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Photos Gint Federas

Row With Champions – a Beautiful Regatta for a Cause

By Sophie Braccini

With temperatures in the 70s and a light breeze, it looked like it was going to be a perfect day for the first all-level rowing regatta sponsored by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary and Oakland Strokes last Saturday, Aug. 22 at San Pablo Reservoir in Orinda. According to Daniel

Herbert, who is a member of both groups, it had never been done before: putting people who have never rowed through a 15-minute crash training course and sending them onto the water to compete.

The music, the food and the location made for a fun event,

all in support of four good causes. But even the most organized event can be undone by bad weather. At the end of the meet, as the wind picked up, the last race had to be canceled, leaving a few teams disappointed.

Twenty-eight teams registered a boat in the race.

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Creek Culverts: The Weakest Links of the Moraga Storm Drain System

By Sophie Braccini



Las Trampas Creek crossing at Bollinger Canyon Road

Photo provided

After reviewing the storm drain pipes for corrosion and damage at the beginning of the year, the town of Moraga worked with consulting civil engineers Schaaf and Wheeler to study the ca-

capacity of the drainage system to handle a 10-year storm without overflow and property damage. The combined outcome of the studies resulted in the Storm Drain Master Plan that was adopted by the

council this summer. The plan highlights the weaknesses of the system: narrow, obstructed or damaged pipes and under-capacity culverts. The plan does not say, however, how the town will finance the \$8.9 million of high priority work, let alone the \$26 million to completely address the issues.

At the beginning of the year, Schaaf and Wheeler conducted a televised study of drains to assess possible corrosion and wear. The study determined that \$363,000 out of \$513,000 worth of work was high priority repair and recommended including it as part of the pavement project. The highest of all priorities as far as repairs are concerned is the large 8-foot diameter Rheem Center culvert that conveys water from Laguna Creek. It runs under a privately owned parcel, and it is unclear if a public drainage easement exists.

Schaaf and Wheeler's recent study focused on the capacity of the drainage system – gutters, inlets, pipes, culverts, and creeks – to handle a 10-year flood. A 10-year flood has a 10 percent probability of happening every year.

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Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, Sept. 2, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
District Office Board Room
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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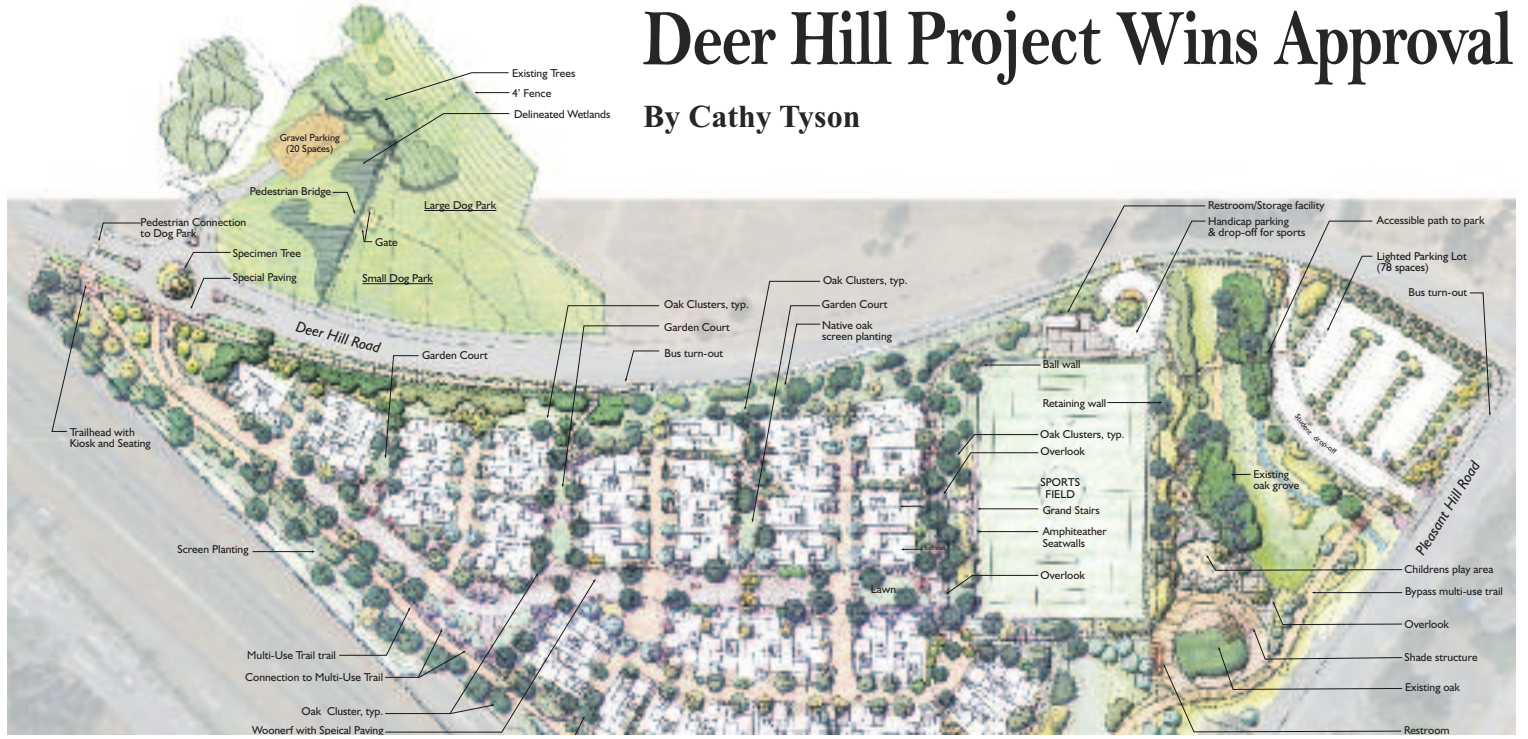
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Deer Hill Project Wins Approval

By Cathy Tyson



Approved site plan

Images courtesy O'Brien Land Company

After numerous meetings and hours of passionate public comment over the past four years, an application for a 315-unit apartment complex on Deer Hill Road is wrapping up with a sober business-like review of a multitude of conditions of approval and environmental reports. The Lafayette City Council gave a green light to the now much smaller alternative project: The Homes at Deer Hill, which includes 44 detached single-family residences and features public amenities, including a much needed sports field.

Alan Moore, attorney for the landowner, Anna Maria Dettmer,

pointed out that this development represents a 94 percent downzoning of the property, which could have been built out with 35 dwelling units per acre on its 22 acres. The property is now down to two market-rate homes per acre.

In addition to the change in size, a unique compromise was hammered out between the developer, O'Brien Land Company, and the city of Lafayette in which the developer is contributing half the cost of a community park that includes a multi-sport field, a tot play lot, a parking area, a multi-purpose path skirting the hill and a dog park across the street.

Throughout the review process there has been a substantial amount of public testimony. Final concerns at the Aug. 10 city council meeting focused on what some residents consider inequitable distribution of Parks funding. Although the city is splitting the cost of community park improvements with the developer, a number of parents who live in the Leigh Creekside Park neighborhood complained that a large chunk of the Parks budget is going to this project, rather than improvements for the smaller Leigh Creekside Park on Moraga Boulevard at Fourth Street.

... continued on next page



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Aug. 2-15

- Alarms** 69
- 911 Calls (incl. hang-ups)** 8
- Traffic Stops** 183
- Suspicious Circumstances** 20
- Suspicious Subjects** 19
- Suspicious Vehicles** 24
- Abandoned Vehicle**
900 block Anita Ct
3200 block Marlene Dr
- Animal Cruelty**
Mt Diablo Blvd/Dewing Ave
Acalanes High School
- Burglary, Auto**
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd
3600 block Nordstrom Ln
4000 block Mario Way
30 block Chapel Dr
900 block Sunnybrook Dr
3400 block Solana Ct
1200 block Clover Ct
3200 block Lucas Cr
Acalanes High School
1200 block Pleasant Hill Rd
500 block St Mary's Rd (3)
- Burglary, Commercial**
900 block Dewing Ave
- Burglary, Residential**
600 block Glenside Dr
- Civil Problem**
70 block Silverwood Dr
1000 block 2nd St
900 block East St
900 block Sunnybrook Dr
1300 block Summit Rd (standby)
1000 block Brown Av
- Dispute, Verbal**
Moraga Rd/Moraga Blvd
1000 block Carol Ln
- Disturbing the Peace**
3600 block Bickerstaff
- DUI**
900 block Moraga Rd
- Fireworks**
3500 block Silver Springs Rd
- Found Adult**
McDonald's
- Forgery**
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl
- Fraud**
1000 block Brown Ave
- Harassment**
40 block Prado Wy (of pigeons)
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd
10 block Ethan Ct
600 block Michael Ln (by phone)
- Health & Safety Violation**
Lafayette Community Center
- Hit & Run**
Pet Food Express
Safeway (2)
Mt Diablo Blvd/Dolores Dr
Lafayette Park Hotel
3300 block Orchard Valley Ln
3400 block Mt Diablo Bl (2)
- Loitering**
Springbrook Pool
- Loud Music/Noise/Party**
3400 block Moraga Blvd
Woodview Ct/Woodview Dr

- Mt Diablo Blvd/Risa Rd
- Glenside Dr/Las Trampas Rd
- Glenside Dr/Los Palos Manor
- 1000 block Oak Hill Rd
- Lafayette Elementary School
- CVS
- Moraga Blvd/2nd St
- Old Millstone Ln/Las Huertas Rd (3)
- 1600 block Rancho View Rd
- Upper Happy Valley Rd/
Los Arabis (2)
- Panhandling**
Post Office
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd
Happy Valley Rd/Deer Hill Rd
- Police/Fire/EMS Response**
Pleasant Hill Rd/Taylor Blvd
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd (2)
Pleasant Hill Rd/Acalanes Ave
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd (2)
- Possession**
60 block Lafayette Cir
- Public Nuisance**
Martino/Springhill Rds
3200 block Burton Ct
10 block Moss Ln
3300 block Walnut Ln
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd
- Promiscuous Shooting**
N Peardale Dr/Camino Vallecito
1500 block Rancho View Dr
- Reckless Driving**
1st St/Hwy 24
3300 block Springhill Rd
Silverado /Merriewood Drs
Summit/Quandt Rds
3400 block Hamlin Rd
1000 block Vista Bella
Deer Hill/Happy Valley Rds
Via Roble/Via Baja
- Shoplifting**
Safeway
- Theft, Petty**
900 block S. Thompson
3400 block Goyak Dr
10 block Monticello
1200 block Upper Happy Valley Dr
1100 block Camino Vallecito
800 block Rosedale Ave
Oakwood Athletic Club
10 block Burr Ct
900 block Dewing Ave
3300 block Reliez Highland Rd
- Theft, ID**
3200 block Sweet Dr
- Theft, Vehicle**
Howe Ave/Lafayette Cr
- Threats**
Aileen St/Mt Diablo Blvd
- Trespass**
reported to LPD
- Unwanted Guest**
Jack in the Box
Wells Fargo
- Vandalism**
3600 block Mt Diablo Blvd
Olympic Blvd/Pleasant Hill Rd
1000 block Aileen St (2)

Franklin Lane Construction Mystery Solved

By Cathy Tyson



Heavy equipment and pipes that are part of storm drain upgrades on newly formed subdivision on Franklin Lane. Photo C. Tyson

Contrary to some rumors that may be swirling about, the heavy equipment on Franklin Lane in Happy Valley is for work on a drainage project that was a condi-

tion of approval to divide just that 3.7-acre portion of a larger parcel into four lots, of approximately 40,000 square feet each. The entire 62-acre flag-shaped parcel contin-

ues eastward from Happy Valley Road, encompassing a valley and up a large hill ending at the border of Briones Regional Park.

... continued on page A11

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Need Electronic Device Help?

Look no further than the thoughtful, smart students who are volunteering at the new Teen Tech Help at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center every Saturday from noon to 2 p.m. in the Homework Center.

Smart phones, laptops, e-readers, MP3 players, you name it, these teenagers can answer almost any question and solve technology challenges, all for a price that can't be beat: free.

Talented teens like brothers Alexander and John Chen, who are going to be a freshman and junior respectively at Miramonte High School, along with the other teen helpers offer

friendly one-on-one instruction and assistance, according to Patrick Brogan, teen services library assistant. He adds that the program is modeled after the one at the Concord library, which has seen a lot of success.

Alexander says customers are generally older, not surprising since Brogan spread news of the complimentary service to local retirement homes, but the program is open to anyone who needs technology help. From the front entrance on Mt. Diablo Boulevard, the Homework Center is on the right hand side of the building. Just drop in with your device, no appointment needed. *C. Tyson.*

Deer Hill

... continued from page A2



Aerial view of existing The Homes At Deer Hill site

Council members sympathized with parents who had been diligently working on fundraising for improvements at Leigh, but explained that the Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission did an exhaustive study, concluding the biggest city-wide need was an additional sports field, and that opportunities for a flat site are few and far between.

"I don't see that we could find an alternative project with adequate parking," said Council Member Don Tatzin, suggesting that if someone knows a way to acquire and develop a park for the same price that they are sharing with the developer, he'd be happy to consider it.

Parks, Trails and Recreation Commissioner Carol Singer explained that it's important to consider serving the greatest number of residents. "It's a value judgement of where we should spend that money," she said.

"Suddenly we've been given an opportunity that we really can't pass up," said Council Member Mike Anderson. "Right now we need to jump on what's in front of us."

A group of young people representing the San Francisco Bay Area Renters Federation voiced opposition to the smaller project, supporting the prior 315-unit apartment complex that would add more affordable housing stock to the area. Various speakers from the group complained of spiraling rent costs in the Bay Area, calling the need for moderately priced housing "acute."

The amount of paperwork associated with a project of this magnitude is astounding: Resolution 2015 - 50 adopts environmental reports and the Mitigations Monitoring and Reporting Plan, Resolution 2015 - 51, approves a General Plan amendment. Ordinance 641 approves a zoning amendment and includes a land use permit, hillside development permit and conditions of approval, along with a development agreement between the city, the developer, and the landowner.

Specific conditions of approval spell out 80 items that the developer must agree to in order to build the project, from underground utilities to gravity flow sewers to solar panels, which will offset a minimum of 80 percent of each home's projected electrical needs.

Two of the most surprising conditions respond to citizens' concerns and Bay Area Air Quality Management District threshold levels to reduce cancer risk and to mitigate the impact to sensitive receptors to a level that is "less than significant," because the project is not far from Highway 24 and Pleasant Hill Road. The developer will be providing Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value filters with a rating of 10 or higher for homeowner's ventilation systems approximately once every two to three months, per manufacturers requirement, in perpetuity. MERV is a measurement of how well the filter removes small particles from the air - the higher the MERV, the smaller the particles that can be trapped.

O'Brien is also required to submit a Dust Control and Air Quality Monitoring Plan which shall have real time monitoring of air quality during the grading operations on the site, as well as a dozen items to reduce particulate matter in the air during construction that are identified in the environmental impact report, to comply with BAAQMD.

One of the more unusual requirements specified that a bat biologist be hired to "avoid possible loss of bats during project construction." This will be accomplished by limiting demolition of existing buildings on the property to two months in the spring and two months in the fall to "minimize the likelihood of removal during the winter roosting period ... and the critical pupping period."

While the bats will presumably be protected, and a new bike lane will be installed to protect cyclists, drivers will likely face some added congestion on already busy Pleasant Hill Road. Only two things fell into the "potentially significant effects that cannot be mitigated below a level of significance": noise from Highway 24 and from the sports field, and more traffic.

It's worth considering which is worse, traffic from 44 homes, or traffic from 315 homes?

All of the relevant documents are included in the staff report and as attachments from the Aug. 10 city council meeting, which are available online at www.lovelafayette.com.

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ALAIN PINEL



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.
Tuesday, June 8 canceled
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7:00 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

Neighbor dispute 8/10/15 In an ongoing dispute between two neighbors on Alta Mesa Court, the elderly reporting person asked her neighbor to not park in guest parking, because she wanted her caregiver to be able to use the stall. She also complained that the neighbor's television is so loud it causes a disturbance, and she suspects the neighbor is also using her water hose. The 91-year-old thought obtaining a police report would help resolve the problems.

Lost senior citizen 8/10/15 A 70-year-old gentleman was attempting to drive to Antioch, but stopped the car at an unknown location due to darkness and ended up walking to Julianna Court, at the end of the Sanders Ranch development. The subject appeared confused and disoriented, and believed he was still near Antioch. He was transported by police back to the station, where he was picked up by his wife. Cops looked around, but couldn't find his car. They also sent a Notice of Re-Examination to the DMV.

Pillow theft 8/10/15 An Alta Mesa Court resident reported that an orange decorative ceramic ball and two large pillows were stolen from her yard. No suspects or leads at this time.

Unwanted guest 8/16/15 Police responded to the Moraga Country Club pool at 10 p.m. because it was closing time, and a guest refused to leave, asking to stay longer. A verbal argu-

ment ensued, although there was no physical contact. The 31-year-old fellow appeared intoxicated and decided to walk home after agreeing to telephone his mother and have her come pick him up.

Mental illness 8/18/15 Officers attempted to contact the subject who had been reported as suspicious at 2:30 a.m. in an undisclosed neighborhood. She attempted to avoid officers by crossing an intersection against a red light, then began yelling that she was being "murdered." Cops evaluated her and determined that she was a danger to herself, so she was transported to Contra Costa Regional Medical Center by the fire department for evaluation and treatment.

Loud party 8/16/15 It was after midnight when cops were called to break up a boisterous party on Eileen Court. Loud music and several walking drunk people were noted by police near the house. Residents were cooperative and about 45 party people left the home. The residents were issued a Town of Moraga Warning Notice.

Other crimes that occurred in Moraga between Aug. 10-18:

False Alarm – Corte Monterey, Stonefield Place, Merrill Drive, Larch Avenue, Wakefield Drive, Calle La Mesa, Campolindo Drive, Woodford Drive, Deerfield Drive
Lost Passport – Cypress Point Way
Loud Party – Larch Drive
Rock Breaks Window – Corliss Drive
Bike Theft – Corliss Drive
Egged Car – Augusta Drive
Belligerent Drunk – Moraga Road
Phone Found – at the Moraga Commons water fountain Aug. 15. The cops have it, safe and sound. It couldn't be turned on for them to phone home.

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Small Animals Ordinance Study Session Goes Smoothly

By Sophie Braccini

The love of small animals, chickens and bees, was definitely in the air at the Aug. 17 Moraga Planning Commission meeting. It was scheduled as a study session for a modification of the existing ordinance that does not allow raising non-pet animals on properties less than one acre. Most of the people who attended the meeting spoke in favor of the new text that would allow the majority of residents with a backyard to raise small animals. Beekeepers were also in attendance and asked that the proposed text be reviewed based on expert knowledge of what makes a healthy hive and non-aggressive bees. Con-

cerns were raised regarding how the town would enforce best practices if a coop became a nuisance.

Brian Horn, associate planner, said Moraga took advantage of the extensive research the city of Lafayette conducted two years ago regarding regulations in comparable communities when they adopted a similar ordinance. "We customized it to fit our specific situation," he confirmed.

Small farm animals are defined as hoofless creatures including chickens, turkeys, doves, pigeons, quail, game birds, rabbits and honeybees. They can be raised without permit or notification if the residents have enough room in their backyard, but keeping of honeybees would require an administrative permit that would include neighbors' notification.

Keeping small animals would be allowed on 6,000-10,000 square foot parcels; six on parcels between 10,000 and 20,000 square feet; eight on parcels between 20,000 and 40,000 square feet; and 16 on parcels over 40,000 square feet. Keeping small animals would not be allowed on lots less than 6,000 square feet, unless an exception was granted. Raising them would be allowed for single-family residences, as well as duplexes and triplexes as long as the backyard area is wide enough and the other residents are agreeable to the project.

The text would include sheltering and maintenance requirements in order to eliminate all types of nuisance to the neighbors. Slaughtering would be permitted, since the purpose of allowing this activity is to encourage local food production, as long as it remains humane and inconspicuous

to neighbors.

One resident, De Etta Kay Reynolds, spoke against the ordinance. The Moraga resident, who said she was raised on a farm around animals, stated that she did not think that they had their place in Moraga because they can become a public health hazard, they are noisy and they smell. She added that she did not think that newcomers are paying over a million dollars for homes next to chickens.

Other residents who attended the meeting supported the project. Several highlighted the fact that raising small animals is a great project for parents and children to do together, that it taught responsibility as well as a sense of where food comes from. Others indicated that this was now part of the lifestyle in many cities, including San Francisco and Oakland. John Kiefer of Lafayette, who has trained hundreds on how to build odor- and maintenance-free chicken coops, assured the commission that sustainable chicken keeping was both useful and pleasurable. There was general support for the ordinance as drafted, except from the only family of beekeepers who came to the meeting.

Andy and Wendy Scheck, owners of Lamorinda Weekly, have been beekeepers in Moraga for a few years. Andy Scheck explained that limiting the number of beehives to two did not make a lot of sense as the world of bees is changing. He noted that the placement of hives proposed in the text does not take good beekeeping practices into account and that honeybees are non-aggressive insects when they are not under stress. Scheck re-

mindful commissioners of the importance of backyard bees to pollinate local plants as well as being part of the effort to restore healthy bee populations. The beekeepers also stressed the importance of having experienced beekeepers, such as Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association members, train new beekeepers.

Resident AJ Eames noted that these insects and animals are useful precursor species, as bees pollinate plants and chickens produce manure to fertilize the soil.

Some planning commissioners, especially Steve Woehleke, wrestled with the difficulty to enforce good maintenance rules if an ordinance was adopted. Planning Director Ellen Clark noted that there are already many "underground" chicken coops in Moraga and that the way ordinances are enforced is when a complaint is filed. If an ordinance was adopted and a coop became a nuisance, citations would be issued and if no action was taken it could lead to town abatement of the problem.

Vice-Chair Christine Kuckuk and commissioners Ravi Mallela and Suzanne D'Arcy strongly supported the project, recommending that staff meet with professional beekeepers to draft a regulation that would benefit honeybees and protect allergic neighbors.

After the meeting, Horn said he would meet with the Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association shortly and that a proposed ordinance would come back to the Planning Commission in September for recommendation to the Town Council. The objective is to have the council make a final decision before the end of the year.



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Hacienda Transformation: Economic Stakes Emerge

By Sophie Braccini



Proposed map, with additional annotations

Photo courtesy Gould Evans

Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram invited representatives of local stakeholder groups to meet with architectural firm Gould Evans Aug. 17 and weigh in as the concept for renovating the historic public property moves into an active business phase. Gould Evans representatives presented the architectural plans as well as the results of their first talks with potential investors. The trade-offs that would be necessary to make a public-private partnership a success are beginning to surface. Partly business, partly community asset, the new Hacienda would concentrate the public amenities in the pavilion area, while a business model still needs to be created to make the rest of the property an interesting investment opportunity. Food and wine pairing plus accommodations is one possibility.

Members of the Moraga Juniors, the Moraga Movers (seniors), the Hacienda Foundation, the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association (LWGA) and interested residents gathered at the La Sala building and heard a quick conceptual presentation by Gould Evans project manager Lauren Maass. "The concept would be to have a community center around the pavilion area, a hospitality center with a restaurant and lodging in and around the main building, as well as a wine center," she summarized.

The entry into the Hacienda property would be redirected through the Moraga Road entry point. The pavilion would be the community hub, the original pool could be restored, a cabana area and a meeting room could be added; parks and recreation offices would be moved there.

... continued on page A11

Referendum on Aug. 26 Agenda

Council likely to take no action

The Town Council will acknowledge at its Aug. 26 meeting the petition that was filed by a group of citizens to stop the Moraga Center Homes development next to the fire station on Moraga Way. The Contra Costa County Elections Division certified that this referendum petition con-

tained the requisite number of valid signatures. The council could either repeal the ordinance against which the petition is filed, or submit the ordinance to the voters. But the developer, City Ventures, and the property owner, David Bruzzone, have filed a lawsuit claiming that the petition violated several state

election laws. For example they say that the residents omitted the actual plans of the site in the information that they showed to those who signed. State law requires the "full text" of a municipal initiative be included in the petition that is circulated for voter signatures. "Because the town went ahead and cer-

tified the referendum despite this violation of state election law, we are put in the uncomfortable position of actually having to turn to the courts to enforce the election laws," said Charity Wagner of City Ventures. The town attorney believes the issues raised bring up serious legal questions that are

best resolved by a court of law. She has recommended that the council take no action on whether to rescind or put the referendum on the ballot until a court decides on the merits of the petition. The Town Council will decide to proceed or not at its regular meeting on Aug. 26. *S. Braccini*

Better Homes and Gardens REAL ESTATE | **MASON-McDUFFIE** *Real Estate...Simplified!*

<p>857 Mountain View Dr, Lafayette</p>  <p>PRICE REDUCED</p> <p>\$100,000 price reduction. This 4BR/3.5BA home is over 3300 sf with spectacular views and new redwood decks. Spacious cook's kitchen with dining area, pantry and family room. The side yard is perfect for outdoor dining and BBQ's. Offered at \$1,395,000 by Jim Colhoun, 925.200.2795.</p> <p>CalBRE#01029160</p>	<p>319 Pheasant Run, Blackhawk</p>  <p>NEW LISTING</p> <p>Iconic contemporary with 5,800 sf of dramatic living space artistically designed to balance color, texture and lighting. 4 bdr., 2 offices, media room, 7 baths and 4-car finished garage. Professional landscaping and orchid greenhouse, overlooking the waterfalls www.319pheasantrun.com. Offered at \$2,800,000 by Larry Jacobs and Kress Hauri.</p> <p>CalBRE#01465617/#01495118</p>	<p>19 Ketelsen Ct, Moraga</p>  <p>Spacious 4 bedroom/4 bath home overlooking the beautiful Moraga hills. More than 3800 sf with indoor swimming pool & spa as well as game room. Open layout with spacious rooms and views. Near top-rated schools, swim club and shopping. Offered at \$1,250,000 by Jim Colhoun, 925.200.2795.</p> <p>CalBRE#01029160</p>	<p>3416 Morningside Drive, El Sobrante</p>  <p>Well loved home has been freshly painted and spruced up. Enjoy the comfy living room with fireplace, open kitchen/dining area, and Tahoe-like back yard. Within walking distance of elementary and high school, and close to services and Orinda BART. Offered at \$450,000 by Tania DeGroot 510.367.1422.</p> <p>CalBRE#01094898</p>
<p>180 Ivy Drive, Orinda</p>  <p>SOLD</p> <p>Adorable 1289 square foot Ivy Drive ranch style home on gorgeous flat wooded .39 acre lot. Great floor plan with 3 BR/2BA, beautiful remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, & updated baths. Amazing outdoor living spaces. Sold by Ruth Eddy for \$1,050,000.</p> <p>CalBRE#01313819</p>	<p>132 Selborne Way, Moraga</p>  <p>COMING</p> <p>5 BR/2.5 BA. Approx 2500 sq. ft. Fantastic cul-de-sac location close to schools. For more information contact Ruth Eddy, 925.788.5449.</p> <p>CalBRE#01313819</p>	<p>TIP OF THE WEEK</p> <p>Solid job growth, a recent rise in wages, and low gas prices have given consumers more confidence to spend money. In addition, a strong dollar versus the yuan could keep inflation low and likely delay the Fed in raising its benchmark Fed funds Rate beyond September, keeping home loan rates down. While local home prices are rising at a consistent rate of around 5% annually, home ownership is still at a 20-year low. Let us help more qualified buyers participate in the American Dream!</p>	

Meet our Featured Agents ...

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Sept. 1, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting Orinda Union School District

Monday, Sept. 15, 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 Aug. 2-15

Alarms	71
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	12
Traffic stops	148
Suspicious Circumstances	16
Suspicious Subjects	14
Suspicious Vehicles	30
Abandoned Vehicle	
Parkway Ct/Glorietta Blvd	
Muth Dr/Bates Blvd	
Barking Dog	
100 block Overhill Rd	
10 block El Camino	
20 block Moraga Via	
10 block Cascade Ln	
100 block Overhill Rd	
100 block Canon Dr	
Burglary, Auto	
Moraga Way/Bryant Way	
Burglary, Commercial	
50 block Moraga Way	
Burglary, Residential	
10 block North Lane	
50 block Camino Encinas	
Disturbance	
200 block Orchard Rd (domestic)	
Glorietta Elementary (juvenile)	
Brookwood/Spring Rds	
Harassment	
500 block Moraga Way (2)	
80 block La Cuesta Rd	
Hit & Run	
Safeway	
20 block Heather Ln	
ID Theft	
20 block Warford Terr	
200 block Orchard Rd	
60 block Lost Valley Dr (2)	
Loud Music/Noise	
50 block Knickerbocker Ln	
Donna Maria Wy/Sager Ct	
200 block Moraga Way	
Orinda Country Club	
10 block Lind Court	
Loud Party	
100 block Las Vegas Rd	
10 block Lombardy Ln	
80 block Hillcrest Dr	
Police/Fire/ EMS	
Stein/Moraga Way	
Promiscuous Shooting	
10 block Cresta Blanca	
Public Nuisance	
Loma Vista/El Toyonal	
200 block Sundown Terr	
40 block Tara Rd	
10 block Vashell Way	
Ardilla Rd/Camino Pablo	
Reckless Driving	
Camino Pablo/Moraga Way	
Camino Pablo/Orinda Way	
San Pablo Dam Rd/Wildcat Ct	
Miramonte High School	
Shoplift	
10 block Camino Sobrante	
Safeway	
Theft, Petty	
900 block Tappan Ln	
100 block Fiesta Cir	
500 block Dalewood Dr	
10 block Estabuena Dr (2)	
Risa Ct/Ivy Dr	
BevMo	
30 block Zander Dr	



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Council OKs Green Striping for Camino Pablo Bike Lane

Nixes traffic study proposal

By Victor Ryerson

The Orinda City Council has given the green light to a revised striping plan that will add green conflict zone striping to the northbound Camino Pablo bike lane near the Highway 24 on- and off-ramps. However, the council declined to authorize the performance of a traffic study for recommendations and potential impacts of modifications to the westbound Highway 24 on- and off-ramp to improve bicycle safety, concluding that the study would “not be helpful.”

The plan to add the green striping relates back to the city’s 2014 efforts to coordinate with CalTrans on the restriping of new pavement between Brookwood Road and Santa Maria Way to improve bicycle circulation and safety. Retaining walls and abutments to Highway 24 and the BART tracks limit the ability to incorporate bike lanes in the area, and the final design placed the lane between the right turn only lane and the combination through-right turn lane onto Highway 24.

The bike lane striping was installed in June, but comments from the general public and Bike Orinda, a local bicyclists’ group, suggested that further safety improvements should be considered. At the July 20 meeting of Orinda’s Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, city staff proposed additional safety enhancements to the bike lane by adding green conflict zone striping, an increasingly common measure used in many other communities. The committee favored the idea, and recommended addition of the

green striping to the council. The cost of doing the upgrade is expected to be about \$23,000.

Although the council enthusiastically supported the green striping, it unanimously turned down a proposal to conduct an associated study of traffic at the site. The council members were aware of the northbound commute-hour backup from Brookwood to the Highway 24 on-ramp, but did not feel that an additional study would be helpful to their understanding of the situation.

Planning Commission Sends Wilder Developer Back to the Drawing Board

By Victor Ryerson

By unanimous vote at its Aug. 11 meeting, the Orinda Planning Commission approved the design of two single-story homes in Wilder, but sent the developer home to redesign three others for failure to comply with a “step-down” provision of the Development Agreement for the Gateway valley. That provision, which echoes a long-standing Orinda zoning law design principle, requires a hillside home to be designed to step down the slope, so it does not present a massive facade from the front. The underlying concept is that such a design will better harmonize esthetically with Orinda’s steep hillsides. The commission’s action will delay the rejected designs until they can be resubmitted for consideration.

Ironically, at the end of the meeting, Orinda Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu announced that a plan to streamline the design review process for Wilder subdivision homes will be presented to the Orinda City Council, possibly as early as Sept. 28. The new procedure, which was recommended by the City Council Committee on Wilder, would bypass the commission altogether, committing decisions on approval to a zoning administrator. Ursu or his designee would be the administrator.

The rejected designs were proposed by Taylor Morrison of California LLC, which owns 61 lots in Wilder. It is developing its lots on an aggressive schedule, and has filed 17 design review applications for single-family residences. The commission found fault with the designs of three homes because the upper story was not set back from the story below in stepwise fashion. Taylor Morrison attempted to compensate for this by including niches, stairways and recessions in the homes. The commission made clear that Orinda’s design requirements may not be glossed over in this fashion, and that it did not want to set a precedent for future applications by approving the noncompliant designs.

“Have we stepped down the whole house? No we have not,” admitted Taylor Morrison’s architect, John Rothroff. But he argued that other features, such as recesses incorporated into the facades and varied roof heights, were tantamount to “stepping” the structures.

The commissioners wanted to hear none of it. “If you are on a slope, you have to step down the house,” responded commissioner Dave Hoppock. “The code says ‘step.’ ... It doesn’t talk about the appearance of stepping down, it talks about stepping down.”

“We’re looking for breaking planes,” added commissioner Joe McGrath.

With that, the commission sent the developer back to the drawing

board to rethink the designs. Several commissioners further expressed discomfort with previous approvals that seemingly fudged Gateway Development Agreement requirements. “If we have rules and continually override them, [what good are they?],” asked Hoppock.

If rigorous adherence to the Development Agreement is the city’s goal, the proposal to shortcut the design review approval process would seem to be a move in the opposite direction. Recommended by the City Council Subcommittee on Wilder, which consists of mayor Dean Orr and council member Amy Worth, under the proposal the design review and approval procedure would be reduced to an administrative process. The city’s planning staff would re-

view each conceptual plan and offer its input. The plan would then go to the Wilder Development Committee, consisting of an architect, a landscape architect, and a developer representative – in this case, Brook Street, the majority partner. Finally, the applicant would bring the plan to the zoning administrator for final approval, which would not require a hearing unless requested by a neighbor or member of the public. Any appeals would go before the city council.

The proposal is intended to eliminate redundancies, and tracks other zoning administrator provisions in Orinda’s zoning law, according to Ursu. It will be reviewed by both the Planning Commission and the City Council, and is just in the talking stage, he emphasized.

Help 5A Moraga Help Local Foster Kids Get Ready For School This Year



Many don't even have the basic supplies...



Through August 15th, 5A Rent-A-Space in Moraga is collecting donations of new school supplies for our area's Foster Children. A list of needed items can be found on our web site. For every donation we will give you a gift with our 'Thanks'! Our goal is 100 items at each 5A location...

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A list of the needed items is at 5aspace.com. School Supplies Drive Ends 8/15/15



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Orinda Motors Presents



The 11th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show Weekend

**Friday Night Pre-Party,
September 11th, 6:00pm
"DANCING WITH THE CARS"**

**Saturday,
September 12th, 10am-3pm
ORINDA CLASSIC CAR SHOW**



**Join us as a spectator or to show your car or motorcycle!
Register online today!**

Enjoy vintage and modern exotic cars and motorcycles, food, music, and more! The show will be held in and around Orinda Motors, 63 Orinda Way.

Cruise in a Classic!
Donate \$10 and choose your ride for the Drive.



Enter Your Car and Buy Party Tickets Today at www.OrindaCarShow.com

These events benefit the Seniors Around Town transportation program, Educational Foundation of Orinda and other local charities. We would like to thank our partners for helping make these events happen: Orinda Association, Rotary Club of Orinda, Orinda Historical Society Museum, Orinda Country Club, Orinda Chamber of Commerce, EFO, Orinda Arts Council and Seniors Around Town.

Event Schedule

**Friday, September 11th, 6:00pm
"DANCING WITH THE CARS" FRIDAY NIGHT PRE-PARTY**

The presenting sponsor for this great event is **Clark Thompson - Village Associates.**

FUN FUN FUN (till her daddy takes the T-Bird away)

This all-inclusive event is Orinda's largest community-wide fundraiser and will feature a totally awesome exhibit of Shelby Cobras. Along with other primo classic cars of the era. Tropical cocktails, a luscious menu, silent and live auctions, and dancing to the surf-inspired songs of the Beach Boys and Jan and Dean will have you ready to hang ten and shoot the curl! Reserve your tickets now!

Proceeds from this event benefit a variety of non-profits, including EFO, the Orinda Association, the Orinda Arts Council, Orinda Parks and Rec Foundation, the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club of Orinda, which produces "Dancing with the Cars".

**Buy your tickets at:
www.OrindaCarShow.com
Space is limited so don't wait.
NO WALK-INS WILL BE ALLOWED.**

**Saturday
September 12th, 10am - 3pm
11TH ANNUAL ORINDA CLASSIC CAR SHOW**

Free Admission

The presenting sponsor for this event is **Orinda Motors.**

- The show will be held in Orinda Village around Orinda Motors and on Orinda Way.
- 200 Classic and modern exotic cars as well as unique motorcycles
- Lamorinda Idol Winners Performance at Noon
- Arriving at 1pm, there will be an outstanding exhibit of original Shelby Cobras, which the following day will begin the 26th Annual Cobra 1000 Invitational Tour
- Shaded seating to enjoy lunch and refreshments from the Car Show BBQ Booth
- Loard's Ice Cream and Candy
- Ride in the Drive of Classic Cars at 3pm
- Buy a 2015 Car Show T-Shirt

Proceeds benefit local charities: Seniors Around Town, Educational Foundation of Orinda, Orinda Historical Society Museum, Orinda Association, and other local charities



See a 1 p.m. visit of Original Shelby Cobras about to begin their Annual 1000 Mile Invitational Tour!



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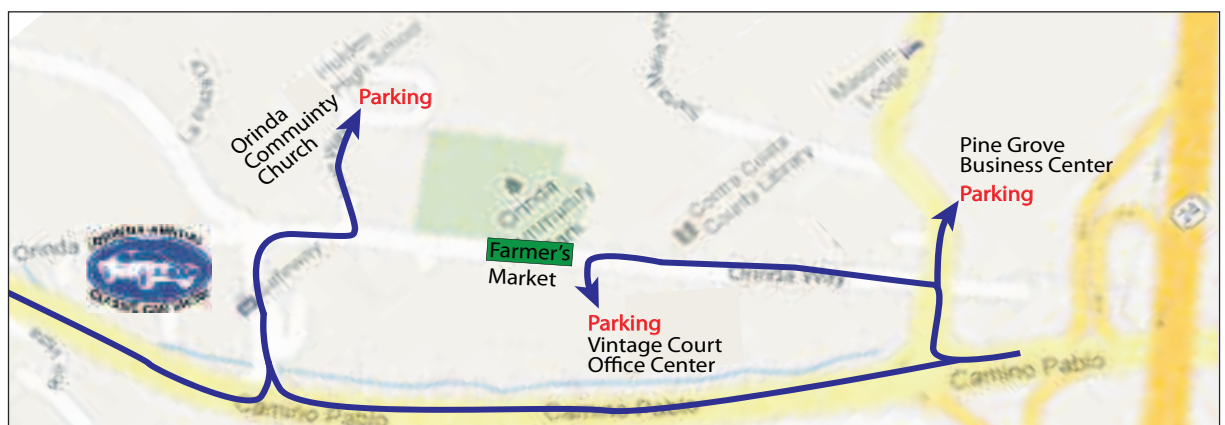
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CLASSIC CAR SHOW WEEKEND PIT CREW

Dan Akol	Bill Criswell	Stu Kahn	Debbie and Wayne
Hallie and Henry Alfaro	David Dierks	Aileen and Mark	Rechnitz
Stretch Andersen	Anthony DREWITZ	Kazmierowski	Mike Robinson
Syd Anderson	Lynn and Steve Freeman	Emily Lambert	Dayna and John Sayres
Nancy and Bob Bishop	Jill Gelster	Lindsay Lautz	Bob Schmaltz
Barbara and Jack Bontemps	Steve Giacomo	Mark and Mary Maxson	Greg Sisk
Boy Scout Troop 303	Karen Derr Gilbert	Pete Michaelides	Tom and Monica Steinberger
Sue Breedlove	Susan and Steve Glynn	Jim Mitchell	Steve Strand
Tom Brzezinski	Kirk Haley	Ed Moffatt	John Vanek
Sheila and Scott Butler	Steve Harwood	Sharon and Lou Parrague	Craig Volpe
Rita Chamberlain	Carolyn and Chip Herman	Tom Pearson	Marie and Bill Waterman
Betsy and Greg Chovanes	Sally Hogarty	Allen Pennebaker	Kate Wiley
Steve Corbitt	Sylvia Jorgensen	Greg Pritchard	Woody Woodward
	Jeff Joyce	Terry Ranahan	

P CLASSIC CAR SHOW PARKING

- Orinda Community Church and Holden High School, Irwin Way
- Vintage Office Building, Orinda Way
- Pine Grove Business Center, Santa Maria Way



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CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

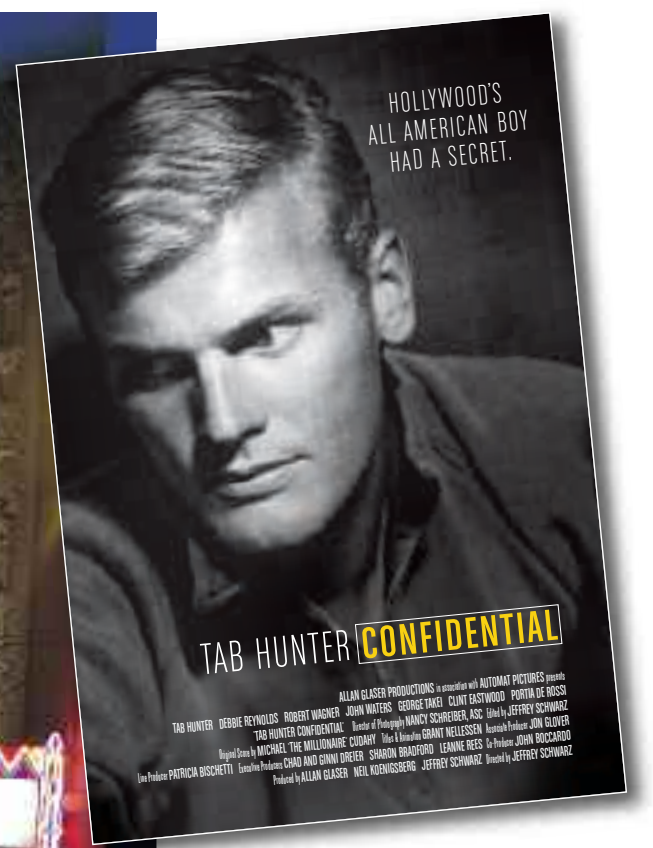
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SEPTEMBER 10TH - 16TH 2015
MORAGA ■ ORINDA ■ SAN FRANCISCO



Opening Night

**Thursday September 10
6:30PM Rheem Theatre**

Meet Hollywood Icon and Legend – Tab Hunter

at the Opening Night Mixer of the 18th Annual California Independent Film Festival. Included in this event are wines from CAIFF's Official Wine, Jackson Family Wines; Official Beer, Zemrak-Pirkle; Official Vodka, Tito's Handmade Vodka; Official Rum, Papa's Pilar Rum; and meat and cheese platters from Ciné Cuvée. Tickets \$20

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Rheem Theatre



Friday, September 11

1:00 PM - They Work Hard for the Money!
A program of six short films dealing with the workplace and one's job

4:00 PM - Relationships
These six short films showcase relationships – father-son, mother-daughter, friends, neighbors and animals.

7:00 PM - Paper Planes
USA 2014, Family, 1 hr 36 min. A young Australian boy with a passion for flight dreams of competing in the World Paper Plane Championships in Japan.

9:00 PM - Writer's Cramp
USA 2014, Comedy, 1 hr 45 min. Amy and Scott, short on money and talent, hatch a desperate scheme to commit the perfect murder.

Saturday, September 12

11:00 AM - Iron Filmmaker Contest
Meet the contestants who are competing for the 2015 Iron Filmmaker Award.

1:00 PM - Sapporo Shorts Showcase
A showcase of award winning short films from around the world by CAIFF's sister film festival in Sapporo Japan.

3:00 PM - Relationships Six short films showcase.

5:00 PM - All-American Family
USA 2015, Documentary, 13 min, Welcome to Pleasanton, CA.

- Banners in the Sky
USA 2015, Documentary, 1 hr 2 min. For the Campolindo Cougar football team, typical has never been a part of the strategy.

7:00 PM - Henri Henri
Canada 2014, Comedy, 1 hr 40 min. As the sisters who raised him have to leave, Henri has to figure out how to live by himself within the city.

9:00 PM - Elephant Song
Canada 2014, Drama, 1 hr 10 min. A psychiatrist is drawn into a complex mind game.

Sunday, September 13

1:00 PM - Bay Area Showcase
Meet seven Bay Area filmmakers as they showcase their latest short film projects.

3:00 PM - Wild Wild West and a Wild One
This is a showcase of five short films about the old and new west.

5:00 PM - Eleven
USA 2014, Documentary, 1 hr 20 min. Eleven surviving War World II veterans from Carrier Air Group 11 share stories with the grandson of one of their comrade-in-arms.



Orinda Theatre

Friday, September 11

1:00 PM - Death Becomes Us
A showcase of six short films is centered on "Death". Who knew "Death" could be so entertaining?

4:00 PM - Let's Make Movies
A showcase of four short films focusing on the craft of filmmaking.

7:00 PM - Huong Ga - Rise
Vietnam 2014, Action Thriller, 1 hr 40 min. Huong Ga - Rise is a rag to riches story about Vietnam's most notorious female gangster, Dieu, as she climbs to the top of Vietnam's gangster underworld.

9:00 PM - Intersection
USA 2014, Crime Drama, 1 hr 21 min. Cobb Mills, a broken man, haunted by a car crash that claimed the life of his daughter, returns to the same small town where the fateful accident occurred only to discover something he never expected to find - love.

Saturday, September 12

11:30 AM - Our Food Chain
USA 2015, Documentary, 1 hr 6 min. Each day the second largest school district in the US serves over 700,000 meals.

1:00 PM - CAIFF Composer Contest
Music is a major element in any film. See how music impacts a movie and who will win the 2015 CAIFF Composer of the Year!

3:00 PM - We All Have Drama in Our Lives!
A program of five dramatic short films from around the world all focused around everyday drama.

5:00 PM - They Work Hard for the Money!
A program of six short films all dealing with the workplace and ones job.

7:00 PM - Love at First Fight
France 2014, Romantic Comedy, 1 hr 38 min. Between his friends and the family business, Amaud's summer looks to be a peaceful one. Peaceful until he runs into Madeleine.

9:00 PM - Queen and Country
Ireland 2014, Drama, 1 hr 54 min. In this sequel to *Hope and Glory*, Bill Rohan has grown up and is drafted into the army, where he and his eccentric best mate, Percy, battle their snooty superiors on the base and look for love in town.

Sunday, September 13

1:00 PM - Make Us Laugh!
A showcase of eight short films that will surely make you laugh.

3:00 PM - Death Becomes Us
A showcase of six short films all based around "Death". Who knew "Death" could be entertaining at times.

4:45 PM - We All Have Drama in Our Lives!
A program of five dramatic short films from around the world all focused around everyday drama.

7:00 PM - Gibby World Premiere
USA 2015, Family, 1 hr 27 min. A young teenage girl, Katie, cannot snap out of her depression after losing her mother. Katie has lost interest in school, her friends, and gymnastics. All that changes in the summer, when Katie is asked to monkey sit for Gibby, her science teacher's Capuchin monkey.



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Council Resolves Zoning Issues

By Victor Ryerson

In anticipation of a prospective application to develop a parcel at 1 Wilder Road with an assisted living facility, the Orinda City Council has decided to retain the current Orinda Municipal Code requirement that each unit of a "congregate care" facility include a kitchen. The council also decided that the property, and all property in a Public, Semi-Public and Utility (PS) District, is subject to the property development standards applicable in the closest residential or downtown district, even though the closest such district is not "adjoining" the property in question. The development proposal was not before the council when it discussed these matters Aug. 18, and the proposal will ultimately be subject to public review and discussion under Orinda's design review, scenic corridor, use permit, and other standards.

"Congregate care facility," as one public speaker commented, may be considered an out-moded term in this day and age, because an entire spectrum of facilities from active seniors' residences to nursing homes fall within this rubric. Each is characterized by different kinds and amounts of assistance provided by the facility. Orinda's zoning law defines a congregate care residence as a facility that provides 24-hour nonmedical care of people in need of personal services, supervision or assistance "essential for sustaining the activities of daily living or for the protection of the individual." The code states that such a facility contains small individual units of usually one or two rooms with a small kitchen "allowing for independent living," but also common dining, housekeeping, recreational and social facilities – the controversy centered around

the individual kitchen requirement.

City staff recommended that the requirement be retained, but this elicited several public comments concerning the safety of incorporating any device that produces heat, even a microwave, in congregate care facilities such as "memory care" facilities. Such a facility cares for persons with conditions like dementia, and they are often unaware of the nature of what they are doing and may, for example, place a shoe in a microwave instead of food, creating a hazard. Although acknowledging that neighboring communities do not have the kitchen requirement in their zoning laws, the consensus of the council was not to amend the current Orinda zoning law and potentially create new problems of interpretation, but to continue to require a kitchen in each unit, even a minimal one,

as any potentially hazardous appliances could be disabled for safety's sake.

On the question of what quantitative development standards (for example, setbacks and building height requirements) apply to this PS district, the council faced the conundrum that Orinda's zoning law specifies that the standards be those required by the "closest adjoining residential or downtown district" regulations, but that there is no adjoining district. After briefly struggling with the issue, the council determined that in this instance – the only one like it in the city – the word "adjoining" should be ignored. This means that the property development standards of the Oak Springs district, RL-6, should apply. At a later date the matter will return for consideration of a formal clarifying amendment to the Orinda Municipal Code.

City Marks 30th Anniversary at Concerts in the Park



The City of Orinda had a brief ceremony to commemorate its 30th anniversary of cityhood at the Aug. 11 Concert in the Park. Current and former council members and founders assembled for the occasion. Mayor Dean Orr, far left, recognized the city's founders, accompanied, from left, by Vice-Mayor Victoria Smith, council members Eve Phillips and Darlene Gee, former council members Laura Abrams and Joyce

Hawkins, founder Marianne Aude, former council member Gregg Wheatland, and current council member Amy Worth. Following the ceremony members of the large audience were invited to help themselves to complimentary cupcakes and beach balls before the concert resumed.

Photo Victor Ryerson



ORINDA \$599,000
2/1. Nestled among the trees sits a charming home. A great alternative 2 condo lvg & no HOA's.
Shellie Kirby CalBRE#01251227



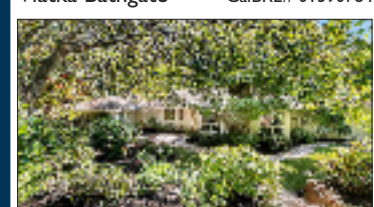
LAFAYETTE \$5,995,000
5/3. Broker Exclusive. Exquisite ranch hm on 1.08 acres. Newly remodeled kitchen. Expansive yard w/pool & tennis court.
Steve Stahle CalBRE#01861509



MORAGA \$850,000
4/2.2. 4 bdrm + loft, updated kitchen with dinette. Redone master bath. Back deck overlooks pond.
The Holcenberg Team CalBRE#01373412



ORINDA \$1,320,000
3/2.5. Absolute Luxury close to Downtown. Spectacular 3972 sqft picturesque home is its serene location.
Vlatka Bathgate CalBRE# 01390784



LAFAYETTE \$2,998,000
5/5.5. Happy Valley Estate: custom gardens, classic charm, superb craftsmanship, approx 1.03 acre
Finola Fellner CalBRE# 01428834

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Finola Fellner CalBRE# 01428834



OAKLAND \$1,395,000
4/2.5. Stunning multi-lvl, vu's chef kitch, pvt, 2 Mstr suites, decks, H/W, yard, garage, CLEAN.
Tom Stack CalBRE# 01501769



ORINDA \$1,785,000
4/3.5. Remodeled & expanded. Open floor plan for easy living. Close to 12 years of Orinda Schools.
Laura Abrams CalBRE# 01272382



LAFAYETTE \$1,895,000
5/3. Spacious completely remodeled home on private acreage with stunning views. Ideal location.
Susan Schlicher CalBRE#01395579



ORINDA \$959,000
3/2. Meticulously remodeled w/superb finishes & attention to detail. Ideal location.
The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



ORINDA \$3,295,000
5/4.5. Breathtaking Mediterranean Estate with glorious Views, opulent paradise in the prestigious Glorietta vicinage.
Vlatka Bathgate CalBRE# 01390784



LAFAYETTE \$1,500,000
4/2.5. Broker Exclusive. Extensively remodeled home. Hdwd flrs, chef's kit, private Mstr Ste, beautiful outdoor pavilion, lrg patio area.
Nancy Stryker CalBRE# 01290021

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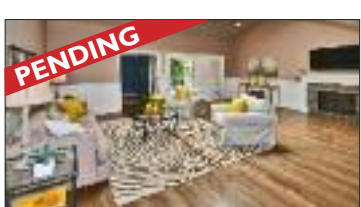
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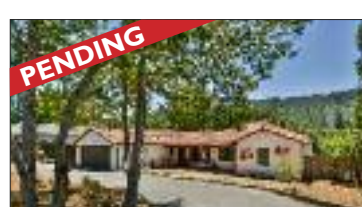
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ORINDA \$1,350,000
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The Hattersley's CalBRE# 01181995



MORAGA \$1,250,000
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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors

Wednesday, Sept. 2, 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, Sept. 15, 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:

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ConFire Station 16 Back in Play

By Nick Marnell



After four years, help indeed may be on the way Photo Ohlen Alexander

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District board of directors authorized fire chief Jeff Carman Aug. 18 to investigate the cost of reopening fire station 16 in Lafayette, putting on hold plans for a joint fire station 46 with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

Discussions of the joint venture have been fraught with negatives since then-MOFD chief Randy Bradley proposed in 2013 that Orinda station 43 and Lafayette station 16 merge across districts. MOFD questioned the financial capability of Con-

Fire to complete the deal, and the ConFire board originally voted against the consolidation, blaming a terrible financial environment. In 2014, as the economy improved, both districts began work on the joint station agreement.

But Carman told the board that the station 46 negotiations have been difficult. "There are operational contract issues," he said, starting with the annual district call volume: 5,000 for MOFD and 50,000 for ConFire. "They have more time to do things like public education, things we'd love to have the time to do," he said, noting that if MOFD took its company out of station 46 to conduct an educational seminar at a high school, ConFire may find issue with that. And if ConFire wanted to pull the 46 company to move up and cover for a Walnut Creek call, Carman said MOFD residents might have a problem. "And that's going to occur a disproportionate amount of time," he said.

The chief said that response times in western Lafayette have increased more than 30 seconds since station 16 closed. "Lafayette is in a high fire hazard severity zone," he explained. "There is potential for devastating

property loss, and that worries me more than anything."

North Orinda residents have touted response time concerns of their own should their local station 43 be closed, staging a petition drive to halt construction of the proposed joint station. Carman acknowledged that the opposition could further delay the project. "It was clear to me that the Orinda residents were not happy about moving their fire station and being associated with ConFire," he said. "It gave me insight that this was not going to be an easy process."

The clincher for the chief was a recent report from a ConFire contractor who disputed conventional wisdom and said that shuttered station 16 could be rebuilt, and at a much lower cost than the construction of fire station 46. ConFire's capital investment was estimated to be less than \$1 million to repair station 16 as opposed to \$6 million to build station 46, and the operational costs for station 16 would increase \$800,000 per year, about half of the district's share of projected annual costs of the joint station. Carman projected a 12-15 month timetable for the repairs, and he asked the board for authorization to further investigate sta-

tion 16 as an alternative to station 46.

"Move forward with all haste," said director Karen Mitchoff, with the other three directors expressing a similar sentiment.

"We're disappointed because we were making real progress on a deal," said MOFD board president Alex Evans. "But we are happy that ConFire is going to rebuild and restaff station 16. Our fear was that they'd never do that and MOFD would carry an unfair burden." MOFD Fire Chief Stephen Healy agreed that opening station 16 would increase regional fire capacity. "However, 46 did offer the flexibility of having one or two engines staffed on a daily basis," he said. Evans said the board will take no action on the property purchased for the new station until station 16 is up and running.

"I am doing back flips!" said Ellen Dale, leader of the north Orinda community group that opposed station 46. "We were prepared to force this plan to a referendum. So, the chief was correct in his assessment that this would have been delayed."

Carman plans to update his board Sept. 22 on the feasibility of reopening station 16.

Lafayette Reacts to Station 16 Announcement

By Nick Marnell



One step closer to opening up that door Photo Ohlen Alexander

Though the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District announced that it will consider reopening Lafayette fire station 16, city officials and emergency services task force members refrained from patting each other on the back just yet.

"It's been a long time. Financially, 16 is viable and we're behind it," said task force co-chair and Lafayette vice mayor Traci Reilly. But she told the fire district board of directors Aug. 18 that the city wanted assurance that station 16 would not be the first station shut down during the

district's next financial crisis. "We're tired of temporary solutions," she said.

The city of Lafayette threatened to detach from ConFire and possibly join the Moraga-Orinda Fire District if the district did not improve delivery of its fire and emergency medical service, claiming that the city did not receive its fair share for its \$9 million annual payment. City manager Steve Falk reminded the board that the pressure for detachment has grown, and is very real. "Our patience has a limit," he said. "It's time to resolve this."

"We can't promise that we'll never close a station again," said director Karen Mitchoff. "And it's getting tiring hearing about Lafayette paying more into the district. This is not a fee for service; you are paying for capacity."

ConFire chief Jeff Carman explained that Lafayette, one of nine cities in the fire district, is part of a major network, much larger than MOFD. "We can supply you with bulldozers, helicopters, fire investigators, an infinite number of resources," he said. He told officials at the Aug. 18 task force meeting about the recent arrest of the arsonist thanks to the work of four ConFire investigators. "That's the stuff you don't see," he said. "We are sure that he set several fires in Lafayette."

Should ConFire nix the proposed station 46 joint venture with MOFD and begin the rehabilitation of station 16 on Los Arabis Drive, Carman estimated that the work will take 12-15 months to complete. Task force member Rich Cunningham, who helped build a fire station in Albany, warned the chief that, since the station rehab project must go through the county public works department, he should

count on a lot longer time frame than 15 months.

Jim Fajardo, task force member and retired fire chief, piled on with the skepticism. "I don't trust that the timeline will be met, or that in the future, we won't be in the same place we are today," he said, echoing that secession was a real possibility if the city does not receive the fire service it has purchased.

"If it's still the desire of Lafayette to detach and join another fire district, I can't say anything about that," said Carman. "I try to balance fire service for our district between nine cities, within a budget. I'm trying to provide good, honest communication in the district. I'm what you've got, and if you don't like what you've got, I can't change that."

"We put in our money, and we expect full coverage of fire and medical service," said task force co-chair and Lafayette mayor Brandt Andersson. "As long as we get that, I'm not as concerned about the money."

"But if we don't get full coverage, we're off the reservation."

The task force plans to next meet Sept. 22, after Carman presents the station 16 study to his board.

Lafayette Joins SunShares Program

Lamorinda residents can opt in while awaiting decision by Moraga and Orinda councils

By Sophie Braccini

Lafayette and three other East Bay cities have joined SunShares – a program managed by non-profit Vote Solar that offers a 15 percent discount on purchased or leased solar equipment. The Orinda and Moraga city councils will decide next month whether they will join the program, but according to SunShares Program Director Jessie Denver, any Lamorinda resident can join. The SunShares program has helped put solar panels on roofs throughout the United States, including about 1,000 in the Peninsula.

Staff from the city of Walnut Creek and Vote Solar spoke to the city of Lafayette's Environmental Task Force, which recommended that Lafayette join the program, said Lafayette assistant planner Megan Canales. "On June 8, the council adopted a resolution authorizing our participation in the program," she said.

By offering pre-negotiated pricing, ease of administration and public outreach, Canales said the task force and council anticipate that more residents will choose to install solar. "The city wants to encourage solar installations in general," she said. Canales said she believes that the increased solar installations will help Lafayette meet state goals set out in Assembly



Solar panels on rooftops

Photo provided

Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, in addition to the city's environmental strategy goals.

Through SunShares, Vote Solar hopes to increase sales of solar panels before the 30 percent federal tax credit ends in 2016, said Denver. "We are also aware that utility companies have filed proposals to change the net metering structure with lesser compensation for solar customers," she added. "If they are successful, the people who have already installed their panels will be grandfathered in."

One of the objectives is to make choosing solar simpler. "With this

program, we simply want people to find out if solar is good for them," explained Denver. "There is no obligation to receive a proposal; people can just see if it is a good fit for their situation."

By working with cities and advocacy groups to advertise the program, she said the installers save on their customer acquisition costs. "They pass the savings to the users with the 15 percent discount," she said, adding that the two companies chosen for the program, Skytech Solar and Sunrun, provide the best equipment and service. ... continued on page A12

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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:

Editor:

In her August 12, 2015, letter to the editor, Kathi Torres demonstrates a lack of knowledge about how our City of Lafayette works. Yes, city manager Steven Falk does ponder solutions to issues that may or may not impact the citizens of Lafayette. That is part of his job. Our elected and voluntary City Council members decide the path that we take to solutions. Mr. Falk implements that path. His comments to downtown problems may be troubling to some, but they are on point and anything but insulting.

The will of our citizens is and has been articulated in our General Plan (G. P.). One of the guiding principles that is listed in its introduction is to “encourage the involvement of citizen volunteers in land use and policy planning.” I remind Ms. Torres that our current G. P. was developed by and for Lafayette citizens with work lasting more than a decade. This, our second plan, was built on the original G. P. that required nearly half a decade of citizen work that began after incorporation in 1968. Hundreds of volunteers have worked on and contributed to our plans over the many years. These individuals include City Council members, City commissioners, City committee members, members of the Chamber of Commerce, homeowners’ groups, sports organizations, school board members, LPIE (formerly LASF) and countless individual citizens. Of course, the Bruzzone family made sure that individual property owner rights were/are preserved in our G. P. Our G.P. is certified by the state as conforming to its regulations. Development over the last several years adheres to the current General Plan. In short, Mr. Falk did not create the plan that we follow today; we, the collective and interested citizens of Lafayette, did that job.

When I moved to Lafayette, there were seven grammar schools and two middle schools. Now the count is four and one respectively. Mr. Falk, even with his two children, did not strain our public schools. I feel that Lafayette is a very desirable and attractive city in which to live, work, and play, thanks to its citizens, leaders, and organizations. I can’t think of any other place I’d like to live, and approximately 23, 993 people seem to agree with me.

Erling L. Horn
Lafayette

Knock, knock.
Who’s there?
Lafayette.

Lafayette who?

Lafayette, the city that ignores EPA Air Quality issues even though their city is built on a freeway. Oh, that Lafayette! HA! The joke is on them! For better or worse, Lafayette is built on a freeway, but the City of Lafayette refuses to enforce EPA Air Quality guidelines. The most recent development, the Homes at Deer Hill, is about to be approved even though the residents are being exposed to four times the cancer risk limit established by the EPA because the homes sit right on the freeway. Lafayette’s answer? Tell the residents to keep their windows closed, stay indoors, and ask them to change their special air filters every three months. But since these are homes, there is no way to enforce that these very important filters are being changed. Lafayette’s reasoning? It’s OK since we just approved another building complex that’s even closer to the freeway, and we didn’t enforce the air quality guidelines in that one either. Sadly, it’s true. The joke is on us.

Susan Candell
Lafayette

I was so glad to read in the 8-12-15 issue, a bike rider has complained about the way the lanes for cars and bikes have been designed as they go along Camino Pablo north, under Highway 24. The design of those stripes directing cars and bikes are an accident waiting to happen. I called public works to complain when I first saw them. The man I spoke could only respond from an entanglement of his assumptions. He only defended a biker’s right to share the road. He could not hear my concern for a person’s life. Safety and life are the primary points! I am driving a car and under no circumstances do I want to injure or kill a person on a bike. As a driver I have to be able to see him/her. And the bike person should not have to worry about being in the middle of cars, like a cowboy in the middle of a buffalo stampede! Second point: People and bikes deal with Moraga Avenue all the way to the town of Moraga. Why is it worse to have bikes cross safely over the freeway on the bike/pedestrian pathway? Each is safer there. And safety is the major concern! Life is more important than anything else.

Thank you.
Mary Anne Anderson
Orinda

Editor:

The Orinda City Council is about to begin a discussion of a downtown plan. One of the most useful and cost effective tools it should consider is a Technical Assistance Panel provided by the Urban Land Institute. This would be an appropriate initial step in identifying issues and future development options. The panel would work within a framework established by the City Manager and Planning Director, under the guidance of the Council and Planning Commission. Orinda’s Municipal Code provides guidelines for the future development of the City’s downtown. The following sub-paragraphs of section 17.8.1 "Intent" are particularly relevant:

"D: Regulate development so as to achieve a vibrant community center over time. All development...shall be consistent with this goal."

"E: Establish incentives, such as additional building height, higher floor area or broader range of permitted uses to help achieve a vibrant community center."

"K: Provide for multifamily housing, including affordable housing, in downtown areas, consistent with the housing element of the general plan."

The panelists would seek input from city officials and the primary stakeholders in downtown. Citizen groups concerned about downtown development, both pro and con, would also have their say. Panel members would be expected to recommend how Orinda can achieve a "vibrant community center" while at the same time preserving and enhancing the "village character" of its downtown. Given the wide array of talent within the ULI's Bay Area membership, it is reasonable to expect the volunteer panelists would address many facets of the challenges faced by the city. They could assess the current health of local retail and office markets, examine current zoning policy related to downtown development, and identify potential renewal opportunities. They can also assess potential fiscal benefits to the City that might reasonably be expected to occur from future development. AULI Technical Assistance Panel is an opportunity for the City of Orinda to gather some very useful input from experienced, professional members of a highly respected organization. Their multi-disciplinary expertise and cost-effective approach cannot be found elsewhere.

Michael Kaplan
Orinda

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Business

Taking Root

By Sophie Braccini



Cindy Kastner prepares meals in the Back to the Table production kitchen. Photo provided

Cindy Kastner wants to help people obtain a healthy lifestyle through food and expand her reach to people who particularly need a healthy diet, those recovering from heart surgery or cancer. In July she launched Taking Root – a dedicated cooking and delivery service of plant-based meals in Lafayette. The businesswoman, who is both a health coach and passionate cook, makes delicious and healthy combinations of entrees and sides that are good for everybody. Kastner also works with people who have special gluten-free, salt-free or oil-free dietary needs.

“I first discovered the benefits of eating organics in a nutrition class during my college years,” remembers Kastner. “I was too far along in my studies to switch to becoming a nutritionist, but it made me change the way I ate.” This translated into a whole organic pantry as she raised three children in Lafayette. “People would come to my house and ask me why everything was organic in my kitchen,” she remembers with a smile.

When her children left the house for college, Kastner decided to further her understanding of food and health. She took a year-long training at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and became a certified holistic health coach. “At the beginning of the class we were told that it would change our lives,” she remembers. “I was somewhat doubtful, but it did. When I came

out of it I was a completely different person.” During the class Kastner learned about the benefits of different diets including the plant-based diet coming out of “The China Study” research, that claims that most, if not all, of the degenerative diseases that afflict us can be controlled, or even reversed, by rejecting our present menu of animal-based and processed foods.

Kastner first stopped eating dairy, then all animal products. But she is not dogmatic. “I learned at the Institute that everyone has their own diet and figures out what is good for themselves,” she adds. “As long as they are unprocessed, whole foods, with good quality, you’re on the right track.”

Kastner started her practice as a health coach, primarily supporting and guiding clients toward their nutrition goals. But people started asking her to cook for them. She had always loved to cook, collecting hundreds of recipes, and took it to the next level with a professional plant-based culinary training with the Rouxbe Cooking School. “My practice started evolving from people’s requests, and now, with this new business, I feel that I am at the right place, I have taken root and I am growing,” she adds with a warm smile.

Paula Roemer has been Kastner’s client for some time. The Walnut Creek dentist got Kastner’s name from her chiropractor. “What I like about Cindy (Kastner) is that

she cooks exactly the way I would,” comments the busy mother of four. “She puts so much love into her meal preparation.” Roemer thinks using all organic ingredients is a plus, but what she likes best, besides the convenience, is the freshness, creativity and taste of the meals she buys for her family. “I started eating a plant-based diet four years ago for health reasons, and also for the impact on the environment,” she says, “but I am not rigid about it; I don’t want to offend family and friends when we are invited.” Her children feel the same: they love the plant-based food, but also get other types of food outside the house. Taking Root allows them to get the quality of food they want, without sweating it.

The business model is pretty simple. Each Wednesday a new menu comes out, which includes five entrées and five sides. Clients have until Friday to place an order. They either order six, eight or 12 meals, or à la carte. “If you order six meals you can mix and match, depending if you want to feed six people for one day, or two for three days,” explains Kastner. She goes shopping for her organic ingredients on Mondays at the Berkeley Bowl, Diablo Foods or Whole Foods. She takes everything to the Lafayette production kitchen “Back to the Table” and prepares all the meals for Tuesday deliveries. All orders are contained in large mason jars.

An example of an entrée would be a barbecue tempeh with slaw and ranch dressing, or a rice pilaf with carrots and crunchy pasta; sides can include a quinoa salad with sugar snap peas, scallions and mint, or a lentil salad with roasted beets. Also on the menu is Kastner’s anytime bar made with nuts, dried fruits and maple syrup.

Kastner feels she also has a mission to support people who are in recovery. “I want people who are going into surgery, heart patients, cancer patients, to be able to feed themselves in a way that’s good for them,” she says. For more information and to order online, visit www.takingrootsf.com.

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

Ariel Skin Care

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www.moragafacials.com, (925) 388-6021, arielmariekey@gmail.com

Ariel Marie Key is a clinical esthetician and Skin Script specialist who recently opened a new salon in Moraga on Rheem Boulevard, across from Chef Chao and 24 Hour Fitness. Key says that there are many things that can go wrong on the road to perfect skin. “Everyone has their own recipe of ingredients that their skin needs to be as strong and healthy as it can be,” she says.

“For optimal skin results I focus on finding the right combination of ingredients for every individual.” She believes that with a little know-how,

and gentler natural treatments, her clients can get the same skin care results as lasers, fillers and deep peels. “Regular gentle treatments improve most conditions like acne, rosacea, aging, dryness and pigmentation (dark spots). And not only are these conditions improved with regular use of enzymes, alpha hydroxy acids (in their natural state), microdermabrasion and smart home-care, but we can get results that are just as dramatic as lasers,” she firmly believes. Key says that she was raised by a quantum physicist and did equations in her kitchen in first grade. After she ran away with the circus and danced tango all over the country she returned to her scientific roots and has done nothing but study the skin and what we can actually do to improve it without looking unnatural. Key’s motto: “Love the skin you’re in!”



Ariel Marie Key of Ariel Skin Care

Photo provided

New Dance Class Opportunities with Justin Cole

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Justin Cole, dance instructor, with young students. Photo Cindy Cattell

Justin Cole, who has taught dance at the California Academy of Performing Arts in Moraga for 15 years, has branched out on his own. He is teaching classes independently at Star Pilates and Fitness in Moraga and at the Dance and Movement Center for adults in Lafayette. The Moraga classes are for children ages 4 to 13 and include techniques such as funky jazz/hip-hop or rhythmic tap. The adult classes in Lafayette focus on hip-hop.

Lace and Bustle

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An intimate, bridal boutique, Lace and Bustle, is opening in Lafayette beginning the weekend of Aug. 28-31 and the boutique has started booking appointments. The boutique’s mission is to make each bride feel as special as she is and make her wedding dress experience a memorable moment she will look back on fondly for years to come. Owner Victoria Hansen was a fashion buyer when she envisioned bringing her passion for timeless beauty and heirlooms along with her eye for assorting collections into an intimate bridal boutique. Lace and Bustle carries an exquisite selection of bridal gowns and unique accessories. The Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting will be at 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 27. Lace and Bustle will host a Ramona Keveza trunk show Sept. 25-27.

Chastain Named Moraga Employee of the Month for July

Carter Chastain, a computer technician at Neighborhood Computers, has been named the Moraga Employee of the Month for July. Chastain, who has been solving IT issues and fixing computer problems for Moraga citizens and businesses for the past three years, has certifications in Windows 7 and 8 and also works on Mac computers as needed. “Carter provides really fine customer service to local residents and businesses,” said store owner Grant Stubblefield. “His attention to detail makes him stand apart as a technician and he also can provide assistance in person or via remote IT services.” The Moraga Rotary and Chamber of Commerce presented Chastain with a gift card to Safeway as well as a gift card to Graze restaurant in Moraga on Aug. 18.

Lafayette One of the 100 Best Cities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Country

GoodCall data center measured which American cities were most supportive for women as entrepreneurs. The city of Lafayette ranked 77 out of the thousands that were evaluated. Alpharetta, Ga., was ranked No. 1. Walnut Creek ranked fourth. Among the elements taken into consideration: percentage of female education attainment, unemployment rate, and percentage of women-owned businesses. To see the complete study, visit <http://www.goodcall.com/data-center/2015s-best-cities-for-women-entrepreneurs/>.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Ribbon Cutting at Earth and Sea Yoga at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 2 at 3400 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga

The 4th Annual Golf & Tennis Tournament will take place on Monday, Sept. 21, at the Moraga Country Club. For golfers, the cost is \$175 per player, with play beginning at noon, and for tennis players, the cost is \$75 per player, with play beginning at 1 p.m. For golf and tennis registrants, dinner, refreshments and prizes are included. Dinner only (non-players) is also available for \$40 per person, beginning at 4:30 p.m. Registration forms are available at the Chamber’s website. For more information, contact Kathe Nelson at (925) 323-6524 or kathe@moragachamber.org.

Orinda

Orinda Classic Car Show weekend Sept. 11-12 (see info on page Bx).



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Moraga Creek Culverts: The Weakest Links of the Moraga Storm Drain System

... continued from page A1



Rheem shopping center culvert for Laguna Creek



Images provided

The creeks that run in daylight have enough capacity, provided that the neighbors do their cleanup work, but it is not the case for creek segments running in culverts. Dan Schaaf, who presented the report to the town, said that out of the 35 culverts analyzed, 17 are undersized. Out of the 17 needing improvements, five are a high priority, including those under St. Andrews Drive, Camino Pablo, Woodford Drive, and the Hacienda de las Flores property.

“An alternative to the replacement of existing undersized systems is day-lighting,” said Schaaf. “This will involve replacing buried networks with vegetated earthen channels, with cross culverts or bridges at roadway crossings. This alternative would discourage unwise development encroachment, improve access and safety, enhance water quality, reduce sediment, and increase aesthetics compared to traditional pipe replacement projects.”

The cost of improving the undersized culverts represents about half of the high-priority \$8.9 million of work estimated by the consultant.

A large chunk of the needed improvements also includes pipes that collect neighborhood runoff to creeks, and that do have enough capacity to handle a 10-year storm. Located throughout town, they are sometimes quite small, but create difficult bottlenecks, with risks of flooding.

Schaaf touched on the issue of future housing developments that will increase the amount of impervious surfaces, leading to more runoff, which will impact the entire drainage system. He recommended the town ask their fair share from developers to finance increases in drainage capacity, and that it include guidelines requiring either retention basins or pervious pavement. The

plan also recommended \$240,000 of annual drainage system maintenance.

Schaaf noted that over half of the costs of the high and moderate priority projects (\$20 million) are located on parcels at least partially private. He recommended that the town begin investigating property ownership and existing easements to further evaluate rights and responsibilities.

The council members approved the plan, but there are little funds at this time to address the issues, including the high priority ones. The first order of business will be determining ownership of pipes and culverts.

Lafayette

Franklin Lane Construction

... continued from page A2

Only the small flat section of Franklin is being subdivided; the balance of the land will be untouched.

At this point, there is no building application before the city to build homes on the newly formed lots, but according to Dave Bruzzone, some homes will be built on the freshly formed lots eventually. There is one existing home on the first lot at Happy Valley Road.

According to a Feb. 6, 2012 staff report from applicant and owner Milton Bruzzone & Happy Valley, LLC, “The General Plan designation for the subject area is Low Density Single Family Residential, which allows a density of up to two dwelling units per acre.”

One of the conditions of approval required by the city engineer to subdivide the land was to improve the drainage system in the area, which

has historically affected homes during the rainy season, said Senior Planner Greg Wolff.

The drainage system will direct run-off into storm drains. Since existing storm drain pipes are old and not up to current standards, upgrades are being made that tie in with the pipes along Happy Valley Road, according to Wolff. These drainage improvements will be paid for by the developer and will serve the immediate neighborhood.

Making the proposed subdivision even smaller, for now, is the condition of approval that no building permit for a single-family home shall be issued for Lot D near St. Francis Drive until the identified slide on the remainder parcel is repaired to the satisfaction of the project geotechnical engineer and the city engineer.

Moraga

Hacienda Transformation

... continued from page A5

The main Hacienda building would be completely renovated, fully ADA compliant, with a 150- to 200-person capacity structure for weddings or other events. The Hacienda would also have small rooms for lodging in the main building, and Gould Evans also looked at adding small one-bedroom casitas along the Devin Drive side (the south side of the property), for short-term stay.

Gould Evans managers have started to talk to hotel professionals about what would be needed to make the project profitable for an investor. It appeared that the number of units should be doubled, from the initial 20 to 40. “We looked at making the detached building (the casitas), two stories,” said a Gould Evans architect. It might also be necessary to add more construction up the hill, so the project is economically viable while the main building is preserved.

A restaurant would be part of the plan. La Sala would be removed, replaced by a large plaza. The proposed plan would expand the existing wine cave that’s carved in the hill, and create a meeting room there.

Moraga Juniors members asked if a teen or pre-teen center had been envisioned. Maass responded that a new pavilion meeting room could serve as a senior meeting place in the morning and teen center in the afternoon.

The members of the LWGA showed a great interest in the project. “There are a lot of us who are grape growers who do not process our grapes at home, and there is no adequate crush pad locally. We have to take it to Sebastopol,” said LWGA president Leslie Ward. She added that there also was no local facility for storing the wine produced and that a central place where people

could come to taste wine, see the caves and enjoy the beautiful scenery would be very unique, and would make Moraga the center of the local wine growing production. Council member Mike Metcalf concurred and added that there are countless examples of successful facilities in Napa, the Russian River Valley and Livermore areas that combine hospitality and accommodations with wine making, such as Michel-Schlumberger in Healdsburg.

“We would need someone professional to handle this wine operation,” advised wine grower Joao Magalhaes. “We could form a special purpose company with all the stakeholders together: a construction company, operators, the college, and others who would bring their expertise, all getting benefits for what they bring.”

Members of the assembly questioned the financing of the project, knowing that the town would never have the means to invest or even manage such a project, and that it is unlikely that residents would want to pitch in. “We are looking at models such as the Presidio,” said Maass, explaining that in such a public-private partnership, the public entity grants usage of the public asset for a number of years in exchange for the renovation of the property they own, but can’t update.

In early September Gould Evans plans to reach out to hotel operators, restaurateurs, Saint Mary’s College and other developers. Operators will be invited to visit the Hacienda and participate in a think-tank. “From it could come requests for proposals and a move to the next level, discussing with the town,” added Maass. More public meetings are also scheduled in the coming months.



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Row With Champions

... continued from page A1



Photo Gint Federas

Most of the participants had never rowed before, not even at the gym, but they could count on Oakland Strokes to drive a perfect event. The first teams arrived around 9 a.m. "People start with practicing on rowing machines," said Canyon John Heylin, who rowed in high school and at the University of Washington. He was training the beginners. "Normally it takes months to achieve perfect technique, and here they have a few minutes to get the basics." He added that it was like weight lifting: first the legs, then the back, then the arms. All the teams followed his instructions seriously, especially the young women on the synchronized swimming team that rowed in perfect unison.

Four organizations benefited from the fundraising event: the Oakland Strokes outreach program for inner-city kids that gives scholarships and has taught water safety to about 800 kids; Las Trampas, a program for adults with developmentally disabilities; Rotary Home Team that assists the elderly in their homes; and the Contra Costa Interfaith Housing that provides permanent and affordable housing and vital services for families in crisis.

Kelley Griest from Moraga was there with the "Girls In The Boat" team sponsored by Ernie Furtado. "We are just friends who hike or swim together," she said. "We are here to have fun." Nearby the Las Trampas teams were getting ready. The nonprofit put two boats in the race. Rowers included board members, staff members, and client Cristin Moore, who said she was very excited to participate. "The Sunrise Rotary is a big supporter of ours," said Executive Director Daniel Hogue. "It is our turn to support them."

Herbert was part of a team that included two former rowing Olympians, Peter Cipollone and Sebastian Bea, who was a rower on the 2000 U.S. Olympic team is now a Lafayette resident and father of two little girls and an Oakland Strokes board member. Bea continues to row recreationally, but once his team, called "Old Strokes," was in the water, it dominated its more novice

competitors. The Moraga Hardware team, led by Val Snyder and consisting of middle-aged women who row together on Lake Merritt, gave Old Strokes a hard time. The two teams were looking forward to a rematch at the end of the day, but the race was stopped before they had the opportunity.

Dipak Roy never rowed before. His Fremont Bank team of beginners finished second in his group and he said he enjoyed the experience. "It is an interesting discipline where you really have to follow directions and work together," he said, slightly out of breath after his race.

Once in the water, different teams did very differently, but all finished the 250-meter race and there was no notable accident or boat capsizing. Oakland Strokes provided the boats as well as a coxswain and two experienced rowers for each boat.

Lamorinda Weekly had also assembled a team, including reporter Cathy Tyson, who used to row in her college years. "I was really looking forward to being back on the water," said Tyson. "I remember at the end of my training season how strong and confident I felt." But things didn't turn out as expected for the team.

"We met, fueled up, we practiced and marched to the shoreline to ad-

mire our eight-person shell – and that's as far as it went. After patiently waiting for our pros to appear, word came via radio that the final heat would be scrubbed due to wind conditions," said another Lamorinda Weekly teammate, Cathy Dausman. The team was disappointed but kept their sense of humor.

"All dressed up and no place to row," said Tyson. "At least we keep our perfect record – undefeated," added Daniel Smith. Upbeat and practical, Victor Ryerson concluded, "We have a year to practice."

Five teams could not compete, and the finals never took place due to the windy conditions.

Herbert felt the race helped people gain a deeper understanding of the teamwork required to propel a boat. "Rowing is the ultimate team sport, and there are more scholarships athletes coming out of rowing than any other sports," he said. "Oakland Strokes was a great partner bringing boats, rowers, coxswains, a lot of coaching to our participants and running the regatta on the water. I think we even set up some friendly rivalries for next year as I heard teams coming off the dock saying they wanted a rematch. We plan to have another Row With Champions next year."



Team "Girls in the Boat"

Photo Sophie Braccini

Lafayette Joins SunShares Program

.. continued from page A8

"Most people have never contracted for a solar installation, so it is not surprising that people are wary of trying to do it," commented Lafayette Mayor Brandt Andersson. "Many still recall early efforts 20 to 30 years ago to encourage solar installations through tax credits, when most installers were inexperienced and some were just trying to take advantage of the tax credits. SunShares allows the residents of Lafayette and its partner cities to work with experienced, reputable firms, while taking advantage of bulk purchasing to lower costs. It should give residents confidence that they can use solar as a cost-effective and reliable alternative energy

source."

To start the process, interested residents should go to <http://www.mygroupenergy.com/group/eastbaysunshares> and enter their information.

"They will be contacted within five to seven business days," said Denver. The installer will evaluate the financial benefits of a solar installation and make a proposal. If homeowners think the proposal looks economically interesting, they then choose one of several options to finance their panels.

"People who choose to use SunShares can also take advantage of PACE financing programs that the

city has also approved," says Canales. The financing mechanism, which was also approved by Moraga and Orinda, allows property owners to repay for solar panels and equipment through payment assessments or special taxes on their property tax bills over a set period of time. Homeowners can also self-finance or enter a power purchase agreement with the partner installers. Under a lease PPA, the installer owns, operates and maintains the system, and the homeowner pays a pre-determined set rate for their electricity that is less than what they currently pay to their utility.

A Walk in the Woods, The Long Trail Up

Orinda man completes the Appalachian Trail

By Chris Lavin



After almost dying on his first attempt in 2014, Richard Birss of Orinda completed hiking the Appalachian Trail this summer. Photo Chris Lavin

A certain ethos exists among the people who torture themselves by hiking long, excruciating distances. "Oh, he's done the whole PCT (Pacific Crest Trail)," is something that might be said while burgers are being flipped among backpacking friends. Yet the Appalachian Trail remains among the big mammas, one of the triumvirate. If you do them along with the Continental Divide Trail, well, people get your burgers for you.

Now an Orindan has successfully traversed the trail, and he's 67 years old.

"There were times when I questioned my motivation," said Richard Birss modestly, sitting at a table loaded with instant bags of food that can cook quick, near a couch full of backpacking equipment. He just got back in July, but that's not quite enough for one summer. He's leaving now for Mammoth in order to hike to Yosemite. He's been hiking for 50 years.

Now that he is retired from his job as a probation officer for Contra Costa County, Birss can continue to check off the long list of trails he has wanted to conquer. His first attempt on the A.T. began in March 2014. It didn't turn out well. About 400 miles in, he suffered horrific indigestion. He couldn't even stand. He lay down in the middle of the trail. Fortunately a "kid" from one of the established lean-to shelters where he had stayed the night before came along, and asked if he should call 911. Birss said yes immediately.

It took search and rescue crews three hours to get there. They hung an IV bag from a tree branch strapped to an ATV, tied him on, and began the long road back to civilization, where Birss would find that a hole in his intestine was leaking water (and other stuff) into his abdomen. He went in for emergency surgery the next morning. "The doctors said I could die if I didn't get surgery right away."

That little episode ended that trip. He decided to try again this summer.

The Appalachian Trail started to get put down and marked in the 1920s, when engineers and then-environmentalists and more than 30 organizations worked together to build a trail from Georgia all the way up

through Maine. It traverses 2,000 miles and goes through 14 states. (That is not a typo.) Birss went through four pairs of shoes. And his return comes at an important moment in A.T. history: Robert Redford's movie, "A Walk in The Woods," based on Bill Bryson's book by the same name about his own trip on the trail, debuts on Labor Day weekend. Birss is worried that the movie is going to be so popular that the A.T. will become severely overcrowded with hikers.

"There just isn't the infrastructure to support that kind of traffic," he said. Yet one of the reasons the A.T. is so popular is that resources are relatively easy to find. The trail goes through, or near, a lot of towns where hikers can resupply, or rest up under a real roof. Many hitch into a town, then back. But the going is hard.

Something that people who have lived and hiked only in California do not realize is that hiking on the East Coast is different. Most of the trails are not trails. They are not nature paths. You cannot skip. There is no skipping. At times you must turn sideways to wedge your way through boulders. One must remove one's pack at such times, drag it through the slot, then haul it back on and climb through mud another 500 feet in elevation within the span of a football field. Birss' pack was 35 pounds, most of the time, thanks to regular resupply stops. A hiker often loses sight of the white spray-painted splashes on trees that mark the trail. Panic may sometimes ensue.

Therefore much of it is not fun. "It's really, really hard," Birss said. "People don't realize that there are huge boulders to get over. There's not a real trail. You have to hold onto trees sometimes to pull yourself up." You reach a place in the trail where the next step is a piece of granite three or four feet in the air, with no steps. Some days he would hike 14 hours and traverse a mere 10 miles.

On the other hand there were his favorite, the moose, which he loved to watch. The occasional bear. The porcupines at night drove him nuts as they chewed the wood on the shelters to get at the salt left by sweaty hikers resting their heads on the timber. Some nights he had to shoo them

away from dusk till dawn.

Apparently his experience has not scarred him too much. After all, his couch and dining room table were already filled up with camping gear. He's off to Mammoth.



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Good Guy Spy from Moraga's Past

A snapshot of history

By Cathy Dausman



Reginald Tibbetts, in 1942 with his electronic gear. Original photo by Clyde H. Sunderland, Oakland. (This photo also appears on page 84 of the book "Images of America: Port Chicago" by Dean L. McLeod and page 92 of "Images of America: San Francisco in WW II" by John Garvey.) Photos courtesy Moraga Historical Society



Tibbetts family, Christmas circa 1954 at the Reef Hotel in Honolulu. "My father rented the penthouse suite," said Workinger. "It was very fancy." From left: Jon Tibbetts, Barbara Tibbetts Workinger, their mother Louise Tibbetts and Reginald Tibbetts

A 76-year-old home sits on the outskirts of Moraga. Grape leaves blossom in its vineyard and the landscaped grounds are a visual treat, but equally important is what is missing.

Gone today is the radio tower

used by its original owner. Gone is the underground gasoline tank, the World War II victory garden and the blackout curtains over its windows. Gone is the office and shop housing engineering research and development important to the Allied cause. Gone, too, is an Eagle Scout and Orinda Scoutmaster, amateur radio operator, UC Berkeley electrical engineering graduate, third generation Californian, 57-year Moraga resident, father, former postmaster – all one and the same man – the reclusive D. Reginald Tibbetts.

Elsie Mastick called Tibbetts "our Moraga spy." Mastick, a Moraga Historical Society member, was friends with Tibbetts' daughter. "He broke the code," Mastick said proudly of Tibbetts' work intercepting and deciphering Japanese transcripts as the two countries moved toward war.

Records show that Tibbetts purchased an 8-acre parcel in Moraga in 1936 and had built his house by 1939. A licensed amateur radio operator, call sign W6ITH, Tibbetts also built a radio tower on site. "It was magnificent," John LaRue of RedStone Products said admiringly of the "very first class" high frequency radio gear and large log periodic satellite antenna Tibbetts had assembled on site. LaRue, who visited the Moraga acreage, said Tibbetts was one of the first to own a large residential receive-only microwave dish.

At the time, the Federal Communications Commission required satellite dishes to be licensed. Barbara Tibbetts Workinger became an amateur radio operator at her father's urging, but she has since let her license lapse. Although she remembers a family victory garden filled with tomatoes, it is unclear whether as a child Workinger understood the importance of her father's work. She did remember "all these famous men" her father knew, including Glenn Seaborg (Atomic Energy Commission chairman throughout the 1960s) and her godfather Ernest Lawrence lounging around her family's pool.

It was no mere coincidence that

Tibbetts was appointed postmaster of Moraga during World War II. It was a move that facilitated the clandestine shipment of equipment he needed to complete his war work – part of which was the development of a Geiger counter used in the early development of the atomic bomb.

Tibbetts was just plain "Reggie" to Ernest Lawrence, said his son Robert Lawrence, MD. The younger Lawrence remembers visiting Tibbetts' Moraga home with his father "several times a year" as a teen in the mid-1950s. Father and son saw the Tibbetts' radio room filled with short-wave radio equipment and clocks set for time zones around the world.

Ernest Lawrence was "a big radio nut," his son explained, having built an entire station while attending the University of South Dakota. "We'd go out several times a year [to Moraga]," the younger Lawrence said. He thought Tibbetts was "very rich," based on the "neat things and toys" around the home, including Lawrence's favorite, a motorized electric jeep Tibbetts built for kids. Ernest Lawrence even listened in on an August 1945 shortwave radio communication Tibbetts held with an amateur radio operator in Japan. The resulting nuclear electromagnetic pulse cut off their communications at the precise moment the bomb went off.

"He [Tibbetts] looked at his watch," Robert Lawrence said, "and marked the time."

Moraga resident Steve Mazaika, whose grandmother lived near the Tibbetts home, said, "I was kinda scared of the guy" growing up. Tibbetts "wasn't that friendly," Mazaika said. But when it came to electronics and phones, he was very knowledgeable, and had the ability to "call around the world [toll free]" at a time when it was rather costly to do so. Communications from the South Pacific during World War II went through him directly to the Pentagon, Mazaika said.

A Moraga firefighter for 38 years, Mazaika was sent on medical calls to Tibbetts' home before he died in Moraga on Nov. 24, 1996. Tibbetts was 85.



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Catherine Jolivet Takes Francophilia To the Next Level

By Sophie Braccini



Catherine Jolivet featured in Langeac Newspaper as she visits a school Photos provided

For years Catherine Jolivet has been known in Lafayette and beyond for the French immersion school, French For Fun, she created and manages. The energetic and passionate woman decided to revive the old sister-city partnership between Lafayette and Langeac, the French city located in the central region of Auvergne where the Marquis de Lafayette was born. Jolivet is organizing a party at the Lafayette Plaza Sept. 6 for the Marquis' birthday and she spent her summer vacation in Auvergne, looking at possibilities and meeting people.

"I was struck by the friendliness and genuineness of the Auvergnats (people from the Auvergne region)," says Jolivet with her sweet French accent. She went to Langeac in July, taking along a book about the city of Lafayette, signed by the mayor as a friendship gesture. In Langeac she met with Marie-Thérèse Roubaud, the mayor, and had a cordial and constructive conversation about the towns' twinning. Then Jolivet started to explore the unfamiliar region.

"This is a beautiful untouched area, rich in historical sites, with gorgeous natural locations, that is not yet overflowing with tourists," says Jolivet. "It is still affordable. It is still rural France as it used to be, with great food, charming bed and breakfasts, and an abundance of opportunities for active vacations." Jolivet raves about the Auvergne, a region of eroded ancient volcanoes - no activity has occurred there for the past 6,000 years. It is a series of emerald green rolling hills, volcanic lakes, gorges and rivers, and kilometers of walking trails marked for exploration. Thermal springs and mineral waters are also an outcome of the geological past; the Auvergne has been known as a medical spa center for centuries.

The village of Langeac itself is about one hour from Clermont-Fer-

rand (the closest airport), and surrounded by other historic and interesting small towns such as Le Puy-en-Velay, well known for its unique promontory rocks, topped by a Romanesque chapel. "Auvergne is an area where you find the most Romanesque art in France," comments Jolivet. "It was a region armies passed through to go invade somewhere else, so there was little destruction there." The teacher and businesswoman obviously fell in love with the region. "It is really France as it was," she says, "and people there practice all forms of outdoor activities: hiking, climbing, horseback riding, canoeing and rafting (there are some beautiful gorges), salmon fishing, and biking, of course. There is even a local bike race organized every summer."

Jolivet's dream would be to take a group of people there on vacation, just like she did for a few years in the South of France with her students. "A perfect time would be at the end of July of 2016, when residents there organize 'La Belle Journée' (the beautiful day), as a celebration of the day in 1786 when Lafayette reclaimed his Marquis title in Langeac. People can rent 18th century costumes and be a part of the two-day-long reenactment. She believes that Langeac is a treasure and that people there will respond positively to possible connections.

In the meantime, the Lafayette businesswoman is preparing for the little ones who will return to class at French For Fun in the beginning of September, just after the Marquis' birthday, and she is continuing plans for the birthday event in Lafayette.

"We are very proud to have the support of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for our celebration," says Jolivet of the Sept. 6 event. "We will have music, activities for the kids, a cake to share and people should bring their picnic."



Nature of Auvergne, next to Langeac



La Belle Journée in Langeac

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Last Show by Cal Shakes' Moscone a Mystery

By Lou Fancher



Liam Vincent and Danny Scheie get their silly on. Photo Kevin Berne

The biggest mystery surrounding "The Mystery of Irma Vep" might be why artistic director Jonathan Moscone chose the play as he leaves Cal Shakes after 16 seasons. It is the last of 22 productions Moscone has directed at the outdoor venue in the Orinda hills.

It was a mystery partially cleared up – then clouded – during a pre-show Grove Talk by resident dramaturg Philippa Kelly. "I don't think he knew he was leaving when he chose it. He's directed it twice before. ... Oh well, I never truly know what goes on in the mighty mind of Moscone," she said, laughing.

All of this was not to say that playwright, director and actor Charles Ludlam's ambiguous, intriguing, oftentimes spoof-like 1984 homage to theatrical, cinematic and literary icons, conventions and traditions isn't deserving of a prominent place in Cal Shake's history. Nor is the play a mismatch for Moscone, whose unequivocal desire for genre-stretching work, jolly sense of humor and fine ear for well-written lines is arguably unquestionable.

Under his direction, the theater has grown from an obscure but respected summer Shakespeare Festival known for great acting – and poor backstage and restroom facilities – to a nationally-recognized or-

ganization with a \$5 million budget, completely refurbished, environmentally-sustainable facilities, a 5,000-student Artistic Learning program, and multiple collaborations and outreach initiatives throughout California. In 2014, the board established the Moscone Permanent Endowment fund to ensure that Cal Shakes' work will continue for future generations to enjoy. Moscone departs to become chief of civic engagement with Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

The history suggests seriousness, but bump into Moscone on BART, or attend his Inside Scoop panel talk at the Orinda Library Auditorium, or witness one of his boisterous "curtain warmer" greetings (the Bruns Amphitheater has no actual main curtain), and see that there's no doubt: the man likes to have fun.

"Irma Vep" bears shades of Alfred Hitchcock, vaudeville, ancient and contemporary horror films, gothic literature, victorian melodrama, and what contemporary society has learned to call "avant garde theater." The play has two male actors playing eight characters, both male and female. Longtime Bay Area favorites Danny Scheie and Liam Vincent whip themselves silly, changing costumes and wigs in sometimes as lit-

tle as five seconds. Scheie goes from swine-herder Nicodemus to newlywed Lady Enid to Egyptian guide Alcazar to other lesser roles. Vincent defies the laws of transformation with multiple switches between the dazed Lord Edgar (Lady Enid's husband and the widow of former wife, Lady Irma) and a stiff-as-a-bristle housemaid, Jane. A healthy smattering of partial portrayals, sometimes simple voiceovers or appendages reaching from behind scenery, are either Scheie and Vincent or crew members who occasionally sweep across the stage to clear props and whatnot.

The action takes place under the keen "eye" of Lady Irma, whose painted portrait presides above the fireplace mantle and sometimes bleeds or erupts with animated screams. Suffice it to say that spirits, werewolves, vampires, mummies and the smartest, magenta-haired Egyptian princess to travel outside of San Francisco's Gay Pride Parade are involved in the murky moors surrounding Lord Edgar and Lady Enid's Mandercrest estate.

Despite the admirable script, with all of its insider intelligence, scenic designer Douglas Schmidt's dazzling set, Katherine Roth's rich, imaginative costumes and sparkling performances from Scheie and Vincent, the play itself falls a little flat. The remarkable costume quick-change humor is hit too often, or perhaps with too much emphasis – and surely Scheie's comedic physical capabilities extend beyond the twirls and occasional sautés (jumps) that grew repetitious by Act II.

Even so, the cast, crew and director are to be admired. A play at Cal Shakes is an adventure and live theater is unpredictable and wildly rewarding exactly because we can't control it or predict our reactions to it. It's speculation, but in the "mighty mind of Moscone," that might sound perfect.

California Shakespeare Theater announced Aug. 19 the appointment of Eric Ting as the company's new artistic director. Board president Jean Simpson said the now-outgoing associate artistic director of Connecticut-based Long Wharf Theatre stood out among the "extraordinary candidates" vetted during a 7-month interview process. Ting assumes his official duties Nov. 1.

"The Mystery of Irma Vep" runs through Sept. 6 at the Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way (formerly 100 Gateway Blvd.), Orinda. For more information, visit calshakes.org.

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As Seen In Lamorinda: A Fisher Stands Alone



Photo Chris Lavin

This blue heron has easy pickings at Moraga Country Club, where the golf course ponds are running low so the little fish are close to shore. Herons like to hang out alone. They have a spring in their necks which coils back; then when they see a fish they release the spring and capture their prey. The offspring of the invasive largemouth bass in these ponds provides plenty of food, as well as sticklebacks. C. Lavin



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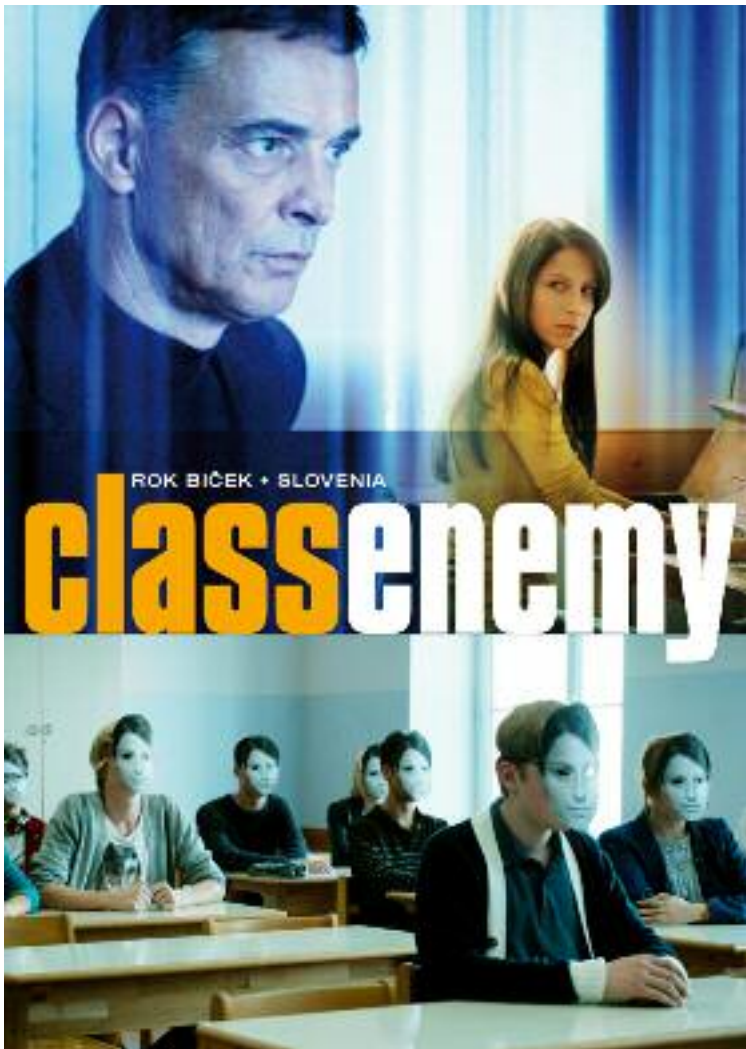
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'Class Enemy'

By Sophie Braccini



The International Film Showcase brings the Slovenian movie "Class Enemy," the first feature film of young director Rok Biček, to the Orinda Theatre for a one-week engagement. This enthralling drama, set in a high school, casts a penetrating eye on the generation gap between young rebellious teens and their strict professor. An intense atmosphere, like a thunderstorm minutes from breaking, adds to the strength of

Image provided this brilliant psychological drama. A group of friendly high school students is suddenly faced with more discipline when a new and demanding head teacher comes to their class. This German teacher quickly focuses all the youths' criticisms, and the students begin to rebel. When a young female student commits suicide, her classmates blame the teacher for what happened. The accusations begin to spiral. Other teachers are helpless and the students are left facing their own

violent contradictions. The film reveals the share of responsibility that each group had in the drama.

The screenplay was written by Biček, Nejc Gazvoda and Janez Lapajne and is based on an event that happened in Biček's high school when he was a student. Although the topic is very personal, the director manages to touch on a universal theme of the generation gap and the clash that happens when two groups that have to live together have very different values. The movie questions the validity of overindulging a generation of spoiled children, wannabe rebels, that educational systems often have difficulty handling. The movie does not condemn the youths' desire to change things, but reveals that those who protest most may exhibit the exact behaviors they so loudly condemn.

The movie won the "Critics' Week" award at the Venice Film Festival for good reason. First, the actors are remarkable. The teacher is played by Igor Samobor, who is one of the most acclaimed actors in Slovenia. In an interview with CineEuropa, director Biček said that the young actors and Samobor never met before filming. "They met on the first day of filming," said Biček. "The reason I did this was to prevent the young actors from having a close relationship with Igor, since it might subconsciously influence their performance in the film." The young actors have an honesty and boldness that makes the movie so real and captivating, as well as very moving.

"Class Enemy" is a subtle movie, interesting and worth discovering. It will play at the Orinda Theatre for one week, starting Sept. 4.

Specialties of the House: The Hunt for Happy Hour

By A.K. Carroll

Welcome to the Hunt for Happy Hour, a new series in which we seek to bring you the freshest and finest when it comes to discounted beverages and premium small bites in the Lamorinda area. This week we visit Rancho Cantina, a neighborhood watering hole with a bit of class and lot of flavor.

After a long day on the ranch, in the office, or at home corralling the kids, every one could use a little time at the neighborhood cantina. The folks at Rancho are armed and ready to fix you up and send you off refreshed, relaxed, and ready for the evening. Running from 3 to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, Happy Hour is available at the reclaimed wood and hand-tiled bar, in the rustic dining room, or out on the spacious patio where you can hide under big umbrellas or bask in the afternoon sun.

Discounted drinks include refreshingly simple house margaritas made with Lunaazul blanco tequila, fresh-squeezed lime, Cointreau and agave nectar; prima margaritas kicked up a notch with Leyenda Del Milagro reposado and Gran Gala liqueur and tall drafts of Modelo beer. The happy hour repository is a bit limited, but the full drink menu leaves little to be desired, except perhaps for the off-menu mezcal margarita that will set me straight for the rest of my night.

There's plenty to tempt your taste buds where noshes and nibbles are concerned. From crispy chips and salsa to generously composed ceviche featuring the fresh-caught fish of the day, the full array of antojitos (small plates) ring up at a 25 percent discount. You can't go wrong with good guacamole, and Rancho's is some of the best, made fresh throughout the day with big chunks of avocado and a solid dose of crushed garlic and minced red onion. Served alongside salsa roja and salsa verde, it's the ultimate in chips and dip. Or you might opt for the bite-sized pardon peppers, charred to crispy perfection and served with a chipotle crema that has just enough kick to get you licking your fingers (and possibly your plate).

You might come in for a quick one, but don't be surprised if you stay

longer. Between the fresh and friendly waitstaff, accommodating bartenders, and Lamorinda locals, you're almost certain to find someone who's game for a good conversation. It's worth taking an afternoon detour to mosey on up and dust off the day at Rancho Cantina.

When: 3-5 pm, Monday-Friday
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Smokey margarita Photos A.K. Carroll



Rockfish ceviche



Rockfish ceviche and grilled pardon peppers



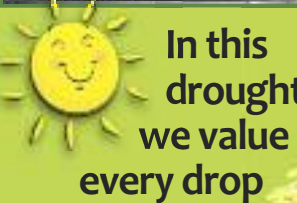
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Lafayette Resident and Katrina Rescue, Joey, Share Good Times

Submitted by Rochelle Holbrook



Photo Rochelle Holbrook

Katrina survivor, Joey, a dog that lost his leg due to injuries suffered during the devastating hurricane 10 years ago, is the loyal companion of owner Robin Hanson at Atria Park of Lafayette. Hanson contacted the nonprofit Best Friends Animal Society in Kanab, Utah, after receiving an alert from them following the hur-

ricane regarding animals in need of homes. Michael Hand of Best Friends brought Joey from New Orleans to Kanab with three other dogs and a cat. Hanson and his wife, Mary, traveled to Kanab to pick up Joey and return to sunny California.

Community Service

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

New Troop 224 Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Claire Phillips



From left: Keifer Wagener, Connor Virostek and Will Hirsh

Photo provided

Three members of Boy Scouts Troop 224 in Lafayette were honored at a National Eagle Court of Honor July 19 upon attaining the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in the Scouting program. Keifer Wagener, Connor Virostek and Will Hirsh are all seniors at Acalanes High School in Lafayette.

For his Eagle project, Wagener made duckling boxes for International Bird Rescue (IBR) located in Fairfield, Calif. Many orphaned ducklings in the surrounding Bay Area, including Lafayette, are brought to the Lindsay Wildlife Museum every year for initial treatment, then are transferred to IBR for continued care until adulthood and released back into the wild. This project allows more orphaned ducklings to survive and increases the local duck population.

Virostek's project benefited Lafayette Nursery School, a nonprofit parent participation preschool. He led the design, construction, and installation of an outdoor weather-resistant play

kitchen set comprised of freestanding stove and sink, and wood cabinets covered by a framed waterproof awning. This project was special to Virostek because he attended LNS as a young child and wanted to give back to his preschool.

For his Eagle project, Hirsh worked with the Lafayette Creek Committee and the City of Lafayette to install two informational signs along the Mt. Diablo Boulevard creek pathway that educate passers-by about the special permeable sidewalk pathway located there, as well as the native wildlife in the area. In addition, he organized a cleanup of the overgrowth affecting the creek area, which improved the health of the neighboring trees and made usable three sets of stairs down to the creek area.

Troop 224 has been a part of Boy Scouting in Lafayette for over 60 years, and offers a year-round program of activities, trips and camps. For more information, visit www.troop224lafayette.com.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

Day Trippin' A Weekend in Yountville

By Fran Miller



Domaine Chandon property

Photos Fran Miller

Yountville has changed greatly over the 17 years in which my girlfriends and I have gathered annually in the tony 1.53-square-mile hamlet. With a front row seat, we've witnessed the town's elegant gentrification. Having dined at most of the restaurants, wined at many of the tasting rooms and local wineries, and meandered the sidewalks and back roads, we continue to be charmed by Yountville and all it offers. At less than an hour's drive from Lamorinda, one can easily make the trip in a day. But with so much to see, eat and drink, and with fall specials at the ready, why not make it a weekend?

Book a room at the North Block Hotel (6757 Washington Street) where guests are invited to eat, sleep, work and play like a Napa Valley winemaker. Modern, but oozing with old world charm, North Block is partnering with Rutherford's Round Pond Estate through October to provide a winemaker-led, hands-on experience. Help with the harvest, tour the facility, and taste Round Pond's estate wines with seasonal food pairings. Head back to the hotel for a swim in the lovely outdoor pool before enjoying dinner at the award-winning Redd Wood, famed chef Richard Reddington's second, more casual Italian-inspired Yountville restaurant, sibling to Redd.

Bardessono is easily Yountville's most luxurious retreat, and also its most "green." One of only three LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) platinum certified hotels in the country, Bardessono is proof that a hotel can be both indulgent and environmentally conscious. Bardessono guests are well respected in the valley and are afforded "access." Whether it is restaurant or wine tasting reservations, in-room spa treatments, chauffeur services, or a desire for a delicious, locally sourced, gourmet midnight snack from restaurant Lucy, staff will make it happen.

Yountville's main road, Washington Street has become home to numerous wine tasting rooms. A few standouts include Girard at 6795 Washington Street where tasting fees are waived for those staying in Yountville hotels. Enjoy a flight of their chardonnay and cabernet-based wines, which, you will learn in wine lingo, have both "power and finesse."

Silver Trident Winery's 6495 Washington Street location is like walking into a Ralph Lauren catalogue, and in fact, everything you see, from the furniture to the crystal wine goblets is for sale by Ralph Lauren Home. The Tuscan-style stone building with its intimate and beautifully appointed living room is a great spot to settle in for a relaxed tasting. New to Washing-

ton Street (6505) is Cornerstone Cellars where each Sunday through September from 3 to 6 p.m., local musicians serenade a crowd that receives two-for-one tastings.

Step off the main drag and enjoy some champagne (or officially, sparkling wine) at Domaine Chandon (1 California Drive), an easy and picturesque walk from town. The gardens and property are beautiful, but the tasting room does get crowded with fans of the country's number one premium sparkling wine. Domaine Chandon, opened in 1973, was the first French-owned sparkling wine venture in the U.S. Pair your bubbly with delicious handmade chocolates from Kollar Chocolates at the V Marketplace (6525 Washington Street), home to assorted galleries and boutiques. Chef Chris Kollar, recently named one of the top 10 chocolatiers in North America by Dessert Professional magazine, makes his chocolates in small batches in a glass show kitchen. A fall visit to his shop might reveal his Halloween and holiday creations.

Any article about Yountville would be remiss without mention of Thomas Keller and his restaurant empire. Yountville is home to four of his current 13 eateries nationwide: the famed French Laundry, Ad Hoc + Addendum, Bouchon Bistro and Bouchon Bakery, where a single macaroon imparts the Keller magic. There is delicious reason for the lines that spill down the street from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

Work off your weekend indulgences with a quiet back road stroll amongst vineyards and majestic oaks on Yount Mill Road. Start at Yount Cross Road, end at Highway 29, and head back again. This is Yountville as it used to be, and it's lovely. But the current version is pretty great too.



Domaine Chandon property

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Immunization Conversation

By Cathy Dausman



BigStock image

Gov. Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 277 June 30, yet immunization conversations continue. The bill, which largely eliminates the personal belief exemptions for school-required immunizations, takes effect Jan. 1, 2016. SB 277 sets as its goal the statewide “total immunization of appropriate age groups” against 10 childhood diseases plus “any other disease deemed appropriate,” as recommended by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

While many fervently support the mandatory school immunization program, its detractors are equally as determined to see this new law end before it starts. Google SB 277 and a list of organizations against mandatory immunizations pops up: California Coalition for Vaccine Choice maintains both a website and Facebook page. Another, Our Kids Our Choice, said in a press release that the organization was “disappointed and surprised” with the governor’s decision to sign the bill into law. “With the stroke of a pen, he has dismissed over 200,000 Californian school chil-

dren who depend upon personal belief exemptions in order to receive a free and appropriate education.”

OKOC lists itself as a “non-partisan, grassroots group of 9,600 politically active health choice advocates” whose members believe “it is in society’s best interest to maintain freedom of choice for what we put into our children’s bodies.”

Nurse practitioner Aimee Paulson of Walnut Creek supports mandatory school vaccinations. Paulson writes she has spent “increasingly more time educating patients about the risks and benefits of vaccination” and is “very satisfied” that SB 277 passed. She added that she has not seen an active measles case recently, but did confirm one Hib (type B influenza) case.

“We are fortunate to have the ability to protect our families and communities against the pre-vaccine devastation of polio, measles, influenza, hepatitis and many other illnesses,” Paulson said, provided “we continue pro-vaccine efforts.”

Sarah Ellison calls the immunization question “an important public health issue,” and one that pits a parents’ right to decide against the risk an unvaccinated child would pose “to the

more [medically] vulnerable population.”

The Lafayette mother of two children, ages 1 and 4, feels having the ability to immunize children against childhood diseases is “one of the greatest advances in medicine,” whose effectiveness also depends upon herd immunity – immunize a high enough percentage of the population and even those unvaccinated will receive some measure of protection against the disease.

“We’re cautious,” Ellison said, recalling how she and her husband asked family members to get whooping cough booster shots after her youngest was born. That same child did experience a reaction in the form of a skin rash after a measles shot; something she said was “pretty bad for two weeks.”

Still, Ellison insists on keeping her children fully immunized, saying in spite of the side effects it is worth the risk.

Connie Kellaher is director at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church Nurtury Preschool. Because they are a state-licensed preschool Kellaher said MVPC will be in full compliance with SB 277 when it takes effect. Although Kellaher has not yet reviewed all incoming student documents, she is not aware that any student currently claims a personal belief exemption.

And there is a bit of wiggle room within the PBE clause.

Nanette Farag, chief of staff for Assemblywoman Catharine Baker, said: “If a child has an exemption on file before the bill takes effect in January they do not have to get immunized until they reach the next grade span.” A grade span is a specific class range – birth to preschool; kindergarten to sixth grade; seventh to 12th grade. “Children who have never been enrolled in school prior to Janu-

ary 1, or children who will transition to a new grade span after January 1, will be required to provide proof of immunization or submit a medical exemption in order to enroll in school,” she added.

Baker, herself a parent of two young school age children, calls herself “a fierce supporter of parental rights, including the rights of parents who have children who cannot be vaccinated.”

“This bill strikes the right balance between a parent’s personal choice

and personal responsibility,” she said.

Baker said she supported amendments that included narrowing the list of required vaccinations to 10, expanded the bases of medical exemptions, and gave schooling options to parents who did not want to vaccinate their children. “We have to consider the decision of parents who choose not to vaccinate, and also the liberty of those who cannot vaccinate their children or themselves due to their health circumstances,” she said.

More Information Online

Information about Senate Bill 277:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB277

CDC Immunization schedules:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/child-adolescent.html>

How the legislators voted:

http://leginfo.ca.gov/pub/15-16/bill/sen/sb_0251-0300/sb_277_vote_20150625_1048AM_asm_floor.html

Getting Organized for Your Junior Year in High School

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

Times have changed and getting into college is much different than it was even five years ago. Selecting a college is a big decision, and both public and private schools are increasingly competitive. Going through the college admissions process can seem daunting, but those who start early on to accomplish the tasks associated with a college search and the application process will have an easier, more enjoyable and successful experience. And, of course, this effort is in addition to academics, sports, volunteerism and jobs.

Our community has fine high schools and counselors. Yet school counselors have their hands full keeping their caseloads on track academically to ensure graduation and support individuals with special needs. Essentially it is the responsibility of the student, with support from family, to fully engage in the process of preparing for, selecting and applying to colleges. Here is a checklist of some basic tasks to accomplish no later than the fall semester of senior year:

1. Verify the accuracy of your high school transcript and assess your eligibility and competitiveness for the University of California (UC) as well as the California State University (CSU) campuses.
2. Find out and keep track of deadlines related to what the high school counseling office requires from you (e.g. setting up a Naviance account).
3. Make an appointment with your school counselor to review college plans and get advice.
4. With your counselor’s guidance, begin a systematic search of “best fit” colleges that include *reach*, *targets* and *nearly certain to get in* options; use school breaks to visit college campuses.
5. Complete standardized testing requirements; for most students these tests are best taken in winter or more commonly spring of 11th grade. Although test prep companies often promote earlier prep, I personally have not seen much benefit to this strategy in my 12 years of counseling hundreds of high school students. In fact,

quite the opposite is true: I have often seen negative consequences such as burnout due to over preparation and serious dips in student confidence due to gaps in academic mastery that could have been avoided by waiting until the completion of relevant coursework. My mantra remains the best preparation for standardized testing is high school academic achievement. This has never been truer as the new SAT is released in January 2016.

6. Complete two SAT Subject Tests in different disciplines (e.g. science and math or math and humanities); these one-hour content-rich exams are still required or recommended by many well regarded schools nationwide and can strengthen your application to most schools, including several of the UCs.

7. If permitted as an 11th grader, attend talks by college representatives who visit your school this fall, attend college fairs, make campus visits, research college websites – learn all you can about colleges so you have a well-researched final list by fall of your senior year.

8. Check admission requirements as you explore college websites; although what is posted is for the current class of applicants, you can get a jump on things by understanding more about what it takes to apply to various schools; for example, you can benefit from paying attention to essay questions colleges pose to prospective applicants – these responses require much time and thought, and you can get a head start by considering how you might respond to similar questions next year.

9. Understand Early Action, Early Decision and Rolling application options and how they differ from Regular Application deadlines.

10. You will be asking your 11th grade teachers for recommendations; keep this in mind as you participate in class discussions, collaborate with your classmates and prepare for tests and projects; show staff and faculty respect and consideration in all your actions both in and out of the classroom.

11. Towards late winter or early spring, work with the counseling office to select appropriate senior coursework and maintain balance between demonstrating rigor and attaining good grades.

12. Check with your high school’s college and career office for local and regional scholarships you may be eligible for and consider your options for both 11th and 12th grades.

13. Become familiar with financial aid this year so you will be better prepared next year; visit <http://www.finaid.org/> to learn more.

Younger high school students and their parents can review this checklist and think about where they will be in the process next year around this time. Start early! Getting all the information, keeping it organized and on track is not a matter of intelligence – it is a matter of time and discipline. Every family with a college-bound student needs to decide how to handle the timing and complexities of college admissions. There are many resources at our fine schools and our counselors are first rate. There are excellent books and websites, and good organizational tools available. With all the resources in our communities, students can stay on track for college!



Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is an independent college advisor who draws upon 25 years of higher education experience to help guide and support the college admissions process for students and their families. Dr. LaScala is a member of NACAC, WACAC and HECA. She can be contacted at (925) 891-4491 or elizabeth@doingcollege.com. Visit www.doingcollege.com for more information about her services.

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www.willowspringchurch.net

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422
www.holyshpherd.org



SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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Coffee Fellowship at 10:30 a.m.
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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

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ART

The newest show at the Lafayette Art Gallery, titled "H2O," will run through Aug. 29, and will focus on water. Whether it is the use of water in the artistic process, water as subject matter, or the current absence of water, the talented group of local artists will showcase their works related to the theme of water. For info, call (925) 284-2788 or visit www.lafayetteartgallery.com.

CC14 presents "The Thrill of the Chase" through Aug. 31 at the Orinda Library Gallery, 26 Orinda Way. Gallery hours: Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art presents "Bright and Beautiful: Early San Francisco Bay Area Watercolors" featuring the collection of Roger and Kathy Carter, which runs through Sept. 13, and Stephen Joseph's exhibition, "Inside Vasco Caves," which runs through Sept. 6. Bright and Beautiful showcases the art of watercolor painting as it was practiced in Northern California in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Vasco Caves features the photography of Joseph, who spent 10 years exploring and documenting the windswept rock outcrops and caves, with an eye towards capturing the landscape as the native people would have experienced it. For info, visit <https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/saint-marys-college-museum-of-art>.

The Moraga Art Gallery presents "Color, Clay & Fire," a new show featuring the ceramics of Jacqueline Proulx and the dramatic light-and-color paintings of Marge Barta Atkins. The show, which includes the gallery's 16 member artists and several guest artists, runs from Aug. 26 to Oct. 31. The public is invited to an opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 29. For more info, visit www.moragaart-gallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.

"Botanica: All Things Plant Life" – a national juried exhibition featuring over 130 artists from across the country working in a diverse reach of media runs through Sept. 6 at the Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek. Botanica showcases a deep love of nature, the embrace of its beauty, and a concern for its protection and survival. For info, visit www.bedfordgallery.org.

Valley Art Gallery presents John Brown - "Digital Alternatives" through Sept. 10 at Valley Art Gallery, 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek. Prior to digital photography, a photographer had to choose between black and white or color film. Brown would carry two cameras and shoot in both. In this show, Brown presents viewers with images in both black and white and color, and asks gallery visitors to vote their choice. For info, visit www.valleyartgallery.org.

MUSIC

Celebrating its 50th anniversary season "Giving Voice to Women" in 2015-16, WomenSing invites experienced singers to audition. WomenSing will perform Britten's masterpiece "A Ceremony of Carols" in December, and will be participating in the Alta Pusteria International Choral Festival in Northern Italy in the summer of 2016. WomenSing is holding auditions on Sept. 3, and by appointment. All voice parts are welcome. Scholarships are available for qualified singers. For info, email audi-

tion@womensing.org or visit www.womensing.org.

The 10th annual Lamorinda Idol Finals will take place on Sunday, Sept. 6 at the Orinda Theatre, featuring performances by 33 soloists and 12 groups. Winners will be selected by a panel of distinguished judges who are musical professionals in the Bay Area combined with audience votes.

Young People's Symphony Orchestra (YPSO) will hold auditions for new members from 2 to 8 p.m. Aug. 27 and Sept. 1 for the 2015-16 season. Auditions will be held at the new rehearsal home, the First Congregational Church of Oakland, 2501 Harrison Street, Oakland, and are by appointment only. Candidates should prepare any three-octave scale, movement of a solo piece and the excerpts provided on the orchestra's website (<http://www.ypsomusic.org/how-to-join>).

LECTURES & LITERATURE

UC Berkeley's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute will offer four six-week courses at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center this fall. There will be a free info session with faculty from 3 to 4 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 10 at the Library (3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.). The session will begin with a talk by tech law attorney (and OLLI instructor) Eric Sirod on "Privacy Lost in the High-Tech World." Learn more at olli.berkeley.edu, or request a free catalogue by contacting berkeley_olli@berkeley.edu or (510) 642-9934. Classes start Sept. 29.

Join a panel of prostate cancer specialists as they explain the emerging and important role of multi-parametric MRI for prostate cancer patients from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9 at the San Ramon Community Center (Terrace Room), 12501 Alcosta Blvd. in San Ramon. The physicians will also discuss MRI fusion guided biopsy and explain why this procedure is changing and treated. Q&A session will follow the presentation. Admission and refreshments are free. To register, call (925) 677-5041.

FESTIVALS & FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

Lafayette Art, Wine & Music Festival, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 19 and 20 in downtown Lafayette. Stroll among stalls of art and handmade crafts, sample foods from top local restaurants, and enjoy quality wines and microbrews. "This little sidewalk sale has grown to be an award-winning Art, Wine and Music Festival with four stages, 21 live bands, 260-plus Artists, KidZone, great food – and arguably the largest selection of wine, beer and ale of any San Francisco Bay Area festival," says Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson. The festival will be held on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For info, go to www.lafayettechamber.org/events/art-wine-festival.

The California Independent Film Festival will screen dozens of films at the Rheem and Orinda theatres as well as San Francisco's Castro Theater over this year's seven-day festival Sept. 10-16, featuring shorts, documentaries and feature length films by independent film makers from around the world. This annual event offers a unique opportunity to meet film directors as well as actors and actresses, and to hear some of the stories behind the creation of the films. Tickets and the full schedule are avail-

able at the box offices or www.caiff.org.

The 11th annual Orinda Classic Car Show Weekend will start with the Dancing with the Cars Party at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11 with the Car Show from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the following day, Saturday Sept. 12. The "Fun, Fun, Fun" party the night before the Car Show at Library Plaza requires an advanced purchased ticket, but its free admission to enjoy over 200 American and European cars ranging from the 1920s, to the classics of the '50s and '60s, as well as modern exotics at the car show that will be on display at Orinda Motors and surrounding streets in Orinda Village on Saturday. For more info see www.orindacarshow.com.

Join French For Fun and the Chamber of Commerce for an afternoon of fun and music that begins at noon on Sunday, Sept. 6 to celebrate the Marquis de Lafayette's 258th birthday in Plaza Park (Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road) with a casual gathering that will include music provided by Isabelle Fontaine and Jeff Magidson "Duo Gadjó" - Gypsy Jazz, French Classics and Cajun music. This event supports and promotes the relationship with sister city, Langeac, France. Bring a picnic! For more info, call (925) 283-9822.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

This fall Lindsay Wildlife Experience will be leading hikes in Mount Diablo State Park to explore the natural habitat of tarantulas. Discover these eight-legged creatures on a local two-mile hike recommended for nature lovers ages 6 and up. Tarantula Hikes take place from 4 to 6 p.m. beginning Sept. 6 and continuing every Sunday through Oct. 25. The hike costs \$10 for Lindsay members and \$15 for all non-members. Pre-registration is required.

OTHER

3-D printing at the Moraga Library at 3 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 29. The program will start with a short video presentation, followed by demonstrations of the 3D printer and what it makes. Extra computers will be available to design a 3D project of your own. One will be picked to print. For more information and registration for this free program, visit ccclib.org or call (925) 376-6852.

Happiness is a kitten or two! Find yours at the weekend adoption event held by Community Concern for Cats from 1 to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 29 and 30, at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more info, visit www.communityconcernforcats.org.

Lamorinda CERT Safety Fair 2015 features helicopters, horses, dogs, Search and Rescue and SWAT teams, police and fire vehicles, emergency preparedness and personal safety demos for all Lamorindans, big and small at Stanley Middle School from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 30. Free. For details, visit lamorindacert.org.

... continued on next page

please...



...thanks

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

MOVIE REVIEW

Hollywood Legend and Icon Kicks off the 18th Annual California Independent Film Festival

Tab Hunter at the Rheem Theatre on Sept. 10

By Derek Zemrak

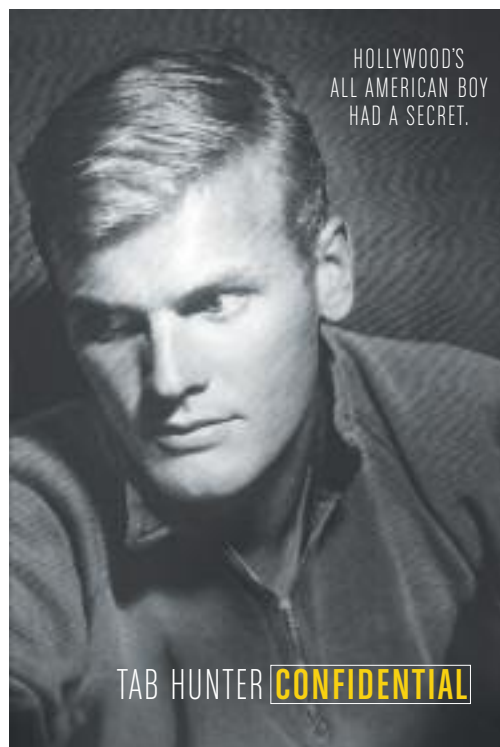


Image provided

In the 1950s there were three leading men in Hollywood: James Dean, Rock Hudson and Tab Hunter. Tab Hunter was a product of the golden age of Hollywood and became Hollywood's golden boy. He was discovered at the age of 19 and the Hollywood machine made him a star. Hunter landed his first leading role in 1952 in the romantic South Sea adventure, "Island of Desire," opposite Linda Darnell. From that time forward the Hollywood marketing machine took over his life. They found their golden boy and capitalized on him. Hunter starred in over 40 studio films, including "Ride the Wild Surf," and the Academy Award

nominated film, "Damn Yankees." He also co-starred opposite several screen legends such as Sophia Loren, Natalie Wood, Rita Hayworth, Lana Turner and Debbie Reynolds.

All his film success, though, was not good enough for Hollywood – it was time to make more money off their newfound "Teen Idol." Hunter had an amazing recording career with his song "Young Love" which soared to No. 1 on the record charts and knocked Elvis out of that spot for the first time. "Young Love" remained the number one record in the U.S. for six weeks and Hunter was now every teenage girl's dream. His popularity led him to his own television show on NBC, "The Tab Hunter Show."

Hollywood created Hunter – but who is the real Tab Hunter? Find out on Opening Night of the 18th Annual California Independent Film Festival at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 10 at the Rheem Theatre. For the first time the festival will be kicking off with the documentary entitled "Tab Hunter Confidential." It is based on the New York Times bestselling book of the same name. This amazing film tells the story of not only who the real Hunter is, in his own words, but also exposes the rollercoaster life Hollywood created around him. The use of vintage footage and modern technology makes this documentary even more special. The evening will include a wine and cheese reception and a Q&A with Hunter.

Tickets are limited and will be sold out soon, so it is recommended that everyone get their tickets at www.caiff.org or the Rheem and Orinda box offices. To learn more about the 18th Annual California Independent Film Festival, go to www.caiff.org.

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

OTHER ... continued

Brasarte presents the SF Bay Brazilian Day and Lavagem Festival from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 6, at Casa de Cultura, 1901 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. Celebrate Brazilian Independence Day with a free outdoor festival. Live music, children's village, beer and caipirinha bar, food and artisan booths. For more info, visit www.Brasarte.com, call (510) 528-1958 or email conceicao.damascano@yahoo.com.

The Friends of the Moraga Library will hold their semi-annual book sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Moraga Library. There will be a \$5 Bag Sale from 1 to 2 p.m. when a large paper grocery bag can be purchased and filled with as many books as the bag will hold. The money raised goes to fund library materials and programs, and to staff Sunday hours at the library.

Contra Costa County AARP Tax-Aide is looking for volunteers to become members of a team providing free tax preparation for individuals of all ages. Orientation is in November and classes for tax counselors start in January 2016. Service from February to April 15, 2016. If interested, apply online at www.aarp.org/taxvolunteer or call LaVerne Gordon at (925) 726-3199 for additional information and to apply.

SENIORS

'As The Page Turns' Book Club - Looking for a good book to discuss with others? Join this informal group of booklovers and

enjoy enrichment, lively discussion, fellowship and refreshments that meet from 1 to 2:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month (location changes). Call Lafayette Senior Services for the book title at (925) 284-5050. Free for Senior Services members; \$10 non-members.

Men "of a certain age" (semi- or fully-retired) are invited to meet Andy Scheck, publisher of Lamorinda Weekly, at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9 during the Sons In Retirement Lamorinda Hills Branch regular lunch meeting at Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. SIRs welcomes new members. For details, visit www.branch174.sirinc2.org or call Tyler at (925) 284-5561.

The Alzheimer's Association will be hosting a three-part education series for individuals with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, who are in the early stages, and for their care partners. Facilitators will discuss what you need to know, what you need to plan and what you can do as you navigate this chapter of your life. Separate classes are offered concurrently for early stage individuals and for care partners. Dates and Location: Wednesdays, Sept. 23, 30 and Oct. 7, in Lafayette. Classes are free but pre-registration is required. Contact Lan Trinh at (800) 272-3900 or ltrinh@alz.org to register

GARDEN

Worm Composting and Bin Building Workshop from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Sept. 5 at Heather Farm Community Center, 301 N. San Carlos Drive, Walnut Creek. Registration Required at

www.RecycleSmart.org. Cost: \$20 per household; 20 household max capacity. All supplies included: bin and worms.

Lafayette Garden Club meeting from 9:30 a.m. to noon Thursday, Sept. 10 – Stefani Bittner of Homestead Design collective will speak on a timely topic, "The Low Water Edible Garden." Don't miss her presentation at LGC's first yearly meeting in September at the beautiful Lafayette Veteran's Hall. Guests welcome. Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd. For info, email cpetzsch@gmail.com.

Gardening All Year: Prepping Your Garden for fall from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 13 at 3932 Mt. Diablo Blvd. This class will go over a variety of techniques to help the transition to your fall garden: seed saving, crop rotation, soil amending, cool weather edible crops, sheet mulching and planting natives. Participants: Please bring seed heads, pods, fruit, etc. to prepare and trade with others for a simple seed swap. Register at lafayettecommunitygarden.org/classes-and-events. Cost: \$5 donation requested.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its general meeting from 9:30 a.m. to noon Monday, Sept. 14 at the Gardens at Heather Farm located at 1540 Marchbanks Road in Walnut Creek. The topic of the program is Pollution Prevention. Kit Ohlman from the Contra Costa Sanitary District will talk about what goes down our drains that can eventually hurt our environment. For more info, email mslittle44@gmail.com.

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Service Clubs Announcements

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

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

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

August 28:
Dr. Jackie Steel will 'Expose Herself'! Jackie will share her interest in natural approaches to healthcare.

September 4:
Our speaker will be Luke Fletcher PhD. Luke is a Physicist at Stanford University and studies extreme states of matter.

Please join us for breakfast and a great speaker!

SOROPTIMIST OF 24/680 **Please join us for our next meeting:**

WHEN: Wednesday, September 2nd Social 5:30-6:00 p.m. Meeting 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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

"Save the Date for our Crab Feed" Saturday, January 23rd

For more information, contact: Regina Englehart @925-876-9076 or go to: soroptimist24-680.org

Lamorinda Weekly
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Moraga Farmers' Market Contest Elicits Enticing Peach Recipes

By Susie Iventosch

Each of the following winners of the Aug. 9 Moraga Farmers' Market Peach Recipe Contest included a paragraph (or two) about their recipe with their contest entry, printed below. Congratulations to all the contestants!

Grand Prize Winner

Masala Peach Melba by Lizette Marx, natural chef instructor and nutrition consultant



First Place Winner Lizette Marx Photo provided

My great grandmother did not like to bake much, so she often poached fruit and served it with ice cream at the end of a festive meal. My mother made this dish too and it was nice, but a little ho hum. So when I was 16, I did a little research and discovered a great dessert made with peaches and raspberry sauce. The original dish was

created in the late 1800s by Auguste Escoffier for Australian soprano, Nellie Melba. Escoffier called this dessert Peach Melba so it would never be forgotten. In this rendition, peaches are poached in chai tea, enhanced with additional Indian spices, dates, and warming tawny port. One of the things I love about this recipe is that it is quite easy to put together and the resulting poaching liquid with the tawny port can be enjoyed as the basis for a tea cocktail as well as a reduction sauce, which is the way it is used in this recipe.

Yields 3 Cups

INGREDIENTS

3 cups water
2 Medjool dates, pitted and sliced into thin strips
Peel of 1 orange or 2 tangerines, cut into thin strips using a vegetable peeler
3 rooibos chai tea bags
1/3 cup port
2 tablespoons honey
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
4 black peppercorns
4 cardamom pods
4 peaches, halved and pitted (choose firm, ripe peaches)
8 whole raspberries for garnish

RASPBERRY SAUCE

1 cup raspberries (fresh or frozen)
Poaching liquid (above)
1 orange or 2 tangerines, juiced
1 teaspoon arrowroot

Method for Poaching Liquid

- 1) Add water, dates, orange zest, tea bags, port, honey, cinnamon stick, star anise, peppercorns, and cardamom pods to a medium sauce pan and bring to a simmer.
- 2) Add peaches and bring poaching liquid to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until peaches can be easily pierced with a fork, about 10-15 minutes, depending on firmness of the fruit.
- 3) Remove peaches and place in a serving dish. Add fresh raspberries and set fruit aside. Discard tea bags and reserve poaching liquid for raspberry sauce.

Method for Raspberry Sauce

- 1) Add raspberries to poaching liquid and bring to a boil until liquid is reduced by half and becomes syrupy.
- 2) Strain sauce through a fine mesh strainer, pressing raspberries thoroughly. Spoon out about 2 to 3 tablespoons of sauce into a small cup and sprinkle in arrowroot powder. Whisk until smooth.
- 3) Add remaining sauce back into pan, followed by the arrowroot slurry. Bring sauce to a boil. As soon as sauce begins to boil, whisk quickly until sauce thickens. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 4) To serve, place a peach into an attractive bowl or wine glass and drizzle generously with raspberry sauce. Top with a couple of raspberries and enjoy. For even more decadence, top with vanilla ice cream.

2nd Place Winner

Peach/Plum Kuchen by Gwen Prichard



Gwen Prichard in her kitchen Photo provided

This is a recipe that my mother made for us as far back as I can remember. Would you believe the 1930s? She always referred to this as her "one egg cake," and it was served in a number of ways – sometimes with fruit incorporated, and at other times as plain cake with a homemade chocolate or caramel sauce poured over individual servings. My dad insisted on having dessert every night and this recipe was a life saver when my mother, a school teacher, would need to make something quickly at the end of her busy day.

My mother would have been pleased to know that her "go-to" dessert recipe is still enjoyed and is being shared with others. The day of this year's peach recipe contest, Aug. 9, would have been her 109th birthday!

Susie's note:

Gwen has always enjoyed cooking with her grandchildren, Libby, Hilary and Connor. Although they are mostly grown up now with Connor in high school, both girls out of college, and Libby soon to be married, they still come over to their grandparents' house for cooking days. They have been making assorted jams for Libby's wedding party favors. "Every once in a while, we try something none of us has ever tried before, like samosas and sushi," Gwen mentioned.

Peach/Plum Kuchen

INGREDIENTS

1 egg
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup milk
1/4 teaspoon lemon extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1 cup pastry or cake flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
Peaches (about 4 large), peeled, pitted, and cut in wedges; or plums (about 6 large), pitted and cut in wedges (or a combination of both)

DIRECTIONS

Whisk egg and sugar together until fluffy. Stir in milk and flavorings, and then add the melted butter gradually, stirring constantly. Add flour, which has been sifted with baking powder and salt, stirring only until incorporated. Pour batter into a buttered 8 by 8-inch pan. Place wedges of peaches and/or plums generously all over the top. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup of sugar, which has been mixed with 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon. Bake at 350 F for about 25 minutes until golden brown and fruit is cooked through. Best served while hot, but is delicious at room temperature or chilled. Can be topped with ice cream or whipped cream, but is excellent just as it is.

Kid's Category Winner

Martin Bruschi's "Organic Lemony It's-Not-Apple-It's-Peach-Sauce! with Crispy Sage Topping"



Martin Bruschi, 6, of Lafayette Photo provided

Martin Bruschi, 6, of Lafayette, loves to garden, according to his mom, Sarah Bruschi, and that is what gave him the inspiration for his recipe.

"I just used peaches and something in it," he said. "Sometimes, I just pick the sage in my garden. I thought the sage would go with the peaches and it smells good!"

His mom said that he normally makes this sauce with apples, but decided to try it with peaches for the contest. It was also the first time he was allowed to use a "big boy" knife in the kitchen.

"I was really excited when he won," his mom said. "He's entered cake contests before, but it was so neat that this time he won something!" Sarah Bruschi said that when he received his \$50 award, he already decided that he wanted to go to the store to buy more fruits and vegetables with it!

INGREDIENTS

6 ripe organic peaches
Juice of 4 organic lemons
1/2 teaspoon organic cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon organic butter
Optional:
1/4 cup organic canola oil
6 sage leaves

DIRECTIONS

Juice 4 lemons. Set aside juice. Cut peaches into large chunks and put in large bowl. Pour lemon juice over peaches, add cinnamon and sea salt, and mix together. Melt butter in a large pan. Add peach mixture and bring to light boil. Let simmer for 7 minutes. Take off heat, let cool, and serve while warm. Optional: In a medium pan, add 1/4 cup canola oil. Heat oil. Wash sage leaves and pat dry. Add to heated canola oil. Fry on each side for approximately 2 minutes. When sage leaves are darker in color, remove them from the oil and let cool on a paper towel to absorb excess oil. Crumple crispy sage leaves over peach mixture and serve warm. Bonus: If you have more sauce than you need, use it to top ice cream!

For more information on the recipes and contest, please contact the California Farmers' Markets Association. Phone (925) 465-4690 or visit the website: www.cafarmersmkt.com

Recipe Contest Results

Grand Prize Winner: Lizette Marx – Masala Peach Melba
Second Place Winner: Gwen Prichard – Peach and Plum Kuchen
Third Place Winner: Barbara Crawford – Peach and Bergamot Jam
Kid's Category Winner: Martin Bruschi, 6 – Organic Lemony It's-Not-Apple-It's-Peach-Sauce!
Honorable Mention: AJ Russell, 12 – Peach Salsa and Homemade Chips
Honorable Mention: Cyril Russell – Peach Donuts and Peach Compote

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.



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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Campolindo Football Documentary to Debut at California Independent Film Festival

By Spencer Silva



2011 Campolindo team celebrates NCS Championship

Campolindo Head Coach Kevin Macy likes to talk about the improbability of success in a sport like football, where some teams, simply put, are bigger, faster and stronger than others. “There are no Cinderella stories in football, just Campo,” he says often.

In his view, a small community like Moraga shouldn’t be capable of producing winning football team after

winning football team. But it does. This is the subject of the new film “Banners in the Sky,” which is set to debut at 5 p.m. Sept. 12 at the Rheem Theatre as part of the California Independent Film Festival.

In 2011, local football pundits wrote off the Cougars. In fact, they were expected to finish last in the DFAL. As usual, Coach Macy downplayed his team’s chances, keeping

his hand close to the vest. To the surprise of everyone, they went undefeated in league, won the NCS Division III title and made it all the way to state championship game, which they lost.

The film attempts to explain the success of a team that, theoretically, shouldn’t have the talent or resources to compete year to year. The film brings the viewer along for the 2011

season, through early-season victories at El Cerrito and Miramonte, and then, in the playoffs, Bishop O’Dowd and Marin Catholic, a team notably led by starting Cal quarterback Jared Goff.

Coincidentally, Macy’s Cinderella talk was from the summer of 2014, when the film was shot. At the time, he was unaware his 2014 squad would best its predecessor by completing a perfect 16-0 season and notch its first Division III state title – in last-minute, thrilling fashion, no less. “We never thought we’d go to state,” Macy offered.

Alexander Leis, a recent graduate of Binghamton University, is the film’s director. The film is his debut. Leis, a New York native, was already something of a Campo football fan before he took on the project. His cousin, Campo Assistant Coach Matt Keeperman, sent him links to watch their games in 2011 and later suggested he make a documentary. Leis received a Young Artists’ fellowship to complete the project.

In Leis’s view, it’s the program’s culture that sets it apart. Jerseys don similar last names year to year; players pass the torch from generation to generation, brother to brother. For this reason, Macy’s biggest goal every season is to play on Thanksgiving, when all

his former players can populate the sidelines. As a side benefit, it also means they’ve made the playoffs.

“We never talk about record,” Macy said. “Our only goal is to make it to Thanksgiving, as a service to our former players.”

In 2014, Leis continued to watch Campo from afar. Then after the state semi-final game he got a phone call.

“The best part of it was the Sutter game, when they were down, and I had to go to sleep,” he explained. “I got a call from my cousin, it was like two in the morning ... and he’s just like, ‘here’s the hotel information, book it, I’ll see you next week.’ I woke up to that.”

Leis was on the sideline filming when the Cougars upset El Capitan last December to clinch the state championship. “It was the best football game I’ve ever been to by far.”

At the team’s request, Leis made a follow-up film about the 2014 team, which will (likely) be available for purchase at the “Banners in the Sky” premier. Coach Macy acknowledges that Leis is something of a good luck charm. “We gotta keep him doing documentaries.”

Tickets are available online at caiff.org; the premier is expected to draw a large crowd.

Twin Goalies ‘Tagg Team’ Club Sports, Now College

By Emily Dugdale



Madison and Spencer Tagg

Photo provided

Few people have a twin sibling. Even fewer have a twin sibling who is also an elite athlete. For Madison and Spencer Tagg, it’s a well-earned reality. The twin goalies and recent Campolindo grads will head to Cal this fall to play for one of the nation’s best collegiate water polo programs.

The lanky, tanned twins may look like typical California 17-year-olds, but their sun-bleached hair attests to long hours spent in the pool, hours that have turned them into some of the most powerful forces in the cage. Yet out of the water, they’re just like any teenager about to leave the comforts of home – energetic, slightly awkward, and ready for the excitement of college.

After a friend introduced her to the sport in sixth grade, Madison quickly fell in love with water polo, and by high school she had dedicated herself to the sport. Her brother, Spencer, followed suit in eighth grade after seeing how successful she had become. Both preferred goalie to field positions, a preference found individually when they were rotated into goal during a typical practice drill.

“I still remember to this day – my coach said, we don’t have a goalie so

let’s rotate in. I made some really good blocks, and he was like, ‘Well, we have a goalie here,’” Madison said.

Spencer, who disliked the rough nature of field positions, described a similar experience with his team. “And then they saw how big my dad was, and they were like, yep – goalie material.” Spencer, now 6 feet 5 inches, barely towers over his 6-foot twin sister.

They’ve taken home NCS titles at Campolindo and led their club team, the 680 Drivers, to unprecedented success over the years.

Recently, the Driver men turned in a sixth place finish at the Junior Olympics, a performance Spencer marked as one of the team’s best.

“[Spencer is] a big game player that works as hard if not harder than every guy in the pool,” said 680 boys 18U Head Coach Miles Price. “I can easily say he’s the best goalie I’ve ever coached.”

The Lady Drivers netted first place at the JO’s and, to Madison’s surprise, she clinched MVP honors. When Madison’s name was called, her team members swarmed around to congratulate her.

“I was really surprised when they

called my name. I was like, uh, I didn’t make that many blocks in the championship game!” Madison said, laughing. “But I liked how my teammates backed me up – they’re really supportive.”

Driver’s Head Coach Jessica Cima called Madison the “backbone” of the team.

During the summer, the Taggs also swim for Orinda Park Pool in the OMPA summer league. At the OMPA Championship Meet this month, the twins garnered a bundle of top finishes. Spencer was the meet’s third highest individual points recipient in the boys 15-18 age group with 66 points and a win in the 50 fly. Madison came in second place in individual points with 64 points, and her 15-18 medley relay broke a meet record from 2004.

“I thought the scoreboard was broken!” Madison said of her relay’s record. “We just wanted to win.”

The pair did not compete at the recent Contra Costa County Meet, citing busy schedules in preparation for the upcoming college school year. Spencer is underway with Cal’s “Hell Week,” doing two-a-day practices in preparation for the beginning of Cal men’s water polo season.

Two top athletes living under one roof might provoke intense sibling rivalry, but their coaches mostly disagree.

“Madison and Spencer have this sort of constant support for each other, and the fact that they play the same position and yet they’re still so happy for each other when they do well is really special,” Cimas said of the twins. “It’s just pure support.”

“His sister still throws better outlet passes than him, though!” said Price.

All eyes are now turned toward how these siblings will stack up in their next big life challenge: college.

The support of the surrounding community made a big difference when considering which college to attend this fall, they both agree. “There were a lot of parents who came up to me and congratulated me on Cal,” Spencer said. “They said, ‘you’ll love it there.’”

“I think college is going to be great for them,” Coach Cimas said. “Who knows what’s going to happen for Cal Water Polo in the next few years?”

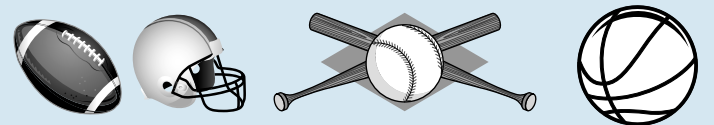
The pair seemed excited and nervous to start their freshman year at Cal, not only a top-ranked water polo powerhouse but also a prestigious academic institution.

“People are telling me you have to be really prepared to balance school and water polo,” Madison ex-

plained. “I’m prepared for it, but I also feel like once I get there I’m going to have to sit down and just study so hard to stay on top.”

It’s fair to say that based on their reputation in this town, these twins won’t do anything less than hit the ground running.

Youth Sports Registration



Lamorinda Lacrosse Club

Registration open now for boys and girls fall clinics held Sunday afternoons from September to November Registration for regular spring season will begin on September 15th. Please go to www.lamorindalacrosse.com for more information and details. Contact Jin Peavey at lamorindalaxops@gmail.com if you have any questions.



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Miramonte's Sabrina Ionescu Continues Rise to National Prominence

By Karl Buscheck



Sabrina Ionescu

Photos Gint Federas

A two-time gold medalist and recently-crowned national champ, Sabrina Ionescu has officially arrived as one of the premier girls' basketball prospects in the entire country.

"Early on, she could definitely do some things naturally that other kids couldn't do," said Kelly Sopak, who has coached Ionescu since third grade – first at the club level with the Orinda-based Cal Stars AAU team and later at Miramonte.

Sopak has had a front-row seat during Ionescu's rise to national prominence and the coach points to seventh grade – when Ionescu developed her outside shot – as the moment when everything started to click.

"Once that happened, I realized how great she was because of her ability to get other people involved, her ability to get to the basket, her ability to get to the free-throw line," Sopak said. "That's when the light really went on for me that she's going to be really special."

Ionescu has not only become a special player, but also one who is in extremely high demand. She won gold medals with the U16 national team at the FIBA Americas Championship in 2013 and the U17 team at the World Championship in 2014. The reigning East Bay Girls Basketball Player of the Year had a chance to go for the hat trick in 2015, but instead opted to spend the summer with the Cal Stars, battling for a national title.

"I mean it was definitely a hard decision," Ionescu said. "I had to talk with my family and obviously Kelly. I think just playing for the program for so long – working to achieve that one goal – that gave me the motivation to stick with my club team that I've been a part of forever to try and accomplish that goal."

The decision ended up paying off for Ionescu, as the guard and her teammates went on to claim first place at the Nike Nationals in North Augusta, S.C., last month. In the title

game, the Cal Stars smashed past the Indy Lady Gym Rats 78-47.

"It really speaks to the team player she is and her basketball IQ – that she recognized how good this team was and the potential it had to win a national championship," Sopak said. "And that's what she wanted to do."

The national title was just the latest accomplishment for the Cal Stars, who have become a powerhouse on the club basketball scene. Since Sopak founded the Cal Stars back in 2006, the club has graduated 100 players to the collegiate ranks. During that run, Sopak has coached an array of stars, but few are as impressive as Ionescu.

"She definitely has some God-given ability, she's worked on her craft," Sopak said. "What separates her is her competitiveness. She's going to dive for a loose ball. She's going to do a lot of things that people of her stature are either A, too good to do, or B, just have never have been

asked to or will do. She cares more about what's on the scoreboard than her individual accolades."

Ionescu's brothers – one who is nine years older and another who is her twin – deserve a lot of the credit for the development of her competitive spirit.

"I think they've definitely turned me into the player I've become," Ionescu said of playing against her brothers as a kid.

There are plenty of college coaches who want to see just how much better Ionescu can become. Ionescu is currently choosing between Texas, Oregon State, Oregon, Cal and UCLA.

"It's kind of crazy to think about," Ionescu said, when asked about being attached to many of the most prominent programs in the country. The guard has already lopped a slew of big name schools off the short list, including Duke, UConn, South Carolina and Notre Dame.

Sopak expects Ionescu to make her final decision in November, but for now, she'll be focused on doing what she does best: getting better one day at a time.

"She knows the level that she's supposed to play at everyday," Sopak said. "And I think she relishes the opportunity to live up to that expectation."



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680 18U Girls Take Home Gold From Junior Olympics

Submitted by Sam Fabrice



The 680 18-under girls' water polo team won the 2015 Junior Olympics, and with it a National Championship. The tournament took place July 29-Aug. 2 in Orange County, Calif. Lamorinda locals on the championship team included former Campolindo goalkeeper and tournament MVP Madison Tagg and Miramonte standout Emily Byrne. Photo provided

Sleepy Hollow Places Fourth at County Meet

Submitted by Barbara Burkhalter



From left: Christian Meckfessel, Derrick Garcia, Robby Rowell, Coach Kevin Honey, Avery Hansen, Kate Minden, Zoe Zabetian, Coach Matt Ehrenberger; front: Justin Ehrenberger, Kelly Murphy. Photo provided

The Sleepy Hollow Legends of Orinda placed fourth out of 57 teams at the 55th annual Contra Costa County Swim Championship held Aug. 15-16 at Acalanes High School. Sleepy Hollow led all Lamorinda teams with 1,229 points.

LMSC Takes First in Premier Showcase Tournament

Submitted by Michael Wingate



Top, from left: Coach Billal Samy, Maddison Rodgers, Amy O'Connor, Kate Canon, Alixe Wingate, Mia Castillo, Grace McCauley, Samantha Hansen, Ariel Steinberg, JoJoFlower and Maddie Wilson; bottom: Abbie Lee, Ava Schmitt, Spencer Deutz, Isabella Deanhardt, Audrey Allen, Megan Go and Sydney Roberts. Photo provided

The Lamorinda United U13 Girls Navy team took first place in the Force Adidas Premier Showcase Tournament the weekend of July 25-26. The girls went 3-0 in group-play, scoring nine and allowing two goals. In the semi-final, the LMSC group pushed through a resilient San Carlos United team, winning 2-1. The Final was the team's biggest test. They found themselves 2-2 at the end of regulation, but went on to win 3-2 in a nail-biting penalty-kick shootout. "It was great to see the team adjusting to opponents with varying strengths and approaches to the game," said Coach Billal Samy. "The team showed character in problem solving from the first game, to the last."

Rancho Colorados Ladies Win NorCal District Championships

Submitted by Brian Berry



Team members: Kim Siegel, captain, Colleen Miller, co-captain, Courtney Belia, Julie Bishop, Wendi Boselli, Gayle Burleigh, Caity Burrows, Kristin Cortez, Kristie Darin, Anna Eppinger, Wendy Finegold, Susan Furay, Stacy Giglio, Mikelle McCain, Ashley McLin, Michelle Muller, Molly Ogro, Marlene Peacock, Kim Siegel, Romi Smith, Shelly Vezzali and Lauren Webster. Photo provided

The Rancho Colorados Swim and Tennis Club Ladies 3.5 USTA team won the NorCal District Championships recently. The ladies completed three days of District competition at Blackhawk Country Club, where they reigned undefeated over teams from Carmel, Los Gatos and Fairfield. Rancho's historic season began in late-March with 194 teams competing from the Oregon border to Fresno. Now, they are one of eight teams left contending for the NorCal Championships, which take place in Carmel Aug. 21-23. If they win, they will advance to play for the National Championship at Indian Wells, Calif., in October.

CC United U14 Black Places Seventh in Junior Olympics

Submitted by Stewart McGuire



Pictured from left: Brodie Jasper, Connor King, Henry Saunders, Tanner Armas, Giorgio Alessandria, Dash McFarland, Tom McGuire, Patrick Conn, Max Stryker, Jack Larsen, Soren Jensen, Narayan Sharma and Sean Percin. Photo provided

CC United Water Polo Club's 14U Black team finished seventh at the 2015 National Junior Olympics held July 25-28 in Orange County. A total of 110 teams from across the country competed in the 14U age-bracket. The CC United boys, coached by Brodie Jasper, secured their position with a tie-breaking goal in the final 11 seconds of the last game against Commerce Aquatics. Along the way, CC United also managed to beat 6th seed Northwood in a game that ended in a shootout – though a narrow two-point loss to the No. 2 seed was nearly as sweet.

Lamorinda Takes Home Title at Futbol Classic

Submitted by Matthew Hansen



Top, from left: Coach Billal Samy, Owen Hansen, Adrian Guzman, Kent Barbir, Rabee Haidari, Luis Felix, Saul Carapia, Victor Quintanilla, Coach Yousef Samy; bottom: Alex Cuellar, Martin Galvan, Kellen Clancy, Erik Voss, Gio Sponzilli, Sean Donovan, Christian Ramsey. Photo provided

On the weekend of Aug. 15-16, Lamorinda Soccer Club's U14 Boys Navy team were crowned victors of the West Coast Futbol Classic, held in Orange County (Calif.). The boy's finished the tournament with a 5-0 record, playing five matches in two days under a hot Southern California sun. Teamwork and ball retention proved to be the difference makers under difficult match conditions.

- Score lines:**
- 2-1 vs. LA Galaxy Conejo Valley
 - 3-2 vs. West Coast FC
 - 3-0 vs. Sporting San Diego
 - 2-0 vs. LA Premier FC (Semifinal)
 - 1-0 vs. Pateadores FC (Final)

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Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 13 Wednesday, August 26, 2015



Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for September ...read on page D13

Growing Vines, and More, In Time of Drought

By Sophie Braccini



Susan Captain

For Sal Captain, minimizing water usage is a culturally ingrained characteristic. “In the house in England where I was raised, you had to put in shillings to get hot water,” he remembered fondly. Captain trained his kids to save water; if the kids showered too long, he would shut off the hot water supply. “We would get into arguments about who could take the shorter showers,” one of his sons recalled. Captain even installed an outside shower, so the gray water would recycle automatically.

It's not unusual, then, that Sal and Susan Cap-

tain use dry farming at their vineyards in Moraga. In July, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) held a training session at Captain Vineyards to present ways to minimize water usage. The Moraga growers, who recently received a second award from EBMUD for their water-wise practice, want to lead the way for water conservation.

Dry farming refers to crop production during the dry season without supplemental irrigation. “When it came to planting our 3,500 vines, each used drippers that gave a half gallon per hour, and

we were supposed to water for 6 to 8 hours once a week. That would be 14,000 gallons of water every week. On top of it, it's purified chlorinated water that's not good for vines,” said Sal Captain, “but we didn't have any other source of water.” When the homeowners saw their water bill the first time, they decided to start researching dry farming.

“How did people do it in the old country where there is no irrigation?” they asked themselves. They realized that the vines are plants that in fact need less water to produce better tasting grapes. Last year Sal Captain took a trip to the plateau of Anatolia in Turkey to observe their dry farming practices. “It's hot up there and dry,” he said, “and they don't water their grapes.” Spacing between plants is much larger than here, too.

The key to dry farming is a deep soil that will hold winter moisture all the way until the end of the dry season. After three years, the root system develops in the shape of a pear, going five to six feet deep, depending on the soil. “On the fourth year we were able to stop watering completely, as long as there is normal rainfall,” explained Susan Captain. A normal year sees 15 inches of rainfall in Moraga; this year it was only half that amount, so some watering had to be done.

Right now the berries are much smaller than usual, which should make an intense, great tasting wine. The difficulty will be the volume, likely much less than last year. “The growers sell their grapes by the pound. On a dry year, if they would not water, they would lose a lot of money,” said Sal Captain.

... continued on page D4



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	23	\$430,000	\$7,600,000
MORAGA	11	\$255,000	\$1,700,000
ORINDA	15	\$600,000	\$2,525,000

Home sales are compiled by CalREsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither CalREsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 3302 Berta Lane, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 1696 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$865,000, 04-28-10
- 44 Cricket Hill Road, \$7,600,000, 6 Bdrms, 6107 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 7-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 05-14-08
- 912 Dana Highlands Court, \$1,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 3103 SqFt, 1994 YrBlt, 7-17-15;
Previous Sale: \$852,000, 05-15-02
- 1808 Del Rey Street, \$1,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 1716 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,000,000, 11-12-14
- 766 Glenside Drive, \$925,000, 4 Bdrms, 2490 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 7-24-15;
Previous Sale: \$27,000, 08-30-99
- 20 Iverson Drive, \$1,480,000, 4 Bdrms, 2380 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 05-23-07
- 616 Lancaster Drive, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2280 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 7-17-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 05-13-14
- 3356 Las Huertas Road, \$2,000,000, 1 Bdrms, 1488 SqFt, 1932 YrBlt, 7-15-15
- 871 Las Trampas Road, \$995,000, 3 Bdrms, 2201 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 7-14-15
- 3230 Lucas Circle, \$1,220,000, 5 Bdrms, 2536 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 7-17-15
- 623 Lucas Drive, \$2,175,000, 5 Bdrms, 3403 SqFt, 2012 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,700,000, 04-26-13
- 3324 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,090,000, 3 Bdrms, 1409 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 7-21-15
- 3509 Moraga Boulevard, \$750,000, 2 Bdrms, 822 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 7-21-15
- 3182 Old Tunnel Road #E, \$430,000, 896 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 7-20-15;
Previous Sale: \$430,000, 03-15-06
- 1248 Panorama Drive, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1298 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 7-10-15
- 1594 Pleasant Hill Road, \$950,000, 4 Bdrms, 2087 SqFt, 1917 YrBlt, 7-17-15;
Previous Sale: \$760,500, 09-01-04
- 536 Silverado Drive, \$1,466,000, 4 Bdrms, 2393 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 7-21-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 04-17-12
- 3160 Somerset Place, \$1,410,000, 3 Bdrms, 2717 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 7-24-15
- 710 St. Marys Road, \$1,130,000, 3 Bdrms, 1574 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 7-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$874,000, 07-14-06
- 10 Wellesley Drive, \$2,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 3733 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 7-21-15
- 1000 Willow Drive, \$1,377,500, 4 Bdrms, 2249 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 7-23-15;
Previous Sale: \$159,000, 03-19-85
- 1037 Windsor Drive, \$970,000, 3 Bdrms, 1511 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 7-15-15
- 3324 Woodview Drive, \$1,315,000, 3 Bdrms, 2381 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$760,000, 07-11-03

... continued on page D11

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Growing Vines, and More, In Time of Drought

... continued from page D1

But there are ways to preserve water in the soil, said Susan Captain. First she recommends staying away from synthetic fertilizers because the nitrate and sodium it adds into the soil kills all the living organisms, including earthworms that enrich and aerate the soil naturally. "Once you've killed everything in your soil, you become completely dependent on fertilizers," she added. The Captains stopped rototilling to protect the healthy soil organisms, and they take care of the soil by shredding everything, such as pruned branches and leaves, and leaving it as topsoil. "It disintegrates and feeds the soil, and keeps the water from evaporating," she said. "It's a win-win. Why would you do anything else?"

She notes that dry farming on a slope, as they do, is less common, but that the clay content of their soil, with the addition of the compost, retains water nicely. "The healthier your soil, the better water retention you'll get," she concluded.

Janet Caprile, farm advisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension in Contra Costa and Alameda counties, who spoke at the training session, recommends crops that yield more for less water. "We want more crop per drop," she said, recommending hybrid tomatoes rather than heirloom, and favoring the winter gardens that will produce a lot with much less water.

Crops that can be successfully dry farmed include tomatoes, grapes, potatoes, winter squash, grains and fruit trees, according to the UCCE Master Gardener Program website (ccmg.ucanr.edu). "When we have winter rains, some of the water is stored in the soil for plants to use in the spring as the weather warms up and growth begins. Gardeners use this 'bank' of available water to dry farm – a technique that depends on sufficient soil moisture and deep-rooted plants that scavenge to access water without adding much supplemental irrigation," the website states.

The UCCE Master Gardener Program suggests adding organic matter to the soil, using three to four inches of mulch on top of the soil, using a drip system, planting early-maturing or short-season varieties of vegetables, and laying out planting



Shredded branches are used for topsoil

Photo Sophie Braccini

areas in blocks, not rows. "As plants mature their foliage touches and creates an umbrella over the soil, shading roots, reducing evaporation and creating a beneficial CO2 bubble on the underside of plants," it states.

The organization also recommends sowing seeds in flats rather than directly into the garden bed, which will use less water.

"Planting a vegetable garden instead of a lawn still makes sense for homeowners," Caprile said. "It will use less water and it will feed you."

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What's Your Title?

By Andi Peterson Brown

Do you remember how you took title to your home? Are you a sole owner? Joint tenant? Is it community property? Is it in a trust? ...and are you sure?

A recent health scare with an extended member of my family brought this subject to the forefront for us. Once calm was restored and relief set in that all was going to be ok, we all started to mull over the dreaded “business of death” and “what would have happened” questions. Did this person have a will? Is there a Power of Attorney? Really, they picked who? Are there DNR instructions? What about the cat? What about the house? Would it have to be sold? Would there have been tax or financial repercussions for the surviving family? And on and on this went as we all realized that we were grossly underprepared.

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Stylish Solutions

How to Navigate Inspiration Photos vs Real Life in Decorating and Design

By Ann McDonald



To get this shot, Photographer Erik Nelder removed the fireplace cover and put the camera through the actual fireplace! We had people on ladders holding the pots back and had moved the basket cabinet over to align properly. See photo on page D10.

Photos courtesy Couture Chateau llc

Most of us would love lives that are picture perfect – happy families with kids nicely dressed enjoying family activities with mom and dad; good meaningful conversations happening in a beautiful room – but life is not a magazine shoot, even if we can orchestrate the things around us and want it to be. Life is, however, beautiful in all its process mess.

As summer comes to an end, stylish suburbanite, I wanted to share inside tips you can use today to navigate the process between inspiration photos and the creation of your ideal space that lives as beautifully as it looks. My hope is to equip you with tools, so design and decorating makes you smile, *and thrive*, each time you walk into a room.

First things first: Remember that photo shoots for decorator magazines often involve things like pushing the sofa up against the bookshelf, hanging off a ladder while the table is three feet away from the chairs or climbing a fence in a quarry. What that means is, we can't recreate the same room elements from a photo for real living.

So just how do we design so spaces and places look and live beautifully?

Before we get to the pretty, my team and I sit down and review what I affectionately call “The Life Envelope.” This refers to the next seven years of your life relating to the current project.

What is it you want your life to be in seven years? What are your personal goals? Family goals?

... continued on page D10



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Inspiration Photos



Photographer Erik Nelder



In this shot, Design Photographer Peter Medilek was on a ladder. Real life looks nothing like a photo shoot.



This photo was taken in Israel while filming design inspiration videos. We reasoned that if marble could handle 4,000-plus years outside and retain beauty, it would probably be OK in a vacation project off continent.

... continued from page D8

Will you be staying in the home for generations or is it short-term? Design to facilitate that.

Instead of creating space that is static or holds you back, examine goals, hopes and dreams first. Create designed space that moves you forward in real and practical ways.

It's like sailing. You get to the destination faster and with more style points if you know the currents under your surface and prevailing winds. Get the unseen issues tackled and the rest is – as they say – smooth sailing.

Do you have a young family with children in preschool and want to make sure art and music are still passions when they are teenagers? Design space to create energy and anticipation for practice. Don't place the piano or art studio in a dingy corner of the garage or the basement family room. Integrate those into core living spaces.

There is science behind design, and we love the beauty part, but in order for it to thrive for you in your own home these things need to be addressed.

Next we look at your "Space Envelope." The space envelope refers to a proverbial cube-like border around the spaces and places we will be designing. It's a non-negotiable "design fence" within which we make decisions and bring completion – all consistent with your "Life Envelope."

Why? Just like other areas of life, focus, follow through and completion are the game changers for excellence. Ask yourself what spaces need to be designed together to be consistent. Why is this space a priority? What are the potential pitfalls of this space and how can you avoid them? And do you have a reasonable budget? The "Space Envelope" keeps us from getting carried away.

By putting a decision cube around a space, even if it's a 24,000-square-foot combination of five buildings on a 400-acre mini-ranch, we prevent distraction. It's equally important on a 600-square-foot kitchen remodel, maybe more so, as lives are curated in those 600 square feet.

For today, take stock of these tips for your own spaces. I created this process when my interns and new grads who had amazing technical skills, struggled to complete projects of excellence. It has been so well received, design professionals from across the country use this training for themselves, not just for their employees. We are in process of creating a complete homeowner accessible version as well this fall.

As stylish suburbanites, you are therapists, counselors and lifestyle consultants. My goal is to equip you to thrive and reach your individual and family goals seven years out – through design.



Ann McDonald, IIDA, NAPO, is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau, a luxury interior design firm in Orinda. For a complete blog post including other design ideas, visit www.couturechateau.com/blog

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

MORAGA

- 62 Amberwood Court, \$1,355,000, 5 Bdrms, 2312 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 7-24-15;
Previous Sale: \$725,000, 05-31-00
- 2067 Ascot Drive #142, \$255,000, 1 Bdrms, 753 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 7-20-15
- 2135 Ascot Drive #20, \$585,000, 2 Bdrms, 1529 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 7-17-15;
Previous Sale: \$453,000, 08-04-09
- 773 Crossbrook Drive, \$1,275,000, 5 Bdrms, 2848 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$419,500, 05-14-87
- 187 Cypress Point Way, \$1,375,000, 5 Bdrms, 3398 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 7-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$950,000, 05-15-02
- 10 Dickenson Drive, \$1,306,500, 4 Bdrms, 2583 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 7-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,069,000, 05-01-12
- 35 Kazar Court, \$1,700,000, 6 Bdrms, 3162 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$448,500, 12-14-95
- 154 Miramonte Drive, \$540,000, 2 Bdrms, 1525 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 7-22-15
- 450 Rheem Boulevard, \$475,000, 2 Bdrms, 1170 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$470,000, 06-08-07
- 1123 Sanders Drive, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1691 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 7-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 11-26-03
- 219 Scofield Drive, \$1,505,000, 5 Bdrms, 2921 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 7-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$445,000, 09-30-94

ORINDA

- 146 Camino Sobrante, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 2658 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 7-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$545,000, 11-25-92
- 115 Coral Drive, \$1,125,000, 3 Bdrms, 1340 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 7-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$700,000, 12-09-11
- 20 El Patio, \$2,150,000, 6 Bdrms, 4552 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 7-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$825,000, 12-29-11
- 87 El Toyonal, \$700,000, 2 Bdrms, 1103 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$401,000, 03-27-13
- 220 Glorietta Boulevard, \$2,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 3801 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 12-05-01
- 206 Holly Lane, \$600,000, 2 Bdrms, 1196 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 7-20-15
- 623 Ironbark Circle, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 3421 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 7-21-15;
Previous Sale: \$755,000, 10-26-98
- 350 Miller Court, \$2,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 4106 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 7-22-15
- 401 Miner Road, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 2636 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 7-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$620,000, 10-20-88
- 755 Miner Road, \$1,475,000, 3 Bdrms, 2440 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 7-10-15
- 49 Overhill Road, \$1,575,000, 4 Bdrms, 4970 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 7-15-15;
Previous Sale: \$600,000, 08-13-96
- 54 Persimmon Walk, \$1,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2385 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 7-10-15
- 20 St. Hill Road, \$1,565,000, 5 Bdrms, 3693 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 7-22-15
- 41 Van Tassel Lane, \$2,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 3639 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 7-14-15;
Previous Sale: \$2,700,000, 05-05-06
- 639 Watchwood Road, \$1,360,000, 2 Bdrms, 2203 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 7-22-15;
Previous Sale: \$635,000, 11-18-98

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Drought Fells Orinda Cottonwood



Leeann Brady stands in front of the Cottonwood

Photo provided

The California drought has claimed yet another victim – this one a decades-old 65-foot-tall cottonwood tree in a south Orinda yard. Richard Osborne and Leeann Brady were preparing to remove the tree, realizing that it had rotted from the inside out, when it suddenly toppled Aug. 13. No damage was done, although the tree did temporarily block a residential street. Osborne feels they are “sort of lucky that it fell” because initial estimates for its removal ranged from \$1,800 to \$3,000. Now that the tree is down he expects to pay half that amount. *C. Dausman*



The fallen tree blocked Hall Drive



Workers remove the tree



Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for September

By Cynthia Brian

"The sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world's joy" – Henry Ward Beecher

We have definitely experienced ample sunshine this season and as summer simmers into its final month, we still have ample time to enjoy the warmth and tranquility of outdoor entertaining. September is often the hottest month of the year. Make sure that you are paying attention to the water needs of your trees. Because of the drought, you may lose some plants, but mature trees may be irreplaceable in your lifetime. Obey the EBMUD rules, water deeply twice a week, and your landscape will survive until the winter rains arrive. An El Nino is being predicted for 2016. If your ground is severely dry and compacted, you may suffer flooding as the water will not be able to penetrate the soil.

Nothing says "California" better than joining friends for a barbecue or roasting s'mores around a fire pit. (Be fire wise; Lamorinda is on high fire alert this year.) With vegetable gardens at their peak, fresh corn, squash, peppers and melons brushed with olive oil and sprinkled with herbs are delicious cooked over the grill.

As many of our annuals and perennials begin to wither, it's a great idea to gather bouquets to dry for the winter. Many plants dry naturally and others need to be hung. Before tying in bunches, remove the foliage and hang in a dry, cool place away from bright light. Garage beams make great drying racks.

Be alert for the pear, apple and grape harvests happening around the area. Become a farmer for a day. Volunteer for picking, pressing and stomp-

... continued on page D14



A side yard shaded by trees provides a cool place to play for pooch and people.

Photos Cynthia Brian



New guinea primrose amidst Bird of Paradise withstand the hot temperatures.



A blue hydrangea will retain its hue when cut and dried.



Our container plants need more water now. Pictured deer-proof heuchera and ferns.

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for September

... continued from page D13

PRESS apples for the delicious fresh juice.

VISIT The National Heirloom Exposition, the "world's pure food fair," Sept. 8-10 at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. Education about heirloom growing, sustainability, market farming, and risks of genetically modified foods will be the focus. Enjoy heritage poultry and livestock shows, giant pumpkin and vegetable contests, foot stomping music and tractors. www.theheirloomexpo.com.

BUY a deep soaker hose to give thirsty trees a good drink. If you see tree roots rising to the surface and leaves wilting or falling, get some H2O to your trees.

DEAD HEAD roses and control powdery mildew with a spray consisting of 2 teaspoons cooking oil and 2 teaspoons baking soda mixed in a gallon of water.

CHECK out Cate's Garden premium bypass pruning shears and easy action ratchet pruning shears made from SK5 high carbon steel blades. These great garden tools have a lifetime warranty. www.catesgarden.com/vip

LOWER yard maintenance with ground covers such as sedum, liriop, succulents, creeping thyme, baby tears, and vinca major or minor.

PROTECT your tender plants, roses, and citrus from the hungry deer. They are especially destructive now as their food sources dwindle. There are few deer-proof plants, although my deer don't touch oleander, digitalis, bearded iris, naked ladies, heuchera, rosemary or Russian sage.

DESTROY any star thistle plants that may come up in your landscape. These very prickly weeds are difficult to get rid of once established. Seeds blow in from the hills. The cows and deer don't eat them.

DIVIDE iris, lilies and naked ladies. Replant in other barren areas or share with a friend.

PROVIDE a shady area for your pets to play and relax. Make it interesting and a cool place for you to unwind.

DRY herbs and flowers. Garlic, leeks, artichoke blossoms, Bird of Paradise, hydrangeas, sunflowers, bachelor buttons, sage, lavender and protea can be hung upside down from rafters in the garage.

STARE up at the clouds at sunset for a multihued moving performance. Do it with your kids or grandkids.

IMPROVE your soil with compost and mulch now. Compacted clay soil will experience severe run-off when winter rains arrive.

ATTEND the Pear and Wine Festival on Sept. 26 at Moraga Commons. Visit the Be the Star You Are! booth to receive a free brand new book as part of the literacy outreach project, "Read, Lead, Succeed!" Info: http://starstylerradio.net/Events/Entries/2015/9/26_Pear_%26_Wine_Festival_2015.html

SELECT the perfect September bouquet at your local farmers' market as your garden displays wane.

SIT by a waterfall to enjoy the trickling falls and the sounds of silence.

SOW seeds of kale peas, kohlrabi, turnips and cabbage in preparation of a winter harvest.



Dead head roses

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California Trees

Darren lives his life with passion, and trees have been his passion since he was a kid, working with his father in the tree care company, he is a firm believer in the power of planning, and in the importance of giving back to those aspects of life that sustain you.

California has a rich horticultural history and many extraordinary specimens of trees can be seen in nearly every community here. Each of the many tree species provides unique form, texture, color and often aroma. These are the trees that provide shade, help to conserve energy, improves property value, reduces storm-water runoff, sequester CO2, mitigate air pollution, and make urban living healthier and more peaceful. "We all have a role to play in planning for the future of our trees". So invest in the future and plant the correct type of tree in the proper location.

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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Cynthia Brian in the Clary Sage-Salvia sclarea.

I'm on my way to speak at the National Garden Symposium where I am looking forward to meeting other garden writers and media professionals who share my passion for nature. My October column will be blooming with the best ideas I glean from around the country.

Have fun in the sun and delight in the joy of our September trees, flowers, fruit and herbs.

Happy Gardening, Happy Growing!

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Cynthia Brian

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50 Don Gabriel Way South Orinda home features open floor plan w/custom cabinetry, hardwood floors, updated kitchen. Patio & outdoor dining area, large terraced upslope backyard perfect for relaxation. **\$1,250,000**

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99 Via Floreado This brilliant contemporary has spectacular views w/walls of windows. This stunning apx. 3,000sf, 4bd/3.5ba country club home is near the freeway. Updated master bath. **\$1,450,000**

ORINDA



25 Rustic Way Impressive property w/top-of-the-hill privacy, fab. views & custom built 6bd/5.5ba home of apx. 8514sf on 8.14 acres. Racquetball court, pool w/unique waterslide, tennis court. **\$3,695,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

76 Sullivan Drive Impressive updated 4bd, 2.5ba, 2,131 sq. ft. home. Breathtaking views! Excellent floor plan, level-out to fabulous pool/ landscaping. Top CA schools. Great commute location. **\$1,195,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

1825 Joseph Drive Single-level in The Bluffs. 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, hardwood floors, beautiful views, private setting, sparkling pool and possible vineyard site. **\$1,285,000**

MORAGA



5 Whiting Court Sonsara Mediterranean 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath, open kitchen/ family room combo, spa-like master bath, in-door laundry, sunny courtyard. Single level, like new. **\$1,485,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

66 Shuey Drive Spectacular Moraga showcase home remodeled inside & out w/upgrades & special features. Just over 2900sf, 4bd(+ofc)/2.5ba treasure on .344ac, panoramic views & access to TOP schools! **\$1,585,000**

MORAGA



5 Paseo Linares Stunning new construction! Mediterranean Villa, spacious rooms, cul de sac, views & level yard. 4142sf, 5bd/4.5ba home w/hdwd, great room + formal living & dining w/butler's pantry. **\$2,525,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

1601 Reliez Valley Road Short Term Rental. Hard to find... 5 month 3 bedroom, 2 bath rental featuring an open floor plan, hardwood floors, high ceilings and award winning Lafayette schools. **\$4,500/month**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

3500 Silver Springs Road Traditional charm in coveted Silver Springs! Spacious living room, kitchen w/white cabinets & Carrera marble counters. Hardwood floors. Large patio, lovely gardens. Top-rated schools. **\$1,695,000**

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. **\$3,696,000**

LAFAYETTE



1141 Vallecito Court Treasured Happy Valley estate custom built in 2006 w/finest craftsmanship. Chef's kitchen, gorgeous master, ofc, fam rm, home gym. Pool, spa, frplc & level lawn w/views. Detached guest house. **\$3,900,000**

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