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Children rush to gather colored eggs tucked in the grass at Moraga Commons Park.

Photo Andy Schreck

Smiles Abound at 'Egg-citing' Spring Egg Hunt

By Cathy Dausman

It was a BYOB (bring your own basket) event Saturday at Moraga Commons Park during the 33rd annual Spring Egg Hunt, sponsored by the Moraga Junior Women's Club. "Members used to hard-boil eggs and hand dye them for the event," said JWC member

Debbie Purcell. She said the club produced 1,200 eggs its first year. On the sun-dappled day this past weekend in Moraga, the hillsides at the Commons were covered with colorfully-clad children, 8 and under, searching for toy- and sticker-filled eggs and enjoying games, face painting,

crafts and bounce houses.

Families arrived with cameras in hand to catch the action. If you missed the excitement, or if your kids crave a double dose, several Lamorinda events are scheduled the day before Easter. ...continued on page A11



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Possible Closure of Del Valle Campus

What about expensive improvements funded by voter-approved Measure E?

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

The recent class brochure that Lamorinda households received may be the last one they'll ever get from Acalanes Adult Education with class listings for the spring quarter at Del Valle Education Center. Due to a substantial deficit at Acalanes Union High School District caused by implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula and changes due to AB 86 – a statewide program to grant funds to regional consortia to create and implement a plan to better provide for adult workforce development, not

enrichment programs – the doors may have to close at Del Valle.

Unfortunately the first step in the process is the layoff of a number of full-time staffers at the recently renovated Tice Valley campus, including popular Del Valle Education Center Director Frank Acojido, who has been in charge for 14 years. His last day will be June 30.

The deficit at AUHSD is almost \$2 million, despite taking into account cost savings where possible, some retirements, narrowing of elective choices for high school students and more. Administrators with the district had long characterized the base level funding provided through the new funding formula as "inadequate." School districts with a higher percentage of English language learner students, foster youth and lower income students receive additional funding. AUHSD has few students who fall into those categories.

The intent of AB 86 is to improve the delivery of adult education, focusing on skills required to obtain a high school diploma or equivalency, classes for citizenship and English as a second

language, education programs for adults with disabilities, and short-term career-oriented technical education programs.

Classes offered at Del Valle reflect the interests of older students from the Lamorinda area, Rossmoor and Walnut Creek: art, film, quilting, money management, foreign languages, and fitness classes. Although career technical classes and English as a second language are offered, the majority of classes are enrichment oriented.

Caught between substantial deficit spending as the district grapples with new local control funding formula and restrictions tied to AB 86, Acojido calls the situation frustrating. He described this segment of the population as not being served by the state. He points out that enrichment options help keep those 55 and over engaged and active in the community, and it helps them maintain mental acuity. Current Del Valle students have been vocal about the unfortunate situation and have started a Moveon.org petition. Proponents are also encouraged to write their legislators to increase funding geared toward lifelong learning for older adults. ... continued on page A11

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Planting a backyard paradise – page D13.





Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, April 20, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.aalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, April 15, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
Stanley Middle School Library
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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Adjustments Needed for In-fill Project

By Cathy Tyson

It's been almost a year and a half since local developer Lenox Homes came before the Design Review Commission for a study session about a proposed project directly behind Trader Joe's. And it was clear at a recent meeting that like almost all projects in Lafayette, the design needed to continue to evolve before approval.

Back after a pause to adjust the architectural plans, Lenox Homes president Dan Freeman explained, "Tonight's plan is a culmination of many of the ideas provided" from their previous visit, where commissioners encouraged the in-fill project to shrink and appear less monolithic. The proposed three-story building would have 11 units, with underground parking on a 0.3-acre parcel directly behind Trader Joe's on Mountain View Drive.

Freeman highlighted the revised architectural plans that provide pedestrian-friendly housing near public transit and downtown, and pointed out the unique, first-in-Lafayette car stacking technology meant to efficiently accommodate cars in the underground parking garage. While the parking requirement for a multi-family building of this size is 15 parking stalls, 22 are provided via the parking valet technology.

The developer realized the anxiety of neighbors who feared parked cars from the new building's residents and their guests would further clog up the already narrow street. While the proposed parking lift system could encourage, as the commission suggested, a truly more pedestrian lifestyle, they went a step further and suggested very limited parking spaces per unit.

Although one side of the project

backs up to the Trader Joe's loading dock, the neighbors to the south were still concerned about a large contemporary building with dramatic windows looming over their much smaller scale homes. To address that, the developer proposed three smaller units on the ground level to help relate to the neighborhood scale, and four units on both the second and third floors, each stepped back with generous terraces.

Ever tactful Associate Planner Michael Cass said this iteration is a "good start," but staff recommended a number of modifications—primarily to increase outdoor space and decrease the amount of development on the site.

Following on that theme, Commissioner Andre Ptaszynski suggested breaking up the units on the second and third floor to provide some relief between units, so it

doesn't look "like a long continuous freight train."

Other comments from commissioners reiterated that they think the structure is too big for the site and that reducing the number of units would be helpful. Many commissioners were troubled by the wall of windows on the southern elevation.

The project now goes back to the developer to respond to the Design Review Commission's comments and is scheduled to be back for further review at its April 13 meeting. If the architectural adjustments can't be completed by that time, the review may be postponed. While commissioners applauded the concept of pedestrian friendly, sustainable housing, they made it clear they were looking for a more unique, diverse configuration and changes in the number, type, size and orientation of the units.

Construction Coming Together for New Manzanita Room

By Cathy Tyson

"It's like a giant erector set," said Project Manager Doug Swanson, who, along with Associate Engineer Mike Moran, is supervising the construction of the brand new Manzanita Room. The crumbling 60-year-old former structure used to house two kindergarten classrooms, said Moran, but had

seen better days. The city of Lafayette purchased the community center in 1983 from the Lafayette Elementary School District; it was formerly Burton Elementary School.

With the foundation poured and steel support beams in place, the crew from JUV Inc. of Oakland is now

busy assembling the roofing sections. Economical, ready-to-go panels with exterior and interior finishes sandwiching insulation get lifted into place by a crane with what Moran and Swanson call an "octopus" — eight powerful vacuum suction cups on an assembly hoisted by the crane.

... continued on page A8

LAFAYETTE POLICE	
Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report March 1-14:	
Abandoned Vehicle	
1500 block Silver Dell Rd	
Camino Colorados/St Mary's Rd	
Alarms	62
911 calls	16
Burglary, Auto	
10 block Olympic Oaks Dr	
30 block Olympic Oaks Dr	
3300 block Mt Diablo Bl (2)	
Burglary, Residential	
1700 block Reliez Valley Rd	
Burglary, Commercial	
3800 block Mt Diablo Bl	
DUI	
Mt Diablo Bl/Pleasant Hill	
Fire/EMS Response	
1300 block El Curtola	
1500 block Rancho View Dr	
3700 block Crestmont Pl	
Forgery	
1600 block Rancho View Rd	
Fraud	
800 block Avalon Av	
Hit & Run	
2nd St/Golden Gate Wy	
1st St/Mt Diablo Bl	
900 block Stow Ln	
3300 block Moraga Bl	
900 block 2nd St	
Health & Safety	
Happy Valley Rd/Hwy 24	
ID Theft	
3200 block Camino Colorados	
70 block Silverwood Dr	
1000 block 2nd St	
Loud Party	
3100 block Stanley Bl	
Lorinda Ln/El Nido Ranch Rd	
Missing Adult	
1000 block Pleasant Hill Rd	
1000 block Via Media	
1000 block 1st St	
3400 block Moraga Bl	
Petty Theft	
40 block Prado Wy	
3900 block S Peardale Dr	
1800 block Del Rey St	
10 block Green Pl	
1000 block Rahara Dr	
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl	
900 block Reliez Station Ln	
1800 block Reliez Valley Rd	
3700 block Highland Ct (3)	
Promiscuous Shooting	
1500 block Rancho View Dr	
Johnson Rd/Rancho View	
800 block Acalanes Rd	
Public Nuisance	
Acalanes Rd/Glorietta Bl	
Crest Rd/Diablo Cr	
20 block Hidden Valley Rd	
Raintree Pl/Reliez Station Ln	
3300 block Springhill Rd	
Martino /Springhill Rds	
3300 block Hermosa Wy	
900 block Moon Ct	
Acalanes Rd/Fiora Pl	
Mosswood Dr/Highland Rd	
3400 block Silver Springs Rd	
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl	
Carol Ln/Janet Ln	
3200 block Ameno Dr	
1000 block Timothy Ln	
Mt View Dr/Mariposa Rd	
Reckless Driving	
4000 block Mt Diablo Bl	
Moraga Rd/Moraga Bl	
Pleasant Hill Rd/Deer Hill Rd	
Mt Diablo Ct/Mt Diablo Bl	
Pleasant Hill/Springhill Rds	
Moraga Rd/Mt Diablo Bl (2)	
Lafayette Park Hotel	
Upper Happy Valley Rd	
Shoplifting	
Safeway (2)	
Susp. Circumstances	18
Suspicious Vehicle	29
Suspicious Subject	25
Traffic Stops	220
Trespass	
Brookwood Park	
1100 block Cambridge Dr	
Unwanted Guest	
3200 block Lucas Cr	
Vandalism	
1400 block Rancho View Dr	
Rancho View/Pleasant Hill	
3700 block Mt Diablo Bl	
Pleasant Hill/Hwy 24	
Carol Ln/Mt Diablo Bl	
1200 block Summit Rd	
El Curtola/Old Tunnel Rd	
700 block Las Trampas Rd (2)	
3200 block Camino Colorados (2)	
1500 block Rancho View Dr	
Oakwood Athletic Club	
McDonalds	
Vehicle Theft	
1000 block Via Media	
Warrant Service	
4000 block Natasha Dr	

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What's Next for Lafayette?

By Nick Marnell



Lafayette residents gather at the March 19 Community Conversation meeting to discuss the future of their city. Photo courtesy Steven Falk

Nearly three dozen Lafayette residents provided feedback on the direction of the city at the March 19 Community Conversation held at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The workshop, hosted by the city council, offered the community a chance to share its vision and aspirations for the next 20 years over such priorities as affordable housing, parking and crime surveillance. "What are the next things that will capture the imagination of the city?" asked Mayor Brandt Andersson.

Suggested priorities were outlined on a survey posted on the city website, and those same topics were listed on sheets distributed to the workshop participants and hung on the front wall of the meeting room. "They are things to get the juices flowing," said council member Mike Anderson. "We want your comments and refinements for what we have listed up there. And we want to hear your new ideas, too."

Maybe the free chocolate cupcakes inspired everyone. Maybe the solar flares sparked a burst of creativity. Or maybe the Lafayette residents who participated in the workshop are simply passionately in tune with their city. Because for over an hour, the room buzzed. Six groups of total strangers discussed and argued their vision for the city

while council members drifted into and out of the sessions. A spokesperson for each work group summarized the findings. They closely matched the results of the online survey, which has garnered nearly 400 responses so far.

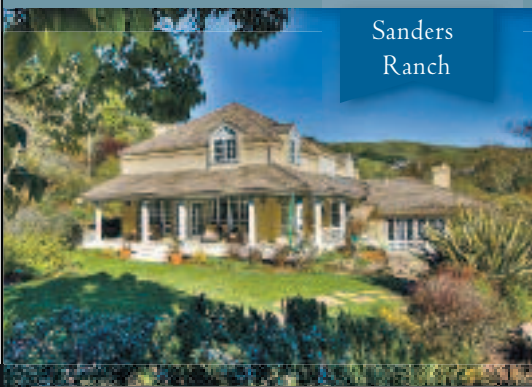
Preserving the city's open space ranked as the first priority in the online survey and it was the only topic that each work group listed as a top priority. Traffic circulation and parking ranked as high priorities both on the survey and by the workshop participants.

One notable difference between the survey and the workshop results related to policing. In the survey, crime surveillance and increasing the size of the police force ranked among the top three priorities. The work groups gave neither item a single vote. Whether that result was skewed by Police Chief Eric Christensen standing in the back of the room, in full uniform, was unclear. A topic that wasn't listed on the survey received a dozen high priority votes from the participants: housing for the disabled. "Make downtown accessible and affordable," said a workshop spokesperson.

"That wasn't really front and center on our radar," said Andersson, who praised the engagement of the workshop participants.

... continued on page A8

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Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, March 25, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 8, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, April 6, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

School Board Meeting Moraga School District

Tuesday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Moraga Police Department

Tax man fake out, 3/07/15 A Via Granada resident informed police that she received a letter in the mail from the Internal Revenue Service informing her that someone had filed a tax return using her information. Probably not a good Samaritan, but rather an identity thief looking to enjoy her presumed refund. Same thing happened to a Del Monte Way resident.

Park vandalism, 3/09/15 Two signs were stolen from the Moraga Commons Park; each sign was valued at approximately \$300. The person reporting the incidents also noted vandalism to the bocce ball courts. The wood frame perimeter of the courts was damaged and needed to be replaced. Estimated damage around \$200.

DUI 3/13/15 A pickup truck was observed driving erratically on Moraga Way near School Street at 6:30 p.m. The middle-aged driver, who was not a Moraga resident, displayed the distinctive odor of alcohol. He completed field sobriety tests, then had a blood test at the police department.

Vandalism in progress, 3/14/15 Apparently someone really didn't like the sign at Miramonte Drive. A witness reported to cops that at 11 p.m. someone damaged the sign, and then noted their license plate as the subject drove off. Police contacted the person responsible at his residence, who later admitted to the vandalism and was detained. Damage estimated to be \$500. The vandal was placed under arrest. Anger issues? Whatever happened to using your words to solve problems?

Burglary, 3/14/15 An Ascot Drive resident reported to police that his storage locker which is located in an unsecured carport was broken into. Missing items included a Coleman tent and an REI sleeping bag. Was the thief a camping aficionado? Estimated loss \$400.

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Rheem Boulevard to be Closed for 4 to 6 Months

By Sophie Braccini



Image provided

The terrible condition of the portion of Rheem Boulevard between St. Mary's Road and Moraga Road will eventually become a bad memory. But to fix that portion of the road, the arterial will be completely closed for at least four to six months, and maybe longer depending on the condition of the terrain underneath. According to both Summerhill Homes, which will be in charge of the construction, and Moraga Public Works staff, the work should start this spring or summer.

That leg of Rheem Boulevard provides a strange driving experience. Either ends are in good shape and have been redone by the town a few years back, but the middle is badly eroded with potholes, bordering on complete collapse. The reason of this sorry state is the landslides that affect the hillside and the terrain under the road. Repairing

means major excavation, grading and fill, and a cost the town could not cover alone. The joint repair of the road by the developer and the town was one of the conditions of the approval of the Rancho Laguna II project by Summerhill Homes. Now the developer is ready to start repairing the road, before grading for the homes begins.

On March 11, the Town Council was informed of the upcoming project between Fay Hill Reservoir Road and Fernwood Drive.

The project is a joint venture between the town and the developer. Each party's responsibility is defined in the conditions of approval. Summerhill is responsible for providing detailed plans for management of the closure. Plans include logistics of access, signage and traffic management of both construction and other traffic affected by the project.

These plans have been submitted and routed for review to agencies and departments including the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, the Moraga Police Department, and will be sent to the local school districts and Saint Mary's College. Lafayette residents driving to Campolindo High School using Rheem Boulevard as a route will be heavily impacted.

There are still some serious uncertainties regarding this project. The first is the start date, since Summerhill still needs to obtain permits from different agencies. Kevin Ibrahim, Summerhill vice president of development, stated, "We are currently working with town staff to finalize the details of the construction drawings for the Rheem Boulevard repairs. We hope to have the plans completed and approved within the next month or two. After the approvals we will start the Rheem Boulevard reconstruction. Currently, the work is anticipated to start in May."

The second uncertainty is geological and could impact the length of the closure. "The slide repair is expected to take four to six months, (unless there are) unforeseen circumstances, in which case if there are issues, construction could span over two grading seasons," said Laurie Sugang, senior town engineer. She reiterated that the actual duration would depend on the conditions of the slides, which are revealed during construction. The contractor will remove the asphalt and excavate up to 30 feet under the existing roadway. If necessary the contractor will remove excess water in areas that are too wet for reconstruction.

Notice will be sent to all neighbors and signage will be posted 30 days prior to the closure at the intersections of Rheem Boulevard at St. Mary's Road and Moraga Road. Summerhill also will provide a detour plan to affected agencies, and detour signage on the roads.

Body-Worn Cameras for Moraga Police Officers

By Sophie Braccini



Corporal Randy Pacheco has his camera on as he interacts with a driver during a traffic stop. Photo Lt. King

A Moraga driver was recently stopped by Moraga Police Lieutenant Jon King for failing to halt behind a school bus with flashing lights. As King approached the car, he automatically reached for a small black box pinned to the front of his uniform. With a quick thumb movement, he slid the

front to reveal a camera lens. The body-worn camera, activated by the unmasking of the aperture, recorded everything about his interaction with the driver until the lieutenant closed it.

Moraga is the first Lamorinda city to equip its force with the devices. Many other agencies have them, including the Oakland Police Department and the East Bay Regional Park District where King used to work. Contra Costa County is testing its usage at this time. "Our objective is to maximize transparency and accountability," said Moraga Police Chief Bob Priebe when he asked the town council to authorize the purchase of system. "Each officer has been issued a camera to record their law enforcement contacts, to document actions of involved parties, and to provide our officers the opportunity to see how the public sees them."

King, who joined the department a few months ago, is familiar with the device; he wore a camera for five years in the park district. "At first it was an interesting feeling," he said. "(We thought that) somebody could see what we were doing and would be checking up on us. But what we quickly realized is that if you are a police officer doing your job well, who cares? And I know that the officers here do a good job." King added that these days, officers are usually the only ones not filming as

everybody else uses their cell phones or other devices.

The lieutenant has stories about the usefulness of the cameras. "Sometimes a camera can see more than the officer notices at the time of the encounter," he said. He remembered the case of an officer who stopped a gang of young men in a park and had a normal discussion with them. When reviewing the film, he noticed that one of the men took a concealed weapon from his pocket and hid it behind a rock. The man was on parole and not authorized to have a weapon, and the film was used to arrest him. "The judicial system likes the evidence provided by cameras," said King, adding that sometimes more than one recording is needed to see all the angles. "During the BART Fruitvale shooting inquiry, the recordings of 23 different cameras were used."

King is in charge of the implementation of the system in the department. He says that the cameras can be useful tools for officers to monitor their behavior. "My perception of how I speak to people might be something completely different from theirs," he said, "so officers can go back and review their own recordings."

... continued on page A8



Other crimes happening in Moraga during the week of March 11-17:

- Found Property** – Saint Mary's College
- Smashed Glass** – Moraga Road
- False Alarm** – Rheem Boulevard
- Fraudulent Use of Credit Card** – Country Oak Road
- Leaking Water Pipe** – La Salle Drive
- Domestic Dispute** – Rheem Boulevard
- Civil Dispute** – Ascot Court, Rheem Boulevard
- Loud Party** – Sanders Drive
- Front Door Banging** – Hazelwood Place

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 Saturday, April 18, 9-Noon
 Moraga Commons Park**



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Saint Mary's Field Lights Will Stay On Until 10 p.m.

By Sophie Braccini

At its March 13 meeting, the Moraga Town Council authorized Saint Mary's College to light the intramural field adjacent to the residential neighborhood, The Bluffs, for an additional hour at night until 10 p.m., 305 nights a year.

While the glare from the lights that illuminate the field at night bothers nearby neighbors, the sound, according to some Bluff's residents, is a bigger nuisance.

Saint Mary's College is located in what Gary Howard called a natural amphitheater, noting that if you add a westerly wind, the sound of the teams practicing on the intramural field carries up to the houses. "The constant screaming and yelling has changed our way of life," he said.

Bluff's resident Mark Genestro measured the decibel level in his house during intramural play. "Its 60 to 70 decibels, the noise of a vacuum cleaner 10 feet away," he said, adding that it's commercial area noise. The neighbors noted that the bell ringing stops at 9 p.m. on campus. And signs posted throughout the campus require students to be quiet after 9 p.m. Even the plea of a father citing that his little girls were unable to go to sleep at night did not tip the scale.

The council made its determina-

tion based on the college's commitment to improving the lighting system and significantly reducing the lights' glare. They were also swayed by Saint Mary's President Jim Donahue's personal commitment to discuss the issue with the neighbors and set up a response mechanism to address neighbors' complaints.

Councilmember Teresa Onoda was the only one who zeroed in on the noise issue. "Do you have any technical way to diminish the noise?" she pressed. Donahue did not have an answer, but did say that noise is part of what the activity entails. He promised that students will be reminded of their duty as good neighbors and will be asked to refrain from using profanity.

In the past, college representatives have stated that the extra hour is important for scheduling of recreational sports and practices for many students who work in retail or babysit for residents, and still need to have a place to practice in the evening.

"This issue has some history and it has created concerns about matters of trust between the college and the town of Moraga," acknowledged Donahue in his address to the council. "When I took over the presidency (a year and a half ago), one of my goals was fostering a positive relationship

between the college and the town. Part of that is that we have a trust between us and our neighbors. ... I will be personally responsible for ensuring that the college follows through on what we say we will do."

The question of trust is a hot button issue for the neighbors. Several recalled the many years they had lived next to the college, enjoying every moment of it, including the games. "But in the last three years there has been no work with the neighborhood," said Peter Snap.

A town consultant examined the college's simulation of its new lighting system and felt confident that it would dramatically minimize the impact for many residents.

Four residents did speak in favor of the college extending play hours, saying that life goes on. Moraga resident Barbara Simpson said complaining about the noise on the field is like people who bought a house near an airport complaining about airplane noise.

The college will install the new lights over the summer. The extended hours will start once the college makes the improvements. The council will review the issue one year after the 10 p.m. time begins.

Do you have a person in mind for the Town of Moraga to honor as 2015 Citizen of the Year?

A celebration dinner will be held on **Saturday, May 16** at the Soda Center of Saint Mary's College to honor the winner! The deadline for submitting nominations is **Friday, April 17**. **Please send your nomination to Lamorinda Weekly**

Email: nominations@lamorindaweekly.com

Mail: Lamorinda Weekly
 Attn: Citizen of Year nomination
 P.O. Box 6133
 Moraga, CA 94556

Sponsors for Moraga's Citizen of the Year event are Lamorinda Sun, Saint Mary's College, Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga Chamber of Commerce and Kiwanis of Moraga Valley.



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Call Maureen Caldwell-Meurer at 510.915.0092 for pricing and more information.

CalBRE#01908929

1075 Bear Creek Road, Martinez



NEW LISTING
 Historic Circle T Ranch in beautiful Briones. 7.45 acre horse property with 1929 sq. ft., 2 bedroom, 2 bath home. Spacious floor plan in private setting with gorgeous views. Two large box stalls, large tree shaded paddock and large shaded pasture. **Offered at \$1,075,000 by Ruth Eddy, 925.788.5449.**

CalBRE#01313819

2019 Sequoia Dr., Martinez



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 3 bedroom 2 bathroom with 1227sf on a large lot with a private backyard and Mt. Diablo views. Walk to elementary school and nearby Park. Close to shops, access to freeway, trails. Updated kitchen and baths, brand new laminate floors. **Offered at \$475,000 by Tina Van Arsdale 925-640-2355**

CalBRE#01259271

705 Moraga Way, Orinda



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 This 3BR/2.5BA home has gleaming hardwood floors and a beautifully updated kitchen. Spacious backyard with solar-heated swimming pool. Walking distance to K-12 schools.
Offered at \$900,000 by Jim Colhoun 925.200.2795.

CalBRE#01029160

611 Augusta Drive, Moraga



PENDING
 Remodeled creekside townhome. Two large bedrooms (one master suite) with 2.5 bath adjacent to 1st Fairway. Formal dining & living rooms, separate family room. Kitchen with eat-in area. Beautifully landscaped premium lot located near end of a cul-de-sac and close to Clubhouse. **Offered at \$775,000 by Ruth Eddy, 925.788.5449.**

CalBRE#01313819



Not only do we help people buy and sell homes, but we also perform community service projects. During our annual Giving Day, all Better Homes and Gardens/Mason-McDuffie offices give back to our communities. This year we painted the fencing and bocce courts at the Moraga Commons on March 7th!

Meet our Featured Agents ...



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 CalBRE#01908929



Adam Hamalian/Dana Fillinger
 925.708.5630/925.588.6409
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dana.fillinger@bhghome.com
 CalBRE#01917597/01731662



Jim Colhoun
 925.200.2795
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 CalBRE#01029160



Tania DeGroot
 510.367.1422
tania.degroot@bhghome.com
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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 14, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting Orinda Union School District

Monday, April 13, 6 p.m.
OUSD Office, 8 Altarinda Road,
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report March 8-14

Alarms 40

Barking Dog
10 block Evergreen Dr
30 block Southwood Dr

Burglary, Residential
10 block Monte Veda Dr

911 calls 6

Disturbance
Orchard Rd/Glorietta Bl
Theatre Square

Police/Fire/EMS
Hall Dr/Moraga Wy
Bryant Wy/Moraga Wy
100 block Crane Ter

Harassment
Library

Indecent Exposure
30 block Valley View Dr

Loud Party
Miramonte High School
Lavina Ct/Ivy Dr
Los Cerros/Moraga Wy

Theft, Petty
90 block Davis Rd
Safeway

Missing Juvenile
30 block Park Ln
10 block Calvin Dr

Neighbor Dispute
100 block Ardith Dr

Promiscuous Shooting
Theatre Square

Public Nuisance
50 block Via Floreado
10 block Tappan Ln
10 block Birch Ct
El Ribero/Camino Sobrante
100 block Lombardy Ln

Reckless Driving
Moraga Via/Glorietta Bl
Moraga Wy/Overhill Rd

Susp. Circumstance 5

Suspicious Subject 4

Suspicious Vehicle 2

Traffic Stops 61

Vandalism
10 block Overhill Ct
10 block Overhill Rd
100 block Ivy Dr (2)
Miramonte High School (2)
Glorietta Elementary
700 block Moraga Wy

Warrant
300 block N Civic Dr, WC

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Orinda City Council Mulls Nuts and Bolts Matters

By Laurie Snyder

The most recent Orinda City Council meeting was an efficient one. Held on the evening of a statewide special election when Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer was vying with four other candidates for the California Senate's District 7 seat, the March 17 affair was reminiscent of pre-Housing Element sessions for its relative brevity (lasting just 113 minutes), and was focused primarily on operational matters.

The meat of the meeting began with a report by Vice mayor Victoria Smith on council's closed session held earlier in the evening. Closed sessions are permissible under state law (the Brown Act) for a range of matters, including but not limited to personnel issues, public safety threats, or when government officials need to confer with legal counsel regarding pending litigation.

All four items on the March 17 agenda fell under legally permissible categories. Item one involved labor negotiations with unrepresented management employees and city personnel represented by Teamsters Local Union No. 856. Explaining there was nothing reportable at this juncture, Smith moved on to item two

– Painter versus the City of Orinda, Contra Costa Superior Court Case No. N14-0068, a lawsuit launched in 2014 by the owners of 34 Broadview Terrace to challenge the city's denial of their design review application. Smith reported that council directed the city attorney to refrain from challenging an adverse decision in the case. Due to the length of the first two matters, the remaining items – Skoumbas versus the City of Orinda and Moll versus the City of Orinda – were deferred to a continuation of the closed session later that same evening, and will be addressed by council when there is news to report.

Council then adopted the majority of items on its consent calendar before engaging in a "For the Good of the City" matter – proclaiming March as "Red Cross Month." Council members praised the American Red Cross for its important work, and received information from ARC representatives about two helpful programs – a home fire preparedness initiative and "The Pillowcase Project," which teaches children about disaster preparedness and response. Developed

after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans in 2005, the project now reaches children in schools and summer camp settings in the majority of U.S. states and Puerto Rico thanks to funding from The Walt Disney Company. For more information, visit: www.redcross.org/prepare/location/school/preparedness-education/the-pillowcase-project.

Council then addressed three policy matters: financial auditing, the city's new draft storm drain master plan, and signage to be displayed during Orinda's infrastructure overhaul. Regarding auditing, Orinda finance director Susan Mahoney explained that accounting best practices dictate that, even if a public agency is well served by a specific financial auditing firm, that agency should still change auditors periodically to ensure that it receives the most reliable auditing services possible. Staff reviewed the services of four firms; two were ruled out due to high fees. Council then weighed proposals from the other two firms, ultimately awarding a three-year contract totaling \$76,670 to Maze & Associates based on that firm's depth of experience. Maze will

prepare Orinda's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), Appropriations Limit Review, Single Audit, and State Controller's Report.

The overriding theme of council discussions regarding the draft Storm Drain Master Plan was clarity. Individual council members took turns asking staff and a representative of Schaaf & Wheeler, the consultant hired to prepare the SDMP, to clarify segments of the SDMP's executive summary, ultimately directing staff to work with the consultant in improving the document's overall comprehensibility for the average Orindan. One of the salient points made was that, although the SDMP is an important first step, it is not truly a "master plan" because its creation did not involve a comprehensive analysis of every pipe in Orinda's drainage network. According to the staff report, while the SDMP assessed Orinda's system for both capacity and existing pipe status, the consultants were given just two weeks to conduct "field inspections to determine condition ratings at 48 locations throughout the City. ... continued on page A9

Standard & Poor's Gives High Marks to Orinda City Leaders for Management Practices

Measure J bond sale proceeds smoothly

By Laurie Snyder

Representatives from Standard & Poor's, one of the world's Big Three credit rating agencies, gave verbal high fives to Orinda city leaders during a conference call Feb. 24. That call was scheduled in preparation for the city's sale of \$10 million in general obligation bonds to help repair Orinda's infrastructure. (See "Orinda Authorizes Multimillion-Dollar Measure J Bond Sale" in the Lamorinda Weekly's online archives.)

Orinda City Manager Janet Keeter gave the news to the Orinda

City Council at its March 17 meeting as part of her update regarding the sale's progress. Orinda was not only awarded the coveted AAA bond rating city leaders had hoped for, but also garnered reaffirmation of its AA+ rating for its certificates of participation, according to Keeter. S&P representatives also took the highly unusual step of explaining why they were issuing such high ratings. Noting that "Orinda's local economy is very strong," the S&P representatives called Orinda's budgetary perform-

ance strong and its budgetary flexibility "very strong." They also commended Orinda's "very strong liquidity, which supports Orinda's finances," and noted that "Orinda's management conditions are strong with good financial practices," said Keeter. Those practices "include the strong oversight of budget to actual results during the year, long-term capital and financial planning and investment management policies."

As for the bond sale, the official statement was posted on the city's

website after Orinda received its S&P rating. The \$10 million in Measure J bonds were snapped up by roughly 30 local asset managers, individual investors and small institutions, and the city's underwriter also underwrote about 25 percent of the bonds for likely sale to additional individual investors. The bonds' overall interest rate was set at 2.88 percent – "similar to an APR for a home loan," said Keeter.

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9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

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Mark Roberts Named Orinda's Citizen of the Year

By Laurie Snyder



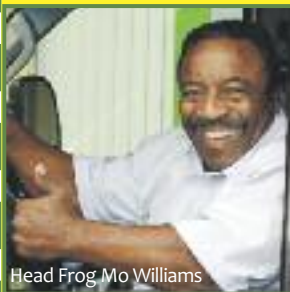
A host of dignitaries were on hand to honor Mark Roberts as Orinda's Citizen of the Year March 20 at the Orinda Community Center. From left: Orinda Planning Commissioner Claire Roberts, Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Andersen, Mark Roberts, Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer. Photo Ohlen Alexander

Proving that nice guys can and do finish first, Orindan Mark Roberts was recently named Orinda's Citizen of the Year. He accepted the award in front of a room full of family members and other fellow Orindans at a special Orinda

Rotary-sponsored celebration March 20. (To learn more about his volunteerism, read "Making a Difference: Orinda's Mark Roberts on the Value of Volunteerism" in the *Lamorinda Weekly's* online archives.)

A longtime Rotarian and board member of the California Autism Foundation, Roberts has also been actively working with local schools to help educate teens and their parents about the dangers of texting while driving. ... continued on page A9

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6/3. Orinda Contemporary.Vaulted ceilings, HW floors, chef's kit, beautiful outdoor spaces w/ views of the hills. Nancy Stryker CalBRE#01290021

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4/4.5. Coming Soon! Cape Cod style updated with old world charm. Close to downtown Orinda Village. Maureen Wilbur CalBRE#01268536



ORINDA \$2,750,900
5/4. Custom Home w/views. North Orinda loc. minutes to town. Gourmet kit, SS appl, 2 Mst Suites & much more! The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



ORINDA \$3,750,000
4/4.2. Rare opportunity to buy newer estate plus two adjacent lots. Gated, wine cellar, gorgeous grounds w/pool & more! Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



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5/4.5. Immaculately Updated Beauty with Spectacular Views. Truly a very "special" home. Shellie Kirby CalBRE#01251227



ORINDA \$875,000
3/2. Adorable Updated Home in the Coveted Ivy Drive Neighborhood. 1253 sf of living space. Maureen Wilbur CalBRE#01268536



ORINDA \$2,750,900
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ORINDA Coming Soon
5/3. Spectacular single story with meticulously landscaped flat yard Vlatka Bathgate CalBRE# 01390784



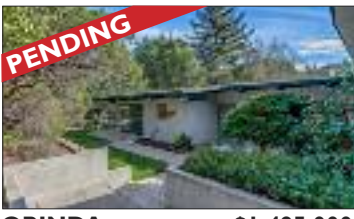
ORINDA Coming Soon
5/4.5. Architectural elegance, state of the art amenities, sophistication throughout. Vlatka Bathgate CalBRE# 01390784



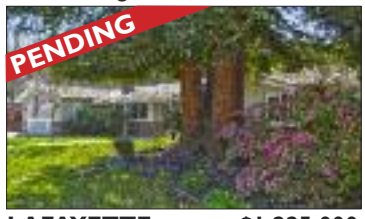
ORINDA \$1,199,000
4/3. Large lot & Open Floor Plan. Rare opportunity in Glorietta. Private setting w/gorgeous Mt.Diablo views. O'Brien/Fellner CalBRE#01482496/01428834



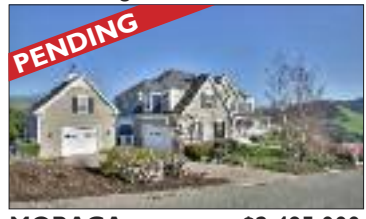
MORAGA \$2,695,000
4/3.5. Exquisite estate in a very private setting! Gorgeous grounds w/large spa. 4542 sq. feet. Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



ORINDA \$1,495,000
5/3. Eichler-esque home with Integrated guest/aupaire/in-law unit on lower level w/ own entrnc. David Pierce CalBRE# 00964185



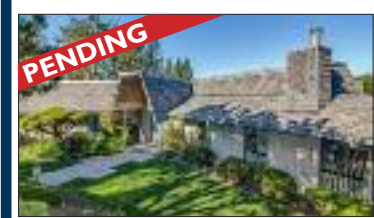
LAFAYETTE \$1,225,000
3/3. Burton Valley Beauty. Cherished location. Light and bright one level gem. Pristine cond. Yard w pool. Susan Schlicher CalBRE#01395579



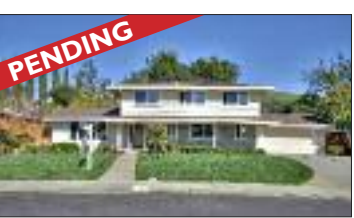
MORAGA \$2,495,000
5/4.5. Spectacular CUSTOM home with fabulous views and amazing backyard. 4175 square feet. Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



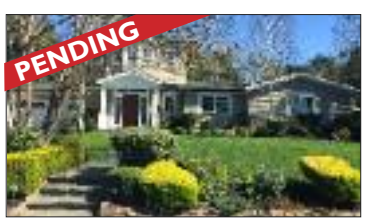
MORAGA \$1,099,000
4/2. 4 bed/2 bath with pool, hot tub, play structure & Rim Trail access. Many updates. The Holcenberg's CalBRE#0137341/00637795



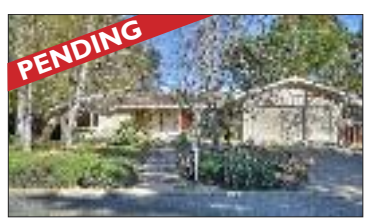
ORINDA \$1,995,000
4/4. Contemp. 4120sf. 2 level, 0.52 ac lot. Mstr suite w/ study, 2 fmly rms. Spa, views, cabana. David Pierce CalBRE# 00964185



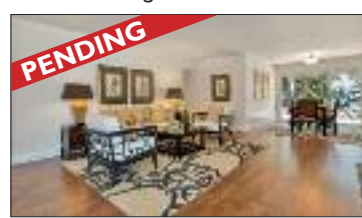
MORAGA \$1,350,000
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ORINDA \$1,895,000
4/3. Fabulous Glorietta home beautifully rebuilt with incredible attention to detail and design. Finola Fellner CalBRE# 01428834



MORAGA \$899,000
3/2. Great Single Level! Adorable house with great location, 1961 sqft on .24 acre lot. Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



ORINDA \$919,000
4/2.5. Charming family home near top rated schools and walking distance to village. Steve Stahle CalBRE#01861509

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors
Wednesday, April 1, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library Community Room
1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga
For meeting times and agendas,
visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors

Tuesday, April 14, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber room 107,
Administration Building,
651 Pine St., Martinez
For meeting times and agendas,
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

Emergency response information
and training:
Lamorinda Community
Emergency Response Team (CERT)
www.lamorindacert.org

Lamorinda Fire News Briefs

By Nick Marnell

New ConFire Operations Chief
Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Chief Jeff Carman announced that 13-year ConFire veteran Lon Goetsch has been promoted to assistant chief of operations. After 12 years with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Goetsch worked his way through the ConFire ranks as a firefighter-paramedic, engineer, captain and battalion chief. "I'm humbled and proud to be our operations chief," he said. "We've survived one of the most difficult periods I've ever seen in my 25 years. We are recovering, we are evolving and we are stronger."

The operations chief oversees district firefighting efforts, including training and emergency medical and rescue services. He directly supervises the battalion chiefs, who lead the 24 on-duty companies. ConFire comprises four battalions, numbered 1 through 4; Lafayette resides in Battalion 1.

"Please take the time to improve the defensible space around your homes," Goetsch advised

Lamorindans. "With the extra dry fire season ahead, it's going to be a very dangerous year."

TV Coverage of Station 46 Opposition

Two Bay Area television stations recently aired the concerns of The Committee to Save Honey Hill Fire Station over the planned relocation of Moraga-Orinda Fire District fire station 43 to a new facility on the Orinda-Lafayette border. Construction of the new fire station 46, a combined effort between MOFD and the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, whose Lafayette station 16 closed in 2012, awaits approval from both district governing boards. The joint venture is expected to save each district \$1 million in annual operating costs.

"I found the experience interesting in that they spent quite a bit of time with us, filming us answering questions, and then used very little of what was said," said committee spokesperson Ellen Dale. "But, I think they both included our most important concern, namely the increase in

response times." The grass roots committee acknowledges that station 43 experiences low call volume, but fears that the response times in its Orinda neighborhood will increase by two minutes once the new station opens.

"We say one life lost, one home that burns down while waiting longer for help to arrive, is worth more than the million dollars they hope to save," said Dale.

Should construction of the new station be approved, MOFD plans to conduct public workshops throughout the district. "We are working to put all of our data into a form that will be understandable to the public," said Fire Chief Stephen Healy, who noted that a report the district commissioned on station 46 response times has not been completed.

MOFD Approves OPEB Trust Fund

In January, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District approved the pre-funding of its other post-employment benefit costs, which include the cost of retiree health care benefits. The district finance commit-

tee recommended March 11 that MOFD set up an OPEB trust account and hire an investment firm to manage the trust account. And at its March 18 meeting, the district voted to pre-fund its OPEB costs into a trust for the first time in its history, simultaneously approving Public Agency Retirement Services as the trust manager. The district will fund \$84,000 into the trust account this fiscal year.

MOFD administrative services director Gloriann Sasser said that pre-funding OPEB costs strengthens the district's financial position by lowering its net OPEB liability, and using the earnings on investments will reduce future employer costs. The district carries both a \$17 million unfunded OPEB liability and an estimated \$40 million unfunded pension liability.

"It's the first time we've even been in the position to do something like this since 2008," said director Fred Weil, citing the district's improved financial condition due to increased property tax revenue and lower labor costs.

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Lafayette Construction Coming Together for New Manzanita Room

... continued from page A2



A crane uses powerful vacuum suction cups on an assembly to hoist roofing panels on the new Manzanita Room in Lafayette. Photo Cathy Tyson
Tongue and groove edging on the panels' sides fit tightly together forming a no-leak seal.

The new and vastly improved building at the Lafayette Community Center on St. Mary's Road is approximately 5,300 square feet, and will

cost \$2.3 million, paid for by park facilities fees, not the city's general fund. Measure WW funds, from the voter-approved East Bay Regional Park District bond measure, will pay \$241,000 of that total.

The original structure, dating

back more than 60 years, had major structural issues, wasn't consistent with current building codes including seismic safety and would soon need a substantial amount of expensive repair. The all-volunteer Parks and Recreation Commission, after getting estimates on extensive remodeling versus a tear down, recommended that the city council start fresh for a more functional sustainable design that would be more beneficial over the long term.

The project is on schedule, said Jennifer Russell, director of Parks, Trails and Recreation, with wall panels scheduled to go in next week. "It was amazing how quickly the metal frame went up. The contractor is exceptionally diligent." She added, "We cut viewing windows through the fence fabric because so many people, especially little kids, love looking at the progress. We are very excited to open the building to the public in the later part of the summer."

Lafayette What's Next for Lafayette?

... continued from page A3



Photo courtesy Steven Falk

"None of this drives policy," said Anderson. "It just gives us a good idea of where we want to start looking."

The search will continue at the next two Community Conversation

events at 7 p.m. April 16 at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, and at 7 p.m. May 14 at the Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Residents are en-

couraged to attend. For those who can't attend a meeting, the city would still like residents to voice their opinions via the survey available online at www.lovelafayette.org.

Moraga Body-Worn Cameras for Moraga Police Officers

... continued from page A4

King explained that if the department gets a phone call saying that an officer was rude, he will sit down with that officer, review the tape, and discuss it. He adds that he hasn't had a phone call like that yet in Moraga. The cameras have only been active since the end of February, but he remembers cases in the park district where officers were surprised to hear how they sounded, and they changed some things they were doing.

Moraga police officers are now wearing their personal cameras whenever they are on patrol. The rule is

that when they enter into an enforcement or investigative contact, they turn the camera on. "Sometimes we would be talking to somebody during a friendly contact, then for whatever reason it becomes adversarial. At that point in time the officer should be thinking about recording the conversation," said King. He added that it is important that the officers stay sensitive to the dignity of the individual when in an embarrassing situation; then, they should not record.

The recordings will not find their way onto the Internet. The cameras

are downloaded into a secure stand-alone computer in the department. Each device can record four hours before it needs to be downloaded. The films will be kept for at least 180 days, and much longer if they are part of an investigation such as a DUI that could take more than 180 days to go to court. Only King and Sargent Brian South have the authority to erase a film.

King said that all the officers are embracing the system. "With this, everybody is protected."



Letters to the Editor

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. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570



Editor:

Orinda citizens are concerned about pressure for more extensive development in downtown as stack and pack does not fit the semi-rural character of Orinda. What about concern for the increased zoning in semi-rural residential Orinda? The General Plan is the embodiment of community values. Doesn't the General Plan also preserve the quality of life from extreme pressure to more extensive development in residential Orinda?

The General Plan, 2.1 states residential zoning should be low density, single family, 1 to 2 units per acre. The Guiding Policy is to maintain the semi-rural character of Orinda. The Orinda City Council has violated that policy by increasing Orinda residential zoning to high density to allow for a rental unit on each lot. Now homeowners can end up surrounded by rental units. This new higher density residential zoning will increase traffic as each rental unit will have 1 or more cars. Increased traffic will deteriorate roads and increase green house gas in our neighborhoods. Increased population will denigrate our schools.

Orinda voters should be allowed to vote to determine if they want to destroy their quality of life. Unfortunately, the City Council with the exception of Eve Phillips will not allow Orinda citizens to vote on maintaining the semi-rural character of Orinda.

Janet Maiorana
Orinda

Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda, or one of its communities, 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. We will not accept Public Forum submissions regarding a current ballot measure or candidate for public office. Opinions expressed in Public Forum are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

Orinda

Orinda City Council Mulls Nuts and Bolts Matters

... continued from page A6

Most of these were selected to focus on larger diameter (greater than 30-inch diameter) corrugated metal pipes (CMPs) since many are 30 to 40 years old and "more susceptible to corrosion and eventually buckling/collapse." It would have been cost prohibitive to inspect Orinda's entire system, added staff, so 48 locations were chosen "to represent a good sampling" with several sites "prioritized based on known past issues." Field data was then plugged into modeling software "to determine where flooding is likely to occur" with potential water surface elevations and flowrates calculated via a "10-year storm" scenario.

The SDMP currently projects that \$13.5 million in capacity and

condition improvements will be needed -- \$9.2 million of which relates to public storm drains (with \$4.3 million related to privately maintained systems). No formal action was taken by council other than to direct staff to bring back an improved version of the report at a future council meeting.

Council members then approved staff's request to purchase signage for placement at road construction entrances to increase residents' awareness of how Measure L and Measure J funding is being utilized to repair Orinda's aging infrastructure. Six to 10 signs will be mounted on moveable barricades at a cost of roughly \$400 each for fabrication and placement, and will be recycled from project to project.

Orinda

Mark Roberts Named Orinda's Citizen of the Year

... continued from page A7

Although he and his wife, Claire (a current member of the Orinda Planning Commission), have been active volunteers in Orinda for more than two decades, he still expressed genuine surprise about his nomination. "It's a recognition I truly appreciate because this puts me among a number of people I have known and admired for their volunteer work in the past. I feel very grateful and honored."

In characteristically modest fashion, he quickly deflected attention away from himself and back toward a topic he adores -- the many ways in which a single person can better his or her home town. He hopes more Orindans will volunteer locally -- particularly residents who are new to the area. "A perfect opportunity would be Orinda Action Day on Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to

noon. It's an opportunity for people to really pitch in -- to beautify parts of our city which need a little help and keep our creeks looking good and free from garbage. The activities are things which people of any age -- kids, adults, parents, teens -- can do. If you're new to town, it's a great way to meet others, and you'll feel like you're part of a group that's really accomplishing something really meaningful."

Roberts also announced that the Orinda Association will hold its first volunteer fair that same day. "After Orindans participate in Orinda Action Day, they'll be able to learn more about other ongoing activities available. The fair will be held right there in the library plaza." To volunteer, visit: www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0d4baba629a02-orinda3.

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Giving Dreams an Address



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

There are currently openings on the following Commissions and Committees:

- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Community Center Foundation
- Capital Projects Assessments Committee (CPAC)
- Circulation Commission
- Creeks Committee
- Crime Prevention Commission
- Design Review Commission
- Downtown Street Improvement Implementation Committee - DSIMPIC
- Emergency Preparedness Commission
- Environmental Task Force
- Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission
- Planning Commission
- Public Art Committee
- Senior Services Commission
- Youth Services Commission
- Lafayette Representative to the Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging

For additional information visit the city's website: www.lovelafayette.org

Or call Joanne Robbins, City Clerk 925-284-1968.

Application deadline March 31, 2015. Positions open until filled.

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Business

Cooking With Kids Foundation, an Enterprise and a Mission

By Sophie Braccini



Lynda Rexroat teaches children how to cook at the Lafayette Recreation Center. Photo provided

Standing by the prep table in the Lafayette Community Center's kitchen, Chef Lynda Rexroat held a big knife, getting ready to slice a carrot. The tiny fingers and palm of a 4-year-old child pressed on Rexroat's steady hand, as she learned the slicing technique. Pretty soon, the youngster

will be cutting the vegetables herself. Learning to prep like a pro and handle knives is just one of the things that the children who attend the Cooking with Kids Foundation classes are learning. Over a four-week period, they learn to prepare and value healthy food and grow an ap-

preciation for what it takes to put dinner on the table. Rexroat not only teaches Lamorinda kids, but also wants to teach children in underprivileged communities how to become healthier.

The Lafayette resident has had an unusual professional life. She was an ultrasonographer at Children's Hospital for years until a back injury stopped her career. Rexroat also studied in Paris to become a pastry chef, "just for the pleasure of it," she remembers. But as a professional door closed, another opened, and she started a wholesale pie business.

"First I was cooking for parties, but my dietary needs changed," she says. "I started to be more interested in healthy choices and looked for ways to reduce sugar, and avoid gluten and dairy." Rexroat developed a new line of pies, without gluten, dairy, and very low glycemic index. The wholesale business was called Apple Lane Bakery, for the many apple trees in her Lafayette garden. Rexroat was selling to cruise lines and large catering establishments like the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. "More and more people were looking for options for people with diabetes or heart problems," she says.

But one day, a friend of hers planted an idea in her mind. "She said that I should combine my love of children with my love of cooking and teaching," she remembers. "That is how I started Cooking with Kids as an after-school program." Very quickly, Rexroat modified the angle of her business from food appealing to kids, like pizzas and pretzels, to healthy food for kids. "Children can appreciate everything, especially if they are the ones preparing it," she says.

In the kitchen, every moment is used to learn something. Rexroat teaches how to recognize the fruits and vegetables in their raw form, to identify their colors and texture, how to weigh and measure food, how to read labels and make a grocery list, and to always be clean and frequently wash. She even teaches the youngest of her students to use the kitchen tools, emphasizing safety. "Each class has a theme and at the end of class we share the food and critique it," says Rexroat. "We wonder if we would do it again, if it was good for us, and the parents get to taste as well." Then the children do the dishes and clean up.

"My purpose is to help the children to connect with the food, to realize what is healthy and that it can also

be delicious," says Rexroat. "This is important here, but it is even more important in underserved communities. This is why I transformed my business into a nonprofit because the children come first, and it was important to be able to apply for grants and raise money."

Rexroat has invited different people from the community to join the board, including members of the Lamorinda Winegrowers Association with whom she is planning her first fundraiser in the spring. "We would like to raise enough money to acquire a mobile kitchen," she says. Rexroat wants to be able to go to any school to conduct after-school programs, even if they do not have the space and equipment required. She is already teaching several after-school pro-

grams locally at Wagner Ranch Elementary in Orinda, the Husky House Day Care Center and Happy Valley Elementary School in Lafayette as well as other schools in Walnut Creek.

Rexroat is also looking for new members for her board to extend the reach of her mission. "I am looking for chefs, moms of young children, retired business people, teachers," she says. She already has enrolled Lafayette dietician Lisa Ota and Virgil Birgona from the Fremont Bank; Saint Mary's College students will also intern this summer to update her website. For more information, visit www.cwfkf.org.

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

Patrizia Marrone a Fast Success on Fiesta Lane

11 Fiesta Lane, Lafayette - (925) 736-0220

Patrizia Marrone has been curating women's clothes in San Francisco and the East Bay since 1980. She recently moved her successful Blackhawk Plaza store to Lafayette on Fiesta Lane (near the Cooperage).

Marrone specializes in unique apparel, accessories and shoes that she selects in shows from all over the world. She was voted Diablo's "Best of the East Bay" several times in either the women's shoes shop or boutique category. Her clients immediately followed her to her new location in Lafayette, making the store an instant success. New customers are also finding their way to the large and bright retail space, full of feminine dresses, tops, shoes and other accessories, from casual to the most sophisticated. "My objective is to build relationships with my clients," she says. "In my store women come looking for a special look they will not find anywhere else. Together we create a total look that uniquely fits them." Marrone says she's had an eye on Lafayette for some time, but wasn't ready to move until now. "Lafayette is perfect for what I offer," she says. "People of all ages come here, sometimes mothers and their daughters." One of her clients who has been shopping with her for 20 years, Mrs. Cheung, came to the boutique with her daughter - and now her granddaughter. Patrons will find apparel from Marrone's favorite designers such as Sarah Pacini or the Crea Collection, and Donald J Pliner shoes, among many others.



Barbara McDaniel, left, tries on a white spring jacket that Patrizia Marrone pairs with a black and white scarf. Photo Sophie Braccini

Orchard Manager Named February's Moraga Employee of the Month

Ken Mulhern, who was a key manager at Orchard Supply Hardware, was named the Moraga Employee of the Month for February. Mulhern handled several different roles at OSH including being the lead manager for the store's support team and heading the store's community outreach program, Neighbors Helping Neighbors. He supervised receiving all goods from the company's distribution center and supervised employees for the customer pick-up area. "Ken was a terrific employee," said Orchard Supply Assistant Manager Victoria Whitman. "He was passionate about customer service. He listened to the customers and provides really good advice on whatever project they are undertaking. He was also really involved with the community and was heading a local project to assist Los Perales Elementary School." Mulhern was promoted to manager of the OSH San Ramon store. In winning the award, the Moraga Rotary and Chamber of Commerce awarded Mulhern a gift card to CVS as well as a gift card to the Golden Palace in Moraga.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Monthly Mixer at GemLust at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 25 at 3529 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

The Lafayette Chamber's Young Professional Group will be meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, March 26 in the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Conference Room. For more information visit the group's meetup page: www.meetup.com/Young-Professionals-Group-Lafayette-CA/.

Citizen of the Year Dinner honoring Marechal Duncan at 6 p.m. Friday, March 27 at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Reservations required.

Dogtown Downtown from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 11. Dog Parade starts at 10 a.m. from the Lafayette Plaza Park to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. In addition to the parade there will be demonstrations, exhibits and contests.

Save the date for Earth Day in Lafayette from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, April 26 sponsored by Sustainable Lafayette, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, and the City of Lafayette. This year's theme: transportation. For more information, visit <http://www.sustainable-lafayette.org/our-events/earth-day-festival>.

Moraga

Chamber of Commerce business meeting from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Friday, March 27 at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive.

Registration opened for businesses and groups that want to participate in the 2015 Moraga Faire on May 9. For information, contact Kathe Nelson at Kathe@moragachamber.org.

Orinda

Save the dates: Orinda Trivia Bee Friday, April 24, and State of the City Luncheon on Wednesday, April 29. Orinda Rotary and Orinda Chamber of Commerce jointly sponsor the Trivia Bee. Teams of six compete for the title in a multiple round trivia competition. Attendees come dressed in costume and decorate tables in keeping with the chosen theme for their team. The event takes place at the Orinda Masonic Lodge, 9 Altarinda Rd in Orinda. For information, contact Candy Kattenberg at info@orindachamber.org.

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

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From Front Page

Smiles Abound at 'Egg-citing' Spring Egg Hunt

... continued from page A1



Community Egg Scramble at Lafayette Plaza Park last year. Photo Andy Schreck

Rotary Club of Orinda will host its free Spring Egg Hunt for children yearning to find that perfect egg at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 4 at the Orinda Community Park (also a bring-your-own-basket event). That same day, the Lafayette Community Foundation serves up its Bunny Brunch, including a pancake brunch, live show egg hunt and a visit from the Easter Bunny at 11 a.m. at the Lafayette Community Center's Live Oak room. Tickets are \$8, however recreation staff cautions that the event usually sells out, so register early. Online ticket sales

accepted until April 3 at www.LafayetteRec.org. Also in Lafayette on April 4, kids through second grade can join the fun at 10 a.m. for the Community Egg Scramble at Lafayette Plaza Park (near the Park Theater), presented by the Rotary Club of Lafayette and E. Bunny. For those more inclined to sit and smile, the Easter Bunny will be at the Rheem Valley Shopping Center in Moraga for a photo op with children from noon to 3 p.m. April 4.

Easter Sunday falls on April 5 this year, so time's a-wasting. Hop to it!

Possible Closure of Del Valle Campus

... continued from page A1

"The timing couldn't have been worse," said Chris Learned, business services associate superintendent. He explained that prior to the Local Control Funding Formula, adult education funds were totally separate from support for high schools. Now, to pay for adult education, the AUHSD would have to take some of the meager funding allocated for grades 9 through 12 to go toward adult programs. Adding another dimension to the unpleasant financial situation is the voter approved and recently completed substantial multi-million dollar renovation of Del Valle.

In 2008, voters in the AUHSD approved Measure E, a \$93 million facilities bond to continue the community's investment in quality school facilities at its four high schools - Acalanes, Campolindo, Miramonte and Las Lomas - as well as the district office and the Del Valle Educational Center that includes Acalanes Contract Independent Study, built in 1958. A whopping \$24 million of that total was spent to rebuild the crumbling Del Valle campus. Current students at the adult education facility may have trouble wrapping their heads around the expected savings if the campus closes, estimated to be \$750,000 for the year.

Funding from the state is key to keeping the doors open, says Acojido. Noting that he is hopeful but realistic, he's well aware that it will take a concerted effort to keep the lights on, in-

structors paid and the revitalized buildings open. Ironically, his dream is "that I can come back next year as a student."

The district wants to keep the facility open and is attempting to come up with a business plan to offer some programs, probably with higher fees. More clarity is expected to come on April 15. Meanwhile, signs are posted throughout the spacious classrooms and airy handicap-accessible hallways to sign up for spring classes, which start April 6. The summer session is subject to the availability of state funding and class fees to pay for operational costs. There have already been some preliminary discussions with Diablo Valley College to lease all or part of the campus.

If the lights do indeed go out at Del Valle, each of Lamorinda's three towns has robust offerings through park and recreation departments. Lafayette has Camp Awesome for kids, soccer, tiny tots, after-school programs and a host of children's camps, along with youth, adult and older adult options. Orinda's Activity Guide for spring and summer 2015 has an array of camps, youth, teen, adult and senior programs all at reasonable prices. And classes and activities for all ages are offered through the town of Moraga.

For information, visit www.lafayetterec.org, www.city-oforinda.org or www.moraga.ca.us.

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Rheem Theatre Voted Bay Area's Best Indie Cinema



Photo Andy Scheck

Moraga's Rheem Theatre was recently voted Best Indie Cinema in the Bay Area for 2015 by Bay Area A-List (<http://sf.cityvoter.com/best/indie-cinema/arts-and-entertainment/bay-area>). Second and third place went

to the Grand Lake Theater in Oakland and the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas in San Francisco.

"I am extremely honored to receive the 2015 Best Indie Cinema," said Derek Zemrak, presi-

dent and founder of the California Independent Film Festival Association that operates the theater. "Lindsay Pirkle, general manager, and the entire Rheem Theatre staff get big kudos for their contributions toward this award. It is al-

ways a joy to see people from outside the Lamorinda area visit this community treasure."

Since reopening five years ago, the Rheem Theatre has become an entertainment hub for residents in Lamorinda and beyond. Originally built as a single movie palace in the 1950s by Donald Rheem, the theater was remodeled in the 1990s to become a four-screen multiplex, according to the Lamorinda Theatres website. Though the theatre has been consistently updated, it still retains its original art deco feel with Zodiac Style art in each house. It is now the home of the California Independent Film Festival and the Classic Film Hall of Fame and Museum, which features interactive displays to learn from the great pioneers in the entertainment industry. Many of the comments posted on the A-List website focus on the museum, as well as the lobby and staff. The Rheem Theatre screens first-run films, a monthly classic film series, B-movie nights twice a month, plus live jazz on the third

Saturday each month.


"The Classic Film Hall of Fame and Museum has made the Rheem Theatre a true destination for movie fans from all over. At the recent Vincent Price Day, most of the attendees, many of whom had never been to the theatre before, came from Sacramento, San Francisco, Alameda, Walnut Creek and San Jose," said Zemrak. "The Hall of Fame and the museum, as well as the entire theatre, amazed them all and many voted for the Rheem Theatre in between movies and the other Vincent Price events. One couple from Sacramento stated, 'It was worth the day trip to see this hidden gem and all the cool exhibits.' They plan to return with friends. I see more people coming to the Rheem not only to see a movie but also the museum. Everyone connected to the Rheem should feel honored to receive this award and to remind ourselves what we achieved in five years!"

For information about upcoming films and events, visit lamorindatheatres.com. *J. Wake*

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An Instant Leftie

Campo student's brain surgery recovery continues

By Cathy Dausman



Audrey Price, left, with her mother, Barbara Photo Cathy Dausman

Audrey Price became a "leftie" last June, on Friday the 13th. For weeks Audrey, a Stanley Middle School eighth grader, had experienced a gradual, unexplained weakening on her right side, causing her to drop things – noticeably when playing tennis. Eight weeks of physical therapy only left the Lafayette teen with increased one-sided weakness.

A physical exam scheduled the end of May came back "abnormal" and resulted in a referral for an MRI. Audrey learned she had a brain aneurysm, specifically a cerebral sacular aneurysm attached to an artery at the base of her brain.

"You learn a lot from your child," Barbara Price said about her daughter's journey from perplexed athlete to patient, rehab role model and happy, successful Campolindo High School freshman. Doctors told the Price family the aneurysm Audrey had most likely had been growing slowly for years, pressing on the left side of her brain stem, and presenting itself only as body weakness.

She had experienced no headaches; felt no pain. The aneurysm had not burst; it simply continued to grow until it was larger than 99 percent of similar aneurysms.

Before then the most traumatic event in her life had been an appendectomy two years earlier. On her first day of summer last June, Price underwent a seven-and-a-half hour brain surgery during which a UC San Francisco neurologist and team of 12 deflated the aneurysm and re-established normal blood flow to the area.

The surgery was to be routine; unfortunately Audrey awoke unable to move her right side, likely from surgical trauma and the distortion the aneurysm had caused pushing on the brain stem. Her expected 10-day hospital stay ballooned into a six week period of lost summer vacation days, and physical, speech and occupational therapies six hours daily six days a week.

Occupational therapist Kristina Schmieder met Price shortly after surgery, when she was still grieving the

body she'd had. Schmieder recalls the girl's tears of frustration. "She just wanted to go back to how she was before," Schmieder said.

Soon, though, Schmieder saw her attitude shift. An OT works with patients to restore daily living activities, and as Audrey's mother explained, her daughter "has had to learn to rehabilitate her entire right side."

With Schmieder's help, Audrey relearned how to stand, walk, bathe, dress, cook and groom herself. "Soon therapy became similar to a high school cafeteria or gathering place where Audrey informed us of all things going on," Schmieder said.

Rehab was filled with laughter, dancing and singing intertwined with wistful thoughts about what her sister and friends were doing with their summers.

Audrey left the hospital for home July 25. She returned to San Francisco in October to receive a Colin Powell medal of courage for her hard work as a UCSF Benioff patient. The family even managed its annual Wisconsin vacation before Audrey began a new school year as a Campolindo High School freshman.

Audrey still wears an ankle brace, which she hopes to shed by April, and hopes the weakness and tremors in her right hand will disappear. She laughed at the notion of being called ambidextrous, saying she writes left-handed or uses Dragon Dictation while taking class notes. She is grateful her classrooms are close together and that a classmate or two will help carry her books, although she notes "adults are a lot more empathetic (to my situation)."

As a preventative measure, the entire family has had MRI tests with normal results and will repeat the tests every five years. Audrey remains positive about the disappointments thrown her way last summer, insisting, "There are many silver linings that come with a struggle."

"Once my body heals, I'll play sports," she said.

Learn more about cerebral aneurysms at: <http://tinyurl.com/mtyrk5e>

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9:30 a.m. Blended Worship
10:45 a.m. Celebrations Worship

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Spreading Seedlings and the Love of Growing Food

By Sophie Braccini



Del Rey teacher John Moran and students decide what to do with the seedlings they received. Photos Sophie Braccini

Sitting around their teacher Mr. Moran in the Del Rey Elementary School garden, fourth- and fifth-grade students were attentive and relaxed. They used this recent weekly outing to the garden to paint, and to plant the seedlings that were given to their teacher by the Moraga Gardens Farm.

The community farm sent hundreds of plants, grown from seedlings, to Del Rey and other Lamorinda schools. The group also planted seedlings at the farm and plans to sell those during a spring fundraiser to help support the nonprofit.

"This year we are giving seedlings to the Global Student Embassy high school gardens (Campolindo, Miramonte, Las Lomas, and Acalanes), as well as JM (Joaquin Moraga Intermediate), Rheem (Elementary), Canyon, Stanley (Middle School), Del Rey (Elementary), Diablo Valley College's Adaptive Horticulture program and Saint Mary's College," said Nita Mehta, the garden volunteer in charge of the donations.

Last year the garden received requests for plants from as far as Turlock, but members decided to focus on Lamorinda schools this year. "We started to plant our seedlings in the ground immediately," said Del Rey's Moran, even though he knew the rec-

ommendation was to wait for April. "It's been crazy weather, and the kids were interested in doing it." The teacher showed students the five different breeds of tomatoes he received from the farm, including tomatillos that immediately drew exclamations of appreciation from the savvy young gardeners.

"I enjoy observing the different plants in the garden," said one young student, Lauren. "The dahlias, the garlic, the artichokes, the beans. We even have a thorn-less blackberry bush, I had no idea that existed."

Moran is a garden enthusiast who believes that it is important to take the students outside to learn. "We do a lot of science in the garden," he said. "We do a lot of writing, I teach social studies, we make decisions about what to plant, and we have Julia Grimsrud who teaches Math in the Garden." The teacher believes that the people who struggle inside are at peace outside, and many of his students mention the pleasure and beauty they find in the garden.

Claire Curtin came to the Moraga Gardens Farm to pick up plants for the four high schools and the Global Student Embassy program. The high school project's goal is to grow food sustainably and giving it to local food banks. "Our focus is on sustainable agriculture and leadership," said the

program's manager Chrissy Orangio. "The students also study sustainable farming techniques from around the world and strive to make a difference here, while they are in school." Like most of the gardens, this program depends on donations, and Orangio is appreciative of the fact that the communities here are very supportive and generous, from the Moraga Gardens Farm and the seedlings, to hardware stores, local nurseries and, of course, parents.

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School teacher Dawn Lezak came to pick up plants. She teaches the Earth Stewardship Class that's part of the 'wheel' curriculum where sixth-grade students get to experiment with the different electives JM has to offer. "I see most of the students for 35 days," explained Lezak, who uses the school's garden extensively. She teaches about solar dials, being aware of the weather, good bugs and bad bugs, endangered species, herbicides and pesticides and the alternatives to using chemicals.

"The children get in pairs, do the research on a topic they choose, and write a report that they present to the class," said Lezak. The students also have to solve problems occurring in the garden, such as the rabbits' invasion that threatened their Brussels sprouts. "I asked them to figure out a way to keep the rabbits out," she said. "Two teams started to build mesh cages around the sprouts." She added that this year the students have been able to spend four out of every five days a week in the garden for their Earth class. Ultimately, what is produced in the garden goes to the Foods class that's also part of the wheel.

"We want to participate in the very worthy programs that teachers get going," said Mehta. "The kids will grow up with a love and respect of the land and sustainable gardening, and it benefits us and our community in the end."

Plant Sale at the Moraga Gardens Farm

Garden volunteers will sell plants to the community Saturdays and Sundays between March 28 and April 19 (with the exception of Easter Sunday on April 5). The plants sold have been grown from seed in the Moraga green houses. This year the garden members are offering a wide variety of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes that have proven to be successful locally as well as squash, pepper and herb plants. Each four-inch pot costs \$3. The sale is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 1370 Moraga Way, Moraga (next to the fire station).



Dawn Lezak, right, and Nita Mehta choose seedlings in the Moraga Gardens Farm greenhouse.

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Lamorinda Idol

Lamorinda Idol 2015 Audition

Lamorinda Idol auditions are just around the corner. K-12 students living or attending school in the Lamorinda area may audition for a chance to be a Lamorinda Idol finalist. Auditions run May 14 through May 17. Visit Orinda Arts Council's website at <http://orindaarts.org/lamorinda-idol/audition-information> to sign up for auditions between **April 1 - April 30, 2015.**

Audition Information

Registration for 2015 auditions will be open April 1-30, 2015.

Auditions will be held at Orinda Intermediate School as follows:

- Soloists K-2 Saturday, May 16, 2015 3 - 5 pm
- Soloists 3-5 Saturday, May 16, 2015 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
- Soloists 6-8 Thursday, May 14, 2015 4 - 6 pm
- Soloists 9-12 Friday, May 15, 2015 4 - 5 pm and 6 - 7 pm
- Groups K-5 Saturday, May 16, 2015 1 - 2 pm
- Groups 6-8 Thursday, May 14, 2015 6 - 7 pm
- Groups 9-12 Friday, May 15, 2015 5 - 6 pm

While there is no required fee for participation in Lamorinda Idol, families of those participating are requested to provide financial support. The suggested contribution for those auditioning is \$10 per family and contributions will be collected at the auditions.

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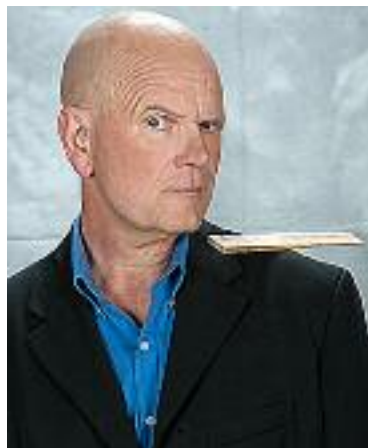
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KGO Radio's Chip Franklin: Unplugged

By Nick Marnell



Chip Franklin Photo provided

Chip Franklin burst into the restaurant, flustered and apologetic for running late. He plopped into the chair, adjusted his eyesight to the dimly lit room and within seconds, he started talking.

"I've always had a job with a microphone since I was 13," said the KGO Radio talk show host. Franklin broke into show business playing piano and doing bits between acts at comedy clubs, eventually purchasing a string of those comedy clubs. "I literally put a million miles on my car in the '80s, driving all over the country, playing music and doing comedy and managing the business," he said. Franklin often showcased his comedians through promotional appearances at radio stations. One such appearance at WMAL in Washington, D.C., changed his life. "The program director was walking down the hall," said Franklin, who had done occasional fill-in shifts at the station. "He saw me and he said, 'Can you do the show tonight?'" The evening host had done something to upset the program director, the host was fired on the spot and thus in 1993, Franklin's radio career began.

A radio personality may have a Mensa IQ, or present a unique point of view, but without the ability to connect to an audience, that person will fail. Franklin's comedy background helped him quickly connect with his listeners. "Authenticity," he said. "And be honest. People can smell a bunch of crap. The best thing anybody ever taught me - it was an operations manager in Baltimore - was to,

number one, know what you're talking about, and number two, don't back down." Confidence, the man does not lack.

Franklin features a powerful tool in his repertoire, a tool used by many top comedians. "Misdirection," he said. "You think I'm going to say this, and I say that." As in, "When I was a kid, my dad came into my room and caught me looking at a Playboy. 'You better cut that out or you're going to go blind.' 'Sure, Dad. By the way, I'm over here.'"

"My mom raised five of us in a three-bedroom house," said Franklin, who was born in Alexandria, Va. "My dad was a cop. My family was full of government employees. So I always err on the side of liberal. Most people get more conservative as they get older. I probably go the other way." He describes himself as a free-market liberal, with a caveat. "I believe in business, but business should not pay money to the people who write the laws that govern business."

While on his comedy club circuit, Franklin met his wife, Wendy, through a mutual friend, Mary Chapin Carpenter. "We've been together for 33 years, married for 28," he said. "Everyone who meets me, and then meets her, quickly forgets about me," he said.

After five years in Washington, Franklin hosted radio shows in Baltimore and San Diego. Cumulus Media Inc. brought Franklin to San Francisco to help shore up the ratings of KGO, a radio station that has fallen on hard times. Ranked number one for decades, the station now barely sits in the top 20 in the Bay Area, according to recent Nielsen Audio ratings. "But let me tell you," said Franklin. "We still do a better job selling product than any of our competitors. It's something that I take pride in. At the end of the day, we're working for the people who advertise."

He moved to the Bay Area in December. "I thought for sure I'd live in the South Bay," said Franklin. "I loved the hills there, but there was nobody near you. A friend of mine asked, 'Have you checked out Walnut

Creek?'" When I drove through the tunnel and stopped in Orinda, it was like I went back in time. Right away, the place knocked me out. It's like Pleasantville, in black and white.

"Orinda reminds me of the '50s," he continued. "We've been conditioned that we can't have this anymore. But you can! You can have towns like this. Nothing against Berkeley, but if I want to smell urine, I know where to find it. I'm not going to feel guilty about living in Orinda. It's timeless, and I don't see it changing."

Franklin's trophy case must be in danger of collapsing. Listed on his website are his many acclamations, such as numerous Associated Press and Achievement in Radio awards, including Best Talk Show Host, Best Documentary, and Best Political Convention Coverage at the 2000 and 2004 Republican and Democratic conventions. He has made hundreds of TV appearances, from Comedy Central to The O'Reilly Factor, from ABC to HBO.

Golf and baseball highlight Franklin's off-the-job passions. And he runs. "Four miles a day," he said. "I used to run up the hill from the Village toward Orindawoods, but that's a killer. Now I stick to the Lafayette Reservoir."

Franklin signed off with a request to his Lamorinda listeners. "Call me up on the air, share your opinions, send me emails," he said. "I'd love to hear from you."

Just be alert for misdirection.

The *Chip Franklin Show* airs on KGO Radio 810 from noon to 3 p.m., weekdays. Call the Talk Line at 808-0810 from any area code in the Bay Area.

Celebrate Pacific Islands Culture at SMC

By A.K. Carroll

Lamorindans looking for an exotic cultural experience are invited to a Hawaiian luau in celebration of the culture and history of the Pacific Islands from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, March 26 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Center. In true Hawaiian spirit, this is an all-inclusive event, made possible by the dedicated members of SMC's Intercultural Center, who have been putting on cultural nights for the past 18 years.

The IC seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment in which diversity is embraced and identity can flourish. They take a cue from Beverly Tatum, president of Spelman College and a leader among women of African descent, who states, "Our ongoing examination of who are in our full humanity, embracing all our identities, creates the possibility of building alliances that may ultimately free us all."

One way the IC seeks to value diversity and build inclusive community is through a series of annual cultural nights during which six historically underrepresented and traditionally marginalized people and groups are recognized and celebrated

through theater, music, food, dance and student expression. Culture nights provide valuable education for cultural competence in a fun and engaging manner. The IC has already hosted The Bash (in recognition of the LGBTQIA population) and Latino Culture Night, both of which featured tasty food and soulful student performances.

The IC luau will feature a selection of student performances as well. In the past these have ranged from various forms of hula dancing and ukulele playing to the singing and teaching of traditional Hawaiian songs. The event includes delicious food, vibrant colors and the welcoming spirit of these celebrated islands. No pre-registration is needed. Tickets can be purchased beginning at 5 p.m. at the door of the Soda Center. General admission is \$8.

Future IC Cultural Nights will include Asian Cultural Night on April 9, Arabian Night on April 23 and Expressions of Blackness Night on May 7. For additional information on any of the IC's Cultural Nights, contact the IC at (925) 631-8545 or email TheIC@stmarys-ca.edu.



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Lamorinda's Specialties of the House Brunching it Up

By A.K. Carroll



Metro's Crab Benedict Photo Metro Lafayette

Nothing says Easter like a beautiful plate of eggs – scrambled, fried, or however you take them. Spring has officially sprung, and we're celebrating with one of Lamorinda's favorite weekend pastimes: brunch. Whether it's an early-morning omelette, a midday frittata or an afternoon of sipping mimosas, you're sure to find something that suits your palate and your budget.

On the 'spendy end' of the brunch scene is the Michelin-recommended French-Californian menu at Artisan Bistro in Lafayette. Specific offerings vary according to season, availability and the creative whims of Executive Chef John Marquez. Dishes range from a marinated beet salad and a bowl of spring garlic and onion soup to cinnamon brioche French toast topped with fresh berries, and halibut fish tacos served with creme fraiche, pico de gallo, cabbage and red onion slaw and mixed greens. Artisan also offers three varieties of Benedict and sides of applewood-smoked bacon and sweet potato fries. Brunch is served from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Reservations recommended. Artisan Bistro is located at 1005 Brown Ave. in Lafayette. For information, call (925) 962-0882 or visit artisanlafayette.com.

Too many choices have you looking for a prix fixe option? Check out the three-part prix fixe brunch menu at Lafayette's Metro, urban sophistication in a suburban setting. Select a starter of apple fritters with crème anglaise or Strauss organic yogurt topped with Café Fanny's granola, choose a main dish of Croque Madame, Eggs Florentine or Metro Benedict, and pair your morning meal with a cocktail or refresher of choice. Savor your selections in the dining room, at the bar, or on Metro's outdoor patio. Brunch is served from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Reservations can be made by phone or online. Located at 3524 Mt Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette, call (925) 284-4422 or visit metrolafayette.com for information.

For a California brunch that is as farm fresh as it is comforting, sample the homemade creations of Moraga's Home/Made Kitchen Cafe and Bakery. Organic eggs and local ingredients are used in every chef's scramble, blueberry buttermilk pancake, market quiche and poached egg salad. But the real champ on Home/Made's menu is the Chile Relleno Bake, a spicy savory egg bake made with roasted Anaheim peppers, avocado, spicy relleno sauce, and three types of cheese. Homemade pastries are available all day long, as are steaming hot cups of fresh Four Barrel coffee, both of which can be enjoyed in the sun or under the umbrellas of Home/Made's spacious patio. Brunch is served from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Located at 337 Rheem Blvd. in Moraga, for information, call (925) 388-0841, visit homemadekitchen.com or email aly.homemade@gmail.com.

If you're looking for a place to stop, sip and stay, try the bottomless mimosas at Table 24 in Orinda's Theatre Square. Match your mimosa with a slice of house-made quiche or a serving of jalapeno combread, or opt for something more substantial, like the new orange brulée French toast or the tasty Monte Cristo sandwich. Table 24 also offers brunch-time Bloody Marys, and for the less indulgent day drinkers there are espresso beverages and fresh-squeezed juices. Brunch is served from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Located at 2 Theatre Square, Ste. 153 in Orinda, for info, call (925) 254-0124 or visit table24orinda.com.

Hunting for a brunch that's easy on your budget and still high on character? On the lower end of the spending spectrum is the tucked-away charm of Millie's Kitchen, a homey little spot with friendly faces, generous portions and efficient service. The doors open before dawn, making Millie's the perfect place for early risers. The house favorite is Millie's classic coffee cake along a strong cup of coffee, though All-American options abound, from fried eggs, bacon and hash browns to pancakes and huevos rancheros. Nothing fancy. No notice needed. Open 5 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., seven days a week. Located at 1018 Oak Hill Road in Lafayette, for information, call (925) 283-2397.

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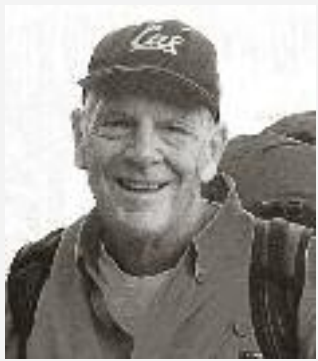
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In Memory

Robert Edward Merritt, Jr. Jan. 31, 1941 – Feb. 22, 2015



Robert Edward Merritt Jr. was born on Jan. 31, 1941 in San Francisco, Calif. He passed away peacefully surrounded by his family (which he swore would never happen because he thought no one truly died that way), on Feb. 22, 2015.

Bob's legacy will be carried on by his wonderful wife Robin, his children Kim Hunter (Chris), Kevin Merritt (Leslie), Kristin Avicolti (Jason), and Kati Radziwon (Bob), his 13 grandchildren (Cal, Haley, Laurel, and Kurtis Hunter, Kayden, Thai, and Shiloh Merritt, Dante, Gaetan, and Mia Avicolti, and Will, Matt, and Jake Radziwon), his brothers Rich Merritt (Pam), and Joe Merritt, their families, and all his caring friends.

For full obituary, please visit: <http://www.themerritts.us/bob>

There will be a joyous Celebration of Life for Bob Merritt held at the California Shakespeare Theatre on May 31, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

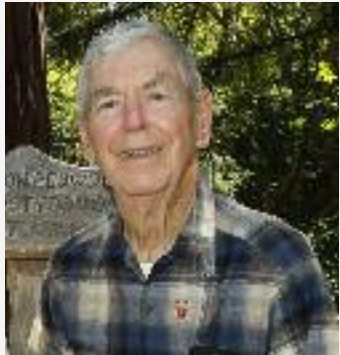
Please come dressed in your best Cal gear, ranger uniform, hiking outfit, or casual attire.

<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/bobmerritt>

Donations may be made in honor of Bob Merritt to:

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Early Old Yellow House Inhabitant Dies



Ezra Emanuel Nelson, 91, died at home March 15. Nelson was born Feb. 27, 1924 in Berkeley, the youngest child of Charles and Karen Nelson. He grew up in "The Old Yellow House" on Moraga Way, then completed the bungalow next door and lived there his entire adult life. Nelson attended Orinda Union School when it had just two classrooms, each with a coal burning stove. He graduated from Mt. Diablo High School in 1941. In recollections submitted to the Orinda Historical Society and later republished in this paper, Nelson recalls summers spent working Moraga pear harvests for \$2 per day (<http://tinyurl.com/ojetavn>). After high school Nelson worked as a machinist for Hexcel Corporation, Berkeley and later as a letter carrier out of the Orinda Post Office. He retired in 1989. He married Aleda Dooley in 1954; she died in 1995. He married Margaret Ellingson in 1997; she survives him. Nelson is also survived by his son, David Ezra and Carolyn (Knapp) Nelson, of Evergreen, Colo., granddaughters Robyn (Gary) Glover, Arlington, Texas, Courtney Nelson (Conor Poul) Dallas, Texas, and grandsons Grayson, Jacob and Noah Glover, Fred and Leslie (Webb) Ellingson, Walnut Creek, Mariko and Jon Klopstock, San Ramon, and Bert Ellingson, Orinda, grandsons, Tyler Ellingson, Samuel and Shane Klopstock and several nieces and nephews. Services have been held. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to Mission Athletes International, attention Paul and Vickie Gizzi, or CMMML, Inc., c/o Daniel and Georgiana Eakins, P.O. Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762.

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Moraga Mediator Making Peace in the Community

By Sophie Braccini



Larry Beans in his Moraga home.

Photo Sophie Braccini

On any given weekday, you may find six people – two couples who live next to each other and two mediators from the Center for Human Development – sitting around an oval table in a quiet room. One of the six just might be Larry Beans of Moraga, a seasoned mediator who started practicing for the CHD more than 20 years ago.

Beans and his colleagues regularly find resolution and peace where there once was only dissent and anger, whatever the dispute – a fight over an obnoxious barking dog, or the growth of a row of trees that have begun to obstruct the view of one of the parties. Sometimes the parties involved in a dispute still talk to each other. Sometimes they can't bear to be in the same room.

Mediation is a voluntary process, Beans explains. "One party initiates the process by calling the CHD," he says. Someone in the office conducts

an intake interview to evaluate if the topic is something that could be resolved through mediation. Then they contact the other party to see if they will agree to mediation.

"We ask people to commit to three hours," says Beans. "We start by giving an overview of what we are going to do, and we set the ground rules, asking people to agree to stay civil during the process. We explain that we are not judges and that they will be in charge of the agreement they will come up with."

Beans remembers one case where three sisters were disputing who was going to be in charge of their mother's burial. "At some point, one of the parties bolted out of the room and my partner ran after them and was able to get them to come back," he remembers. Ultimately, an agreement was found that the three parties signed.

Beans started 20 years ago after participating in a 40-hour training

program. "I remember how impressed I was by the quality of the people I met. Some of them had mediated for years," remembers Beans. Then he was paired with a partner and started mediating local disputes. "I started with resolving disputes between neighbors (community mediation); then I started guardianship mediation," he says.

One of the keys to successful mediation, Beans says, is listening closely to each party, reiterating what he has heard them say, and digging for the details and the emotional roots of the issue. "We try to get to the emotions behind the scenes and explore them. We try to help them overcome the dynamics and the feelings. If you don't help them enough with their emotions, whatever solution is found may not be long lasting," he says, noting that community mediation has a 75 percent success rate. "At some point we try to get them to talk to each other, and explore how to continue to communicate," he says.

Beans is now mostly doing guardianship mediation.

"It is a court matter, but the judge requires that the family goes to mediation first to work out their differences," Beans explains. He says grandparents often initiate the procedure when they see parents unable to take care of the kids. "A teenager once came to mediation (teens over 14 can be part of the process), asking to go back to live with his uncle in Missouri instead of staying with his separated parents who both wanted him, but were constantly fighting," he remembers. The parents were not able to resolve their difficulties and the young man went to live with his uncle.

Over the years, Beans says that he

has developed his ability to listen and that his laid-back personality has helped. "We've had situations where at the end of the mediation the parties might get up and give each other a hug. That's a real success sign," he says with a smile.

Beans participates in one to two mediations a month.

"I do this to improve the relationships in the community," he says. "If

we can be a little more understanding, maybe it will make a difference in the world eventually. And it affects kids' lives. If you can work out something for them, then those kids have a better chance."

The Center for Human Development is offering a 30-hour community mediation training course starting April 23. For more information, visit <http://chdprevent.server283.com/>.

Miramonte Vandalism May Be Related to Moraga Incidents

By Chris Lavin



Miramonte High School principal Julie Parks points to boarded windows that were recently broken by vandals at the school.



Vandals recently broke bird guards and PVC piping at the Miramonte garden. Photos Andy Scheck

Vandalism to schools and other public places is not a common occurrence in Lamorinda, but this month turned out to be a bit of an exception. Twenty windows were broken at Orinda's Miramonte High School on three different nights between March 7 and March 14, while some businesses and signs in Moraga were also damaged in the same time period.

"We have reason to believe (all the incidents) might be related," said Orinda Police Chief Mark Nagel. "Moraga police are investigating as well, and we're working together."

Helping the investigation is the use of surveillance camera footage in several locations, Nagel said. At Miramonte, a camera on the roof pointed directly at the damaged area, which included the badly trampled portion of the school community garden, said Miramonte Principal Julie Parks. The

broken windows were in the science, arts and math wing, as well as one in the administrative offices.

No rocks were found in the area, "so we think someone was probably using a baseball bat or a skateboard to break the glass," said Parks. Because the glass in the windows is old – before tempered glass was typically used for public buildings – several classes had to be moved because of glass shards on the floor.

"What's really sad is the trampling of the garden," Parks said. "The students don't have that much time to work on it in the first place, because they are so busy, so this really sets them back." All the bird guards and PVC piping used to protect the gardens was broken, and seedlings and plants were trampled.

"Mainly, the students are really disappointed," Parks said. "This is a violation of their space."

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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Community Service

Party Puts Fun into Fundraising

Submitted by Elizabeth Siamas



From left: Audra Fraioli, Laura Lashinsky, Gina Hageboeck and Rachel Blatt
Photo provided

Proceeds from the Lafayette Juniors' Feb. 28 007 Casino Royale fundraising party supported the 2014-15 beneficiaries, including Ruby's

Place, Boys & Girls Club of Diablo Valley, Las Trampas, Trinity Center Walnut Creek, and VESTIA.

Troop 303 Honors Four New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Deb Sitzmann



From left: Will Gittings, Jack Brovelli, Gunnar Davison and Cole Wirtz Photo provided

Orinda Troop 303 announced that Will Gittings, Jack Brovelli, Gunnar Davison and Cole Wirtz have achieved Scouting's highest rank of Eagle Scout.

The achievement was celebrated Dec. 7, 2014 at Saint Stephens Episcopal Church. Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer presented each Eagle Scout with a proclamation noting their accomplishment and a "day in their honor."

To earn the rank of Eagle Scout a candidate must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges including 13 Eagle required badges, demonstrate leadership and complete a service project to benefit the community. During their scouting experience with troop 303 these four scouts accrued a total of 680 miles hiking, 227 nights camping and dedicated 352 hours to community service.

Jack Brovelli, a senior at Athenian School, installed a new 300-foot redwood rail fence with signage for St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Orinda to discourage illegal mulch dumping on the church property.

Gunnar Davison, a De La Salle High School senior, restored the playground for the Northern Light Charter School in Oakland. The 162 hours of work by scouts and friends with par-

ent oversight was coordinated by Davidsen and included the removal of all the old bark from the playground area.

Miramonte High School senior Will Gittings remodeled the rose garden at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School in Orinda. The remodel included replacing fence posts, framing, fencing, two gates, stairs, and parts of a retaining wall.

Cole Wirtz, also a Miramonte senior, recoated a playground black top surface and painted a 40-foot diameter map of the world on the surface for enjoyment of the kids at the Northern Light Charter School in Oakland. Due to the nature of working with asphalt sealant, and paint, his project took over 140 hours of work on eight separate visits, and involved the participation of 14 other scouts during these multiple work days.

These four young men join the less than 4 percent of all scouts who achieve Eagle Rank. Troop 303 meets every other Monday night at St. Stephens Episcopal Church. The troop has 65 scouts of all ages. To learn more about the troop visit www.bsatroop303.orinda.com or contact scoutmaster Jim Brovelli (925) 997-8437.

Documentary Screening Brings Baha'i Institute for Higher Education into Focus

Submitted by Chris Palmer



Audience members tweeted the Ayatollah for justice March 13 following a screening of "To Light a Candle" at Lafayette Library.
Photo provided

Approximately 80 people attended the Lafayette Library screening March 13 of journalist Maziar Bahari's new documentary, "To Light a Candle" – a film about Iran's Baha'is and their commitment to spreading knowledge. A panel discussion following the film included scholars Niknaz Aftahi and Fares Hedayati, Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) graduates who were accepted into the graduate schools of architecture and engineering, respectively, at UC Berkeley.

After Iranian authorities outlawed higher education for Baha'i youth in 1987, the community formed the BIHE, a highly innovative underground university. With standards so high that over 80 Western graduate schools (including UC) accept their credentials, according to Dr. Farhad

Sabetan, moderator of the panel, they also operate as a community, leaving no one behind.

Aftahi and Hedayati described their BIHE experience, recounting how classes were held in living rooms and basements, how they would arrive, singly or in pairs, over the course of an entire morning, so as not to attract attention, and would receive the most intensive education under the most primitive of conditions, returning to their towns and villages across the country to read and study.

According to Dr. Tina Edraki, of the Lafayette Baha'i community, instructors and students operate under constant threat of arrest and imprisonment and many languish in prison today.

The campaign "Education is not a Crime," under which the film was

shown, seeks to draw attention to BIHE and to the systematic persecution and resilience of the Baha'i community in Iran. It also seeks to expand the network of Western universities that recognize BIHE certificates.

The campaign's website, <http://www.educationisnotacrime.me> asks students to record and submit interviews reflecting on the theme of "Education is not a Crime," and to tweet Ayatollah Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani, to put them on notice that the world is watching. Several young audience members stayed after the presentation to record their reflections and to tweet authorities in Iran that "#educationisnotacrime." The event was sponsored by Lafayette's Baha'i community.

Community Service

Orinda Troop Honors Two New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Kim Laughton



Mark Laughton and Jack Kovalik Photo provided

Orinda Boy Scout Troop 237 held an Eagle Court of Honor on March 22 at the Orinda Community Church to honor two Eagle Scouts – Jack Kovalik and Mark Laughton. Both are graduating sen-

iors at Miramonte High School. Their scoutmaster is Eric Jorgensen.

For his Eagle service project, Kovalik sourced, funded and installed a trophy sports information case for the Miramonte High School men's baseball and women's softball teams. Laughton's Eagle service project involved painting and beautifying the blacktop play area at Markham Elementary School in Oakland in support of Playworks (www.playworks.org) to facilitate productive recess and after school programs at the school.

Baskets Galore Go to Good Cause

Submitted by Sue Renno



Photo provided

Lafayette United Methodist women recently filled Easter baskets with bunnies and candy to be given to 100 children served by the Contra Costa Food Bank. Lafayette dentist, Dr. Andrew Ferrier, supplied toothbrushes and CVS Moraga donated the baskets.

Junior Girl Scouts Learn Critical First Aid Skills

Submitted by Shirley DeFrancisci



Photo provided

Members of Junior Girl Scout Troop #31300 from Camino Pablo Elementary School in Moraga were recently taught critical first aid skills by healthcare experts and Moraga residents, Kim and Barry Sutherland. Kim Sutherland is a highly-experienced Neonatal Intensive Care Unit nurse at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland, and Barry Sutherland is the CEO of Norcal Ambulance.

The fifth-grade girls received a comprehensive tour of a state-of-the-art ambulance in the Norcal fleet. The brand new ambulance is one of the few of its kind in the Bay Area that can isolate a potential Ebola victim. In addition to practicing first aid, the girls learned how to perform life-saving compression breaths on CPR mannequins.

Cruciferous Crunch Makes This Salad Sing

By Susie Iventosch



Broccoli Salad with Turkey Bacon and Sharp Cheddar Photo Susie Iventosch

I have always loved broccoli salad, but you don't seem to find it in too many places. And, when you do, it usually has raisins, and sometimes mayonnaise or yogurt. I really love this recipe, because it uses a simple vinaigrette of olive oil and a combination of rice and cider vinegar. The cider vinegar gives it just a hint of sweetness, but it's not too sweet. The turkey bacon adds a salty touch and a bit of protein while the broccoli has such a good crunch! This salad travels well in lunch boxes, too.

In case you read the Thin Mint Brownie recipe from last week, please bake them at 350 degrees. I inadvertently omitted the oven temp!

INGREDIENTS

- 6-8 cups chopped fresh broccoli, including florets and stems (one large bunch)
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 slices turkey bacon
- 1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
- Dressing
 - ¼ cup unfiltered cider vinegar
 - ¼ cup rice vinegar
 - ½ cup olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon lemon pepper
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- Mix well in a jar with a tight-fitting lid.

DIRECTIONS

- Heat oil in a sauté pan and cook onions over medium-high heat, until beginning to get brown and crispy. Set aside and cool to room temperature.
- Cut broccoli into small, bite-sized pieces, including the florets as well as the stems. Put into a salad bowl.
- Heat bacon in microwave for about 2-3 minutes, until it starts to get crispy. (Turkey bacon is pre-cooked, so this is just to crisp it up a bit.) Break into small pieces. Toss in with broccoli.
- Add grated cheddar and toss all together with dressing.
- Serve at room temperature along with some yummy bread!

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.



Lynn's Top Five

Where Should I Retire?

By Lynn Ballou, CFP®

This month the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards has posted a lot of really helpful free information revolving around the theme of where to retire. This is a very timely topic in our community, and in my offices we spend quite a bit of time with clients these days thinking through choices. If you are one of the 10,000 baby boomers transitioning to retirement daily, here are some ideas for you to consider.

Aging in place. Many of us want to retire in the homes we live in as working adults. But there are two critical issues to think about: affordability and safety. Affordability can be thought of with respect to upkeep as well as tying up net worth that might be needed for your support during retirement. We need to think about the net value of our home and determine through careful retirement planning if we can afford to keep equity in our house or if it might instead be needed for our support. Regarding safety, we need to be realistic about the suitability and adaptability of our home to our changing physical needs.

Downsizing has its own challenges. It could be because of where your grandkids end up growing up or your need to live closer to essential services, but most of us will move out of the home we lived in while working and raising our children and downsize both financially and physically into a different living environment. Tackling this thoughtfully involves taking a realistic and non-sentimental view of all the potential costs and comparing them to other options. Collaborate with all your professionals to take into consideration

everything from the tax costs of a home sale to the monthly dues at a retirement community you might be eyeing.

Are you thinking about retirement-friendly areas? Moving close to children and grandchildren is great, but what if their communities are not set up for seniors? Everything from community centers to the religious community of your preference should be researched. And is it a walking town, friendly to slower-paced seniors? Or will you find transportation challenging and the pace geared to a much younger crowd? It sounds great to live in a vibrant community, but if it's all about the skinny jeans and never about the comfy shoes with great support, well ... I'm just saying!

Using the equity in our homes for support. When you analyze your future plans, think about long-term care needs. Do you have insurance? Is the equity in your home your long-term care policy, because in essence you are self-insuring by hoping to tap into it at some time in the future? And if so, you have choices about how to do that. Leaving no stone unturned in this vein, you might end up considering everything from an outright sale to financing the equity out to help pay for your living expenses, including costs for your care.

Essential Services for retirees. Living a peaceful life in a cabin in the woods sounds amazing, but what happens if you get sick? Or if you develop a chronic medical condition that involves regular trips to not just a local doctor, but a specialist that might not practice nearby? Don't forget to think about levels of medical care and proximity to good med-

ical services. And if you belong to an organization such as Kaiser, be sure they have facilities in your retirement community. If not, check out what coverage is available in your targeted area and if you can find the depth of medical services you might need. You also need to be sure that, as you age, you can find local help with everything from gardening and cleaning your home, to physical assistance.

As the CFP board ambassador for the Bay Area, I'm always happy to share their many resources. Their general website is chock full of free information and helpful links. You can access it at www.letsmakeaplan.org. Also, here is the link to their blog that all the CFP board ambassadors post to from time to time: http://letsmakeaplan.org/blog. Happy planning!



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional and co-owner of Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisory (RIA) firm in Lafayette. Lynn is also a Registered Principal and Branch Manager with LPL Financial (LPL). The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Financial Planning offered through Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, A Registered Investment Advisor and a separate entity. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

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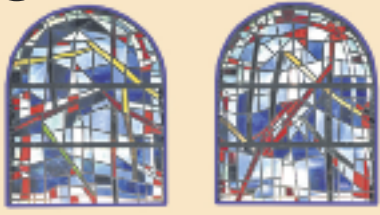
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Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 29 Worship at 10:00 am
Maundy Thursday, April 2 Service at 7:00 pm
in the Sanctuary

Easter, April 5 Sunrise Service at 7:30 am
in the Olive Grove

Worship at 10:00 am in the Sanctuary

Children and families... Please join us following worship at our children's table, where we will have special treats and crafts. We look forward to seeing you there!

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682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

Lafayette United Methodist Church



955 Moraga Rd., Lafayette
284-4765, office@thelumc.org, thelumc.org

Worship	Sunday	10 am
Children & Teen Faith Formation	Sunday	10 am
Teen Fellowship	Sunday	6 pm

Opportunities for Worship, Love, Service

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

ART

Bedford Gallery's next exhibition, "The Object and the Void: West Coast Metal Sculpture," will run through April 12. This show gathers works from renowned artists Bella Feldman, Linda Fleming, Yoshitomo Saito and Clay Jensen. The exhibition will feature both large and small scale works, made using techniques from cast bronze to cut steel, demonstrating the artists' masterful command of their media.

The exhibit "Lamorinda Under Glass," featuring watercolor landscapes by Moraga resident George Ehrenhaft, depicts local sites including Saint Mary's College, Mt. Diablo, the Lafayette Reservoir, Orinda's Lake Cascade, scenes along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail and several surprising lesser-known local places. The exhibit will be open during library hours through March 31. For details, call (925) 376-6852.

MUSIC

The Contra Costa Performing Arts Society will present an evening concert featuring music by Mozart, Liszt, Barber, Debussy and modern classical Czech composer Bohuslav Martinu starting at 7:30 on April 14. The program of classical music will be performed by solo pianists Virginia Bigelow and Charles Lee as well as violinist Christiana Carr, violist Julie Athayde, and cellist Arlene Lee who comprise the string trio delivering the Trio a Cordes by Martinu. The concert will be held at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd. in Walnut Creek. Admission is free and donations to support young musician scholarships are appreciated.

THEATER

DVC Drama presents the Steve Martin comedy, "Picasso," at the Lapin Agile through March 29. On an October evening in 1904, Albert Einstein and Pablo Picasso end up at the same small bar in Paris—the Lapin Agile. The two young geniuses, joined by an eccentric cast of characters, spar over art and science, their respective libidos, where inspiration comes from, and the promise and dreams of the 20th century. For tickets and show times call (925) 969-2358 or visit www.dvcdrama.net. Free parking for all performances.

Crosslight Theater will kick off its first production since being formed in January 2015 by the merger of Contra Costa Christian Theater and Center Stage of Diablo Valley with "Seussical the Musical". This imaginative, energetic, engaging production features the singing, dancing and acting talents of 30 local actors and is sure to delight adults and children alike. Crosslight Theater will showcase its 2015 production of "Seussical" for seven shows over two weekends in April at Walnut Creek's Del Valle Theater, located at 1630 Tice Valley Blvd. For tickets and showtimes visit www.crosslighttheater.org or www.lesherartscenter.org.

The University of California Alumni Chorus and Smuin Ballet will present Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" for one evening only at the Berkeley Community Theater, 1930 Allston Way (one block west of Downtown Berkeley BART), at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 11. Bawdy, irreverent and satirical, Orff's "Carmina Burana" is a piece for all the senses. Based on 24 poems from the medieval collection of the same name, it is among the most often programmed and popular choral works of our time. Tickets are priced at \$50, \$40 and \$30, and are available at brownpapertickets.com. For more information, go to the U.C. Alumni Chorus website, www.ucac.net or the Smuin Ballet website at www.smuinballet.org.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Mac Barnett has written a new book, "The Terrible Two," with his friend Jory John. The authors will discuss their work be at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26 at the Lafayette Library.

Nutrition-Revitalize Your Menu – a free community lecture with Cynthia Allen, RN, from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 31 at Lafayette Physical Therapy, 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite B110, Lafayette. Seating is limited so please call (925) 284-6150 to RSVP and reserve your seat. For info, visit www.LafayettePT.com.

Prostate Cancer: MRI Fusion Changes the Game from 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 8 at the Piedmont Community Hall, 711 Highland Ave., Piedmont. Join a panel of prostate cancer specialists as they explain the emerging and important role of multiparametric MRI for prostate cancer patients. A Q&A session will follow the presentation. Space is limited and advanced registration is recommended. Free admission and refreshments. To register, call Diablo Valley Oncology (925) 677-5041 x272 or visit www.dvohmg.com.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

The Friends of the Lafayette Library Bookmark Contest is happening again! The contest is open to all Lafayette students, grades K-8. Entry forms will be available at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, at Friends Corner Book Shop, and at school libraries for Lafayette School District and St. Perpetua School students. The entry deadline is Friday, March 27. Winners will receive a gift certificate from The Storyteller Bookstore and complimentary framing of their bookmarks at Fast-frame of Lafayette. For more info, contact Mary Ransdell at mbransdell@comcast.net.

Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center is holding its 18th Annual Art and Writing Challenge for Contra Costa County middle and high school students and is encouraging all students to participate. This year's topic: "We Who Believe In Freedom Cannot Rest Until It Comes." Submission deadline is April 3. Monetary awards will be presented to the winners and their families at an awards dinner on Saturday, May 9 at Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek. For detailed information on the topic, contest rules and award amounts, please go to www.creatingpeacefulschools.weebly.com or call the Center office (925) 933-7850.

Bunny Brunch from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 4 at the Lafayette Community Center, Live Oak Room located at 480 St Mary's Rd. in Lafayette. Enjoy a complete pancake brunch, live show, egg hunt and more. Tickets: \$8 per person by April 3; \$10 per person on day of event (unless sold out). Online ticket sales accepted until April 3 at www.LafayetteRec.org. For more info, call (925) 284-2232.

The Community Egg Scramble at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 4 at Lafayette Plaza Park (near the Park Theater) is open to all kids up through second grade. Presented by the Rotary Club of Lafayette and E. Bunny.

Orinda Spring Egg Hunt at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 4 at the Orinda Community Center.

Take a photo with the Easter Bunny between noon and 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 4 at Moraga's Rheem Valley Shopping Center. Bring your own camera. The session is free with coupon available to print at www.rheemvalley.net.

2015 Poul Anderson Writing Contest - open to all students who reside and/or attend high school in Orinda. Entry categories are science fiction, essay/memoir, poetry and short story. Students may submit one entry in any of the four categories for a total of not more than three entries. Submission deadline is noon on Friday, April 17. If you have any questions about the contest, email contest@friendsoftheorindalibrary.com.

Wildlife/Earth Day Festival from noon to 4:30 p.m. on April 19 at the Nature Area of Wagner Ranch Elementary School, 350 Camino Pablo in

Orinda. Entertainment by an Earth Tribute Band and student musicians, photo contest (info at fwma.org), participate in arts and crafts, live raptors for viewing and education, bee display, student recycling projects, solar project displays and more. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. This is a free event, but donations are gladly accepted and benefit the educational programs of the Orinda Union School District.

OTHER

Orinda Rotary Club supports Hospice Thrift Shoppes Donation Drive through April 1. Support Rotary Club of Orinda and Hospice Thrift Shoppes by donating new or gently used items. No electronics please. Items can be dropped off in Orinda at Mechanics Bank, 77 Moraga Way or Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante Road. For info, call Sue Breedlove at (925) 254-6262 or Steve Paddock (925) 254-0393.

The Elfenworks Center for Responsible Business at Saint Mary's College of California is hosting a half-day conference on Business and the Challenges of Inequality from 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 27 to bring together people in academe, business, government and the general public to engage in a thoughtful dialog on this topic. Tickets: \$20 for general public; \$10 Saint Mary's alumni; free for current faculty and students. For more details and to RSVP, visit http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/business-and-the-challenges-of-inequality.

Lafayette Hiking Group will hike Bear Valley to Arch Rock, Point Reyes National Seashore. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot out from Lafayette BART's main entrance on Saturday, March 28. We form carpools to the trailhead. Bring lunch, water, layered clothing, good walking shoes, sun protection and money to contribute toward gas, bridge tolls and parking (\$5). Distance: 8 miles, moderate. Leaders: Chester and Liz Jung. For info, email LafayetteHiking@comcast.net.

Community Concern for Cats weekend adoption event from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 28 and 29, at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information, visit www.communityconcernforcats.org.

USA Synchro will host the 2015 U.S. National Synchronized Swimming Championships April 1-4 at SODA Aquatic Center in Moraga. Around 30 teams from all over the country, including two international teams, Canada and Puerto Rico, will travel to Moraga to compete. The championship will consist of solo, duet, team and combination events. The championship will also feature the 2015 U.S. Senior National Team. Find out more, including a schedule, at www.usasynchro.org.

Lamorinda Village launch event celebrating the opening of Lamorinda Village from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on Monday, April 6 at Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall. Light refreshments will be served. For info, visit www.LamorindaVillage.org.

Second annual Dogtown Downtown from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 11. Dog Parade at 10 a.m. from the Lafayette Plaza Park to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. In addition to the parade there will be demonstrations, exhibits and contests.

The Orinda Starlight Village Players (ORSVP) is holding season auditions at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 12 at the Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater and at 7 p.m. Monday, April 13 in the Orinda Community Center carpentry room. You will be asked to read from scripts provided. For more information call Jill at (925) 528-9225 or email info@orsvp.org.

... continued on next page

please...



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OTHER ... continued

Remember, Renew and Refill – a Journey Through Grief. This workshop and luncheon to honor lost loved ones will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 18 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. Opening and Closing Speakers will be Dianne West, executive director of Moraga Royale, and author Diane Shore; breakout sessions will be led by Jeffrey Ismael, bereavement services manager for Vitas Hospice, and Marilyn Hunt, LMFT. No charge, but reservations are requested: (925) 376-4800 x285 or www.mvpctoday.org.

Annual Moraga Beautiful event will be held rain or shine Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at Moraga Commons Park. Volunteers should meet at the park and wear old clothes for weeding and the beautification of the park picnic benches. The Town will supply gloves, brushes and stain. Individuals and groups welcome! Call (925) 888-7045 for more information.

◆ **Not to be missed** ◆

Registrations are being accepted for the Moraga Classic Car Show. Area residents who own classic cars are invited to participate in the 7th annual Moraga Classic Car Show, which takes place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 9 as part of the 2015 Moraga Community Faire. The \$30 registration fee includes an entry ribbon, lunch for two, a commemorative photo and a chance for owners to display their restoration work to the public. Prizes will be awarded. The registration deadline is May 1. To register, go to www.moragachamber.org/faire or call Gloria at (925) 247-4473 or Jason at (925) 788-3889.

starts offered for sale to the Lamorinda backyard gardener. For information, contact curtinm@gmail.com.

Fourth Annual Contra Costa Master Gardener Great Tomato Plant Sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 4 and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 11 at “Our Garden,” the Contra Costa Master Gardeners’ demonstration garden at N. Wiget Lane and Shadelands Drive, Walnut Creek. Experts will be on hand to provide advice about plant selection, site location and preparation, planting, fertilizing, pruning and harvesting. For info, visit <http://ccmg.ucanr.edu>.

SENIORS

Sons In Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St., Moraga. Social hour 11 a.m.; lunch at noon. The after-lunch speaker on April 1 will be John Brisco, distinguished lawyer, author and noted raconteur who will talk about the law of the sea, and some land and water use highlights in California and nationally. He will also have some comments about good food (he wrote a book on Tadish Restaurant) and wine. For membership information, call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

The Lafayette Garden Club will meet from 9:30 a.m. to noon Thursday, April 9 in the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., and will feature Rosemary Loveall presenting “Companion Planting with Herbs.” Loveall is owner of Morningsun Herb Farm in the countryside of Vacaville. With degrees in both forestry and environmental horticulture, she operates this specialty nursery where she propagates and sells over 600 varieties of herbs and many unusual landscape perennials. For info, email cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

Sons In Retirement - Branch 116 welcomes guests to socialize at monthly luncheons beginning at 11:30 a.m. Monday, April 20 at Walnut Creek Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive. The speaker, Jane Kreidler, outreach coordinator, Contractors State License Board, will share her experiences to help seniors recognize scams and provide steps to proactively resist fraud. Lunch is \$15. Guest are welcome. For reservations, call (925) 322-1160.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its general meeting at 9:30 a.m. Monday, April 13 at the Gardens at Heather Farm at 1540 Marchbanks Road in Walnut Creek. Kathleen Elliot, landscape designer and horticulturist, will share information on olives and lavender at Hillcrest Ranch. For more info, email mslittle44@gmail.com.

Montelindo Garden Club Meeting will be at 9 a.m. Friday, April 17 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. James (Doc) Hale, a wildlife biologist, naturalist and ethno biologist will discuss wildlife in the East Bay. For info, visit montelindogarden.com. Visitors welcome.

GARDEN

Moraga Gardens Farm Annual Plant Sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, March 28 through April 19, 1290 Moraga Way (between the fire station and School Street). Many varieties of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, herb

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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Service Clubs Announcements



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.

A global volunteer organization working to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.

 <p>Please join us at our new location THE LAFAYETTE PARK HOTEL on Friday mornings at 7am. For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com</p>	
<p>March 27: Lamorinda Sunrise's own Ernie Furtado will "Expose Himself". Ernie is the SVP and Chief Accounting and Compliance Officer for Textainer Group Holdings Ltd.</p>	<p>April 3: Our speaker will be Jency James Recycling Coordinator from Republic Services. Jency majored in Environmental Studies at Saint Mary's College.</p>
<p><i>Please join us for a great speaker and breakfast!!</i></p>	

Lafayette Rotary Club

Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting.
Thursday at noon Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

<p>April 2: Norma Bishop from Lindsay Wildlife Museum will be our speaker.</p>	<p>April 9: We will meet at the new Merill Garden Retirement Homes, 1010 2nd St, Lafayette for a tour and lunch.</p>
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www.rotarylafayette.org

SOROPTIMIST OF 24/680



"Improving the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment"

Please join us for our next meeting:

WHEN: Wednesday, April 1st
Social 5:30-6:00 p.m.
Meeting 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

WHERE: The Buttercup Grill
660 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek.

For more information, contact:
Regina Englehart @925-876-9076
or go to: sorooptimist24-680.org

M-O-R-A-G-A Well-Represented at County Spelling Bee

Submitted by Shirley DeFrancisci

Moraga schools held spelling bees over the past two months and four students were named as the top spellers after several grueling rounds of correctly spelling words that most adults would have difficulty spelling.

Ashley Cloza, a fourth grader, took Rheem Elementary School's top spelling honor as her peers watched and applauded during their school's longest spelling bee on record, which went into "overtime" and lasted one hour. Participants were armed with special "mustache power" bracelets to give them extra confidence during the competition.

At Camino Pablo Elementary, spelling bee participants were introduced to an adoring crowd like rock stars as they took the stage with the Olympics theme song in the background. Tyler Garcia, a fifth grader, won with the tricky herb and homonym, "thyme." Tyler was an active participant during the lunchtime practice sessions leading up to the big day.

At Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, the winning word, "apocalypse," was spelled by Jeffrey Brown, a seventh grader who won from a panel of 27 students from all grade levels, sixth through

eighth. Jeffrey then went on to score in the top half of all spellers at the county competition.

Los Perales Elementary School students experienced déjà vu as they cheered on their classmate, Sarah Yuan, a fourth grader who won the Bee for the second year in a row. There were 17 other participants. Sarah coincidentally won the LP contest with the same word that won at JM, "apocalypse," and then she spelled "osculate." Sarah came in 11th place in the County Bee.

The Moraga School District has much to be proud of with these local spelling champs.



Los Perales Elementary School winner Sarah Yuan with principal Amy Black Photos provided



Camino Pablo Elementary School winner Tyler Garcia with principal Tom Rust



Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School winner Jeffrey Brown at the County Bee. (Not pictured, Rheem Elementary School winner Ashley Cloza.)

Lamorinda Weekly

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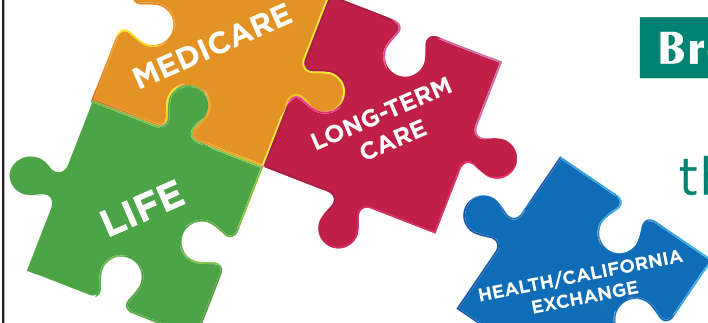
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LAMORINDA SPORTS

To the State Finals!

Campo advances to the CIF Division III state title game

By Michael Sakoda



Scott Chen

The Campolindo boys' basketball team advanced to the CIF Division III title game after sneaking past Drake, 50-44, in the Regional finals on March 21. They will face Damien (28-5, No. 8 in CA) of La Verne, the winners of the SoCal bracket, at Haas Pavilion in Berkeley March 27.

In the match-up against Drake, the game had a slow start.

Trailing 17-18 in the second quarter, senior captain Scott Chen found Sean Yamamoto who knocked down a three. Moments later, Chen stole a Drake pass, split free throws, and gave the Cougars a 21-18 lead with 1:16 in the half.

Campolindo clung to a 23-22 lead at the half. "We average 23 a quarter," said head coach Matt Watson of the slow pace. "It felt like it was going to be whoever's going to make a shot first."

Drake hit back-to-back three-pointers to start the third, taking a 28-25 lead, and it was time for the big man to go to work. The third quarter belonged to senior captain and DFAL Player of the Year Chris Hansen, who scored six straight for the Cougars and eight of his game-high 22 in the period.

"He's been unbelievable all year," said Watson of his 6'7" center. Hansen also had 17 rebounds in the game.

With 4:12 left in the game, Campo led 39-38, and Chen blew past three Pirate defenders, scoring a basket and finding himself at the line again. He finished the three-point play, and it looked as if Campo might finally pull away.

The Pirates responded to take a 44-42 lead with 2:25 to play.

"It felt like that was a big momentum shift," said Watson. "I [told] the guys, 'We didn't lose anything yet, all we have to do is get the ball to the big man and let him go to work.'"

Yamamoto split a pair of free throws with 2:06 left, cutting Drake's lead to 44-43, and then the Cougars defense buckled down.

Chen stripped a Pirates' guard, and Austin Clarke split another pair of free throws on the extra possession. Tied at 44, with 1:04 left, Clarke grabbed Campo's second steal in the final two minutes, and Hansen knocked down two free throws, giving Campo the lead with 37 seconds left to play.

"We knew we had the fouls to give, so we were being very aggressive (on defense)," said Watson.

Campo forced three turnovers in the final two minutes, propelling the Cougars to a 50-44 win.

Campolindo's Run to the Finals a Team Effort

By Conrad Bassett



Sean Smith



Chris Hansen

Photos Gint Federas

After a run that ended in the NCS semifinals, the Campolindo boys' basketball team rebounded in the California Interscholastic Northern California Division III tournament.

With a No. 2 seed, Campolindo drew a bye in the first round and then defeated Sacred Heart Cathedral 79-65 on March 14 to advance to the NorCal semifinal against Sierra (Manteca) on March 17.

The Cougars took their first lead 12-11 in the game behind senior Chris Hansen's put back with 3:18 to go in the first. Campo ended the period on

an 8-0 run highlighted by senior Tiger Garcia's put back with one second left.

Campo led 39-29 at intermission. The Cougars built a 54-40 lead at the end of three. Sierra rallied in the fourth quarter.

With 4:03 to go in the game, Hansen fouled out. Campo led 59-53, but Sierra seemed primed to make a game ending run. However, junior Austin Clarke hit back-to-back three pointers within 37 seconds, bringing the crowd to its feet.

After Hansen went out, head

coach Matt Watson explained his strategy. "Once we ran the double reverse offense we knew Austin would either get the 6-8 center guarding him on the perimeter so he could exploit him for a layup or he would get a 5-7 guard trying to stop him shooting the 3. The 'three' prevailed."

The Cougars went on to win 73-61. Watson was pleased with the team effort. "Sean Smith ran the point guard position to perfection as well as senior Scott Chen running the low block and exploiting their team's defense."



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Mats Fall to Rival St. Mary's-Stockton in NorCal Final

By Spencer Silva



Sabrina Ionescu Photo Gint Federas

After a battle through the CIF Open Division, Miramonte's season came to an end in the Regional finals. The Mats (30-3) fell to the St. Mary's Rams (33-1) 67-58 on March 21 at the Sleep Train Arena.

Despite the loss, Miramonte head coach Kelly Sopak was proud of the work his team had put in throughout the long season. "We put a lot of work from November to where we're at today, the schedule we put together, and the level of competition we played. We just got better as the season went along," Sopak said.

The Mats got off to a slow start, adjusting to

the full-court press employed by St. Mary's. The Rams doubled, and often triple-teamed, Miramonte guard Sabrina Ionescu. In the words of St. Mary's coach Tom Gonsalves, "We tried to limit her touches and make someone else beat us."

The Rams came out firing early, jumping out to a 44-29 lead at the half on the back of eight three-pointers. The Mats then went on an 8-0 run to begin the second half, only for St. Mary's to counter back with a 14-0 run of their own.

"They have a lot of firepower and they just keep coming at you," said Miramonte coach Kelly Sopak.

It was the second time in as many seasons the Mats faced the Rams in the postseason. In the first round of the 2014 tournament, they beat them by a 15-point margin.

"(St. Mary's) has always been our rival," said Miramonte standout Sabrina Ionescu. "We knew what we were getting into and they knew what they were getting into."

Keana Delos Sanots led all scorers with 17 points and 11 rebounds. Forward Uriah Howard and Ionescu both chipped in 11 points and 12 rebounds.

The Mats will return all of their starters in 2016 and believe the experience of playing on the big stage will serve them well for next season.

"The new people grow from the experience and learn how competitive it is, how every opportunity we have, we have to grow from and learn from it," Ionescu explained. "I think it's going to help us next year."

Miramonte and Acalanes Postseason Ends in State Finals

By Karl Buscheck



Rachelle Louie



Brooke Panfili Photos Gint Federas

It's been a banner year for Lamorinda girls' high school hoops. Miramonte rolled through the early rounds of the Open Division State Championship, while Acalanes advanced to the semifinals of the Division III tournament.

The Mats began the team's run by edging Pinewood 57-52 in an overtime home win on March 13. Sophomore forward Rachelle Louie starred for Miramonte, scoring 16 points to help the Mats hold off a furious late charge.

In the semifinals, Miramonte topped St. Ignatius 67-55 on March 17. The Mats led wire-to-wire, but it was an eight-point run to start the final quarter that sealed the win.

"The first three minutes of the fourth quarter, that's the difference between whether someone's going to come and play with you or whether they might just go away," said head coach Kelly Sopak. "So, that's been an emphasis all year. It was great to see us actually do it."

Sabrina Ionescu had a characteristically big night, as the junior guard racked up 26 points and 14 rebounds while playing every minute. As Sopak explained, the entire team just has a knack for coming through when it matters most. "For a young group, they step up in the big games," he said.

Acalanes also stepped up in a big way during the 2014-2015 season. A year removed

from an 11-15 finish, the squad reached the semifinals in the Division III State Championship.

"It was definitely a huge accomplishment for us," said head coach Chad Wellon. "The girls bought into the program and having that year of experience under their belts was huge."

After earning a bye in the first round, the Dons took down Shasta 62-57 at home on March 14. A lot of the credit for that result goes to sophomore Brooke Panfili.

"She went nuts in the fourth quarter," said Wellon, after the guard scored 14 points in a row.

Panfili wasn't the only Don who provided major contributions throughout the postseason. Sophomore forward Emma Godfrey dominated the boards, while junior guard Julia Lyons and sophomore forward Roni Marrone stood out as the defensive stars.

On March 17, Acalanes ran up against the No. 1 seed Vanden in a road clash, and lost 75-44. The defeat ended the Dons' season, but the team was able to put the loss in perspective.

"You're not guaranteed to get back to this position next year," said Wellon. "So, I just really wanted them to enjoy the moment, which I think they all did."

Middle School Madness

Submitted by Judy McNeil



From left: George Ekmekjian, coach Daryl Utter, Peter O'Donnell, Kellen Clancy, Alex Metz, Rex Curtiss and Lucas Nomura. Not pictured: Chase Peterson.

After a tough 0-7 season, Joaquin Moraga's seventh grade boys' basketball team caught fire and won three straight games to take

first place in the Piedmont Tournament. They won their division after beating Stanley in the final with a last minute free throw.

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Saint Mary's Tops Hawaii in Overtime Thriller in WNIT Opening Round

By Karl Buscheck



Carly Turner



Shannon Mauldin

Photos Tod Fierner

After earning a berth for the WNIT, Saint Mary's faced a tough opponent in the first round. Saint Mary's escaped with a 92-88 overtime win against Hawaii on March 20 after watching an 18-point second-half lead vanish.

"It was a battle out there," said head coach Paul Thomas after his squad survived the late scare to move onto the second round of the Women's NIT. "I think this team is motivated. I think they want to continue playing."

Saint Mary's led throughout the first half and took a 36-28 edge into the break at McKeon Pavilion. The

Gaels stormed out of the locker room, opening up a commanding 50-32 advantage just five minutes into the second half.

With the Gaels seemingly cruising, Hawaii began to slowly claw back into the game, cutting the deficit to single digits with just under five minutes to go.

"They hit some shots. Got some momentum and started playing downhill," said Thomas. "And it was funny because that's what we told our players. We had to play downhill."

In the closing seconds of regulation, the Warriors tied up the score at

75-75 to send the game to overtime.

"I'll give them all the credit for coming back, but I was super pleased our kids did not lose their focus in overtime, kept to the game plan and knew we had to get to the free throw line and that's what we did."

During overtime, Saint Mary's demonstrated remarkable poise, as a parade of Gaels drained 16 of 19 free throws to hold off the surging Warriors.

"I think that's the kids we have," said Thomas. "They have that composure. And they have that composure because we practice pressure free throws probably every single

day. They have that composure because that's the kind of kids they are. I believe they are built that way. That's their makeup."

Freshman guard Stella Beck sank four consecutive free throws in overtime, while freshman guard Carly Turner hit six of seven on the night, and junior guard Lauren Nicholson was 10-12 from the line on her way to scoring 23 points.

Nobody was more clutch than junior guard Shannon Mauldin, who contributed a career-high 32 points. "I think she just continues to improve," said Thomas. "She did a phenomenal job of just playing

under control."

With the win, Saint Mary's earned the right to host Fresno State on March 23 at 7 p.m. in the tournament's second round. The two teams met back in December when the Bulldogs emerged with a 60-56 win. Thomas appreciates that it will be a challenging matchup, but he also appreciates how important it is that the team will be playing in Moraga this time around.

"I know we'll be prepared, and we're very grateful and very pleased that the game is at home. That makes a difference. We get a chance to play in front of our home crowd again."

Saint Mary's Bows Out of NIT in Opening Round

By Karl Buscheck



Brad Waldow

Photo Tod Fierner

For Saint Mary's, the final game of the year was a microcosm of

the season. On March 18, in the opening round of the NIT, the Gaels

jumped out to a fast start, but ultimately couldn't keep up.

"I feel like we just ran out of gas towards the end of the season," said senior forward Brad Waldow after the team lost 75-64 to Vanderbilt at McKeon Pavilion on March 18. Waldow had a big night, grabbing 13 boards and contributing 12 points to move into fourth place on the school's all-time scoring list.

On the year, Saint Mary's posted a 21-10 record, but the squad was on the wrong side of the score line in its final three contests.

"It's tough to finish with three losses in a row," said head coach Randy Bennett. "That hurt us. You don't like going out like that. You remember seasons how you finish. So, that leaves a bad taste in our mouth, but the overall body of work [was] pretty good."

The night began promisingly, as Saint Mary's claimed a 19-12 lead after 10 minutes of play. The Commodores then proceeded to rip off a 10-0 run, and the visitors never looked back.

The shots weren't falling for the hosts, and it didn't help that Saint Mary's failed to protect the ball. "The first half we had 10 turnovers," said Bennett. "And that was pretty much the difference in the game."

The Gaels also ran up against a quality opponent: "We brought it. We just got beat by a team that was better than us tonight," said Bennett. "They're playing like an NCAA tournament team right now. We've seen a few."

Forward Garrett Jackson led the way with 23 points and Bennett was impressed with the senior both on the court and off it. "I thought Garrett

made some huge strides as a player. I was really proud of what he's done. Unselfish as a leader. Not many guys come as far as he has."

The playoffs lasted just one game, but it was the eighth year in a row that Saint Mary's earned a post-season berth. "It's hard to do," said Bennett of the accomplishment. "I want those guys to understand that. For them to get into the NIT, it's tough."

With seniors like Jackson and Waldow departing, keeping that streak alive now falls to the young players. "Who's going to be the guys who step up and be your all-league type players because we need those," said Bennett. "I could guess who they are, but they haven't done it. They got to do it. We just got to pound the rock. Work hard. And, I think, we will."

MBA Box Scores

Submitted by Kat Panos

Mustang Division

Feb. 28

Cardinals 22, Yankees 3

Cardinals - Dashiell Weaver 2-3, 2B, 2 RBI's; Miles O'Conner 2-3, 3B, 3 RBI's; Will Cook 2-3, 3B, 2B, 3RBI's; Charlie Lopez 2-3, 2B, 2 RBI's; Jules Frippiat 3-3, 2RBI's.

Yankees - Tim Daugherty 1-2, 1B; Dylan Rusconi 1-2, 1B; Scotty Linden 1-2, 3B, 2 RBI's

Giants 4, Rangers 0

Giants - Andrew Pan 2-2, 3 RBI's; Landon Fly 1-3, HR, RBI; Adrian Blumberg 2 IP, 6 K's.

Ranger - Scott Lyon 1-2; Jason Runkel 1-2; Justin Rodriguez 1 IP, 3 K's.

March 7

Yankees 8, Giants 3

Yankees - Cooper Lenahan 2-2, HR, RBI; Isaiah Ortiz 2-2, RBI; Scott Linden 2-1, Tim Daugherty 2-1; Isaiah Ortiz 2 IP, 4 K's; Scott Linden 1 IP, 3K's; Brendan Comerford 2 IP, 1K

Giants - Logan Robeson 2-2, RBI; Andrew Pan 1 - 2, RBI; Luke Olsen 3-1, RBI; Landon Fly 1.2 IP, 3K's

March 14

White Sox 4, Cardinals 2

White Sox - Evan Olson 2 -2, 3B, 2 RBI, 2R, 2IP, 6K; Justin Meyers 1-2, 3B, 1R, 1.2IP, 3K, 0 ER; Liam Johnson 2SB, 1R, 2IP, 4K, 0 ER

Cardinals - Miles O'Connor 1 -3, 2B, 2IP, 3K; Ryan Sintchak 2IP, 4K, 0 ER; Dashiell Weaver 4SB, 2R, 1IP, 2K.

A's 5, Yankees 2

A's - Lucas Concepcion 2 IP 0 ER, 3-3; Jack Harper 1 IP 3 K, 2-3; Charlie Hill 2 IP, 2-3

Yankees - Isaiah Ortiz 2 IP, 5 K, 1-1; Tim Doherty 1-2 RS; Dylan Rusconi 1-2 RS

Pirates 12, Giants 10

Pirates - Douglas Ellery 3-4, 3 RBI's; Andrew Moon 2-2, 3 RBI's, Joey Cecchin 2 for 4, James Giordani 2 for 3, Ryder Conrad 2 for 3.

Giants Highlights: Andrew Pan 2 for 3 4 RBI's; Logan Robeson 2 for 3; 3 RBI's, Landon Fly 2 for 3; 1 RBI, Adrian Blumberg 2 for 4, 1 RBI.

March 17

White Sox:

Ben Marston: 2-for-2, 2 RBI, Run Barrett Dellamar: 1-for-1, BB, 2 Runs Griffen Bartis: 1-for-2

Evan Olsen: 1 IP with 2 Ks, 0 ER

Pirates:

Joey Cecchin: 3-for-3, 2 Runs. 2 IP with 5Ks, 1 ER

Andy Moon: 2-for-3, 2B, 3 RBI

Pinto Division

Feb. 28

Cardinals 15, A's 9

Cardinals Highlights - Joe Revelos 3-3, 3 2B, 3RS; Jack Meridian 3-3, 3RBI's, 2RS; Crosby Kelly 2-3, 3B, 2 RBI.

A's Highlights - Oliver Fetzko 3-3, 2

RBI, 3 RS, 2 2B; Colin Rutzen 3-3, 1RS; Justin Nagayama 3-3, 1 RBI, 1 RS

Yankees 15, Cubs 10

Yankees Highlights - Avery Jules 2-3 1B, 2B 2 RS; Andrew Vaughn 2-3 1B, 2B, 1 RBI; Carson Rossi 1-3, 3B, 1RBI

Cubs Highlights: Jonathan Wang 2-3, 1B, 3B 2 RBI's; Lucas Cano 2-3, 1B, 2B 1 RBI; Liam Nyhan 1-3 1B, 1 RBI, 1 RS

March 7

Giants 17, Cubs 6

Giants - Grace Rich 2 1B, 3 RBI; Drew Defrancisci 1B, 2 2B, 3 RBI; Brendan Baldelli 4- 5, 4 1B; Levi Olsen 4-4, 3 1B, 1 2B; Cubs - Jonathan Wang 3-3 1B, 2B, 3B; Ryan Lee 2 1B, RBI; Teo Spiropulo 1B, 2B, 3 RBI.

Athletics 17, Yankees 9

Athletics - Ty Madsen 4-4, 2 2B, 2 RS, 4 RBI's; Bradley Schoenberger 3-4, 2B, 2 RS, 3 RBI's; Colin Rutzen 3-4, 2 RS.

Yankees - William Myers 3-3, 2B, 2 RBI's; Quinn Flanagan 3-3, 3 RS; Andrew Vaughn 2-3, 2B, 2 RBI's.

March 9

Red Sox 22, Cardinals 4

Red Sox - Luke McLeod 3-4, 5 RBI's; Cole Fischer 3-4, 2RBI's, 2R; Luke Bonardi 4-4, 4 RBI, 3 2B

Cardinals - Gunnar Chapman 2-3, 2B, 2R; James Erickson 2-3, RBI; Owen Ludwig 2-3

March 14

Cardinals 11, Cubs 10

Cardinals - Joe Revelos 4-4, 3 2B, 2 RBI; Jack Moradian 4-4, 4 RBI, 3 RS; Lucas Cano 2-3

Cubs - Max Robeson 3-4, 4 RBI; Teo Spirolio 3-3, 1 RS

Red Sox 21, Athletics 10

League Champions

Submitted by Jon Zuber



Photo provided

The U10 Magic girls' soccer team won the San Ramon Futsal League title on March 8 with a hard battled 8-5 victory over the SR

Supergirls. The Magic girls took control with great ball handling, passing and some rocket shots on goal.

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CYO Champs

By Hector Chao



Back row, from left: Hector Chao, Tate Nelson, James Frye, Mike Kostolansky, Marco Chao, Noah Deitrick, Matt Nelson; Front row: Jack Wood, Kyle White, Harry Llewellyn, Will Stryker, Luke Souza

St. Perpetua's fifth grade boys' basketball team capped a successful season with a 9-1 league record and the championship title in the Oakland Diocese American Division tournament.

Skill on Display

Submitted by Steve Peterson



With Grant Miller and Jared Finney ready to join the attack, Lamorinda forward Harry Quinn helps Lamorinda advance for one of four scores against top-ranked Jesuit. Photo Geoff Martin

The Lamorinda rugby varsity was invited to play a Feb. 28 match against Jesuit (Sacramento) before Cal over spring break. Lamo is entering the heart of its season before its European tour

Preseason Victory

Submitted by Suzanne Everly



The Acalanes boys' tennis team, under the direction of new head coach Stephane Lawrence, went undefeated in the California Tennis Classic team tournament March 6-7 in Fresno. Acalanes clinched the championship by a small margin, defeating Southern California powerhouse Viewpoint (Calabasas) in the final match. Over 100 teams participated in this statewide tournament.

State Cup Champions

Submitted by Chris Palma



Back row, from left: Lindsey Lucas, Danielle De Francisci, Anna Soloman, Sydney Tuggle, Isabella G., Samantha K., coach Javier; front row: Natalie Means, Brooke Palma, Kelsey Viadro, Katherine Montoya, Caitlyn McCulloch, Lily Boyden, Emma Bonardi

For the second year in a row the Lamorinda U11 Navy girls' soccer team won the state cup. This year they won the Diamond II Division. Their final two games of the year were played in Modesto on Feb. 21-22. The girls beat Clovis Crossfire 3-1 in their semifinal match and then beat Cal Cougars from Stockton 3-2 in the finals.

Perfect Season

Submitted by Shannon Tague



Front row, from left: Maile Broad, Kaylin Hiatt, Keri Wendt, Leah Douglas; back row: coach Bob Sverak, Kylie Wood, Daphne Ganter, Olivia Tague, Emily Sverak, Nicole Wan, Gabby Amini, coach E.J. Tague Photo Carolyn Wan

St. Perpetua's seventh grade girls basketball team ended a 12-0 season by defeating another St. Perpetua team to win the 2015 West Diablo CYO National Championship on Feb. 22.

Lamorinda Rugby Tournament Highlights

Submitted by Doug Pearson



Adrian Hunt on one of his many scoring runs in the tournament. Photos provided

The Lamorinda Rugby Club concluded its season by competing in the Norcal Rugby End of Season Tournament at the Wilder Fields in Orinda on March 15. Here are some of the highlights for the tournament.

U8 Division

Lamorinda Rugby had 28 players and entered three teams in the U8 division. The three Lamorinda teams combined to go 8-1 in the tournament. Mya Dunne was awarded Player of the Tournament by the referees and tournament organizers for her outstanding play and sportsmanship.

U10 Division

Lamorinda Rugby had 48 players entered on two teams for the tournament in the U10 division. Lamorinda U10 Lights competed against 11 teams from the Bay and Sacramento Area. They won all three of their matches by a com-

binated score of 21-4. The U10 Opens demonstrated great sportsmanship by lending many of their players to other teams throughout the tournament to enable those teams to field a full roster.

U12 Division

Lamorinda Rugby had 75 players entered on four teams for the tournament in the U12 Division. The U12 Lights were led by Will Berrien, Brady Brinkman, Matthew Muren, Luke Souza, Calvin Dakis and Owen Peck, who all scored. Luke Pearson had the play of the day intercepting a pass and scoring on a 40-yard scamper. One of the Lamorinda U12 Open teams went undefeated in the tournament. John Jamigan, Sam Ross, Christian Moncayo, Charlie Saunders, Chris Bruen, Niko Cortessis, Adrian Hunt, Stradley Foutch, Liam O'Leary, Dane Elento, and Roenigk Straub all had outstanding plays in the tournament.



Front row, from left: Brock Bliss, Logan Meranda, Jack Ruffolo, Christian Prizeman, Conor Flynn, and Jack Miller; middle row: Ethan Conley, Liam Fitzpatrick, Colton Mesones, Anthony Vera, Alex Adolphson, Nicolo Dolge, Chase Bliss, Sebastien McCrea, Jayden Oh; back row: coaches Bill Bliss, Luis Mesones, John Flynn, Steve Miller

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 25, 2015



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

Holding Back the Moving Earth

Retaining walls work to hold things in place

By Chris Lavin



Rick Barnette of Dig This inspects his work for the day at a home in Orinda.

Photos Chris Lavin

There are not many absolutes in life, but suffice it to say that on one topic – retaining walls – no one, but no one ever opens a conversation with a good story. The words: “Wow! I just put a new retaining wall on my property, and it was a great experience! I absolutely loved it! It was so fun,” could be something out of a science fiction novel. A story, perhaps, where gravity is not a factor.

That is because no one has fun, or loves to replace or build retaining walls at their homes and properties. Often, however, it must be done. “Oh, I could

tell you some stories,” said Pat Ward, the proprietor of Dig This Inc., a company that does its share of retaining walls and deals with homeowners whose soil is shifting. “Some of them aren’t so good. But lots of them are good. Most are good.”

Even the name, Dig This, Ward chose for his company reflects an attempt at humor in often troubling situations. “The name came to me in the shower,” Ward said.

Ward lost one of his legs in a motorcycle accident years ago, for instance, and he does not let it slow him down one single bit. “That was a long time ago,” he

said, deftly picking up something that had fallen off a Bobcat earthmover. “I don’t even think about it anymore.” He’s also a professional arm wrestler, which is worthy of a story unto itself. For the meantime, he’s using his prowess to build walls.

And he gets a lot of work done. The Lamorinda area is full of shifting soil and rock types – clays, mud, loam, chert, and the list of geology terms goes on – and gravity tends to make those elements flow downward, toward houses, driveways, buildings. Sometimes even the houses themselves risk misplacement.

“People can find themselves in some rough situations,” Ward said. “It’s not that they want to do the work, but they have to.”

Exacerbating the problem with houses in Lamorinda are the natural features that surround us all – many of us live on hills, or slopes downhill or uphill, created by the oceans and volcanic activity that preceded us thousands of years ago. Sometimes we think that the earth is static, and when we move in, that’s the way things are going to stay.

“People really don’t know what their dirt is going to do,” Ward noted. Enough said.

Paula of Orinda, who did not want her last name in the paper, had no idea what she was getting into when she contracted Dig This to fix her back yard and driveway. She lives at the bottom of a slight valley with houses on all sides, and the valley drains into a small creek. As rains came and gravity worked its magic, she found that her neighbors’ properties were gradually flowing onto hers, and unless she did something, her house would eventually be underground. So she hired a company to put in retaining walls. Her adventure then began.

... continued on page D4

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ORINDA	4	\$507,000	\$1,307,000

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LAFAYETTE

- 3337 Carlyle Terrace, \$1,340,000, 4 Bdrms, 1753 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 2-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 05-31-00
- 26 Camino Court, \$1,356,500, 4 Bdrms, 3913 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 2-9-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 10-29-03
- 529 Florence Drive, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1116 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 2-12-15;
Previous Sale: \$410,000, 06-01-01
- 9 My Road, \$880,000, 2 Bdrms, 2019 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 2-10-15
- 3540 Oconner Drive, \$1,485,000, 3 Bdrms, 2367 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 2-10-15
- 1700 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,500,000, 2 Bdrms, 1677 SqFt, 1943 YrBlt, 2-6-15;
Previous Sale: \$975,000, 04-10-13
- 7 Sessions Road, \$2,550,000, 4110 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 2-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$2,000,000, 09-05-12
- 4018 Tilden Lane, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2668 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 2-10-15

MORAGA

- 127 Hardie Drive, \$1,160,000, 4 Bdrms, 2176 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-9-15
- 118 Oxford Drive, \$900,000, 5 Bdrms, 1967 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 2-5-15;
Previous Sale: \$426,000, 02-27-90
- 1 Ross Drive, \$975,000, 4 Bdrms, 1716 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-11-15;
Previous Sale: \$40,000, 02-25-71

ORINDA

- 22 Alder Walk, \$1,307,000, 2-12-15
- 241 Camino Pablo, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1130 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 2-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$490,000, 08-22-01
- 18 Ichabod Lane, \$935,000, 3 Bdrms, 1527 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 2-11-15;
Previous Sale: \$750,000, 10-23-02
- 52 Underhill Road, \$507,000, 2 Bdrms, 1114 SqFt, 1930 YrBlt, 2-2-15;
Previous Sale: \$260,000, 04-05-13



Quinn Berg

Broker Associate

Direct: 925.765.2996

quinn.berg@camoves.com

www.quinnberg.com

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- 2900± sq. ft.

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- Spanish Hacienda
- Offered at \$1,695,000

761 Tofflemire Drive, Lafayette



- 1.55± Acre Lot
- Offered at \$1,599,000

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COMING SOON**

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- 2700± sq. ft. on .5± acres

1106 Upper Happy Valley Road, Lafayette



- Gorgeous Remodel
- Offered at \$1,680,000

6 Arbolado Court, Orinda



- Mediterranean Remodel
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238 The Knoll, Orinda



- 2BR/2BA
- 1534± sq. ft. view

839 Ava Court, Lafayette



- Quiet Court in Trail
- Offered at \$1,325,000

3166 Lucas Drive, Lafayette



- Country Quiet
- Offered at \$1,195,000

Upper Happy Valley



- 3BR/3BA + Cottage
- Total Remodel

Burton Valley Contemporary



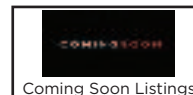
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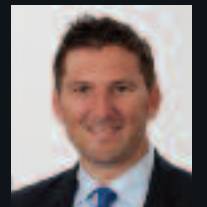
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Holding Back the Moving Earth

... continued from page D1

"I got a call at work and they said, 'We had to move some stuff around, so you don't have a driveway right at the moment,'" Paula said. She came home to find mounds and mounds of detritus filling up her front yard. It has since been removed, or put back – and her property is now protected for a hundred years or so – but the whole project was a mind-bending experience of working with neighbors about their swimming pools, their soil drift, their lack of vegetation to hold soil in place so that it doesn't flow right into the creek or into her yard.

"I had no idea that we would have such a problem when we moved in," she said.

Once homeowners find out they need to replace or put in a retaining wall, dealing with city officials to obtain permits can be as frustrating as watching the slopes slip. In Lafayette, for instance, four separate agencies or offices have to sign off on the plans before construction (or reconstruction) even starts. Until all the offices sign off, construction cannot even begin without the possibility of a neighbor phoning in to complain about work being done without permits.

"We make sure all the paperwork is in place before we start," said Ward. "There are setbacks and variances that have to be met to get permits. It's a process that takes a while, sometimes, but we get it done."



The homeowner of this house in Orinda got a call from her retaining wall contractor who said, "Um, you won't have a driveway for a while."

Photos Chris Lavin

50 Corte María, Moraga



Offered at \$1,549,000

Open Saturday & Sunday, 1-4

Rare newer construction on a coveted Moraga cul de sac, this fantastic 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath single story home circa 2001 offers an easy lifestyle with a wonderful floorplan and outstanding indoor-outdoor access.



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Coming Soon

Beautiful Burton Valley Home

Tucked back into the serene hills of Lafayette at the end of a private cul-de-sac, this beautiful remodeled home welcomes you with a tranquil & inviting setting. Enjoy the 3BD/2.5BA main house as well as the wonderful au-pair/guest unit/apartment over the garage with a separate entrance, full bath & mini kitchen. This stunning 2,784+/- sf. home offers a plethora of amenities including a wonderful open floor plan, beautiful chef's Kitchen, cherry hardwood floors, vaulted ceilings in the elegant living room, sophisticated master suite, oversize deck area for entertaining and a private backyard with custom built chicken coop, vegetable/herb gardens, flat play area & beautiful landscaping. **Call for more information.**

Lisa Brydon 925.285.8336 | Kristi Ives 925.788.8345

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Two Great Orinda Properties!



64 Bates Boulevard
 Offered at \$1,299,000

Located in the heart of Orinda, this approx. 2,741 sq. ft. home sits on .60 of an acre. This contemporary home, with 5 bedrooms, 3 baths & office, boasts vaulted ceilings, lovely hardwood floors, and beautiful outdoor spaces with views of the hills.



Coming Soon!

649 Ironbark Circle
 Offered at \$1,325,000

Located in Orindawoods, this lovely approx. 2,494 sq. ft. home features open beamed ceilings, glass walls in the living room, custom tiled floors, spacious kitchen, private master suite, a large atrium deck and a gorgeous pool.



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1:00-4:00 PM



This home features stunning architecture, 3,900 Sqft, 4 Beds, 3.5 Baths and 2.2 acres of pristine views. **\$1,488,000**

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Patti Camras

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DOWN-SIZING or UP-SIZING... This home is the right size for you! Nestled on a private .69 acre parcel, this one-level jewel has a Southern Exposure and boasts 3 bedrooms, 3 baths & approximately 2173 square feet. This 1960's rancher proves the power of "Love at First Sight." It features an expanded Master Retreat with its own side yard + hot tub, hardwood floors, a gracious floor plan that inspires entertaining and a completely flat backyard. Virtual Tour at www.3171Surmont.com

Offered at \$1,149,000



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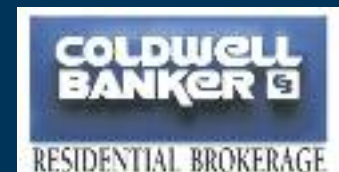
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Should you remodel before selling your home?

2015 Cost vs. Value Remodeling

		Project Cost	Resale Value	Cost Recouped
Bathroom Addition	MidRange	\$52,643	\$53,265	101%
	UpScale	91,164	89,057	98%
Kitchen Remodel	Midrange	69,359	75,493	109%
	Upscale	134,874	120,563	89%
Window Replacement	Midrange	12867	13640	106%
	Upscale	16406	18624	113%
Roofing Replacement	Midrange	25967	29710	114%
	Upscale	51123	49,290	96%
Garage Door Replacement		1942	3067	158%
		3298	5150	156%

To obtain a full report of Cost vs. Value for a wide range of projects, please contact us. We can advise you on which projects will get you the greatest return on your investment.

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774 Crossbrook Drive, Moraga

This beautifully updated 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom home is ideally located on a secluded 1.12± acre knoll-top setting with breathtaking valley views. The large level fenced yard has lush lawns, decks, aggregate walkways, a huge side yard and plenty of room for expansion. Just minutes from Moraga Commons Park, the regional hiking/biking trail, shopping, restaurants, the BART bus & top-rated Moraga schools (check availability).

Offered at \$1,249,000 • Call for more information



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Residents of Orinda's desirable Glorietta neighborhood are readily familiar with one of the most distinctive properties in the area. Now for the first time ever, 102 Meadow View Road comes to the market March 27, 2015. Built in 1990 on a level .40 acre lot, this East Coast traditional style home has been recently refreshed and re-energized. This is a home where lifetime memories are created and where outdoor weddings and memorable parties will be treasured. Rarely is a home with this magical combination of space and structure available. Open Saturday and Sunday March 28 and 29 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Property is listed at \$1,995,000. Contact Jim Colhoun at 925.200.2795 for more information or to arrange a private showing.

Open Saturday and Sunday
March 28 and 29 from 10 am to 4 pm



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As VP of the Town Hall Theatre's Board of Directors I am happy to support the Theatre and the Community by announcing the lineup for the

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There will be a silent auction featuring rock and roll and sports memorabilia as well as donations from local businesses.

Tickets \$30.00 advance, \$35.00 at the door
Saturday, May 2nd. Doors 6:30/Show 7:30

Get your tickets today at www.TownHallTheatre.com

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DOORS AT 6:30 ~ MUSIC AT 7:30

\$30 ADVANCE ~ \$35 AT-DOOR



To DIY or hire, that is the question

By Andi Peterson Brown

I don't know about you, but last night when I watched the same commercial from Lowe's four times in 30 minutes that kept telling me to Never Stop Improving, I have to say that it worked. They got me. All of a sudden I had a burning desire to improve something, anything. It was 9:15 at night but I wanted to jump in the car right then and there and drive to Lowe's to buy brushes and cans and sprays and plants and on and on and on...

They made it look so fun, so happy, and so relaxing to repaint the house, landscape the yard, and sandpaper the front porch. The sun was shining, everyone smiled as they worked – I mean how could you not want to sandpaper your front porch when it could bring such joy?

Sure there are lots of projects that are a-ok to stock up at Lowe's for and do-it-yourself, but many are better left to the professionals. So how do you know when to hire a professional? Hire a professional when:

- The project is elaborate or extensive. Adding on? Rebuilding kitchen cabinets? Call an expert.
- You just aren't handy with a hammer and never will be.
- You don't have the time. If you don't have the time, you will end up with 2/3 of a completed project. Trust me.



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Spring and Feng Shui

By Michele Duffy



The fresh green of spring is nicely expressed in this living room.

The Wood element and the fresh green color resembling jade governs spring in feng shui, and spring has sprung! Spring symbolizes colorful new growth, new projects, new friendships, new bonds, new beginnings and abundant health – especially when associated with the idea of family. You can think of your family as the roots of your being, your DNA, your very own new beginnings. Families are defined by the group that loves you unconditionally and may include your immediate family but also close friends or colleagues.

The Family, New Beginnings and Spring area on the Feng Shui Bagua is, from the front entrance door, the middle left area of your home or office. This is also the area that governs “little money,” or the paying of everyday bills. Oh, you say, how do I get that area moving? Easy. The number three is associated with this area, so since plants represent the wood element, place three small lucky jade plants, purple African or common purple violets on a desk or side table. Do so with the motivation and intention to

welcome upward growth in this area, to leave any difficulties of paying your daily bills in the past, and planting new possibilities for abundance moving forward. One can deepen the “activation” of the wood element that rules this area even further by choosing green pots for the plants.

Since moving water creates wood, the Family/New Beginnings area is excellent for a water feature. As long as that area is not a bedroom, a nice sounding upward directional indoor water fountain will get things moving nicely. Paint that area a soft but happy color of green to activate the wood element of spring, or place three images of a sunrise, a forest or bamboo in wooden frames on the wall. In the same area of your garden, place an outdoor water feature and a bamboo wind chime. Remember to minimize the metal in this location almost entirely, since metal is not a friend of wood and you do not want the vibrant upward growth and new beginnings of the spring season to be cut short.

... continued on page D12

JUST LISTED!

28 KELLIE ANN COURT, ORINDA



Opportunity in Glorietta! Private 4 bed/3 bath home with incredible views, large lot and open floor plan.
Offered at \$1,199,000

COMING SOON!

15 SOUTHWOOD COURT, ORINDA



Orinda 1939 classic on approx .78 of an acre with gorgeous outdoor space. Walk to town!



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Orinda & Lafayette's Finest!



Pending!
6 Abbott Court, Orinda



Coming Soon!
Fabulous Happy Valley Home!

This pristine one level home on cul-de-sac boasts fabulous traditional charm with ideal floor plan, gorgeous chef's kitchen/family great room, private master suite, and large formal spaces perfect for the entertainer! The guest house with vaulted ceilings, spacious kitchenette, lovely full bath and beautiful built-ins offers a perfect place for guests, au-pair, office. The gardens are magnificent: large level lawns, private pool with hot tub, spacious patio and beautiful mature trees.

Call for more information!



Finola
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Spring and Feng Shui

... continued from page D10



Green, the color of spring

Photos provided

Some of the other energetics of this Family and New Beginnings area include feeling more secure in all areas of your life. Activating this area can help you build a stronger foundation to help you meet life's challenges with more confidence and less stress, improve family relationships and bring more harmony into family matters, enhance your business and increase income, get a promotion, or create a situation where you always have the money to cover the bills. You can find emotional balance and stability, improve your physical and mental health, and make better choices in life.

The energy in our homes and gardens influences us in many meaningful ways, so with your own harmonious intentions, plant your gardens this spring with a mindful eye to all that you will be shifting anew, and welcome the wonder of the season with each new day of possibilities.



Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2015 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.

WEALTH & PROSPERITY "Gratitude" REAR LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues, purple & reds	FAME & REPUTATION "Integrity" REAR MIDDLE <u>Fire</u> Reds	LOVE & MARRIAGE "Receptivity" REAR RIGHT <u>Earth</u> Reds, pinks, & whites
HEALTH & FAMILY "Strength" MIDDLE LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues & Greens	CENTER <u>"Earth"</u> Yellow & earth tones	CREATIVITY & CHILDREN "Joy" MIDDLE RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White & Pastels
KNOWLEDGE & SELF CULTIVATION "Stillness" FRONT LEFT <u>Earth</u> Black, blues & greens	CAREER "Depth" FRONT MIDDLE <u>Water</u> Black & dark tones	HELPFUL PEOPLE & TRAVEL "Synchronicity" FRONT RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White, grey & black

"Front Door"

Feng Shui Basics

Feng shui (or Wind and Water) is the practice of arranging your environment so that energy or "Qi" flows gently and smoothly through your home or business. The principles of feng shui are founded on traditional Chinese medicine, which is based on the dynamic opposites of yin and yang, together with the five elements (water, wood, fire, earth and metal) as well as form, landscape, space orientation and time. Feng shui is about creating a natural equilibrium, while promoting health, harmony, stability and prosperity. Feng shui is not a meditation practice, a religion or a New Age cult. In fact, its origins are thousands of years old. Feng shui is based on the concept that everything in your environment has a life force or energy called "Qi." Just as Qi flows through your body, Qi also flows your through living environment. When the energy flow is stagnant, stuck, obstructed or moves too quickly, unbalanced Qi may lead to ill health, domestic strife or financial concerns. Professional feng shui advice, adjustments and blessings help create nurturing energy in the spaces and places we spend the most time in, our homes and offices. The goal is sustainable good luck, good health, harmonious relationships and prosperity.

Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Paradise Found

"God has given us a world that nothing but our own folly keeps from being a paradise." – George Bernard Shaw



Plant a few bird of paradise to enjoy the feeling of the tropics.

Photos Cynthia Brian

For many people, including myself, sometime between February and March, I have an insatiable urge to experience the exotic romance of a tropical island. I want to feel the sand between my toes, listen to the waves pounding against the shore, smell the seaweed-tainted salt air and soak up the sun. I yearn to snorkel with turtles, swim with sharks and perfume my

hair with plumeria. As winter wanes and spring sprouts, hammocks beckon. In paradise, the landscape is lush with flowers, trees, and vines that we normally only experience in botanical gardens. But what if we can't take a trip to a fantasy island? How can we plant a piece of paradise in our personal places to release that fabulous feeling of leisure?

Here is a smattering of simple ways that you can plant the aloha spirit into your spring swing.

Palms

Nothing says "tropical" more than palm trees! When I built my home in Lamorinda, the first two trees I planted in containers were palms. Now planted at the top of my driveway, the two lovers are well over 30 feet, their fronds swaying in the wind to welcome me home. There are numerous varieties of palms to choose from including lady, queen, date, coconut, bamboo, sago and many more, depending on what you desire in height, hardiness, leaf structure and upkeep.

Bird of Paradise

When my daughter and I went on "the college tour," what enamored her most about San Diego were sunshine, surf, palm trees and birds of paradise – four ingredients of kick back island living. Hardy in zones 9-12, bird of paradise are remarkably easy to grow in our area as long as the plants get four or more hours of direct sunlight with good drainage. They prefer temperatures of 50 degrees and above, but I've had no problem growing them even when the thermometer dips below freezing. If planted from seed, they will take seven or more years to bloom, otherwise, expect to wait three or four years. They afford exquisite, long lasting cut flowers.

Hibiscus



Tuck a pink hibiscus in your hair.

When you are looking for high impact tropical flair with low maintenance, you can't beat the show-stopping hibiscus. Easy to grow and available in a kaleidoscope of colors, hibiscus enjoys temperatures up to the 90s but doesn't do so well under 30 degrees. Hibiscus can be trimmed into gorgeous hedges or used as a moveable container plant.

Ferns

When we think of ferns, we often are reminded of redwood forests or Victorian parlors. In the rain forests, many varieties of ferns grow wild in filtered light where they thrive on humidity and moisture. Propagated by spores, I grow maidenhair, walking, sword and other hardy ferns in my outdoor landscape, using them often in my floral arrangements. ... continued on page D14

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Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Paradise Found

... continued from page D13



A traveler's tree looks like a banana tree but is really a bird of paradise

Traveler's Tree

I bet this specimen stumps you! *Ravenala madagascariensis* was named because its long leaf sheaths accumulate a quart of water, often used for drinking in emergencies by travelers. This Madagascar native has a trunk that resembles a palm and fronds that look like banana leaves, yet it is a member of the bird of paradise family boasting white flowers. In the tropics, the traveler's tree will grow to 30 feet, but in my three large ceramic deck pots, it reaches a perfect height of about eight feet, dying back in a winter freeze.

Bromeliads

What is not to love about these perennial monocotyledons? In tropical settings, we see them attached to trees, structures, or growing like pineapples. In California, they are usually used as houseplants requiring minimal maintenance. They thrive outdoors in the heat as long as the weather remains above freezing. Their brilliant bracts maintain color for six months or more and each rosette blooms only once. As the mother is dying, pups are born, repeating the cycle. Fill the cup



Pineapples are bromeliads. Bromeliads are easy and beautiful.

on the top of your bromeliad with water when necessary without watering the soil.

Anthuriums

Originally from Central and South American tropical rain forests, now a mainstay in the Hawaiian Islands, anthuriums flourish with heat, humidity, filtered light and good drainage. Colors include red, pink, white, orange and green. Combine them with other tropicals for a rich tapestry of vacation envy.

Jungle Fowl

In the islands, jungle fowl roam freely. The magnificently feathered roosters are protective of their girls and offspring. Chickens are the domesticated version of these jungle birds. Although the boys may not be welcome in your neighborhood, the hens will deliver fresh eggs while fertilizing and tilling your landscape. Peacocks are another beautiful bird in paradise. I grew up raising chickens and peacocks. While my egg business paved the way to my college education, the peacocks provided endless entertainment with their constant preening around anyone or anything they perceived to be female, including our ornamental cement ducks.

Koi Pond

Experience the luxury of getting up close and personal with friendly, curious, colorful fish by installing a koi pond, probably the most popular of all garden installations. With proper filtering, aerating and feeding, you will enjoy years of exotic water entertainment.



For water enjoyment, entertain a koi pond.

These are just a few ways to bring a slice of foreign fun to your home. There are hundreds of dramatic plants to introduce into your tropical design including begonias, orchids, amaryllis, bamboo, lilies, bougainvillea, mandevillas and vines of every sort. Keep in mind that many of the indoor plants we purchase at our favorite nursery or garden center are actually grown in the wild in tropical climates. Even if you don't decide to create a tropical paradise outside, you can always transport the tropics indoors to enjoy a bit of paradise. Finally, don't forget the importance of a water feature and attracting the birds.

Spring has sprung so why not bring the romance, adventure and luxury of a vacation hideaway to your piece of heaven. Kick off your mud boots, grab your flip flops and sun tan lotion, tuck a bright pink hibiscus blossom in your hair and find paradise in your continental backyard.

Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Reminders



Anthuriums are available in multiple colors.

CHECK out the new science based app, Tomato MD, which helps gardeners identify more than 35 diseases, insects or disorders of tomatoes. The demo version is free; the full version is \$2.99 from Apple App store or Google Play.

ALLOW spent daffodils and narcissus to dry as they are. Do not cut or you won't have any flowers next season.

PICK bouquets of freesia, bearded iris, and jasmine for a fragrant centerpiece.

ADD nitrogen to boost the growth of all your plants.

COME to the Be the Star You Are!® Book Bash Blow Out on April 25 at 5A Rent A Space to pick up your free seeds and complimentary potpourri. For information, visit <http://ow.ly/K3zXG>.



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CALL AN ARBORIST

The most common reason a tree owner calls an arborist is concern that something is wrong with a tree. It may be that some of the leaves are discolored, a branch has died, or perhaps the entire tree has been dropping leaves. Sometimes the cause of the concern is a minor problem that is easily explained and corrected. Other times the problem is more complex-with several underlining causes and a remedy that requires treatments extending over several years. Unfortunately, there are instances in which the problem has gone undetected for so long that the tree cannot be helped, and the only option is removal. If an arborist had been called earlier, perhaps the tree could have been saved. So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping.

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85 Oak Road

Light & bright 3bd/2.5ba 2,131sf 2 story craftsman features wonderful views, fully remodeled gourmet kitchen w/soapstone counters, new roof, HW flrs, trex decking & lots of play space.

\$1,100,000

ORINDA



New Listing

169 Overhill Road

Super mid-century appeal stylish & well designed. One level living w/ floor to ceiling windows, vaulted ceilings. Gorgeous courtyard w/lawn, oversized deck. Bonus office/studio.

\$1,189,000

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New Listing

62 Van Tassel Lane

Great Sleepy Hollow opportunity w/exceptional value price per sq.ft. 4bd/3.5ba, abundance of space, easy access outside. Kitchen/family room combo, close to Swim/Tennis Club.

\$1,279,000

ORINDA



73 Scenic Drive

Fabulous Glorietta 6486 sf spacious home tucked on a private .82 acre lot with a view. Complete with 5 bedrooms, 6 baths, 2 family rooms, level lawns, private decks, 3 car garage.

\$2,395,000

ORINDA



New Listing

134 Crestview Drive

Private Orinda Hills renovated 1948 Spanish retreat w/apx. 4000sf, 4+bd/3.5ba on sun-splashed apx. two acre setting. Outdoor kitchen, large level yard & near top-rated Orinda schools.

\$2,995,000

MORAGA



New Listing

176 Miramonte Drive

Light, bright, updated & lovely special Miramonte Gardens townhome w/3bd +bonus room. Indoor laundry, wood floors, new double paned windows, kitchen opens to fenced patio.

\$645,000

MORAGA



740 Country Club Drive

Serene lagoon setting, sought after Moraga Country Club single level, 2bd/2ba plus den. Steps from pool, golf and tennis.

\$739,000

MORAGA



New Listing

49 York Place

Corliss area home, hardwood floors, large family room, private backyard, cul-de-sac, minutes from school and shopping. Move-in ready.

\$1,195,000

MORAGA



New Listing

50 Corte Maria

Rare newer construction on coveted Moraga cul de sac, this fantastic 4bd/2.5ba single story home circa 2001 offers easy lifestyle w/wonderful flrpln & outstanding in-outdoor access.

\$1,549,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

3393 Goyak Drive

Wonderful traditional 4+bd/2.5ba on premium level .5ac at end of small court! Hdwd flrs, formal dining rm, family rm adj. spacious kitchen, pool & entertaining areas! Walk to schools.

\$1,288,000

LAFAYETTE



3336 Springhill Road

Expanded in 2004 including kitchen & baths. 3000+ square foot home, .6 acres - private creekside location. Large lawn and great outdoor living, minutes from schools.

\$1,639,000

LAFAYETTE



23 Sessions Road

Gated English Manor 12.18 acre 5bd/6ba Estate. Grand foyer, living, family rms + "Club" rm, deluxe kitchen, dramatic solarium + executive office. Gorgeous grounds w/lap pool/lawns, views.

\$3,895,000

OAKLAND



New Listing

566 Athol Avenue

Located in desirable Haddon Hill, this single story home has beautiful architectural details & charm. Close prox. to Lake Merritt, Grand Lake Theater, farmer's mkt, freeway access & more.

\$699,000

WALNUT CREEK



Back on Market

0 Brodia Way Lot D

Fabulous .92 acre lot in prestigious Walnut Creek neighborhood of La Casa Via. Expansive views of valley, hills & Mt. Diablo. All utilities underground in street. Build your dream home!

\$575,000

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

1519 Encanto Place

Builder's own terrific home. Remodeled and expanded with great style! Custom built cabinets throughout. Gorgeous kitchen and baths with European style.

\$1,200,000



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