problem and find a solution. If the solution offered does not satisfy the neighbors, they can appeal staff's decision to the Town Council. Priebe cited the example of the former police chief, Mark Ruppenthal, who conducted a traffic study along Corliss Drive years ago that led to the construction of sidewalks.



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Frustration at Every Turn

By Nick Marnell

At a Feb. 5 special board meeting, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District approved a mid-year budget revision that revealed more bad news. Administrative services director Gloriann Sasser projected that the district will now lose \$599,000 in fiscal year 2013-14, nearly \$200,000 more than budgeted. Though property tax revenue increased more than \$300,000, ambulance revenue dropped nearly the same amount and overtime charges rose nearly \$250,000, she said.

Sasser then made an even more sobering announcement to the board: MOFD's long range financial plan projects losses through 2018-19, with its capital fund depleted two years sooner. "In order to eliminate the structural deficit in the general fund, additional expenditure reductions are

necessary," she said.

Her presentation did not go over well with the firefighters' union.

"If we take a 9.5 percent pay cut, where will that money be used?" asked Vince Wells, Local 1230 president. "You took the SAFER grant money, but you then cut the staff. And how serious are you about making cuts? This administration is top heavy!"

"That is your opinion. I am not prepared to acknowledge it as anything more," said director Fred Weil.

Wells continued, stating that the firefighters have done what they could to help the district climb out of its financial mess: no raises in six years; health care contributions frozen since 2010; and quickly agreeing to recent staffing reductions. Unswayed, the board unanimously

passed a motion that authorized Sasser to further cut costs and present a balanced budget for the next fiscal year.

Weil softened his stance somewhat to the firefighters in attendance. "I am as frustrated as you are that we have to deal with these realities," he said.



Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Meetings

Next meetings:
Wednesday, Feb. 19
Wednesday, March 19
check website for updates
(Go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for location and more information)

After Impasse, What's Next?

... continued from page A1

Once the panel's findings are released, the district may impose its last, best and final offer after holding a public hearing on the impasse.

As one-sided as this process appears - the district may impose but the union cannot strike - MOFD does risk backlash if the findings of the panel are strongly negative toward the district. Political and public pressure could hinder the implementation of the district's last, best and final offer; however, the district would still have the right to do so.

The MOFD board of directors and fire chief Stephen Healy did not respond to questions posed for this article. "While the district hoped the parties would be able to reach agreement and avoid impasse, the district's financial challenges necessitated this action," the district said in a press release.

The union did not hide its frustration. DeWeese and Local 1230 president Vince Wells both noted that the rank and file have received no cost of living raises since 2008, and the firefighters have been saddled with 100 percent of their health care premium increases for the last three years. Wells said that he objected to the district's attempts to correct its financial mistakes on the backs of the firefighters; he pointed to "frivolous spending on ideas that were not well thought out," and an accounting error that reduced the district's general fund balance by \$2 million. DeWeese added that the union has agreed to eliminate two of its top three highest paid positions, and also agreed to give up six engineer slots, all to help save money for the district.

"The Moraga-Orinda Fire District was the last place we felt we would

end up in this situation," said Wells.

Notwithstanding the rhetoric and the positioning, both parties have promised to deliver at all times the high level of professional service that district residents have come to expect.

MOFD Jan. 28 Last, Best and Final Offer to IAFF/Local 1230 - Highlights

Term: through June 30, 2016, OR, through June 30, 2015 if parties cannot agree on a multi-year deal.
 Salary: 7.5 percent decrease effective July 1 through June 2016, OR, a 9.5 percent decrease for one year effective July 1.
 Health benefits: up to \$1,197 per month maximum, for the Kaiser Family Plan (no increase). Up to \$458 per month for a single employee and \$916 per month for two.
 Retiree health benefits: vesting schedule for current employees. New employees (hired after implementation of the offer) to receive the Public Employees Medical and Hospital Care Act minimum, which in 2014 is \$119 per month.
 Staffing: the ability for the district to implement staffing changes under more flexible terms, and the creation of 12 "single-role" paramedic positions to replace departing or retiring firefighter-paramedics.

The Union's Counter-Offer

Term: two year extension of current agreement
 Salary: no salary increase
 Health benefits: no increase to the district's medical contribution
 No other changes to the current contract terms
 (Pension rates are not a negotiable item. The nine firefighters hired after Jan. 1, 2013 fall under the retirement plan of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act.)

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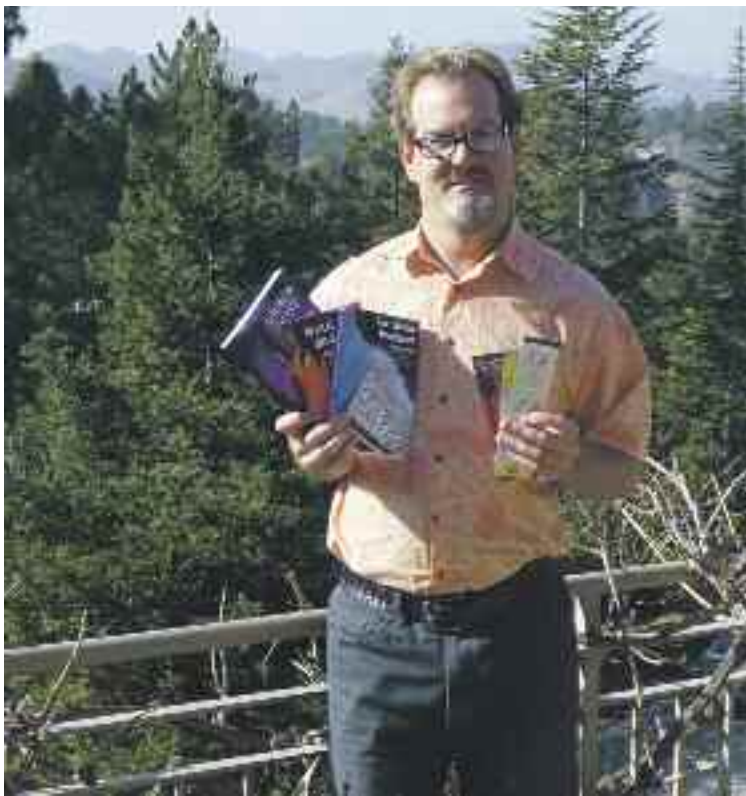
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Tapping Technology

Two Orinda businesses utilize technology in different ways

By Sophie Braccini



Andrew Benzie with some of the books he's published. Photos Sophie Braccini



Jack Jorgensen

Orinda recently saw the addition of two new communication ventures at different ends of the media spectrum: Jack Jorgensen, a 15-year-old Miramonte High School sophomore, launched Elite Bulletin, an online classified ad service centered in Lamorinda; and Andrew Benzie started his publishing company, Andrew Benzie Books, which takes books from manuscript to finished product utilizing 'on-demand' printing and book publishing software – two generations, different media, aiming at supporting local endeavors.

Benzie wants to put an end to the stigma of self-publishing. When looking at a book published under the 'ABB' label, nothing differentiates the self-published work from any other book distributed by the larger, more traditional publishing companies.

"My original business is graphic design and creation of collateral marketing material," says Benzie. "When my father retired, he decided to write a murder mystery and with my tools and experience I helped him self-publish it."

When a client comes to Benzie

with a manuscript, he digitizes it into the right format, creates the design for the book – the interior, the cover and back – gives it an ISBN number, and electronically publishes it on Amazon as an e-book. For printed copies, Benzie sends all the ready material to CreateSpace, a subsidiary of Amazon that prints on demand for a few dollars a copy.

"People can immediately put their book on Amazon and CreateSpace will print by the copy as it is ordered; it is not necessary anymore to get a thousand copies printed," he says.

Benzie, who is also a professional musician, compares what is happening to books nowadays to what happened to music with MP3s in the '90s. "Anyone can get published now," he says, "this is very liberating."

So far Benzie has published six books from local authors. "Mara-caibo Oil Brat," a biography by Moraga resident McClurg Berman, "Amber Dust," a mystery and love story by Lafayette author J.L. Plummer, "Contract Year," a baseball and romance novel by Moraga former mayor Bee Hylinski, and other biographies and non-fiction books by East Bay authors.

"I can also help authors with their marketing, creating a website, bookmarks ... and defining a promotion strategy. This new process is very exciting and many talented authors are going to be able to get noticed." You can find books published by Benzie at Orinda Books in the local author corner.

Jorgensen started the community site Elite Bulletin to provide local job connections for Orinda residents. The Miramonte sophomore comes from a

family of entrepreneurs – his step-mother is the president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce – so when he was looking for a job, his first inclination was to create one himself. "I was always interested in the business world," he says. "I read a lot about Jeff Bezos, about start-ups, and these people just fired me up." The idea came to him to create a site that would help other teens find jobs, and adults find the babysitters, house sitters, gardeners or other service providers they might need.

Jorgensen brainstormed business ideas with his extended family and reached out for advice from the brother of Miramonte's associate principle, who started the website Notice.com. Jorgensen also conducted a lot of research on his own, finding ways to save money in the process.

"Originally I was going to file my fictitious business name online for \$200, but I found out that by going to Martinez and doing it in person it costs only \$35," he says. He opened a personal bank account with Mechanics Bank, where he saved all of his birthday and Christmas money, to self-fund his business; a business account would have required him to be an adult.

Jorgensen created the first version of Elite Bulletin with help of an online website builder; he is teaching himself html to improve his second version.

On Elitebulletin.com people of all ages can list their skills for free. The categories include music teachers, housekeepers, yard workers, drivers, event helpers, and volunteers. People looking for help can browse the profiles available or post a job offer themselves. The site includes lists of local restaurants and shops with direct links to their sites. It also offers the opportunity for businesses to advertise.

Jorgensen spends about 20 hours a week working on the site; it is a real passion. He knows that his big challenge is to drive traffic to his site. "I had some postcards printed that I distributed to all the local businesses," he says. "I also spend a lot of time on social media sites such as Next Door." Jorgensen plans to add more services such as things for sale and to expand the site geographically.

For information about Elite Bulletin, visit www.elitebulletin.com. More information about Andrew Benzie Books, visit www.andrewbenzie.com or call (925) 253-7790.

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

Orinda Theatre Square Welcomes Michael Friedes' New Design Showroom
2 Theater Square #135
(510) 366-0660, mf-da.com



Michael Friedes (center) at the grand opening of his new store in Theatre Square in Orinda Photo Rob Lucacher

Michael Friedes is an accomplished interior designer with over 20 years of experience. A native New Yorker, Friedes ran his own interior and product design firm in Manhattan before moving to Oakland. Friedes and his team are said to have cultivated an aesthetic that blends the cosmopolitan sophistication of New York with the casual graciousness of California. The Theatre Square space, the first store front the designer ever opened, will display examples of his style, including custom designed furniture and unique finds. Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays, by appointment only; Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 5 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays from 1 to 6 p.m.

Big Game Fishing Moves to Lafayette
624 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

(800) 458-2879, www.biggamefishinginc.com

Chris and Kip Adam recently moved their company, which has been taking vacationers fishing to the Baja, Mexico area for over 30 years, to a new office location in Lafayette. Since 1978, Big Game Fishing, Inc. has been a premier fishing travel company that works with large to small fishing groups and individuals, according to the company's website. The company specializes in the Baja fishing areas of Cabo San Lucas, San Jose del Cabo, the East Cape/Sea of Cortez, Loreto and La Paz, helping clients catch blue marlin, striped marlin, wahoo, tuna, yellowtail, roosterfish or dorado. Chris Adam is also a well-known water aerobics instructor at the Moraga Country Club.

New Insurance Company in Moraga: Filice Insurance
1150 Moraga Way, Moraga

(925) 385-5300

Filice is an employee benefits consulting firm serving businesses throughout California. The insurance company provides a complete suite of business insurance products, including domestic and international employee benefits, individual and family plans, retirement services and financial planning, workers' compensation, and personal commercial insurance. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 2 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14 in the new office.

New Realtors at Alain Pinel
2 Theatre Square, Suite #215, Orinda
(925) 438-2014

Alain Pinel Realtors announced the addition of Mary Staten and Irene Steslow to the Orinda office team. Staten joins APR from the retail franchise, Papyrus, where she owned the Lafayette location. She will specialize in the Lafayette, Orinda, and Moraga market and is looking forward to bringing her same professionalism and client dedication to her career at APR. Steslow joins APR with 20-plus years as a marketing and advertising executive. She will be bringing her business acumen and marketing skills to the geographic areas of Walnut Creek, Lafayette and Orinda.

Bollinger Nail Salon Opens New Location
960 Moraga Rd., Lafayette

(925) 284-7700, contact@bollingernailsalon.com

Bollinger Nail Salon, a company with nine locations in the East Bay, opened a new salon in Lafayette. The salon is opened seven days a week.

Happy Anniversary!

Saklan Valley School Turns 60 and is Looking for Alumni
1678 School St., Moraga
(925) 376-7900, www.saklan.org



Christine Kuckuk, Kay Long-Martin, and Head of School Peter Metzger Photo Sophie Braccini

The Moraga school that teaches children from preschool to eighth grade is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. Originally named the Gertrude Nielsen Learning Center and located in Lafayette, the school was funded as a preschool in 1954. The school moved to Moraga in 1966, and Nielsen sold it to Mary Elena Straub-Dochterman who expanded classes to the fifth grade under a new name, the Carden School. In the mid-1990s it was expanded to include middle school grades and became a non-profit under the name Saklan Valley School. Since then the school has developed a unique curriculum aimed at nurturing the entire student by focusing on each individual child. The school attracts a diverse student body from all over the East Bay. At this time, the 60th Anniversary committee is collecting memorabilia and stories from alumni and their parents. Kay Long-Martin and Annie Barendregt are the co-chairs of the project. "We want to gather as many memories from the community as we can," says Long-Martin. "We would love to hear stories, and see pictures that will be on display during the celebrations." A big birthday party with the children is scheduled for the last Wednesday in August, an alumni celebration will take place during the summer, and a gala is planned in October. Send stories or photos to 60years@saklan.org or call (925) 376-7900 to share information.

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

Celebrating an Anniversary?

If your business is celebrating a significant anniversary (5, 10, 20 years or more ...) send us a photo of your business, the owner(s) or the staff with specific information about your business and what you're celebrating, and we'll include it in an upcoming issue.

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Civic News Lafayette

Business Person of the Year in Lafayette



Brian Aiello

Photo provided

Family man, business owner, local resident since the tender age of 12, Acalanes and UC Davis graduate Brian Aiello was named the "Business Person of the Year" by the Lafayette Chamber of Com-

merce. He was honored by friends, family and business associates recently at a dinner and roast at the Lafayette Park Hotel.

"It was outstanding," said Aiello, who was humbled by all the adoration, "one of the best nights of my life, lots of fun." His kids and wife reflected on what a great guy he is and Jay Lifson, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce had a wacky presentation of photos from when Aiello served in the Navy on the U.S.S. Towers. "It was a real honor," he added.

Aiello is married to wife and business partner Jennifer, and is the proud dad of Brooke, 18, and Brady, 16. The couple have owned and operated Pinnacle Apparel and Promotions since 2000 in Lafayette; the company sources and produces branded merchandise. He's been an active member of the community, busy as a coach of various sports over the years and has volunteered to be the entertainment chair of the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival for the last decade. *C. Tyson*

Greenlight on Lafayette School District Parcel Tax

... continued from page A3



From left: Lafayette school board members Nancy Wallace, Jean Follmer, David Gerson, Art Kapoor, Teresa Gerringer and Superintendent Rachel Zinn.

Photo Cathy Tyson

"Loss of this funding would be devastating," said Rachel Zinn, school district superintendent, noting that the \$4.6 million, or 15 percent of their budget, that is currently provided through parcel tax revenue is critical.

Discussion among school board members focused on the language of

a cost of living adjustment for the measure. "Inflation happens," said board member David Gerson, explaining that it's hard to estimate if that will be 1 percent or 3 percent or 5 percent per year in the future.

Ultimately there was a consensus to have a cap on the cost of living ad-

justment, but still allow some flexibility that would benefit the public if there's a low rate of inflation; they agreed that the adjustment "shall not exceed 3 percent." If passed by two-thirds of voters, revenue raised will go to the five schools in the district: four elementary schools and Stanley Middle School.

Civic News Moraga

Jason Evans Named Business Person of the Year



Jason Evans

Photo provided

The board of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce elected Jason Evans Moraga's 2014 Business Person of the Year.

According to Kathe Nelson, the chamber's executive director, Evans was chosen because of his involvement and commitment to the town of Moraga. "Jason has always had a very positive attitude and outlook on things," she added. The award will be celebrated at a dinner event later this month.

Evans is a Coldwell Banker Residential Broker specializing in residential home sales in Moraga. He says the Moraga schools are the number one draw to Moraga, as well as the rolling hills, wide streets and big yards in which to play.

Evans said he inherited his passion for homes and real estate sales from his father's custom home, multi-family development and construction company. He graduated from Iowa State Uni-

versity with a degree in civil, construction and environmental engineering. The list of Evans' volunteer work in local service groups could fill a page. He is the current president of Moraga Valley Kiwanis, vice president of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and of the Moraga Movers, and he volunteered on the Design Review Board and Planning Commission, to name just a few. He and his wife, Carol, have lived in Moraga for 15 years.

There will be a celebratory dinner at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24 at the Moraga Country Club. The cost per person is \$30 and seating is limited to the first 100. Reservations are required and can be made by phone or email to Nelson: kathe@moragachamber.org, (925) 323-6524. *S. Braccini*

Civic News Orinda

City to Memorialize Orinda's First Mayor, Richard Heggie

... continued from page A7

In addition to his service for the city of Orinda - for which he was named Orinda's Citizen of the Year, he was a Regent of the University of California and president of Cal's Alumni Association, president of the Japan Society of Northern California, vice president of the Oakland Museum, and director emeritus of the East Bay Community Foundation.

"I'm very delighted to have this opportunity, personally, to make this recognition known," said Mayor Sue

Severson. Added Councilmember Victoria Smith, "I think it's a lovely idea, and I want to thank everyone who was involved. It will be a very nice addition."

The City Council approved the memorial 4-0 (Worth recused). Staff will order signage "consistent with lettering throughout the library," and install a plaque citing Heggie's accomplishments. The cost to the Orinda Parks and Recreation Department is expected to be roughly \$750. The date for the unveiling will be announced later.

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Lamorinda Couples Share the Secret to Their Longevity

... continued from page A1

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Karen and Larry Blodgett

Photos provided

She joined him in Idaho, where they were married; they returned to Lafayette to raise their family and take over the family business, Blodgett's Abbey Carpet and Flooring.

Matt Delaney met his wife, Karen, during their freshman year at Campolindo High School – he was a football player, she was an aspiring cheerleader. “What’s neat is that we’ve known each other since we were 14, we know the friends and families, we have a shared history and we’ve gone full circle,” says Matt, who asked her to be his date for the Campo Junior Prom. Later, while on a family ski trip together in Tahoe, Matt shared his dream for the couple. “He told me about the house we would have with a circular driveway and a white picket fence,” recalls Karen Delaney. “I knew she was ‘the one,’” he says. “I just projected myself 20 years into the future.” While they broke up and went to separate colleges, they stayed friends.

A friend’s wedding reconnected them when Matt asked Karen to be his date. “The weekend-long wedding turned into a week vacation, then a two-week escapade,” Matt reminisces. They got married in 1999 and lived together in Hawaii before returning to Lamorinda to raise their family. “I always kept an eye on the Burton Valley real estate market,” he says. “Then one day the perfect home came on the market.” The family moved into a house with a circular driveway and white picket fence.

Kathy Biro says, “We feel we have something very special.” She met her husband, Rick, in their junior year in an Acalanes chemistry class. It was 1979. “I arrived late to class and there were only two spots left: one in the back next to a member of the football team, and one between Rick and a girl; that’s the seat I chose,” she says. Love grew steadily during their junior year and junior prom was their first date. They both went to Saint Mary’s College. “We didn’t choose the same college on purpose,” says Rick Biro, “and we even tried to date other people, but we were not very successful!” They soon realized that when they were not together, something was missing. “But it took me nine years to get him to marry me,” jokes Kathy. Rick wanted to buy and fix his first house in Martinez and establish himself professionally, “I was not going to bring a bride in a rundown place,” he says. They got married in 1989 and moved back to Lafayette when they had kids. “We knew we wanted to raise our children in this community.”

For Krista Benson, her marriage to husband, Eric, is a matter of faith. “We have placed God is at the center of our relationship,” she says. Eric Benson was a junior at Miramonte, and Krista a freshman at Campolindo when they met at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church in 1991. Although they were from rival schools, after a church trip to Mexico to build houses, the two started to date.

... continued on next page



Karen and Matt Delaney



Rick and Kathy Biro

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Krista and Eric Benson

She went to his prom and he went to hers, and they continued to see each other on vacations after Eric left for Oregon State, until Krista began attending the University of Oregon 40 minutes away. After nine years of dating, they were married and lived in San Diego where Eric was in the Navy, before deciding to settle in Moraga. "Some people move here for the schools," she says. "We came back because we knew what a good place it is to raise children."

Another type of faith is the glue between Jim and Jill Larson. "We have faith that as long as we have each other, everything will turn out fine," says Jill. Love struck the couple in high school, too, but it had a delayed fuse. New to Acalanes, Jill fell for the very popular Jim Larson. He thought she was adorable but had an earlier attachment. They graduated in 1977 and both went to UC Berkeley, where they dated, but had several break-ups. The two met again in Europe in the summer of 1980, only to break-up in Paris. Jill signed up with the Peace Corps and left for Senegal with a two-year commitment. But Jim could not get over her. "He was sending me aerograms saying 'I love you,'" recalls Jill. He even boarded an airplane and found his way to the African village where she was working. When she returned they were married. "For our 20th anniversary I took Jill back to Paris," says Jim. "I owed it to her."

The secret to all these couples' happiness seems to be the shared values, respect and shared experiences from a lifetime together. They all say communication is important as well as working to keep the flame alive – simple things to remember as we approach another Valentine's Day.



Jim and Jill Larson

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Celebrations



Jessica M Cabrera and Justin R. Perlstein Get Engaged!

Sherrie B. and Billy Perlstein are thrilled to announce the engagement of their son Justin R. Perlstein of Orinda to Jessica M. Cabrera, daughter of Alice Cabrera of San Antonio, Texas. They both have successful careers in Los Angeles where Justin is in residential real estate and Jessica is in retail management with Michael Kors. The groom-to-be proposed to the bride-to-be on the island of Kauai, on the beach at sunset with rose petals, champagne and tears of happiness. They plan to be married this May in Malibu, Calif.

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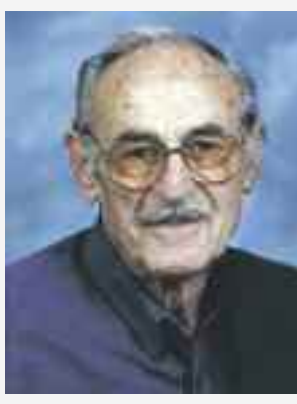
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In Memory



Angelo Rossi
Aug 9, 1920-Sept 7, 2013
Resident of Lafayette

Angelo passed away peacefully on Sept. 7, 2013 at the age of 93. He leaves his wife of 68 years, Gloria Rossi, son James Rossi, daughter-in-law Nancy Rossi, granddaughter Jocelyn, grandson Justin Rossi and granddaughter-in-law Tasha Rossi.

Angelo was born in a small farmhouse just two blocks from where he passed in Reliez Valley of Lafayette. As of his passing, Angelo was the oldest "born in Lafayette" resident at the age of 93. Angelo, along with his two brothers Frank and Setafine, worked the Rossi ranch which covered 158 acres. Angelo was in the first Acalanes graduating class in 1941. He served with the 27th Infantry Division in the Army during WW II, participated in the invasion of Saipan and Okinawa where he was awarded two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star. Upon his return from the service, Angelo married Gloria Bertero of San Leandro in 1945. Son James was born in 1949. Angelo and Gloria built the house on Angelo Street in 1951 and still live there today.

Angelo along with his two brothers had Rossi Brothers Furniture Shop on Mt. Diablo Blvd. for 31 years. They all retired in 1977. Angelo coached Little League in the Lafayette Youth Association for 5 years, and was involved in the Boy Scouts with son Jim.

Angelo and Gloria traveled extensively after retirement and were always active and involved with the grandkids while they were growing up.


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Sandra Sue Richards
Resident of Lafayette

It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of Sandy Richards, wife of Louis Richards, mother of Michael Richards of Livermore and Laurie Roser (Rob) of Chicago, IL and grandmother to Zoe and Chase Richards. Sandy was well known and liked in the community for her friendly story-telling and warm greeting to all who passed through the doors of Sandy's Unique Boutique in Lafayette. In recent years she was unable to come to the store due to her disability from Lupus. During that time, family and friends stepped in to keep the business going in the hopes that Sandy would recover and return to her store. It wasn't meant to be, however, and the business closed in June of 2012, 34 years after first opening.

Sandy was born March 18, 1943 in Spokane, WA to Arbie and Sarah Mickels. She graduated from Central Valley High School in 1961. That same year, she gave her hand to Louis Richards and so began a 52-year adventure in fun, family and business. Along the way, she was a fashion model and cheerleader in high school, received her credential as an EMT at County Hospital in Martinez, attended DVC in nursing, raised two children, started her own business in 1976, and teamed up with Louis to remodel and sell eight houses in Martinez, Lafayette and Orinda.

Sandy spent much of the past 15 years in and out of the hospital fighting the hold the disease had on her body. Lupus finally won the battle after a recent visit in John Muir Hospital and she passed away on Jan. 24, 2014 while in hospice care at the Bruns House in Alamo. The family thanks Bruns House for the tender, loving care they gave her in the final hours of her life. She will be well remembered and memorialized with a brick in the garden of Bruns House with her name on it. Donations in her memory can be addressed to The Bruns House, Alamo, CA or The National Lupus Foundation. Her body has been donated to UCSF in the hopes that, in her death, she may contribute to the research into the cause and effects of Lupus.

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A Survivor's Heart

By Laurie Snyder



Young Morton C. Warnow Photo provided by Kimmen Sjölander, Ph.D.

"We shall draw from the heart of suffering itself the means of inspiration and survival."

— Winston Churchill

When a parent dies, the journey from sadness to acceptance is frequently a challenging one – even for adult offspring. Memories resurface as closets are emptied. New mysteries emerge as letters or photos are discovered in desk drawers or dusty attics.

The odyssey of Lafayette resident, Kimmen Sjölander, Ph.D., a professor in the University of California, Berkeley's departments of Bioengineering and Plant and Microbial Biology, began when a woman in Texas, Helen Milewits, found a Purple Heart bearing the name of Morton Warnow among the possessions of her own deceased father.

An 8th U.S. Army Air Force private during World War II, Milewits' father, Nathan Beckman, personalized medals for his unit's wounded. In this case, Beckman misspelled the name as "Warwow" and then inexplicably brought the medal home. After he died, Milewits asked Purple Hearts Reunited (www.purpleheartsreunited.org) to find the man who had earned it. PHR phoned Sjölander after determining that her father, Morton C. Warnow, was its rightful owner.

Born in Brooklyn in 1925, Warnow enlisted in 1943. Assigned to the USAAF's 612th Squadron, 401st Bombardment Group H in Deenethorpe, England, he participated in successful strikes on Pas de Calais, and was aboard the Dynamite John when

36 planes hit Peenemünde – Germany's rocket manufacturing hub – on July 18, 1944.

Then, his luck changed. "Sgt. Morton C. Warnow, waist gunner on a B-17 who had been reported missing in action July 20, is a German prisoner, having been shot down in a raid over Germany. He is the son of Mark Warnow, conductor heard on CBS," announced the Sept. 11, 1944 issue of "Broadcasting: The Weekly Newsmagazine of Radio Broadcast Advertising."

"Our plane got two engines knocked out after we dropped our bombs" on Leipzig, said Staff Sgt. Ken Fritts in "One Story of a B-17 Aircraft Combat Crew – WWII," a memoir penned by the plane's pilot, Lt. Jack Frederick. A third lost power on the way home. "We had a choice: ditch that B-17 in the North Sea or bail out" over Holland. "The Nazis were shooting at us in our parachutes as we were floating down. I landed on my back in a farmer's garden. ... As I hit the road I looked up and here comes a Hitler Youth in uniform on a bicycle carrying a sub-machine gun."

They were interrogated harshly – Warnow even more so. His dog tag identified him as Jewish. "He had a lot of mistreatment as you can imagine, but he would never talk about it," said Sjölander.

Afterward, the Germans sent the officers to Stalag Luft I and the enlisted from one prisoner of war holding pen to another – and via train boxcars to Stalag Luft IV. "When we got to camp we had a lot of men injured by bay-

nets and by dogs biting them," said Fritts. Separated again into two groups, they spent 19 months there, enfeebled by poor food, flimsy clothing and the camp's open latrines, unheated huts and inferior medical facilities before being forced into winter death treks across Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany with 80,000 western Allied POWs.

... continued on page B3

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Above the purple, enamel heart with its profile of George Washington garbed in Continental Army uniform, lies the Washington family's coat of arms set between two sprays of leaves. "For Military Merit" is inscribed on the reverse – along with the medal winner's name. Medal photos provided by Purple Hearts Reunited and U.S. Army (public domain)

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Listening to the "After" People

By Cathy Dausman



Six Stephen Ministries volunteers with nearly 50 years of experience among them. Back row, from left: Kathy Hallock, Matt Bell, Judy Peak, and Cynthia Robey; front: Jean Lee and Marilyn Rockwood. Peak belongs to St. Anselm's Episcopal Church in Lafayette; the others belong to Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. Photo Cathy Dausman

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Bill Sautter and Jean Lee expect to listen a lot when they volunteer. Sautter and Lee are lay volunteers for Stephen Ministries, working through Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. The Stephen Ministries website describes their volunteers as the "after" people – meaning those who arrive *after* the funeral, the divorce, the imprisonment, the foreclosure, or the devastating medical pronouncement.

"Our pastors are overloaded [with work]," Sautter said, and Stephen Ministries helps lighten their caseload by providing confidential, one-on-one support to care receivers. Volunteers take an initial 50 hours of training, and then attend monthly continuing education classes and twice monthly peer group meetings. But their main role is as a sounding board. "We're not trained as therapists, we're trained as listeners," Sautter emphasized.

Each volunteer is selectively paired with a care-receiver of the same gender; the volunteer generally visits once a week for an hour, for as long as their services are needed. Sautter said LOPC has about 75 trained volunteers, 25 of whom are currently active. Each volunteer commits to two years with the program. Stephen Ministries is used by 11,000 congregations in 160 Christian denominations worldwide. Lee said Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, Hillside Covenant Church in Walnut Creek, St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, Lafayette, Faith Lutheran, Pleasant Hill, and Hope Center

Covenant Church, Pleasant Hill also run Stephen Ministries programs. The churches have formed a consortium and sometimes train together, which is kind of unusual, Lee said. The collaboration "works really well with us," added St. Anselm's Stephen Minister Judy Peak.

Six hundred thousand people have trained as volunteers since the program's inception in 1975; nearly three times that number have received program assistance.

Becoming a Stephen Minister requires "pretty intensive training," said Lee, who is the program's referrals coordinator. She became interested after a personal experience she had during her son's serious accident 10 years ago. "I spent a lot of time in the hospital," Lee said. While there, she noticed a young man who had no visitors. She decided to become his "friendly visitor."

A short while later, Lee noticed a Stephen Ministries announcement in the church bulletin, seemingly "in bold print, leaping off the page."

"Oh my goodness, I need to be in this class," she thought.

LOPC makes its Stephen Ministries services available to the Lamorinda community at large. "We did an awful lot of outreach at the beginning," said Lee. She adds that although care receivers should understand the program is Christian-based, volunteers do not proselytize.

To learn more about the program go online to www.lopc.org; click on "care," then "Stephen Ministry."

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

A Survivor's Heart

... continued from page B1



Sgt. Morton C. Warnow and fellow members of 2nd Lieutenant Jack L. Frederick's crew in front of their B-17 during combat crew training at Alexandria, Louisiana, April 1944. Front, from left: Lt. Frederick, pilot; 2nd Lt. John W. Kirkbride, copilot; Lt. Fred H. Sherriff, navigator (transferred before July 20 mission); 2nd Lt. Raymond L. Nagle, bombardier. Back: Staff Sgt. Kenneth H. Fritts, engineer/top turret gunner; Sgt. Walter H. Jenkins, ball turret gunner; Warnow, waist gunner; Sgt. Robert V. Norris (did not fly July 20); Cpl. Edgar E. Pierson, tail gunner. Not pictured, but present and taken as POWs July 20: Staff Sgt. Emerson R. Roberts, radio operator; 1st Lt. John P. Szungyi. Photo provided by Kimmen Sjölander, Ph.D. Crewmen identified by Donald Byers, historian, 401st Bomb Group (H) Association: www.401bg.org/Main.

Fritts and Jenkins went to Stalag Luft I. Warnow's group began the "Black March" from Gross Tychow on Feb. 6, 1945 during Europe's coldest months of the 20th century. They trudged 20 miles daily for nearly three months. Hundreds died. Separated yet again, the entire crew survived somehow until re-

lease, though life proved difficult for many afterward. Research has documented a lingering impact not just on Holocaust survivors and soldiers – but on their children and grandchildren. "Preoccupied with mourning their immense loss, some parents had difficulties in responding to their children with adequate



Morton C. Warnow on the right. "He was a brilliant, brilliant man," said Lafayette resident, Kimmen Sjölander, Ph.D., of her father, Morton C. Warnow. Photo provided by Kimmen Sjölander, Ph.D.

History of the Purple Heart

Second only to the bronze star in prominence, the Purple Heart is also the nation's oldest military decoration, dating back to the time of George Washington. On Aug. 7, 1782, he wrote:

"The General ever desirous to cherish virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth, or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with a due reward."

Washington's award, however, was only ever conferred upon three men from Connecticut regiments of the Continental Army. It was not until General George McArthur became Army Chief of Staff in the late 1920s that the Purple Heart truly became the tribute it is today.

Initially, the medal was to be issued only for a "wound which necessitates treatment by a medical officer and which is received in action with an enemy" if the soldier's commander determined the wound to have resulted "from a singularly meritorious act of essential service." But, during a 20-year period, three American presidents raised the medal's profile even higher.

Franklin Roosevelt decreed that wounded from all military branches – not just those in the Army – were eligible retroactively from Dec. 7, 1941. Harry Truman pushed that eligibility date back to April 5, 1917 to honor World War I's injured. And John F. Kennedy ensured that "any civilian national of the United States, who while serving under competent authority in any capacity with an armed force... has been, or may hereafter be, wounded' and authorized posthumous award of the medal."

Source: Celebrating America's Freedoms: The Purple Heart, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

affect," wrote Natan P.F. Kellermann, Ph.D. in the "Israel Journal of Psychiatry" in 2001. For many, "economic safety was considered more important than emotional well-being." While a fair number were unaffected, he said, still others were left with a "vague sense of fear, sadness and vulnerability."

Warnow graduated from Cornell, married in 1955, had three chil-

dren, and wrote the 1962 novel, "Forced March" in just a few days. "He loved the written word; it was one of his great gifts," said Sjölander. An inventor, he designed face-to-face communications technology in the 1970s and founded Modern Deaf Communication. He passed away in 2006.

Looking at the medal she had been safekeeping for her dad – the

Purple Heart that actually had made it into his hands, Sjölander realized his name had also been misspelled on that one – as "Norton Warnow." PHR is now obtaining a corrected medal for her.

"He had a tremendous capacity for optimism and appreciation of beauty in the world. He never stopped being enthusiastic about life."

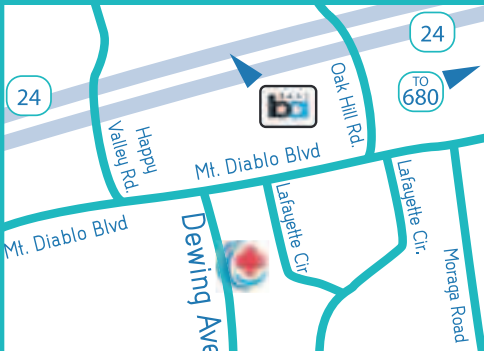
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The Big Business of Trash

Accusations fly as \$500M contract looms

By Sophie Braccini

As the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority neared a deal worth \$500 million at the end of January, negotiating a franchise agreement with the companies that will manage all the trash for the next 10 years, allegations of malpractice were made against the front runner, Republic Services. The authority is launching an independent investigation into the claim, although CCCSWA director Paul Morsen confirmed that he does not think there is substance to the allegations.

A few days before the Jan. 30 CCCSWA board meeting, the group California Compost Coalition declared that 67 percent of Central Contra Costa's food and yard waste was not being recycled properly, citing "official state and local records" that showed Lamorinda's yard waste was being used as ground cover at local landfills instead. Using green waste as cover on landfill is legal, but it is not what Republic contracted for. Additionally, the coalition noted that using green waste mixed with food waste as ground cover is strictly prohibited by state law.

Morsen met with the California Compost Coalition on Feb. 5 to understand where the figures cited were coming from. After the meeting the director said that he does not believe that the claim is true, but given the seriousness of the case and to make sure there is absolutely no doubt left, he decided to entrust Intelliwaste, an independent consultant, with an investigation of Republic's practices.

"Intelliwaste's charge is to: one, determine if Republic Services is composting green waste, including green waste from CCCSWA communities that allow home food scraps to be mixed with this material, in accordance with the current

contractual obligations; two, determine if Republic Services has exceeded contractual limits on the use of green waste as alternative daily cover (ADC) at the Kellar Canyon Landfill and determine if there is evidence that Republic Services is using CCCSWA green waste mixed with food material as ADC; three, assess the adequacy of the CCCSWA's annual reporting against requirements established by CalRecycle as it relates to green waste composting and ADC use," stated Morsen.

Since 2007 Lamorinda CCCSWA's customers have been able to discard their food waste in their green bins with the understanding that Waste Management trucks take it to the compost facility operated by Republic Services on Newby Island in Milpitas, where it is turned into a byproduct for local farmers. The practice was extended to Walnut Creek in 2011.

At the Jan. 30 meeting, Tim Argenti, Republic Services general manager, stated that all the material collected to be composted at Newby Island is composted there, as per the contract and as attested by a third party yearly review. In a statement to the board, Argenti qualified the attack as "a desperate attempt by our competitors to derail the Request For Proposal process."

The two final contenders for trash collection and processing are Republic Services and Mt. Diablo-Recology. At the meeting, the CCCSWA's ad hoc committee and staff, and HF&H Consultants presented a recommendation to the board to choose Republic Services as the preferred provider for collection, transfer, organics processing and disposal services, and Pacific Rim Recycling as the preferred provider for recyclable processing. The report's recom-

mendation was based upon Republic's lower cost for the same diversion rate and lower transition risk, and concluded that Republic was the highest value option.

Tensions rose once again when allegations of Brown Act violations during the selection process were made by Wilson Wendt from the law firm Miller Starr Regalia, which represents Mt. Diablo-Recology LLC. He said that the ad hoc committee analyzing the proposals made decisions instead of recommendations.

CCCSWA's lawyer indicated that he did not believe there were any violations and he was corroborated by members of the ad hoc committee, however, he recommended postponing the decision to avoid a legal battle that would take even more time.

Many community members came to the meeting in support of Republic, praising Argenti and his team for exemplary service and community support, among them Anne Grodin of Lafayette and Edy Schwartz of Moraga. The staff report also listed dozens of communications by residents asking board members to support Republic Services and Pacific Rim Recycling.

The new 10-year franchise agreement being negotiated will offer new services that should lead the region to meet the state's target of a 75 percent diversion rate by 2020. Both Republic and Mt. Diablo-Recology plan to add new services such as recycling of batteries, rigid plastics and plastic bags. Republic also plans to add cell phone and compact fluorescent bulb weekly collection.

The Intelliwaste investigation report is scheduled to be finalized in time for the Feb. 27 CCCSWA board meeting.

1,000 Places to See

By Lou Fancher



Patricia Schultz Photo provided

If travel journalist Patricia Schultz was an airplane, she'd be a supersonic MiG-25 Foxbat fighter jet. Or maybe a slightly slower, all-weather F-15 Eagle. At an appearance at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Jan. 29, she piloted a sold-out audience on a 45-minute, Mach 3, whirlwind spin around the world.

Ironically, the intrepid traveler and author of New York Times best-seller "1,000 Places to See Before You Die" dislikes flying. "Here's my secret: I'm a nervous flyer," she said. "I hate to fly." She never indulges in thoughts of airline preference: "whichever one is going wherever I need to be," is her selection method. Courageous to a fault, but no fool, she said safety is paramount, jet lag is "something to soldier through," and if tomorrow, she had to pick just one place to live for the rest of her life, it would be Italy.

Long before Schultz contributed to guides like *Frommer's* and periodicals including *The Wall Street Journal*, she was a girl, growing up with a German father and an Italian mother. Her heart, usurped by her mother's blood (her 2011 paperback second edition has Germany, 18 pages, Italy, 50 pages), Schultz said Italy is the most revisited country in the world. "Do you have to see it before you die?" she asked, not waiting for an answer, but supplying it herself: "Yes."

Originally published in 2003, "1,000 Places" profiles Schultz's curated selections of the world's best locations and sights. Beneath postage stamp-sized photos, she offers reasons why visiting is essential and includes tips on hotels, prices, websites, and more. Schultz has added 200 new entries and 28 new countries to the updated edition; performing a magic act by merging original entries and maintaining the total entries at 1,000. Without increasing the already brick-like book's size, she's added places that hadn't been "on her radar" (Ghana, South Korea) or were too tumultuous, immediately after breaking away from the Soviet Union (Estonia, Ukraine, Slovakia). Everything received updated tweaks, requiring a two page list of collaborators.

"Once you get out the door, adventure starts to happen," she promised, before delving into the splendors of 30 locations she'd chosen to highlight in the program. From London, a city about which she said, "everyone starts there at some time," her rapid fire PowerPoint traveled in just four minutes through Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Scandinavia. "Do you know that a person from this country that I spoke with referred to Scandinavia as a country?"

she asked, astounded. "It reminded me of the 30 percent of Americans who can't find Mexico on a map."

Scandinavia is a continent including three – and sometimes up to five countries and the Faroe Islands. When Schultz asked a young American boy how many countries Europe has, he guessed seven. There are 48 and she said Americans remain the most geographically ignorant people she's encountered.

Describing Norway's dramatic topography, waxing poetic about Iceland's Northern Lights and Berlin's proud, great museums (and a small village nearby, boasting nine breweries that hold Oktoberfest in August to catch the tourists), she suggested she'd been to heaven, one-thousand times over. Like her book, the talk was filled with tips about train travel, cruises, tour guides (worth the money), and how respect can earn trust and lead to special insights. "You get back what you put out," she said. "If you are a well-behaved American, you will find people are always nice."

Susan Terzuoli, Alamo, and Ingrid Lara, Danville, hadn't traveled far to hear Schultz, but their globe-roving wanderlust made them seasoned travelers. Terzuolio has visited every continent except Australia and marveled at how Schultz managed to get her "favorites" list down to just 1,000. Lara said today's digital age offers opportunities to "explore" on YouTube, but virtual visits lack sensory experience and are not substitute for actual travel. And coming home is made all the more sweet by having been away. "Each time I come back to the Bay Area, I appreciate it more," she said.

Schultz answered audience questions with clipped, often pithy responses. When she travels, she's expected to see more in three days than most people see in three months. She's been known to literally run through museums and suggested each person must find his or her preferred mode. "I enjoy seeing a little of everything," she said, perhaps inspired by the Asian proverb fronting her book: "Better to see something once than to hear about it a thousand times."

For more information about Schultz and her book, visit 1000places.com.

Don't Miss the Next Author Lecture at LLLC

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center will feature Dina Colman, author of "Four Quadrant Living: Making Healthy Living Your New Way of Life," at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 20 as part of its Sweet Thursdays program. Colman will outline the principles of the four quadrants and discuss ways to reduce stress, live mindfully, eat well, exercise more, sleep better, engage in healthy relationships, and detoxify environments. For information, visit <http://www.lafayettelib.org/calendar/sweetThursdays.html>.

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Emergency Path Realignment Scheduled for Sleepy Hollow Elementary School

By Cathy Dausman



Future emergency path

Image provided

While it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a multitude of agencies to straighten out a pathway within that village. That's what Lamorinda Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein and Moraga-Orinda Fire District Fire Marshal Kathy Leonard are finding out as they prepare to re-establish a 500-foot-long trail connecting Sleepy Hollow Elementary School grounds to Orinda's Bear Creek Road.

Notes from the MOFD general project description explain that "the trail is intended to continue to serve as an alternate egress route for students and school staff in the event a major incident caused the narrow road network within the Sleepy Hollow neighborhood to be compromised."

"The real story here might be the amount of inter-agency cooperation it takes to make a simple project actually materialize these days," Rein said.

The land is owned by East Bay Municipal Utility District and abuts Orinda Union School District land. A current agreement for the trail exists between the school district and EBMUD. Cal Fire and firefighters from the Solano County Delta Conservation Camp will provide the manpower, with the work supervised by

MOFD personnel. Rein calls Delta Camp members "a hard working, fire-fighting team that do these grade projects during the off season. It's a great benefit to our community and projects like this one might not get done without them."

"It's a collaborative effort," agreed Leonard, who said that the brush removal needs to be done because in some places "the Coyote Brush is as tall as [a human]," she said. After outlining the path, workers will cut surrounding brush to re-establish a 4-foot-wide trail, align, then slope it to prevent erosion, tamp the surface, chip vegetation and minimize stump hazards on school grounds. Trees within 50 feet of the trail will be limbed up. When the project is finished, a standard trail gate will be installed at the fence line nearest Bear Creek Road. The gate will be locked, monitored and maintained by Sleepy Hollow school staff.

The work is scheduled for April 1 and 2, when school is not in session, with April 3 reserved if needed. Cost for the work crew is approximately \$230 per day.

"It's a great deal for everybody," Leonard said, saying the work "will improve the existing easement without jeopardizing the safety of the kids."

Lots of Love at New Gallery Location



Artist Judy Feins with husband, Rick.

Photos Steve Hobbs

It's hard to quantify if there was actual love in the air at the Lafayette Art Gallery for a reception celebrating their new exhibit, "Love at First Sight," but there was clearly plenty of friendship and chocolate kisses. Many of the 28 member-artists of the co-op were in attendance, along with friends and family, enjoying an array of complimentary chocolates and champagne that surely contributed to the sociable buzz.

In their new location since October at the Forge, next to Bo's Barbecue, plein air painter and founding member of the art gallery, Jill Landau, reports that many of the co-op artists are very excited about their new loca-

tion. Filling the modern split level space are a wide variety of hand-crafted works that adorn the walls and shelves, including some of Landau's paintings, striking ceramic sculptures, jewelry, water colors, oil paintings and Joe Bologna's three large humorous steel dogs with rebar tails and railroad spike legs. Newest member of the co-op Steve Hobbs and his camera were happy to mingle with fellow artists; his bucolic photographs of local landscapes were easy to spot.

The gallery is open from Tuesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 3420 Mt. Diablo Blvd. For more information, go to www.lafayette-gallery.net. C.Tyson



From left: Artist Irenka Kudlicki's sister, Alina Bialobrodzka, Kudlicki, and Steve Hobbs' daughter, Becky.

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SMC Conference Facilitates Discussion of Critical Topics

By Amanda Kuehn

Diverse and dynamic women, including 92-year-old Betty Reid Soskin, America's oldest park ranger, and Wanda Johnson, the mother of Oakland resident Oscar Grant who was shot by a BART police officer on Jan. 1, 2009, will speak on the topics of racism, sexism and social injustice as keynote speakers at the March 8 Wo/men's Conference at Saint Mary's College. Put on by the Women's Resource Center (WRC), the annual conference connects individuals from different genders and generations to engage in the discussion of critical topics.

Recipient of the 1995 California Woman of the Year Award and special guest at President Obama's inauguration, Soskin is a prominent and active African-American woman. "She's coming back by popular demand," said Sharon Sobotta, director of the WRC. While Soskin will speak to the issue of racism in society, Johnson will target the way that violence against young men of color affects

women. Soskin and Johnson will be joined by social justice practitioners who work in agencies ranging from Community Violence Solutions to the MOMs program in Alameda County.

"It's intentionally an inter-generational conference," said Sobotta. "We think something extra comes from having many generations together sitting around the table and talking about these issues."

Intentionally written with a backlash, the Wo/men's Conference isn't just for women. "We want men to be there too," said Sobotta. The conference seeks to bring together men and women from different backgrounds to explore new ways to address tough issues. It is an all-inclusive venue in which community members, educators, parents and students will have the opportunity to learn about and engage in discussions.

A number of large group workshops will be offered by various members of the Lamorinda com-

munity. Workshop topics range from human trafficking and modern day slavery to a presentation on how your food choices can challenge injustice. "We don't want people to leave overwhelmed," said Sobotta. "We've asked that the workshop leaders leave people with some sort of agency regarding what they can do and what difference they can make."

New to this year's conference is an interactive poster session that will allow small groups and individuals to share new information, interests and findings with conference attendees. "People can choose anything they're passionate about that relates to the general theme," Sobotta explained. Posters might reflect student projects, new research or information regarding the efforts of a local organization related to the themes of racism, sexism and social injustice. A group of SMC students will present a poster on the question "What is violence against women?" Mis-

sion and Ministry will present a poster regarding fair trade products.

Anyone can participate in the poster fair. Poster presenters will be stationed at tables, engaging with small groups and individuals as they pass by. If you're interested in presenting, sign up on the WRC events website at: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/womens-resource-center/events/womens-conference-2014/submit-a-workshop-or-poster-session-proposal>. Applications for participation in the poster session will be accepted through Saturday, March 1.

The conference will run from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, March 8. Conference tickets are \$25 per person; sponsored tickets are available for those who are unable to purchase. You can register online by locating the WRC's events page (<http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/womens-resource-center/events/womens-conference-2014>) and clicking on the link labeled "Register Now."

"V-Day Until the Violence Ends" Event Feb. 14

Other Saint Mary's Women's Resource Center events include "V-Day Until the Violence Ends." A worldwide movement to stop violence against women and girls, V-Day promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money and revitalize the spirit of anti-violence organizations. Using monologues from Eve Ensler's renowned play, "The Vagina Monologues," SMC students will bring these stories to the stage at 3 and 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14. Pre-sale tickets are \$5 for students; \$10 for non-students, available online. Tickets at the door are \$7 for students; \$12 for non-students. For tickets and information, visit <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/womens-resource-center/events/v-day-until-the-violence-stops>.

Isolation and Loneliness Can Be "Deadly" to Older Adults

Prevention is the key

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC

It is a powerful statement to think that isolation might be debilitating to older adults and contributing to mortality. However, research done in the past few years, at UCSF and at the University College London, revealed that lack of social contact – "isolation" – is a predictor of death.

Dr. Carla Perissinotto, one of the authors of the study done in 2012 at UCSF, said that one of the surprising findings of the team is that loneliness does not necessarily correlate with living alone. Research revealed that 43 percent of the adults surveyed felt

lonely, but only 18 percent lived alone. A caregiving spouse who gives care to someone who no longer has the capacity to be a companion could feel lonely and be isolated due to his or her role.

Many of you over 70 living alone might be saying, "I love my life and I actually enjoy my own company." It is my personal belief that if you choose a solo lifestyle and it doesn't compromise your health or sense of well-being, it can be fine. However, when the ability to leave your home is compromised for any reason or

health issues start to isolate you or family members, then there is a problem that can be remedied.

The British study found that having no social contacts increased the risk of dying, regardless of a person's health and other factors, while loneliness increased the risk of dying only among those with health issues. They further explained that those isolated had no one to urge them to eat well or to take prescribed medications and in a crisis there was no one to step in.

Loneliness can be felt in people who are fully functional, but feel

empty or desolate. People who identified themselves as lonely had an adjusted risk ratio for decline that was 59 percent greater than those not experiencing loneliness.

So what should one do to prevent isolation and loneliness? A simple answer is to stay "engaged" all your life. That engagement will vary for each of us, especially as we move into our 80s and 90s. But when I talk to positive people in these age groups, they are still engaged by volunteering, visiting friends, taking classes – despite losses and health challenges.

Here are seven ways to prevent isolation and loneliness:

1) Consider values and your "sense of purpose." Ask yourself, "What gives my life meaning?" If you played a musical instrument, but don't any longer – go to concerts. If you like to travel, sign up for trips (already planned) at a senior center if you don't have local friends or family to travel with.

2) Volunteer. Churches or religious organizations often offer classes and/or volunteer opportunities. They often have visitors to keep you connected if you're homebound.

3) Access transportation. If you can no longer drive, look for the local senior shuttle to bring you to events where you have opportunities to meet others. Call senior information for a list of senior transportation services: (800) 510-2020.

4) Adopt a pet. You'll have someone to talk to in the middle of the night and a good excuse for a walk where you will meet other pet owners.

5) Get ear and eye exams. If you have sensory losses and don't like crowds because you can't always hear, have your ears examined and see what is new in devices. Same with vision: have your eyes checked annually and update your glasses.

6) Consult a care manager. If you have other medical issues which have been a reason for isolation, you might want to consult with a professional care manager who can assist you with managing your medical issues and get you back into the community. Things that we think can't be fixed often have

a new answer – therapies and treatments are changing and an expert can be your coach or guide.

7) Communicate your needs. Sometimes you just need to ask for what you need. If you do have family – near or far – tell them how important their calls and visits are and if you are not on the computer, learn. Email and Skype can keep you connected.

For those who live in Lamorinda, the Lamorinda Village (www.lamorindavillage.org) – a membership organization that will begin in late 2014 – will provide entertaining, educational and health focused opportunities for social engagement. The primary purpose of "The Village" is to support seniors to live healthy in their own homes and communities.

We are social creatures and we need to nurture ourselves and push at times to stay connected. Loss is part of life, but so is creativity and possibility. Reach out to others who you think are isolated, know your neighbors and be part of your community – it will lengthen your life.

If you want resources for any of the suggestions or need to speak with a professional geriatric care manager, please give me a call. Depression could be keeping you stuck – if so, feel free to call my office for resources. If you do live alone or with a partner, think about becoming part of the new "Lamorinda Village" for this primary reason alone – avoiding social isolation.



Linda Fodrini-Johnson is the founder and executive director of Eldercare Services, a licensed marriage, family and child counselor, and a certified care manager.



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Safeway eScrip Changes Spark School Fundraising Concerns

Oscar night party planned to drum up donations

By Laurie Snyder



Miramonte Parents Club presents
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Normally the purview of acclaimed actors during Academy Awards season, nausea and nail biting have also become habits du jour for members of the Miramonte High School Parent Club (MHSPC). It all started in October when the normally upbeat group learned that actions by a local corporation had the potential to rip through MHSPC's unsinkable fundraising machine faster than James Cameron's CGI-generated iceberg chewed through the Titanic.

Historically, MHSPC has relied on revenues generated from Safeway's involvement with Electronic Script Incorporated, the California corporation which launched eScrip in 1999 to help businesses support kid-focused community groups. Today, schools typically earn from 1 to 4 percent of qualifying Safeway purchases.

The 2013-14 take for MHSPC was expected to be \$25,000. But on Nov. 1, Safeway changed the rules.

Credit card purchases no longer earn eScrip. Only items bought with cash, debit card, check, SmartCheck, WIC, SNAP/CalFresh, or Safeway Gift Cards still qualify.

"We were notified of this change Oct. 3, 2013 after our budget was set for the school year," said Miramonte High School Parent Club member Sharon Hillstrom. "For many parents, buying groceries with a credit card was a two-for-one benefit, helping their child's school and earning airline miles."

Safeway clearly believes it has taken a positive step. In the Nov. 18 San Francisco Business Times, Safeway spokesperson Teena Massingill said the grocery giant made the change while also lifting its \$25,000 per school donation cap – a decision she said would be popular with active school supporters. "Ours is a business with razor-thin profit margins. It is difficult to make a donation from a sale when we also incur a high credit-

card-transaction fee on that sale."

According to figures provided by MHSPC, the impact is clear. Purchases plummeted from \$676,470 in October to \$344,240 in November – after Safeway's new policy took effect. Hillstrom worries MHSPC won't meet its goal, as does MHSPC fundraising vice president, Jackie Moreau. "Parent and school groups in Lamorinda, the East Bay and San Francisco all have similar concerns as eScrip has been their biggest source of income."

"Because I want to help the school and continue to earn airline miles, I'm now buying gift cards with my credit card, then paying for my groceries with the gift cards," said Sharon Noble. And MHSPC is also planning an exciting event to head off any shortfall from the eScrip shift.

"Ladies Night at the Oscars" will give Bay Area film fans a chance "to walk the red carpet and enjoy an evening of delicious catered appetizers, wine and champagne while the Oscars live stream on a huge screen," said Hillstrom. Fabulous raffle prizes will also be up for grabs.

Start helping your best gal pal squeeze into her Spanx now. The event will be held Sunday, March 2 from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the J Colleen Boutique, 261 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Tickets are available for purchase through: <https://miramonte.revtrak.net/ek9.asp>.

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"The Monuments Men"

By Derek Zembrak



Photo provided

"The Monuments Men" is the latest directing project by Oscar recipient George Clooney, and his frequent collaborator and co-writer, Oscar winner Grant Heslov ("Argo," "The Ides of March," "Good Night, and Good Luck"). They adapted the screenplay from the novel written by Robert M. Edsel and Bret Witter, which is based on the true story of servicemen and women assigned to locate and recover works of art stolen from museums, universities and personal collections by Adolf Hitler, Herman Göring and the Nazis during World War II.

The ensemble cast includes George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bill Murray, John Goodman and soon to be Oscar winner Cate Blanchett. The entire cast delivers outstanding performances but it is Blanchett who shines on the big screen as the assistant curator from the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris and who is reluctant to cooperate. It is her character's detailed notes and logs that lead to many of the recoveries.

"The Monuments Men" is no "Schindler's List." It is an interesting movie with flaws. It lacks character development and Clooney never truly brings out the tension of what one would expect from a World War II period piece. Plus the musical

score sets the tone for humor that diverts the story away from the seriousness of the subject matter. I commend Clooney for bringing to light the story of these courageous individuals as an educational vehicle and addressing the question: What's the price we're willing to pay for art? The movie made me want to learn more about the Monument Men, the stolen art and the recovery. If a film can educate as well as entertain, it is worth the price of admission.

The amazing part of attending the San Francisco press screening of "The Monuments Men" was meeting Bernard Taper, a real Monument Man and retired UC Berkeley journalism professor. It was a wonderful experience to shake his hand and say "thank you." A moment in my film history I will never forget.

"The Monuments Men" is rated PG-13 for a few war scenes and smoking. It has a running time of 1 hour and 58 minutes. I highly recommend school field trips for this film.

Derek Zembrak is a film critic, film producer and founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news. Derek can be heard every Friday on KAHN 950AM on the Poppoff Show.

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TEEN SCENE

Two Local Teens Debate the Pros and Cons of Valentine's Day

Why Not Every Day?

By Youngjoo Ahn

The romantic nature of Valentine's Day began with Chaucer and Shakespeare even though the disputed existence of St. Valentine occurred years earlier. Valentine's greetings were popular in the Middle Ages but the real market for ready-made cards began in 1913 with the creation of Hallmark.

Today, although Valentine's Day is touted as being a day celebrating love, in my opinion it is really only about mass commercialism. Last year sales on Valentine's Day reached \$17.6 billion. Storefronts to mobile games to children's books encourage consumption with pink and red heart decorations and generic sayings of affection. Sweethearts feel obligated to buy flowers, chocolates, or jewelry to express their love.

The only people who win on Valentine's Day are the owners of companies that benefit from a shopping populace. Instead of cherishing loved ones, Valentine's Day has added a price tag to love. This so-called holiday pressures people to buy gifts for those they care about.

"I think Valentine's Day is a corporate plot to allow companies to make billions of dollars. I'm not against it because love is to be celebrated. It just doesn't need all the chocolate and flowers that people associate with it," senior Ruwan Thilakarathne said. "Show someone you genuinely care about them by writing a letter or spending the day with them."

"I think Valentine's Day is a very commercialized holiday that's only celebrated to make money. It's only really fun for little kids and couples," senior Devin Mottier

said. "There shouldn't have to be a specific day to tell somebody you love them. That's something that should be expressed without a holiday coaxing it out of you."

Because Valentine's Day has become so commercialized, it often ostracizes those who do not receive flowers and gifts. Being single shouldn't make you feel lonely and depressed yet the anti-Valentine's Day, called Single's Awareness Day, or "SAD," has arisen.

"Valentine's Day is a unique holiday where I eat a lot of candy and reevaluate my life as a loner. As a guy, I feel pressured to buy something on Valentine's Day. If a person is in a relationship, it is mandatory to spend on this holiday," sophomore Scott Wu said.

Valentine's Day has lost its meaning because of commercialization. There doesn't need to be a holiday celebrating love, especially when celebrating love consists of the obligation to go on a shopping spree. To me, every day is a time to cherish loved ones, showing them how special they are to me without the added expense of chocolate, flowers, and jewelry.

Youngjoo Ahn is a senior at Miramonte High School. In her free time she hosts Express Yourself!® Teen Radio, enjoys volunteering, and reads voraciously.



Spreading the Love Around

By Linda Lan Phung

To be or not to be MINE? That is the question that many teenagers think about on Valentine's Day, along with coming up with a romantic gesture for their significant other. This day, like any other holiday, brings joy as well as other benefits.

Valentine's Day spurs creativity because people invent unique ways to show their love. In a way, it forces people to think about their beloved and the memories they have shared together.

Chocolate is a popular gift idea among couples, as freshman Jack Thomas says, "Receiving chocolate makes girls happy, and guys want to make their girlfriends smile." Even though chocolate seems like a simple gift, it contains a multitude of health benefits.

According to recent scientific research, dark chocolate consists of many antioxidants that destroy free radicals, highly reactive atoms that damage DNA and cell membranes that roam around in our bodies. In addition, the cocoa in chocolate reduces cardiovascular disease, protects skin from UV rays, and increases blood flow. Hurrah for chocolate gifts!

Critics may claim that Valentine's Day was merely devised by mercenary corporations to increase sales. However, these profits can be used to produce more cards for upcoming events (e.g. Mother's Day, graduation). Although greeting card companies don't flaunt their charitable actions, most are philanthropic.

Hallmark has partnered with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) since 2006, donating more than \$12 million from sales of UNICEF-related items. They also donated \$3.5 million to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

Another well-known card enterprise, American Greetings, supports the United Way of

Greater Cleveland through volunteering and fundraising to help local organizations. They have donated boxes of school supplies to the art school, the Rainey Institute.

Although Valentine's Day is an invented holiday, there's a reason why this day is celebrated not only in the U.S. but also in Britain, Japan, Italy, and many other countries. Junior Max Han believes that "love is a universal theme that everyone can relate to." Considering how many books, songs, movies, and TV shows center around the notion of love, it's obvious why this holiday was created.

For the people who call Feb. 14 *Singles Awareness Day* or "SAD," there are other ways to cope. Travelling, spending time with friends, or watching movies are popular, as senior Olivia Warner adds, "Good movies come out around this time of year." No teen should be ashamed about being an independent and unattached individual. Everyone is single at some time. It is pointless to annually mope.

Feb. 14 is a unifying day for both singles and couples, strengthening friendships as well as romantic bonds. Utilize this day to show your appreciation for loved ones and those who are making a positive difference in your life. Say "thank you" for caring.

Linda Lan Phung, a Miramonte High School senior who volunteers throughout the East Bay, is an officer with Club Be the Star You Are!®, and strives for 17-second miracles, inspired by author Jason Wright.



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

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



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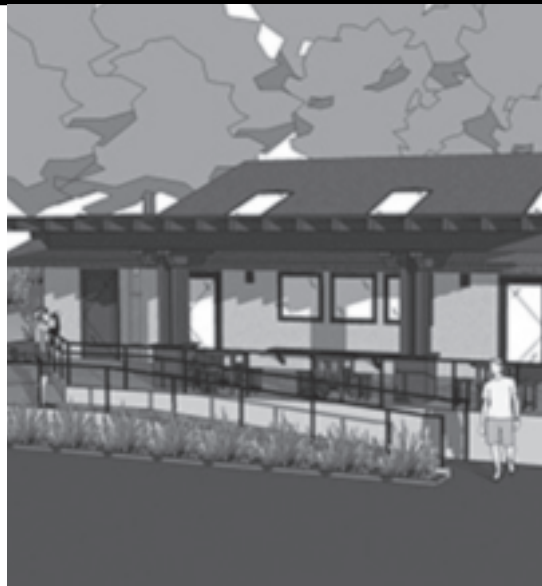
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Lava Cakes (for the Lovies in Your Life)

By Susie Iventosch



Marshmallow lava cakes for the lovelies in your life! Photos Susie Iventosch

I am a huge fan of marshmallows. Although this is still a work in progress, I am quite pleased with the latest results. In the first attempt, we used marshmallow cream in the center of the lava cakes, but it just melted away and integrated into the cake. Next, we tried burying the marshmallow in between spoonfuls of batter, completely covering the marshmallow, but the same thing happened. In this last attempt, I stuck the marshmallow right in the center of the batter in each cupcake tin, so that the top stuck out about 1/2 inch. This way, as the lava cake baked, the marshmallow spread out over the top and turned golden brown, as if perfectly roasted over the fire.

Serve these with a scoop of your favorite ice cream or frozen yogurt and drizzle chocolate sauce over the top. (I did not photograph it this way, so the marshmallow would show in the picture.)

The idea for this recipe came from a photograph I saw in a magazine, which looked like a nice, fluffy white center in the middle of the lava cake. I thought, "Wow, what a great idea, using marshmallows in the middle of lava cakes!" But, as it turned out, the white spot was simply the way the light reflected on the cake and there were no marshmallows anywhere to be found in the recipe. This did not deter me, since



THE APP RAP

By Eric Pawlakos

App: Wickr by Wickr Inc.
For: iPhones and Android phones
Price: Free

Encryption apps are becoming increasingly popular among a variety of users. This popularity is a result of the increasing body of evidence showing that data transmissions from smartphones can be intercepted and collected. However, there may be many instances where confidentiality of a smartphone transmission may be of paramount importance. That's where Wickr comes in handy. Wickr is much more than an app that encrypts your text messages. Using the most advanced encryption technology, it also allows you to safely and securely send audio, video, and voice messages. The company can't see the information you are sending, and when a message expires based on the user's self-destruct option, it is gone forever. The transmission leaves no trace, and it can never be recovered by anyone, including Wickr. The person who sends the transmission has complete control over who gets to see what, and for how long. This highly advanced encryption app brings 'sophisticated security and privacy technologies to everybody.' According to the company, their app is used by reporters,

senators, police, doctors, patients, lawyers, bankers, military, and so on. For example, insurance companies and hospitals use wickr to ensure that transmission of medical records is kept completely private. Basically, anyone who has a vital need to ensure their data is only seen by the desired recipient would have a use for Wickr. Thankfully, it is an incredibly easy app to use. In today's information society, where interception of data is a common occurrence, Wickr stands out as a must-have app.



Eric Pawlakos is a sophomore at UC Davis, majoring in statistics. He is a member of the UC Davis rugby team, and enjoys playing guitar in his spare time.

Dark Chocolate Marshmallow Lava Cakes



Lava cake batter with marshmallows

(Makes 12 regular muffin sized lava cakes, or 6 large muffin tins ... bake a little longer if using the large size.)

INGREDIENTS

- 6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1 cube butter (1 stick), cut into pieces
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon Ruby Port
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 6 tablespoons flour
- 12 marshmallows

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Melt butter and chocolate in a bowl in microwave. Remove from microwave and stir in vanilla and Port until smooth. Whisk in 2 eggs and egg yolk, again until smooth. Stir in powdered sugar and flour.

Prepare a muffin tin by spraying generously with cooking spray. Evenly distribute batter in each tin. Depress a marshmallow in the center of each muffin tin.

Bake for approximately 12 to 15 minutes, or until marshmallows are beginning to look roasted. (Baking time also depends upon how gooey you like the center.) Remove from oven and allow to sit for a couple of minutes. Then, using a cutting board against the top of the pan, invert muffin tin to remove lava cakes. Turn cakes right side up again onto dessert plates, and serve immediately with a scoop of strawberry ice cream or frozen yogurt, which is especially nice for Valentine's Day! Drizzle with your favorite chocolate sauce.

*If you refrigerate these and save them for later, they will be a little bit more like a very fudgy brownie as opposed to a lava cake.

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. **This recipe can be found on our website:** 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.

Lamorinda Weekly

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Team Bentley Runs to Raise Funds for Growing Robotics Program

Submitted by Jenna Starkey



Team Bentley

Photo provided

Bentley School, which has campuses in Oakland and Lafayette, is fielding its fourth annual team of runners and walkers for the Oakland Running Festival on Sunday, March 23. Team Bentley has grown steadily over the last three years from 125 runners to 175 runners. Its mission is to model a healthy lifestyle for and with its children. The team is represented in every race length by students, parents, faculty, or a combination thereof.

The 5K is the most popular race length, with runners as young as kindergarten. They field multiple marathon relay teams from the middle school, and have had an integrated faculty/parent team. In addition, they have helped several middle and upper school students complete their first half marathon. Team Bentley is one of the largest groups represented at the Oakland Running Festival. Structured as a fundraiser, over the last

three years Team Bentley has cumulatively donated more than \$35,000 to projects or programs at the school. In 2013, funds were allocated to a library renovation on Bentley's Oakland campus.

This year, all proceeds will fund Bentley's Remote Operating Vehicle (ROV) program, which promotes problem solving through engineering. Bentley's upper school ROV team won the Best Engineering and Design Award at the

12th Annual Marine Advanced Technology Education ROV Competition last year in Monterey. The middle school will launch the first ROV class in 2014. As part of this effort, students will design, build, and test ROVs, with the goal of representing Bentley at the regional competition in Monterey.

For more information, please contact Team Bentley co-chairs, Leslie Bodner and Mona Sillers, at TeamBentley2014@gmail.com.

Community Service

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

“Voices On Poverty”

A community event designed to make a difference

Submitted by Casey Sasner

According to U.S. census data and the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, 1 in 6 people are considered “food insecure” and 107,000 people are living in poverty in Contra Costa County. On Feb. 23, the community is invited to attend “Voices On Poverty,” an event designed to raise awareness of poverty in the county.

The idea for the event began four years ago, when Temple Isaiah began a community organizing initiative to learn what was in the hearts and on the minds of its congregants – what were they worried about, what they wanted to work on. Organizers conducted house meetings, one-on-ones and temple-wide events. Through the process, they learned that congregants were thinking a lot about how the recession was affecting folks here in Contra Costa County – the jobless, homeless, working poor, and under-employed – and decided to use the passion for social action to make a difference.

Conducting over 100 meetings over the course of a year, organizers from Temple Isaiah met with executive directors of non-profits, non-governmental organizations, service providers, funders, county employees, those living in poverty, political figures, and the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County and their social justice alliance. In late January, Temple Isaiah and the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County co-hosted a lunch attended by 110 clergy and lay leaders where they discussed

the issues of poverty and decided to create an interfaith coalition.

“Voices On Poverty” will feature a series of speakers who will share stories about struggling with poverty or working in service on the problem. Small group conversations will be facilitated where participants will consider how faith and community-based organizations can advance the fight against poverty. Opportunities for engagement will also be presented. The event will also honor the hundreds of volunteers in the interfaith community who work on Winter Nights, the rotating family shelter which operates from October through May. Winter Nights is a program of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County.

Jasmine Tarkoff, leader of the effort, said of the event, “Our hope is to get the community to begin confronting the issues around poverty in Contra Costa County and figure out how we might work together on solutions. We know that hearing stories is the best way to put a face on poverty and that’s why we felt this would be a good way of raising awareness.” All community members who are concerned about poverty are encouraged to attend.

“Voices On Poverty” will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. in the social hall of Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, Lafayette. The event is free and open to the public. To RSVP, visit www.temple-isaiah.org/voicesonpoverty.

Boxes, Bags and Bins of Books Benefit Schools

Submitted by Greg Davis



Hannah Wells and Kate Walner Photo provided

As part of their participation in the Julie Fouly Sports Leadership Academy, local Lafayette resident Kate Walner and her friend Hannah Wells, both age 14, set out to collect books for underserved schools in the Mt. Diablo and Oakland unified school districts. Walner, a soccer player from Montclair Soccer Club, reached out to her friends from soccer clubs in our local community including California Magic and East Bay Eclipse. “Due to great support from California Magic and East Bay Eclipse soccer clubs, we collected nearly 4,000 books that were distributed among six different schools,” said Walner. “This is great for students in these underfunded schools because they now have more and a better variety of reading material. It also creates awareness of the need for books in local schools among the soccer players from the clubs that participated.”

Leader of the Popcorn Pack

Submitted by Justin Steele



Jackson Steele, a scout with Cub Scout Pack 200, smashed his Pack's fundraising record last year by selling \$3,124 worth of popcorn throughout Lafayette. This year he nearly doubled that effort by selling a whopping \$5,823, which likely made him the top seller in the state of California. Both years Jackson has been honored at half court during a Golden State Warriors game as the number one seller in this region. His tireless efforts week after week have earned a lot of extra funds for his local council and his pack, which is comprised mainly of Springhill Elementary School students.

Stellar seller Jackson Steele Photo provided

Lafayette Community Foundation Awards Grant to WomenSing for Free Music Performances in Lafayette

Submitted by Linda Infelise



Teresa Geringer, Lafayette Community Foundation president, presents the Lafayette Community Foundation grant to WomenSing's board president, Ann Dzuna, along with members of the Youth Inspiring Youth - Commissioning Emerging Composers committee. From left: Teresa Caldwell (Lafayette), Teresa Geringer, Rachel Eidbo, Patti Sax (Lafayette), Amy Hiestand (Orinda), Ann Dzuna (Moraga), Patty Murray (Orinda). Photo provided

The Lafayette Community Foundation awarded an excellence grant of \$2,500 that enables the local women's chorus WomenSing to expand artistic programming in

Lafayette. The Foundation invests in programs and projects that enhance the civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of the city. Its grant to WomenSing makes possible a week-

end of free public performances April 11-12, giving local audiences an insider's view of a composer's creative process and the ways that choral singers respond to challenging new music. Three local choruses will participate including WomenSing.

Founded in 1965, WomenSing, is an award-winning chorus of nearly 50 women from the Lamorinda and East Bay areas. Its signature project is Youth Inspiring Youth – Commissioning Emerging Composers. Young California composers, ages 18-30, compete for paid commissions to create new choral works for the chorus. The texts are provided by award-winning children's poetry from the River of Words Project of the Center for Environmental Literacy at Saint Mary's College in Moraga.

According to WomenSing artistic director, Martin Benvenuto, Ph.D., “Youth Inspiring Youth has already given birth to nine remarkable choral compositions by young California composers. With this generous grant, we can expand our workshops and performances in ways that give the public additional insight into the exciting challenges of performing new music.”

The winning composers for the current year

are Chris Castro and Jordan Nelson. Castro is a graduate student in composition at UC Davis. He earned a bachelor of music from the Juilliard School where his award-winning composition, *Monolith (A Symphonic Sketch)* was premiered by the Juilliard Orchestra. For his commission, he has chosen a powerful poem entitled ‘Poseidon's Steeds’ written by Allegra Hyde when she was 14. Allegra is now pursuing an MFA at Arizona State, while actively writing poetry and short stories.

Nelson teaches music theory at Colburn Conservatory of Music and is working towards his doctor of musical arts in Composition at USC. His accomplishments range from orchestral works to chamber music for both acoustic and electro-acoustic ensembles. Nelson selected a set of 10 haiku-like mini-poems entitled “Ten Ways of Looking at the Sun”, written by Sophie Anderson, age 13 at the time. Sophie, now a cellist living in Seattle, is very excited about having her poetry set to music.

For information about the upcoming WomenSing “Treble Voices Now Festival” April 11-12, as well as other performances and workshops, visit womensing.org.

Words That Change Our World

Local chef and the book that inspires his creativity in the kitchen

By Lou Fancher



Adam Carpenter
Photo courtesy Lafayette Park Hotel

Adam Carpenter is fast becoming Lamorinda's carnivore troubadour. The 33-year-old executive chef at *Bistro*, the Lafayette Park Hotel's redesigned restaurant, is a culinary wizard whose poetry with pork increasingly finds its place on the establishment's plates and platters. With deep roots in Contra Costa County kitchens – Taxi's in Walnut Creek, an Alamo Baskin Robbins, Danville's Blackhawk Grill – and caché from San Francisco's now-closed Ponzu and the roaringly popular Jaspers, Carpenter has cracked open more than one cookbook.

What better man might there be, to name a life-changing foodie book?

But, in fact, he's a hard to pin down, when it comes to single selection. "Sure!" is his first response to an

invitation to name The Book. Reality quickly follows: Carpenter has an extensive library, including all of Thomas Keller's books. He admits, his devotion shifts according to current interests or the season. And he's fond of non-cookbook, food-related books, like Steve Dublanica's "Waiter Rant," Bill Buford's "Heat" ... and more.

Even so, when cornered by a one-book diet, he selects "Charcuterie," food writer Michael Ruhlman's and chef Brian Polcyn's 320-page narrative on the splendors of all things salted, smoked and cured. Writing ahead of a tidal wave of interest that became a trend, then a food movement by 2005, the writer/chef duo offer not just recipes for meat, but a story. Like all good tales, there's a back story and characters/ingredients following a plot/methodology. Rendered in a casserole of reverent and jubilant tones and graced with Yevgeniy Solovyev's sensitive illustrations, their book even has a clear beginning: duck confit.

"A powerful mania descended on me a decade ago when I first tasted duck confit," Ruhlman writes, in an opening chapter. (Confit, one learns,

involves rubbing a food with spices, submerging it in oil or sugared water for often lengthy cooking, and storing the tender, luscious result in its own fat in a cool, dark place.) From Ruhlman's recollection of his original inspiration on, "Charcuterie" is a delicious waltz of recipes and creation; from salt and smoke to sausage and Cinderella Meat Loaf. Resource listings for meat suppliers and "not optional" sauces and condiments round out the complete literary package.

"I remember reading and testing recipes for hours and weeks; learning and developing recipes to fit a high volume of food for a busy French restaurant," Carpenter recalled. After following the books lengthier processes – some requiring weeks to complete – he got creative. "You start branching off to new ideas and new menu creations," he said.

At *Bistro*, Carpenter brings his "huge butchery background" together with locally-provided meat and produce from his frequent farmer's market sprints. "I have a passion for local and home-grown vegetables," he confided. He also bears a passion for pigs; evidenced by the pig-cut tattoo he bears on one forearm. "The pig

happens to be my favorite animal and the one used more and more in every kitchen across the world. We can all relate to that animal," he said.

Bistro has house-made sausages and cured meats "all over the menu," according to Carpenter. Chef's bites, sprightly named "Amuse," are delivered at the beginning of meals. "Often, this will be a sausage, or an air-cured meat, or a tuna cooked confit for hours. Fun items are explored here," he said.

Offering advice, or simply a description of the cookbooks he values, Carpenter said he looks beyond recipes to workable techniques. "Then you can trust them for years to come," he said. Obtainable ingredients – nothing overly exotic – and cookbooks emphasizing the use of locally sourced produce, meat, dairy and grains, also fit his criteria. "When a book has good ideas and amazing pictures, that goes a long way for me," he added, unable to curb his enthusiasm to just three top features.

But perhaps there are certain things – chef's imaginations, family meals, generosity, and especially, a list of favorite books – that should never be put on a diet.

Lou Fancher is a journalist who, over the course of her career interviewing a wide variety of people, has been struck by how often written or spoken words influenced the local life and purpose of her articles' subjects. If you have a book, a play, a famous quote or a film that has been important in your life and are willing to share your story with Lou – it requires only a 15-minute phone interview – please email storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com and include "Words" in the subject line.

Glamour Guaranteed

Oscar party at the Rheem features Academy Award winner Margaret O'Brien

By Sophie Braccini



Last year's Oscar party

The Rheem Theatre will be the place to be for non-stop Oscar entertainment March 2, including dining, dancing, discovering film memorabilia in the only Classic Film Hall of Fame, intertwined with a live Oscar ceremony broadcast on the big screen. Special guest Margaret O'Brien, whose performance as "Tootie" in Vincente Minnelli's "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944) won her an Academy Award as Outstanding Child Actress, will share her story.

"This will be a fun night, Lamorinda!" claims California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF) president and founder Derek Zemrak. "This is only the second time we are having a full blown Oscar party in Lamorinda." Oscar party goers will be treated to drinks, a dinner catered by Orinda restaurant, Shelbys, and the music of local singer Diamond Dave Hosley, as well as Oscar-themed games.

"When people arrive, they will be given a swag bag that will include a commemorative wine glass and a name tag with one of the Oscar nom-

inees, actor or movie," says Zemrak. "If their character wins, they will win a prize, too!" Like last year, people can bet on winners and also win prizes.

"Additionally this year we are opening a special Oscar exhibit in the Classic Film Hall of Fame and will be displaying very interesting and unusual memorabilia linked to the Oscars," says Zemrak, who is a movie director himself, well connected in Hollywood and has been collecting memorabilia for years. Many of the items in the Hall of Fame are from his private collection.

"My wife is happy that I am emptying the private museum that had taken over parts of our home," jokes Zemrak. For the first time, wardrobes of actors who were nominated to the Oscars will be on display. "For example we have Meryl Streep's original costume from the 2002 movie 'Adaptation' and Bradley Cooper's from the 2012 movie 'Silver Linings Playbook,'" says Zemrak. Visitors can view original autographed docu-

ments or explore the old movie poster room as they walk down memory lane. "This museum is unique in this country," says Zemrak. "It should attract people from all over to Lamorinda as a cool place to visit."

"This year, thanks to our sponsors, we've been able to cut the price of admission in half," adds Zemrak. "It does not mean that we don't need to fund raise anymore." The situation is quite the opposite, in fact, because the Rheem suffered a recent setback in its quest to become ADA compliant. The exterior elevator that required plans, structural engineering studies, and Town approval was rejected by the county on the grounds that it discriminated against people with disabilities because it required them to go back outside after purchasing their ticket to reach the theater's second floor.

"We are back with the option of an interior lift attached to the stair ramp," says Zemrak. "It's the same solution that failed us in the past and costs more than an outside elevator."

CAIFF believes that the needed \$12,000 to complete the project will be raised and the new lift should be installed within three months.

The Oscar party will be held from 3 to 9:30 p.m. Sunday, March 2. Tickets, which are \$50 per person and must be purchased before Feb. 16, are available online at lamorindatheatres.com or by calling (925) 388-0762.

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Most Frequently Viewed Stories From Our Last Issue:



- Moraga's Own Hot Dog King
- Does Moraga Need More Police Officers?
- Has Intimacy Suffered in the Information Age?
- Stat Med An oasis of urgent care between Berkeley and Walnut Creek
- Young Qualify for Olympic Pool
- Impasse in MOFD Firefighter Negotiations
- City Council Approves Terraces Process Agreement
- Magic Versus Magic
- Support Growing for Campaign to Save Park Theater
- Council Considers Wright House It's hard to build on a slope in Moraga

If you wish to view any of the stories above go to www.lamorindaweekly.com and click the link below the story.

Lamorinda's Religious Services



► **Sunday Worship, 9:00 & 11:00 AM,**
with programs for 3-mos.-12th grade.

► **Seedlings Preschool, M-F.**

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284-4765, office@thelumc.org

Worship	Sunday	10 am
Children/Youth Sunday School	Sunday	10 am
Youth Fellowship	Sunday	6 pm

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

ART

Orinda Library Art Gallery February exhibitors: Kabir Adejare, history makers; Robert Wahrhaftig, portraits; Carole Dwinell, multiple disciplines; ceramic artists of Lafayette Gallery. For more information visit www.orindaartscouncil.org.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art - three new exhibitions opened Sunday, Feb. 2. From Swords to Plowshares: Metal Trench Art from World War One; Songs of the Patriot: How Music Helped Win World War One - through original chromolithographic cover illustrations of popular songs, sheet music and lyrics, this exhibition explores how music publishers, songwriters, cover artists, and singers generated support for troops overseas; and Power Point Lecture: The War Within the War: 1914 - 1918 by Adam Hochschild at 2 p.m. on opening day, Sunday, Feb. 2 at LeFevre Theatre (free). Open 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For info, call (925)-631-4379 or visit stmarys-ca.edu/museum. Admission: free to K-12 graders; \$5 adults. Free parking.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art - Two Exhibitions re-opened Feb. 2. Malcolm Lubliner: The Automotive Landscape - The noted Bay Area photographer and Los Angeles native received an MFA in photography from Otis Art Institute. This gorgeous and sometimes humorous display reveals his life-long love affair with the car. William Keith: Nature's Tranquil Splendor - A rotating selection of oil paintings from the College collection is always on view. Open 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For info, call (925)-631-4379 or visit stmarys-ca.edu/museum. Admission: free to K-12 graders; \$5 adults. Free parking.

Photography Show—The Camera Cabal, through Feb. 27 at City of San Ramon's Lindsay Dirx Brown Art Gallery inside San Ramon Community Center. The Camera Cabal, a collective of 11 Bay Area fine art photographers (including Orinda and Lafayette photographers), exhibit their stunning and evocative images of landscapes, abstracts, portraits, and street life. Show hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday; call (925) 973-3200 for evening/weekend hours.

Town Hall Theatre is pleased to announce the opening of a free art exhibit in their gallery at 3535 School Street, Lafayette. "Greeting the New Year," which runs through March 8, is a colorful and energetic exhibit showcasing the work of eight members of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance. Gallery hours are from 3 to 6 p.m. Monday - Friday and for one hour before performances. For more info, contact curator JoAnn Lieberman at olabambola@sbcglobal.net.

With nearly two million veterans in California and a generation of veterans returning from two wars, Contra Costa County Library has launched a timely and relevant project, War Ink, an online exhibit of Iraq and Afghanistan veteran memorial tattoo art. War Ink will launch on Veterans Day 2014, and represents a platform to explore the unfiltered record of war that veterans have documented on their body. Veterans interested in the project are encouraged to contact Jason Deitch directly at jasonadeitch@gmail.com or (510) 593-8423.

The Moraga Art Gallery's new show "Good Looking: California Revealed" highlighting the beauty and wonder of California through watercolor paintings by resident artist George Ehrenhaft and oil paintings by guest artist Loreta Landucci will run through March 15. It is open from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For more information, visit the gallery's website: www.moragaartgallery.com, call (925) 376-5407 or email moragaartgallery@gmail.com.

MUSIC

Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra presents Crazy Eights, a bold, unconventional presentation of traditional works, including Handel's Concerto Grosso, Op.6, No. 8, Mozart's Wind Octet No. 12, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15 at Los Medanos College Recital Hall, Pittsburg; \$5-10 at the door, and Sunday, Feb. 16 at Leshar Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, \$10-\$30 at the door. For tickets, call (925-943-SHOW) or go to www.LesharArtsCenter.org.

Treat yourself to an hour of classical and theatre music from 1:15 to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19 at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. The free program will feature Saint Mary's student instrumentalists and singers performing works from a range of styles and traditions. For more info, call the Saint Mary's College Performing Arts Department at (925) 631-4670.

A Celebration of Pacific Chamber Symphony at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28 in the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall. Mozart's Concerto for Clarinet in A Minor, Schubert's Symphony No. 5 in B Flat Major and the world premiere of Christopher Caliendo's Sherlock Holmes Suite. Tickets: \$30 seniors; \$35 adults; \$10 students with ID; children under 13 free with adult. Tickets available at Brown Paper Tickets, (800) 838-3006.

THEATER

DVC Drama presents William Shakespeare's "Hamlet" though Sunday, Feb. 16. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or visit www.dvc-drama.net. Check website for exact times and ticket prices. DVC Drama is located at 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill, with free parking for all performances.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Don't miss the second annual Science Thought Leaders Night from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25 at Bentley School, an evening of thought-provoking discussion around the topic of climate change. The event will provide a venue for both students and adults to ask questions about the topic of climate change, and offer a great opportunity to learn about the role that science, policy, economics and technology all play in addressing complex global problems. RSVP: <http://bentleysciencenight.eventbrite.com> or http://communications@bentleyschool.net or call (510) 843-2512.

Contra Costa Tale Spinners: Keeping the Oral Tradition Alive from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27. Come one, come all to a wonderful evening of stories. Come tellers new and old with your tales of enjoyment. Come listeners to laugh, cry and clap in delight. Featured performer Nancy Schimmel, followed by "open mic" stories on the fourth Thursday of every month, Gallery Room of the Orinda Public Library, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda. Contact Sally Holzman, (925) 478-8488, or Liz Nichols at liz@liznichols.net. Free. Plenty of safe parking.

Multimedia update on "An Inconvenient Truth." As part of the Wine and Tapas Speaker Series, Wei-Tai Kwok presents the latest facts and findings about the climate crisis from 7 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, March 8 at Our Saviors Lutheran Church Friendship Hall, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. As a volunteer climate leader, Wei-Tai was trained by Al Gore in an effort to provide greater public awareness around this issue. Bring a drink or small plate of food to share.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Free Support Group for Parents of Struggling Teens, Willows in the Wind, from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15 at Oakland Kaiser. Willows offers this peer-led meeting where

you can share your concerns with other parents in a similar position. For more info, visit willowsinthewind.com. If you are attending the meeting for the first time, contact Cindy Rasicot at cindy.rasicot@gmail.com or (510) 332-0463.

Glorietta Elementary School continues to build community and raise needed funds through its annual school auction, now in its 32nd year. It is composed of two parts: online as well as the auction itself. The online portion is open to the general public. On Feb. 7-20, 2014, the public can log onto www.biddingforgood.com and bid on a number of goods and certificates from the surrounding community.

The Contra Costa Camp and School Fair is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23 at Acalanes High School. The second annual free event will have booths for camps, schools, preschool, daycare, sports, martial arts, gymnastics, enrichment, performing arts, scouts and family vacations. Activities and exhibitions. Free. For info, visit www.ContraCostaCampFair.com.

The free college planning and information session to minimize stress and demystify the college planning process from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23 in the Lafayette Library, Community Hall is designed to help high school students (of all grades) and their parents effectively manage the college planning process. Learn more about what to expect and how to plan and prepare your student's path to college. A discussion and lively question and answer session will help refine your student's path and approach to finding the right college fit. Space is limited. Please register at www.smart-cookielearning.com or call (925) 297-5304 with any questions.

Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie's Education Foundation is now accepting nominations for outstanding public school teachers for their 2014 grant program. Every year, Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie Real Estate awards cash grants to outstanding public school teachers in an effort to acknowledge their priceless contributions to our children's future. It is their way of giving back to the communities in which their realtors, owners, managers and staff work and live. To nominate a favorite teacher for 2014, visit www.bhghome.com/education-foundation. The deadline is March 31.

The Orinda Junior Women's Club (Orinda Juniors) is pleased to announce details for Youth Ink 2014, the annual creative writing contest open to all sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students who live or attend school in Orinda. The Youth Ink 2014 prompt is "Listen." Submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis but must be hand-delivered to a designated school representative or post-marked by Friday, Feb. 18 and mailed to Orinda Junior Women's Club, P.O. Box 40, Orinda, CA 94563 in order to be considered for an award. Check online for submission form locations at www.orindajuniors.org. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Apr. 24 at Orinda Library.

OTHER

Health matters for Boomers and Beyond: Embracing the Benefits of Living a Balanced Lifestyle. Health experts will be covering various healthy aging topics, as well as offering free mini fitness classes suitable for all levels from 9 a.m. to noon Friday, March 7 at the Orinda Library. Free. Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the Orinda Library auditorium. Coffee, tea and treats will be available. For more info, contact Beth Girshman, Orinda Library, bgirshma@cc-clib.org, or call (925) 254-2184, ext 15, or visit www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org.

...continued on next page

Please submit events to:
calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com

please...



...thanks

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

OTHER ... continued

Workshops on "How to Raise Your Own Chickens" in Lafayette. Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction. Workshops are free and will be held from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Sundays during February and March. Reservations are required. Contact: jhkiefer@comcast.net.

The Rescue 1 Foundation, an organization dedicated to support the paramedic program of MOFD, is seeking a new director from the Moraga community. Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month except July, August, and December. Letters of interest should be sent no later than Feb. 15 to Julie Fisher, 815 Camino Ricardo, Moraga, CA 94556 or email her at juliefisher1@comcast.net.

East Bay Comic-Con comes to Concord Sunday, Feb. 16, making for an amazing day of Comic Books, Art, Anime, Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Gaming and Cosplay fun. Most of California's best vendors of all things cool and collectible will tempt you with the perfect gifts for Geeks, Nerds, Fans and True Collectors everywhere. Admission at the door: \$5 for adults; children under 8 are free. For more info, visit <http://eastbaycomiccon.com> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/East-Bay-Comic-Con>.

Another year of classic films is schedule for Moraga's New Rheem Theatre. A time-honored movie is slated for the third Wednesday of each month. New for 2014: 1 p.m. starting time. Wednesday, Feb. 19: "Knute Rockne, All-American" (1940). Each film program is introduced by Larry Swindell.

Lamorinda Republican Women Federated welcomes Lance Izumi of the Pacific Research Institute, author of numerous publications on education policy, at noon Thursday, Feb. 20 at the Orinda Country Club. For luncheon information and reservations, contact Elsie Euing at (925) 254-8617 by Feb. 14. Cost: \$25. Men are welcome!

John Muir National Historic Site (NHS) is conducting a public workshop to develop management alternatives for the Muir/Strentzel gravesite in Martinez, Calif., Saturday, Feb. 22. The workshop will be held from 10 a.m. to noon in the multipurpose room in John Swett Elementary School, 4955 Alhambra Valley Road, Martinez. Following the workshop, NPS staff will conduct an environmental impact analysis for each of the alternatives and will select a preferred alternative based on this analysis. These alternatives will comprise the Environmental Assessment, which will be available for public review and comment later in the year.

Voices On Poverty 3 to 5 p.m. Feb. 23 at Temple Isaiah in Lafayette. An event designed to raise awareness of poverty in our county. Volunteers

from the interfaith community who run Winter Nights will also be honored. Speakers who are the working poor and those who work in service on the problem will be featured. Small group conversations will explore the opportunity for faith and community organizations to make an impact. RSVP at www.temple-isaiah.org/voicesonpoverty. (See related story page B10)

Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read will discuss "Future Development in Moraga" at the Moraga Women's Society from 11 a.m. to noon Monday, Feb. 24 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, Moraga. Free.

Free Tax Preparation for the 2014 tax season is available starting February 2014 from AARP's Tax-Aide and United Way's Earn It, Keep It, Save It (EKS) programs. All tax preparers are trained and certified by the IRS. While both programs serve taxpayers of any age, Tax-Aide does not have an income limit for those they can serve but EKS can only serve individuals whose incomes do not exceed \$50,000. For info or to make an appointment for the Tax-Aide sites serving the Walnut Creek area, please call: (925) 943-5851, Walnut Creek Senior Club site; (925) 405-6278, Walnut Creek Grace Presbyterian Church site; (925) 979-5013, Walnut Creek St. Paul's Episcopal Church site. For general information and other site locations, call: (925) 726-3199. For information on EKS sites call 2-1-1 or visit www.earnitkeepitsaveit.org.

Join us at the 5-star Lafayette Park Hotel from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the East Bay's Best Bridal Fair Sunday, March 2. Sip Champagne, sample hors d'oeuvres and meet with the finest wedding vendors in the East Bay as you plan that once-in-a-lifetime wedding. Tickets: \$15 at www.EastBayBridal.com.

For the fifth year, San Francisco's laugh-lovers will have the renewed opportunity to enjoy a champagne-filled night of comedy at the landmark Orinda Theatre at 7 p.m. Friday, March 7. Advance discounted and VIP tickets may be reserved until March 6 using credit cards at the Chamber website - www.OrindaChamber.org - or at First Republic Bank, 224 Brookwood Road. Tickets at the door (if available) will be at increased pricing. Advanced reservations are recommended, so attendees should reserve early.

CSEA Tax Help Day - Get Your Tax Questions Answered. Enrolled Agents, "America's Tax Experts" will be answering tax questions free of charge from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, March 7 at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce 100 Lafayette Circle, and Women's Initiative for Self Employment 1814 Franklin St, Suite 200, Training Room, Oakland. Please visit the Taxpayer Information Center on www.csea.org, or call 1-800-TAX-PRO-5 for more information.

State-of-the-art "cross-cut" shredding will be done from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 29 at 5A Rent-A-Space in the Shred Defense Truck starting at just \$5 per file box. Save your boxes of papers to be shredded for March. Financial advisors, attorneys, medical offices, and other businesses can meet their legal obligation to dispose of clients' information responsibly, while helping send Lamorinda middle school girls to AAUW's Tech Trek Science and Math Camp. Shredding details: Government Specified Approved Shred, HIPAA Compliant Shredding, TWIC Certified Drivers. Certificates of Destruction and Donation Receipts will be provided.

SENIORS

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GARDEN

The Moraga Garden Club will meet Friday, Feb. 20 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Social time is 9:30 to 10 a.m. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. with speaker Claire Splan, author of two Bay Area gardening books, who will discuss "Gardening Month to Month." Non-members are welcome.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com



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Service Clubs Announcements

Rotary

Explore Lamorinda Rotary clubs The heart of Rotary is our clubs- dedicated people who share a passion for both community service and friendship. Learn about Lamorinda's Rotary clubs.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club
We meet Friday mornings at 7 am at Celia's Mexican Restaurant, 3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

February 14: Our speaker will be Patricia Frost Director of Emergency Medical Services for Contra Costa County	February 21: LSR member Ron Melvin will speak about his passion - Special Olympics	Please join us!
--	--	------------------------

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Gaels Go Down at Home

By Caitlin Mitchell



Danielle Mauldin led the Gaels with 24 points and nine rebounds. Photos Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's took to the floor at McKeon Pavilion looking for revenge, but the women could not get the job done against Pacific. Following an 80-91 loss to Pacific on Jan. 25, the Gaels hoped to earn a win in the second match-up of the season. On Feb. 8, the Gaels fell to the Tigers 71-88 for their first home loss of the season.

After big wins against BYU and USD, the Gaels looked to continue the win streak. Instead, they drop to 8-4 in WCC, good enough for third place in the standings, and 18-5 overall.

Senior guard Kate Gaze earned a school record for playing in her 125th career game. She had ten points. Danielle Mauldin led the Gaels with 24 points and nine rebounds.

With six games remaining in the season, SMC faces easier WCC opponents. The only tough match up will be Gonzaga. The Gaels return to action on Feb. 13 at LMU.



Senior guard Kate Gaze earned a school record for playing in her 125th career game.

Lamorinda Prep Basketball Report

By Conrad Bassett



Jackson Wegener



Matt Thomas

Photos Gint Federas

When the Lamorinda basketball teams play each other there is one constant: anyone can win and teams have to bring their "A" game.

In the first round of the Diablo Foothill Athletic League games, each boys' team finished 1-1 winning on their home floor as Campolindo beat Acalanes, the Dons beat Miramonte, and the Matadors beat Campolindo.

Miramonte girls continue to dominate the DFAL and Campolindo is close behind. Both teams look towards the postseason, while Acalanes continues to rebuild.

With the regular season winding down, each team has an eye towards the North Coast Section playoffs that start the week of Feb. 24.

Miramonte

Miramonte's win over Campolindo has been a highlight for the

Mats this season. They were down by 17 at the end of the first period and 16 at the half and fought back for a 69-68 victory. They meet again in Moraga on Feb. 18 with the DFAL title likely on the line. The Mats also came from behind in Dublin. They trailed by more than 20 points in the fourth quarter, but came back to win 69-63.

Miramonte's girls' team has continued to dominate on their way to an 8-0 DFAL record and a 21-1 overall mark. They won tournaments in Wyoming and Arizona and their only loss was on a neutral court to Salesian (Richmond). Coach Kelly Sopak said, "The DFAL has always been a much tougher league in the second half and we need to stay sharp. It goes without saying the boys and girls' games are going to be a lot of fun at Campo!"

... continued on page C2



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Della-forever

Matthew Dellavedova's number to be retired by SMC



Matthew Dellavedova Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's College will honor former men's basketball player, Matthew Dellavedova, by retiring his number, "4" on Feb. 15.

Dellavedova becomes only the second basketball player in SMC Athletics history to have his number retired. Tom Meschery, class of '61, No. 31, was the first basketball player to have his number retired. Meschery's number is also retired by the National Basketball Association's Warriors organization.

Currently on the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers, Dellavedova will return to McKeon to see the banner bearing his number raised.

As a Gael, Dellavedova was a three-time All-West Coast Conference selection, the 2012 WCC Player of the Year and a two-time Capital One Academic All-American.

Dellavedova made huge plays as a Gael, including a half-court buzzer beater to defeat BYU in 2012.

He is recognized as the school's all-time leading scorer (1,933), but he has also made the most three pointers (288), has the highest free throw percentage (.860), recorded the most assists (778), has played in the most games (136) and has started the most games (133). *C. Mitchell*

Lamorinda Prep Basketball Report

... continued from page C1



Alison Smith



Sabrina Ionescu



Ashley Ewing



Andrew Boli

Acalanes

Acalanes' accomplishments include huge non-league wins over Hercules, Analy, and Encinal, whose combined records are 50-19. They also won their second straight Sonoma County Classic title in early January. In their rivalry win over Miramonte 60-55, senior Buster Souza just missed a triple-double with 25 points, 10 rebounds and seven blocked shots and senior Matt Thomas led the team with 26 points. The key to the win was the team's foul shooting. Thomas and Souza combined for 19 of 22 free throws, many coming at the end to ice the game.

Acalanes girls' team is steadily improving, capped with an upset of Campo last week. Coach Chad Wellon said that the win, Acalanes' first over their rivals since 2008, was certainly the highlight of their season. They came back from a 21-point half time deficit to pull off the 64 to 61 win with everyone on the court contributing. When they returned to the court later, during the boy's game, they were given a huge cheer by the partisan fans.

Campolindo

Campolindo's boys have also played a chal-

lenging non-league schedule and have lost to only highly ranked teams. They are a balanced team with several players leading the team in scoring or rebounds in different games. Senior Andrew Zolintakis had 16 and junior Matt O'Reilly had 14 in their win last Friday at Las Lomas while five other players scored eight or more points. Campolindo leads the DFAL after last Friday's games with a league record of 8-1 (17-6 overall) followed closely by Miramonte at 6-2 (15-7) and Acalanes in 5th place at 3-5 (13-9).

While Campolindo and Acalanes girls split their two DFAL games, Campolindo is in second at 7-2 in the DFAL. The Cougars have wins over highly ranked Clayton Valley Charter on the road as well as Hercules and Encinal. Senior Ashley Ewing continues to lead the Cougars, scoring 15 in their Las Lomas win and 23 in their loss to Acalanes. Coach Art Thoms noted, "The girls are getting familiar with their assignments and growing together as a team. We have a lot of room for improvement, but I am very proud of their effort and commitment to our team."

Girls Soccer Rivalry Heats Up

By Scott Wu



Morgan Rogers



Emily Orwig

Photos Gint Federas

With only three league games remaining in the DFAL girls' soccer season, two of the Lamorinda teams are vying for the title. Campolindo at 7-1-1 (12-2-4 overall) and Miramonte at 6-2-2 (10-2-1 overall) will face off for the DFAL title on Feb. 13. Across town, Acalanes at 4-7-3 overall is looking for a statement win to complete a rebuilding season.

Campolindo hosted rival Acalanes Feb. 5 in an electrifying contest. Campolindo, who has not been defeated at home this season, looked to keep this streak alive against the motivated Dons. The Dons put up a tough fight and forced a 1-1 tie.

Wednesday night proved to be cold, wet, and dismal, as rain continuously pounded. The game started with Campo forcefully pressing the ball on defense. Acalanes returned the defensive intensity despite slippery conditions on the field. Dons' goalie Kyle McQuain had numerous stellar saves throughout the first half, which provided her team with a cushion on their half of the pitch. Campo, who shot the ball well, could not seem to find the back of the net. The competitive first half, dominated by defensive efforts on both sides, remained scoreless at halftime.

As the second half started, rain still drowned the field. Determined to utilize offensive opportunities and openings, both teams seemed to slow the tempo of the game and look towards individual sets for potential strikes. Despite the momentum shifting back-and-forth between squads, the game remained 0-0 at the

55th minute. Incredible saves by both goalies left fans holding their breaths at every possession.

With time running down, Campolindo struck first in the 62nd minute when senior midfielder Emily Orwig finessed the ball just over McQuain's fingers from 25-yards out. However, Acalanes did not lose hope. Junior Blake Balfrey received a pass from sophomore Regan McQuain and scored on Campo goalie Haleigh Goett just five minutes later. Following the back-to-back goals, many other shots on goal barely missed the net. Ensuing attacks by Acalanes freshman Morgan Rogers and Campolindo senior Lindsay Wilson whizzed just over the goal around the 75th minute. The game ended at 1-1.

Despite the draw, Campolindo head coach Ernesto Silva is looking ahead toward his next few games. "We will continue working on our possession game and on improving our movement off the ball," he said. In addition, he commended the Dons, who Acalanes head coach Evan Sassano described as "an enthusiastic and committed team."

Meanwhile, Miramonte head coach Mohamed Mohamed is looking forward to the match against Campolindo. "Both teams are playing good soccer," he said. Mohamed added that his "terrific class of seniors are making the team feel comfortable and experienced." The match will be held at Campolindo at 6:15 p.m. tomorrow.



Haleigh Goett



Kyle McQuain

Miramonte Girls' Soccer Big Win

Submitted by Debbie McKeen



Megan Reid going for the goal versus Dublin.



Photos Brian Fessenden Mali Tehaney and Jane Fessenden defending the goal.

The Miramonte Matadors' varsity soccer team is leading the DFAL followed by Campolindo with one week of regular season play remaining.

Miramonte (11-2-1) defeated Dublin 6-0 on Feb. 7. Megan Reid scored four goals with three assists from Samantha Devecchi. Devecchi also scored with an assist from Emma Nushi.

The Mats celebrated senior night on Feb. 11 against Acalanes at Miramonte.

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Baseball Team Earns Second

Submitted by Lynn McAuliffe



Shortstop Jason West makes the tag at second base for the out. Photo provided

led by head coach Wayne Franklin and assistant coaches Dave Manousos and Don Cooper, the Wayne Franklins 14U team advanced to the finals of the Super Weekend Classic on Jan. 26. The team tied with the Central Valley Sun Devils and earned a 10-8 victory over the Headfirst Gamers to make it to the semi-finals. They defeated the Reno Mustangs to reach the championship game where they fell to the Small City Spartans.

CYO Champions

Submitted by Scott Gardner



Back row, from left: Assistant coach Chuck Engs, Evan Persinger, Charlie Engs, Henry Engs, Ryan Gardner, coach Dwight Foster, Timothy Zhou; front row: Jimmy Foster, Matthew Hawkins, Hunter Tierney, Liam Tierney, Jack Nixon. Photo provided

The Santa Maria third grade boys' CYO team won the 2014 West Diablo National Division title on Feb. 2. They defeated St. John Vianney (Walnut Creek) in the championship game. They completed their season with a perfect 15-0 record.

All-Moraga Championship

Submitted by John Giordani



Photo provided

There was an exciting all-Moraga second grade CYO championship on Feb. 2. The teams beat out teams from Lafayette, Orinda, and Walnut Creek to reach the title match.

Stanley Team Wins Tournament

Submitted by S. Campillo



Front row, from left: Kaitlyn McKendell, Isabella Campillo, Sydney Louie, Ashley Thoms (tournament MVP), Jessie O'Reilly, Lauren Entynre; back row: Amada Alessandria, Keliey Meyer, Olivia Toth, Zoe Del Rosario, Theresa Nevins; not pictured: Coach Jack Walton, Hannah Edwards. Photo provided

The eighth grade girls' basketball team won the Stanley Middle School tournament on Jan. 24. This is the third tournament win for the team, which was undefeated in the tournament and 13-1 during the season.

Lamorinda Rugby Wins

Submitted by Steve Peterson



Freshman Michael Stenaro (7) outduels Marin for a lineout throw from Jack Fouts (right), with support from Leon Martin, Trey Savar, Corban Ricketts, and Daniel Carpentier Balough. Photo provided

The Lamorinda Rugby junior varsity team showcased its talent as it hosted the Marin Highlanders. Lamorinda outscored Marin 40-10 with all players seeing action. In early February, both the varsity (27-26) and junior varsity (13-12) won their matches by one point against the Peninsula Green club. Both matches came down to the final whistle.

Lamorinda Rugby Competes at UCLA Tourney

Submitted by Steve Peterson



With Alex Sulyman and Cameron Gee waiting, Alex Sluser takes control of the ball at the throw in. Photo provided

The Lamorinda Varsity Rugby team launched its 2014 season at the Dennis Storer Classic on Jan. 18-19. They were joined by teams such as Torrey Pines, Back Bay, Danville, the PITS, and North Bay. Some of the top university teams were there to recruit high school players.

Local Soccer Players Compete in Arizona

Submitted by Greg Davis



Molly Davis, Samantha DeVecchi, Kierra Krawec, Mia Grillo, Katharine Larson Photo provided

As part of the Cal North Olympic Development Program (ODP), five local 14-year-old girls were selected to travel to Phoenix to compete in US Youth Soccer's Region IV Championship Tournament on Jan 9-12. The Cal North team fared well, beating Alaska (7-0), tying both Washington and Nevada (1-1) and losing to Utah (1-2). Representing Cal Magic and local schools, Molly Davis (Acalanes), Samantha DeVecchi (Miramonte), Kierra Krawec (Stanley), Mia Grillo (Miramonte) and Katharine Larson (LMSC/Acalanes) were chosen from a group of 38 players to join the 20-girl team.

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 07 Issue 25 Wednesday, February 12, 2014



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D13


Eichler Revival on Hall Lane

By Sophie Braccini



Gregg and Francoise Hansen in their house on Hall Lane.

Photo Sophie Braccini

 In a small street off Brown Avenue on the east side of Mt. Diablo Boulevard, five Eichler homes occupied by both business owners and residents have been preserved, remodeled and renovated over the last 18 years. This revival is thanks to builder Gregg Hansen, who loves

the modern concept that Joseph Eichler brought to the American middle class in the '50s and '60s and who has worked to bring these unique spaces into the 21st century.

...continued on page D4



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City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	7	\$725,000	\$2,900,000
MORAGA	3	\$1,005,000	\$1,315,000
ORINDA	3	\$710,000	\$1,593,000

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

970 4th Street, \$879,000, 3 Bdrms, 1607 SqFt, 1997 YrBl, 1-3-14;
Previous Sale: \$719,000, 04-10-03

655 Byrdee Way, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 2253 SqFt, 1967 YrBl, 1-9-14;
Previous Sale: \$220,000, 05-13-88

390 Hermosa Court, \$905,000, 3 Bdrms, 1180 SqFt, 1954 YrBl, 1-15-14;
Previous Sale: \$800,000, 08-18-06

3286 Isola Way, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3080 SqFt, 1979 YrBl, 1-9-14;
Previous Sale: \$965,000, 08-28-13

2920 Rohrer Drive, \$2,900,000, 5 Bdrms, 7902 SqFt, 1990 YrBl, 1-7-14;
Previous Sale: \$1,389,500, 07-01-96

576 Silverado Drive, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1414 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 1-7-14;
Previous Sale: \$394,000, 01-17-95

3360 Walnut Lane, \$800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2023 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 1-13-14;
Previous Sale: \$935,000, 07-09-04

MORAGA

197 Corliss Drive, \$1,110,000, 4 Bdrms, 2196 SqFt, 1965 YrBl, 1-10-14

30 San Pablo Court, \$1,315,000, 4 Bdrms, 2112 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 1-10-14;
Previous Sale: \$67,000, 09-04-73

16 Sarah Lane, \$1,005,000, 4 Bdrms, 2046 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 1-3-14

ORINDA

122 La Espiral, \$1,593,000, 4 Bdrms, 2761 SqFt, 1957 YrBl, 1-3-14;
Previous Sale: \$1,429,000, 08-31-12

156 Lombardy Lane, \$1,410,000, 4 Bdrms, 2816 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 1-3-14;
Previous Sale: \$310,000, 08-20-87

218 the Knoll, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 2408 SqFt, 1974 YrBl, 1-10-14;
Previous Sale: \$317,000, 12-04-86

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Eichler Revival on Hall Lane

...continued from page D1



CB Financial Services personnel on Hall Lane.

Photo Sophie Braccini

“Joseph Eicher’s inspiration was to bring modern architecture to the average American,” says Hansen. A developer, not an architect or contractor, Eichler was heavily influenced by the architectural giant, Frank Lloyd Wright and built approximately 11,000 homes, mostly in Northern California. They

were typically single story two- or three-bedroom homes, less than 2,000 square feet, with gabled roofs characterized by their low pitch and exposed beams; below the gables, tapered transom glass was often used to create a light and airy feel within.

The first structure to be renovated by Hansen’s

company, Aspen Building Technology, Inc., was at 3406 Hall Lane. In 1996, Christopher and Conchita Bocard purchased the building, which was occupied only by several feral cats. “The structure was in a state of complete disrepair,” remembers Hansen. “The slab foundation and all of the walls had to be completely reconstructed while the roof beams were elevated and left intact.” To avoid a lengthy design review process, the renovated structure was built in the original footprint, and the overall profile was maintained. The insulation, electrical, gas and water services were upgraded to current code standards.

“I like simple, and to me Eichlers are refreshing,” says Hansen, “but from a builder’s perspective these homes need help. It is a great concept, but they don’t measure up to today’s code and energy requirements.” In post-war America, the Eichlers were popular because they embodied the California way of life, bringing the outside in for those who loved to entertain, “but people didn’t have the energy concerns we have today,” he notes.

Eichlers are known for their poorly insulated walls, single pane floor-to-ceiling windows, vaulted ceilings and no attic insulation, as well as concrete slab floors and radiant heating systems that often failed after 20 years. The Bocard renovation was completed in six months and has since served as the office for CB Financial Services.

Four years later, in 2000, the building on the corner of Hall Lane and Brown Avenue was purchased by the Hansens to house Aspen Building. Formerly Betsy’s Knit and Stitch, this building was completely reconstructed in the original footprint, adding a modern design by local architect Stephen Elbert. In 2003, the building was honored by the Lafayette Garden Club as the most improved building and landscape in Lafayette. The roof was raised 12 inches and the pitch was increased from the typical 2/12 pitch to 3/12, thus permitting the use of asphalt shingles rather than the original tar and gravel. As with the CB Financial building, the failing slab foundation was demolished and completely re-poured in the original footprint.

...continued on page D6



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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 this 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, 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 the numbers and recent sales in the area. While not always inaccurate, it is oftentimes inaccurate.

When I give my opinion on a home's value, not only do I think about recent comparable sales, 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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Eichler Revival on Hall Lane

...continued from page D4

Patrick Bradley purchased the building in 2013 to become the Bradley School of Music. "I also live here," adds the young business owner who likes to keep his costs low. "The floor plan and the city code allow for this, and the commute is great." The large main room where all the Bradley jam sessions take place has great acoustics thanks to the high ceilings.

In 2007, the only remaining non-business residence on Hall Lane was purchased by the Hansens for use as their primary residence and work space. "We worked with local architect Eric Helgestad and redesigned the building to create a much more dramatic impact by fusing the Eichler design with the more traditional architecture of Greene & Greene," explains Hansen.



Patrick Bradley and his wife in their home business at the corner of Hall Lane and Brown Avenue.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Exposed 4 feet by 6 inch rafter tails were used around the building and a clerestory light monitor was constructed above the main roof. "I thought of skylights first, but because of the direct and hot sun, we constructed the clerestory instead that brings a lot of light in without the heat gain," he adds. They chose a galvalume metal roof that reflects light, a great improvement over the previous tar and gravel roof. In place of the original board and batten siding, a stucco wainscot with horizontal 1 by 6 inch siding above was installed. Interior walls were removed to create an open and airy living space, and Brazilian teak flooring was installed, which contrasts beautifully with the wheat colored walls.

In mid-2008, Jerry and Wendy Zampino purchased the property at 3404 Hall Lane to use as the Home Systems design studio, which was formerly located just down the street at Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Brown Avenue. The renovation showcases Wendy Zampino's interior design abilities. Aspen Building also did the work, including new plumbing, electrical and insulation.

One more Eichler, located on Brown Avenue, belongs to Cotton Patch.

"The different renovations have allowed us to transform the previously run-down area into a thriving complex," says Hansen. "Importantly, the original character of the Eichler has been maintained while dramatically transforming the neighborhood."



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Located on a cul-de-sac in the Campolindo neighborhood, this striking contemporary will delight with sweeping views of Mt. Diablo. With 4 bedrooms + office and 3 full baths on two levels, the home is roomy and comfortable. It features a gracious living room with vaulted ceiling, open to a formal dining area, a kitchen/dinette combo, and a large family room. Lots of windows and decks offer multiple spaces to take advantage of the view, and the more than half-acre property has fruit trees and many areas to explore. This home features new carpet and paint and dual-paned windows and air conditioning upstairs. It has an excellent commute location and is close to the Campolindo Cabana Club and top-rated schools, including Campolindo High School.

Offered at \$1,189,000



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Picture Perfect Single Story in Prime Lafayette Location



COMING SOON

This spacious, 2,550 square foot home offers tasteful finishes and maximum flexibility. The home includes four bedrooms and three full baths. The master bath has been recently remodeled as has the chef's kitchen which opens to a flagstone patio showcasing a picturesque, creekside setting. The spacious family room with vaulted ceilings and plentiful natural light has two separate accesses to the back yard and patios, providing seamless indoor outdoor living with great entertaining areas. This prime location on a private cul de sac is walking distance to the Lafayette Reservoir, Oakwood Athletic Club, BART, and downtown! All these amenities and award winning Lafayette Schools- a fabulous combination!

Price Upon Request



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The Home Designer

Furniture Buying 101

By Brandon Neff

Yes, Virginia, there is a better sofa – or chair for that matter. When shopping for upholstered furniture you truly get what you pay for. And, in this era of eco-friendly, sustainable and value-conscious purchasing nothing fits that practice more than well-built home furnishings. Knowledge of how products are made will yield a better understanding of what will last, and what you can expect to replace in short order. Do you know what you're buying?

It seems nothing is made to last these days. My family has had furniture pieces handed down over generations that still look and work beautifully today. I seriously doubt you'd be able to hand down half of the stuff I see being offered up from those self-help big box stores, and that sad furniture you purchase next to the oversized detergents and tube socks. Well, maybe you could hand down what's left of them.

Truly, something that endures and performs well, year after year, is the definition of value. So, before you click "add to cart" on that flashy furniture website you're surfing, step away from the computer and take a few notes – knowing what you're buying, and why, will make your decision a lot easier.

For starters, quality has nothing to do with the fabric a piece is upholstered in – looking under the hood is the key. Whether your taste runs to the more contemporary, or is planted in the traditional, the key is to look beyond the shape and dig deeper. Like many of my clients, most consumers get sidetracked by the color and texture of furniture rather than taking the time to find out what lies beneath the fabric. Knowing

what the pros know about furniture basics will help you become a more savvy shopper, and help guide you through the labyrinth of options.

Terms like eight-way hand-tied springs and kiln-dried hardwood are infinitely more important to your deci-

sion than kid-friendly stain-resistant fabrics and oil-rubbed bronze nail head trims. Will buying a sofa, or chair that's built right cost you more? Of course. However, will that piece last longer, maintain its integrity and support over time, and cost you less long-term? Ab-

solutely!

Sometimes, furnishing a room properly can seem counterintuitive – many homeowners shove the cheap pieces into the rooms that take the most beating – not a good idea.

...continued on next page



A pair of custom designed sofas made of kiln dried hardwood frames.

Photos courtesy Brandon Neff Design

John Hayward, of Baker Furniture adds, "It's even more important to furnish high traffic rooms, like family rooms, with better quality furniture, so it will hold up to more wear and tear. In addition, a great frame can be re-upholstered, thereby extending the value of that piece."

Here's what I want you to do: take this column with you on your next shopping trip, and compare the following list to the choices you're considering. Don't be afraid to ask the salesperson to explain how their products are made, and where. If the answer you get is, "I don't know," or "I'll have to check and get back to you," I want you to step away from the showroom and go to your next destination. Now, read on, and digest the basics. Consider this a "Carfax" for home furnishings.

Eight-way, hand-tied springs. Each coil spring is placed in the seat by hand and tied into place with twine using a series of interlocking knots. Steel coil springs are set within the furniture frame and tied together in eight directions. Each piece of furniture has a unique spring pattern and height to provide just the right degree of comfort.

Kiln dried hardwood. Kiln dried frames are superior because you can be sure about the reduction of the moisture content to a satisfactory level. This drastic reduction in wood's moisture content is important so that the wood doesn't warp or shrink with changes in humidity and temperature.

... continued on page D12



Look for sinuous springs and double-dowel joints.

Erin Martin presents...



712 Augusta Drive, Moraga | List Price \$739,000



CalBRE#01922810

Erin Martin

Village Associates Real Estate

(925) 951-3817

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Charming 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath creekside home in the heart of Moraga Country Club. Huge bonus room perfect for home office, media room or play room. Walk to club house, tennis, golf, and swimming pools. Move right in!



206 Contessa Court, Lafayette

Spacious 4 bedroom, 2 bath ranch style home with private yard located on a quiet Burton

Valley cul-de-sac. Top location, close to schools, trails, parks and more... Kitchen and baths have been remodeled and home features: kitchen/family room combo, vaulted ceilings, dual pane windows, newer roof plus many additional updates/upgrades throughout. Beautifully landscaped yard offers deck, private patio, grass play area and relaxing, private setting. Call or email for more details or to schedule a private showing.

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The Home Designer

...continued from page D11

Double-dowel joints. Double-doweled joints provide extra strength and durability. All corners should be reinforced using corner blocks secured by both glue and screws.

Additionally, look for mortise and tenon joinery as an option to double-dowels. These supply superior strength to the frame.

Sinuuous springs. These are heavy-gauge steel springs that have been heat-formed into continuous "S" shapes. They are cut into lengths and affixed to the frame. Look for these primarily for support to the back. Conversely, drop-in springs are mass-manufactured, welded units that are more cheaply manufactured and considered to be of lower quality than sinuous springs.

From kitchen appliances to bathroom fixtures, I always encourage my clients to buy the very best they can. And, like any other home décor, building a proper furniture collection can take time, and you want to do it purposefully and with an eye toward quality.

Remember, your home is your sanctuary – furnish it wisely.



A custom designed slope arm sofa featuring eight way, hand tied springs. Photos courtesy Brandon Neff Design



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

I want to hear from you!

Write me and tell me what trends you're following. What looks are inspiring your design decisions? I'd love to know what topics and stories interest you. Don't be shy, drop me an email and say hello!
brandonneffdesign@yahoo.com

Digging Deep-Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Growing Garden Resolutions

“If you don't change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever.” – William Somerset Maugham

By February, most of the resolutions made on Jan. 1 have been waylaid. Our dreams of losing weight, becoming more organized, and being a better person might have already turned into nightmares. If we want to be triumphant in life, we need to make conscientious changes or else we are doomed to stagnation. February is the perfect month to create our year's gardening goals. If we do a little at a time, step by step, and commit to success, we will achieve our desires. There is a saying, “by the inch, it's a cinch.” Choose one or two goals per month and make it happen. The only way to predict the future is to create it. To become a better gardener, we need to adopt new ideas and adapt our beliefs. Whatever your level of gardening expertise, you will benefit from several of these suggestions. Get going, get growing.

1. Keep a Garden Journal

Whether you write in a notebook or create a digital diary, keep track of what's happening in your landscape.

2. Ask Questions

Don't be afraid to go to your local nursery and be

inquisitive. Talk to your grandmother, neighbor, or a total stranger if they have a garden or plants you admire. There are no dumb questions. Gardeners are flattered to share their knowledge.

3. Discover Something New

Whether it's planting an emerging specimen or experimenting with garden art, try something new. Go global and experience a specimen from another part of the planet. Grow the world.

4. Educate Yourself

To educate means to draw forth. Take a class, read a book, join a garden club, attend a lecture, watch a documentary, surf the Internet. Whatever gives you pleasure in learning, go to a place of discovery and growth.

5. Share Your Knowledge

Many gardeners developed their passion for the earth (including myself) by following a parent, friend, or relative through the garden. Be a mentor through example and offer your insights to neighbors and friends, and especially to inquisitive children.



Pick purple freesias for February. Amethyst is the color of the month. Photos Cynthia Brian

6. Walk in Your Garden Daily

Stroll through your garden every day to witness the changes. You don't have to necessarily do anything more than enjoy the serenity. By actively seeing your garden, you'll be able to spot problems, find the perfect location for the new birdhouse, and receive nature's exercise benefits.

7. Embrace Composting

Nothing will enhance your garden more than regularly adding organic matter to your soil. Composting is so simple once you get in the habit. I keep a five gallon bucket inside my garage and right outside my kitchen. Add coffee grinds, egg shells, tea bags, shredded newsprint, wood ashes, vegetable scraps and anything biodegradable that you can add to your larger bin or pile. Lawn clippings, leaves, wood shavings, and weeds can all be mixed in. Don't include meat, dog and cat excrement, or diseased plants. If you have chickens or rabbits, their droppings are gold. Chicken manure needs to be aged for two to three years or it will burn your plants. Turn your compost pile every few months and when it smells earthy and crumbles like chocolate cake, spread it around your plants.



Walk in your garden every day and you'll enjoy the path. Azaleas are glorious in February.

...continued on page D15

Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Reminders

- **GIVE** a living Valentine's gift such as a beautiful dendrobium orchid or fragrant gardenia.
- **START** the seeds of warm season crops indoors including tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and basil. You'll need to wait four to eight weeks before setting in the soil, depending on our weather patterns.
- **PRUNE** grapevines while they are dormant and canes are brittle. Pruning grapes is an art that keeps the vines producing and healthy. If you are crafty, save long, strong canes for projects, such as making wreaths.
- **REMOVE** all fallen camellia flowers from the ground to prevent disease.
- **CUT** multicolored bouquets of fragrant freesia to perfume your interiors.
- **IDENTIFY** nests that have fallen from trees or shrubs. What birds are romancing in your neighborhood?

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Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

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925-377-7827

Cynthia is available as a speaker and consultant.



What type of bird nest is this? It fell from a palm tree. Notice the palm bark entwined in its construction.



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IT'S TIME TO PRUNE YOUR PINE TREES

With current winter drought conditions home owners need to make sure to water their trees too. Lack of water brings bugs and diseases. Proper pruning is also essential this time of year for your Pine trees. Bark Beetles can infest your tree when it is weak from lack of water or due to sap that comes from pruning in the spring and summer; these beetles are dormant during the fall and winter months. Beetles also can carry diseases from tree to tree, and the only way to stop them is to prevent them by having a healthy tree in the first place. So don't wait until it's too late have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service

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Peruse seed catalogues to be prepared for spring planting.

Digging Deep

...continued from page D13

8. Short Work spurts

Make a list of what you need to do in your garden on a weekly basis. Then throughout the week, check off the tasks as you have the time. There is no need to spend eight hours every Saturday or Sunday toiling (unless you want to). You'll feel exhilarated by accomplishing one or two small chores in an hour here and an hour there.

9. Mulch for Garden Health

By maintaining a 3-inch covering of mulch, you'll reduce erosion, maintain ground temperature, suppress weeds, conserve water, and prevent disease. Leaves, pine needles, shredded bark, wood chips, even gravel offer these benefits while beautifying and unifying the look of your landscape.

10. Photograph your Space

With our smartphones and digital cameras it is so easy to take pictures. Take photos in all the seasons for better record keeping as well as to document the years. It's amazing how quickly our gardens change and evolve.

11. Save a Tree

Seven million urban trees are destroyed every year. Americans are being asked to plant a tree or care for one that you already have. Trees combat global warming, absorb CO₂, provide oxygen, clean our air, cool our environments, conserve energy, prevent erosion, supply nourishment, offer play spaces, grant shade, and increase the value of our land.

12. Bee Friendly

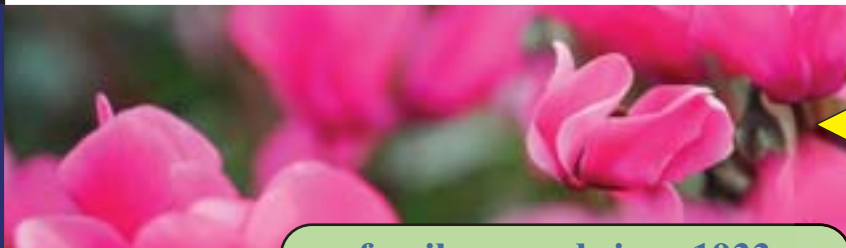
Make your garden attractive to birds, bees, butterflies, and bats and you'll enjoy a healthy, happy landscape. Provide pollen rich food, shelter, water, and landing places for beneficial visitors.

13. Forget Perfection

My motto has always been "failure is fertilizer." There are no mistakes in the garden. If you plant something and it doesn't grow, don't lament. Throw the plant on the compost pile and grow a new garden. Keep in mind that Mother Nature is always in charge. The birds, bees, wind, and wildlife will always be introducing something to your design that you did not plan. Strive for excellence but deep six perfection or you'll be deeply disappointed.

Gardening is good for you. Gardening boosts morale, lowers your grocery bill, and is a free fitness center. A garden's best crop is happiness. Plant some today.

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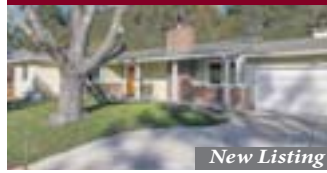
Incredible Orinda, San Pablo Dam, Mt. Diablo views + abundance of nature surrounds this supersized parcel bordering EBMUD land. Once in a lifetime opportunity raw land sale. **\$545,000**

ORINDA



34 La Vuelta Located on coveted street in OCC, this appx. .37 ac parcel is surrounded by expensive homes & is an incredible opportunity to build on special location. Approved site plan w/stylish designed home comes w/purchase. **\$569,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

119 Moraga Way Fabulous location by downtown Orinda. Classic ranch w/sparkling high-end remodel incl. Great Rm, gourmet kitchen & baths, bamboo flrs, dual pane wndws. 3bd/2ba. Large private lot w/ level area. **\$838,000**

ORINDA



8 La Campana Super clean & ready one level living w/ 3bd/2ba, floor to ceiling windows and lots of light. Easy access outside. New Kitchen. Special setting, great high-end street, set for occupancy. **\$865,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

8 Williams Court Lovely single story Rancher featuring 4bd/2ba, 2094 sf on .65 ac w/panoramic views; solar heated pool w/patio, pool house/media rm w/projector & surround sound; dual panes; EMF blocking system. **\$999,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

26 Saint Stephens Exceptional living spaces & quality enhancements prevail in this 2452sf, 4bd/2.5ba home featuring large light & bright rms w/vaulted ceils & modern kit./fam rm combo. Bonus storage area & wine cellar. **\$1,099,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

63 Ardilla Road Exceptional style & design throughout w/beaut. hdwd floors, high ceilings, walls of windows. Large rooms incl. deluxe master, family off Chef's kitchen. Gorgeous outdoor living areas: paths, gardens, peaceful & tranquil. **\$1,150,000**

ORINDA



9 Las Piedras Picturesque private 6bd/3ba home in park like setting w/panoramic views, level lawn & pool. 3745sf classic custom w/vaulted ceils, walls of wndws, hdwd flrs, den, workout rm, FR & well-appointed kitchen. **\$1,349,000**

ORINDA



1 Camino del Cielo Sophisticated and stylish 4900+ square foot newer construction with four bedrooms plus office, three and one half baths, decks and views. **\$1,599,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

18 Charles Hill Road Extensively remodeled Mediterranean residence w/apx. 4000 sf, 5bd/4.5ba, on 1 ac. Chef's kit, deluxe mstr, media rm, wine cellar. Indr/outdr living w/patios, balconies & grassy lawns. Near shopping, commute & schls. **Call for Price**

MORAGA



New Listing

712 Augusta Drive Charming 2bd/2.5ba Creekside home in MCC. Huge bonus room - perfect for home office, media room or playroom. Walk to golf, tennis, clubhouse and swimming. Vacation Living! **\$739,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

5 Corliss Drive Walk to Los Perales Elementary School! Delightful single level 4 bed, 2 bath home. Approximately 2440 sq.ft. on a .28 acre sunny corner lot. This is the perfect family home! **\$975,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

815 Camino Ricardo Updated 4bd/2.5ba house, .7 acre, near LP school. Meticulously maintained & updated. Over-sized Master, Kitchen/Family, new hardwood, fresh paint, recessed lights & more. **\$1,285,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

971 Pleasant Hill Road Light & airy contemp home on private .50 ac Mt. Diablo view lot. 4 spacious bd/3.5ba incl. 2 master suites. Updated kit. w/brkfst bar. Large LR&DR. Huge master w/priv. deck, home ofc area, 2 car attached garage. **\$995,000**

MARTINEZ



New Listing

1816 Ophir Court Lovely home on quiet court. New carpeting & interior paint, large living rm w/vaulted ceils, open family/dining/kitchen w/frplc, master bedrm suite, & enclosed Florida rm in back, 2 car gar. attached. **\$419,000**

WALNUT CREEK



3737 Waterford Lane Lovely 4bd Northgate home w/spectacular .7 ac yard on cul-de-sac near schls & trains. Almost 3700 sf w/large kit./FR, office w/oak built-in cabinets, beaut. hdwd flrs, 2 frplcs, large master suite & 3 car gar. **\$1,398,000**



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