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Centenarian Saul Bashin, left, gets a birthday ride from BAHCC's Don Azevedo in his 1914 brass-era Model T Ford.

Photo Cathy Dausman

Model T Ride Drives Centenarian's Surprise

By Cathy Dausman

When Saul Bashin turned 100 Feb. 20, his life had come full circle, and what a ride it has been. The newly minted centenarian was back in the seat of a Ford Model T, much like the one he first learned to drive at age 12 in 1928. But the story gets better, because before Bashin drove his original Model T, he assembled it from spare auto parts lying in a bundle he spied at the side of a barn.

Bashin's son, Bryan, says his father paid \$12 for the parts near his Los Angeles home. He loaded them into a little red wagon, hauled them home and built a Model T. The elder Bashin was one of five children, and "a self-taught, scrappy young kid," said his son. He was born in New York; the family moved to LA in the early 1920s. At 19, Bashin moved to Detroit to soak up automotive knowledge. He worked in a

defense plant during World War II where he learned about drafting, aviation, and electromagnetic devices. Eventually he designed solar powered systems for satellites. Every step of the way the man was hands-on and self-taught. Even today, although hard of hearing, Saul Bashin remains "bright and connected," said his son.

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*per Public Records

Smile. Police Body and Car Cameras Are Rolling

By Cathy Tyson



Officer Michael Marshall points to his body camera. Photo C. Tyson

Pulled over by one of Lafayette's finest? Smile, because the police will now be recording the audio and high definition video of the incident.

All 22 of the Lafayette police officers are now outfitted with small body-worn video cameras to record interactions with the public. In addition, video cameras are installed in all police cars and will soon be coming to police motorcycles.

Although there are very few complaints, and those that are received are mostly from "outsiders," according to Chief Eric Christensen, the cameras protect the public, officers, and the city by recording what actually happened. "It changes the dynamic," says the Chief. "It's our insurance policy."

Cameras were approved last summer by the city council at a cost of \$75,000 and have been run through a series of tests since the fall. After thorough training, the police have been rolling the cameras since January. Each body-worn camera costs \$775 per unit, and roughly \$6,000 per police cruiser, in addition to a small amount for on-going data storage.

Technology makes the system very user-friendly. At the end of their shifts, officers download the day's interactions from their deck of cards-sized body camera onto a secure server in the office, where the information is kept for two years, tagged and sorted by date. Officers can look at the encounter, but cannot delete or change anything.

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Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

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

Design Review

Monday, March 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, March 2, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.aclanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, March 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:

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

Chamber of Commerce:


www.lafayettechamber.org



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Jan. 31 to Feb. 6

Alarms	29
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	12
Noise Complaints	3
Traffic Stops	103
Suspicious Circumstances	6
Suspicious Subjects	19
Suspicious Vehicles	13
Burglary, Misc.	
1100 block Upper Happy Valley Rd	
Burglary, Residential	
Civil Problem	
90 block Carolyn Ct	
1200 block Glen Rd	
Dispute, Verbal	
Chestnut St/Dewing Ave	
1000 block 2nd St	
Disturbing the Peace	
Acalanes Rd/Hwy 24	
Fraud	
4100 block Canyon Rd	
Harassment	
1500 Rancho View Dr (by phone)	
Health & Safety Violation	
Acalanes High School	
Safeway	
Panhandling	
3600 block Mt Diablo Blvd	
Police/Fire/EMS Response	
1000 block 2nd St	
1000 block Dyer Dr	
Public Nuisance	
3600 block Happy Valley Rd	
Promiscuous Shooting	
3400 block Moraga Blvd	
600 block Los Palos Dr	
4100 block Hidden Valley Rd	
Reckless Driving	
Acalanes/Hwy 24	
Pleasant Hill Rd/Olympic Blvd	
Moraga Rd/Mt Diablo Blvd (2)	
Moraga Way/Valley View	
Shoplifting	
Safeway	
Theft, Petty	
3100 block Maryola Ct	
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd	
900 block Moraga Rd	
Round Up	
Theft, Grand	
900 block Reliez Station Rd	
1000 block Vista Bella	
Theft, ID	
1100 block Pleasant Hill Cir	
10 block Cabernet Ct	
10 block Quail Run (2)	
20 block Timber Ln (2)	
Reported to police (2)	
3100 block Plymouth Rd	
4100 block Canyon Rd	
3600 block Chestnut St	
Theft, Vehicle	
3200 block Camino Colorados	
Unwanted Guest	
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Vandalism	
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Vehicle Recovery	
10 block Roxanne Ln	
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Poll to Measure Support of Sales Tax Increase

By Cathy Tyson

With a unanimous vote, the Lafayette City Council decided to fund a poll to investigate if residents are truly supportive of an additional 1 percent sales tax measure, under consideration for the Nov. 8 ballot, which if approved, would boost the city sales tax to 9.75 percent.

The independent all-volunteer Sales Tax Revenue Study Committee has done extensive research on current and projected city finances along with priorities gleaned from the recent Community Conversation. They recommend a 1 percent general sales tax, which sunsets in 30 years. The group also analyzed potential polling firms and recommended Godbe Research to conduct a voter attitude survey regarding a potential sales tax measure, at a maximum cost of \$26,250.

"Absent additional revenue, the city will be very limited in its ability to implement the projects already identified in the Downtown Specific Plan, transportation studies, various

master plans and the Community Conversations," the group concluded.

At the Feb. 8 council meeting, Mayor Mark Mitchell acknowledged that Lafayette was founded as a low tax, low service city roughly 50 years ago, but things may have changed over five decades and ultimately it is the "public's choice."

Council Member Don Tatzin agreed: "Polling will help tell us if there is interest." The poll will ask a sampling of residents if they support an additional 1 percent sales tax that would run for 30 years.

There is a cost associated with placing a measure on the November ballot, according to City Manager Steven Falk; that cost depends on how many other items are on the ballot. "The greater the number, the lower the cost," said Falk, who expects it to fall at the lower end of a \$20,000 to \$120,000 range. Council members wanted to gauge support of the measure before committing to ad-

ditional election costs.

Being clear about the intent of the revenue was a major concern for Council Member Traci Reilly, who encouraged a narrowed list of projects that the tax revenue could be used for, to give voters a clear picture. Possible projects include purchasing open space, increasing crime surveillance cameras and police, adding a parking garage, revitalizing the Park Theater, and focusing on downtown events and road repairs.

In the past, the city has attempted to pass special taxes, and while over half the voters voted yes on the measures, none of them was able to reach the two-thirds threshold necessary to pass. If the city council chooses after the poll results are in to place the measure on the ballot, this time it would be for a general tax that requires a simple majority to pass: 50 percent of the vote plus one.

If approved, Lafayette's 1 percent additional sales tax would bring the

rate up to 9.75 percent, in the ballpark of neighboring Lamorinda municipalities. Moraga approved a 1 percent sales tax increase in 2012, Measure K, which will run for 20 years to pay for road and storm drain repair. Measure K passed with 70 percent approval and brought Moraga's sales tax rate to 9.25 percent. Orinda voters approved Measure L in 2012 – a half-cent sales tax that brings their rate up to 9 percent. The tax will automatically terminate in 10 years.

While council members are supportive of the poll, clearly one member of the audience was not. Longtime resident Joan Bruzzone said, "It was painful for me to listen to anybody wanting to spend \$26,000 for a poll to encourage us to spend more money on things we really don't need." She encouraged the council to either vote yes or no, "without spending money, without having a company convince us we need this increase."

Office Building Almost Complete, Condos Under Construction

By Cathy Tyson



Future Towne Center by KB Homes condominiums

Image provided

Separated by roughly half a mile, two projects are under construction in Lafayette: Eco Vive is a completely leased office building near the Veteran's Memorial Hall with tenants moving in starting in March; and in the heart of downtown is the very early stage of what will be a multi-story condominium building called Towne Center by KB Homes, at the end of Dewing Avenue.

The contemporary rustic barn at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Risa Road was designed by Scott Thomsen of Lafayette-based Ward, Young Architects and is owned by Branagh Development. Final approval from the city came in January 2013, and it is basically on schedule, according to Matt Branagh, although there were a few delays due to utility issues. He is happy to announce that the entire Branagh Development team will be moving into the building from their current offices in Danville. Other tenants include Quest Diagnostics and the offices of Artful Surgery plastic surgeon Dr. Elizabeth Lee.

The 9,800-square-foot structure will feature a shared parking lot as a joint venture with the city. Parking spaces will be available to the public on nights and weekends for events at the Veterans Hall and Temple Isaiah, just up Risa Road.

The future 69-unit KB Homes condominium building on the 1.5-acre site located on the former park-

ing lot behind Panda Express will include a landscaped public walkway to the BART station. When complete, the building will feature four floors above the private, secure parking garage that will accommodate market rate units that range in size from 874 to 2,138 square feet.

According to Carly Kraft, project manager for corporate communications, the community is currently planned to open in May, with first sales expected in June. At the moment, curious onlookers will see a giant hole in the ground, when peering over the chain link fence.

The project has had an interesting history dating back to 1998 when the city council entered into a development agreement with Lafayette Town Center Associates for a building originally known as Town Center Phase III.

... continued on next page

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LLLC Foundation Names New Board Members

Submitted by Fran Miller

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation (LLLCF) board of trustees is pleased to welcome to its board six new trustees, each of whom will fulfill a two year term: Melanie Brickman, Chris Voll Chernin, Victoria DeMoss, Larry Duson, Mary Scipi, and David Van Etten. Brinkman, a CPA, works in corporate planning and analysis and has her MBA in finance and marketing. Voll Chernin is an educational psychologist specializing in psycho-educational assessment, cognitive processing of information, and learning disabilities. DeMoss is a certified public accountant who has previous LLLC Board experience. Duson, currently a residential real estate agent with J.

Rockcliff, has more than 35 years of previous senior level banking experience and is active in Lafayette's Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club. Scipi, a longtime Lafayette resident and mother of two, works at Fitbit. Van Etten spent 44 years in the business world prior to his career in volunteering. He served as a member of the Contra Costa County civil grand jury, and after attending and enjoying multiple events at the LLLC, decided to contribute his time and effort to the Library. The LLLCF Board Trustees serve to set the Foundation's policies, programs and financial goals, and act as ambassadors to the greater community by promoting the needs and values of the LLLCF.

Office Building ... continued from page A2

KB Homes filed an application for a specific plan amendment in 2010, which was followed by numerous public meetings and a significant amount of comments – both pro and con from concerned residents. A major sticking point

was the height of the building. The final height when complete will be 55 feet tall, after the developer agreed to remove the top story. The development will be shorter than the adjacent shingled apartment building.




Construction site of the future Towne Center by KB Homes in downtown Lafayette



A view of the completed Eco Vive building

Photos C. Tyson




What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, March 9, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, March 7, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, March 14, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, March 8, 7 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

Lost tab – not the soda 2/2/16 The registration sticker was there when originally stuck on the license plate in March, 2015, but the Canning Court car owner noticed it was missing on Feb. 2. Not sure if sticky fingers unstuck it, or it fell off. The owner just wanted documentation.

Suspicious solicitor 2/5/16 A bald gentleman in his 30s or 40s approached a Rheem Shopping Center business owner and aggressively solicited \$50 – stating that he needed the money for car repair. When the owner declined, the suspect helpfully suggested removing the money from the cash register. Stalwart storeowner was aware that this shake-down had occurred to other storeowners in the center in December. Police were notified after the fact. Apparently the solicitor took “no” for an answer.

Loud party 2/6/16 Cops received an anonymous tip about a loud party on North Sandringham Drive. Approaching officers could hear robust music coming from the backyard. When asked, the homeowner denied having any music and became increasingly hostile and aggressive. Cops gave homeowner a stern warning or next time, a citation would be written.

Three amigos plus booze 2/7/16 Officers came to a Camino Ricardo cul-de-sac at almost 1 a.m. and found three male juveniles in and around a car parked in the road. The trio had been consuming alcohol and a bottle of liquor was in plain view of the vehicle. Being sensitive sniffers, the police also noticed the odor of non-burnt marijuana coming from the inside of the car. Not surprisingly, some pot, a glass pipe, and a second liquor bottle was also found in the car. One of the 17-year-olds was cited for California penal code violation 25662 B and P, also known as “minor in possession” – all three subjects were released to parents. Could be an infraction or misdemeanor with possible license suspension for a year – time to lawyer up, since those under the age of 21 are not allowed to buy, possess or consume alcohol.

Scaled Down Plans and Phased Approach for the Hacienda de las Flores

By Sophie Braccini



Gould Evans' new plan for the Hacienda

The conceptual remodeling plans for the Hacienda de las Flores, which were sized down from a cost of \$24 million to \$6.3 million by architect Gould Evans and shown at the Feb. 10 Moraga Town Council meeting, were well received by the council members and the public, but the economic study that went with it was sent back to the drawing board.

The first of three proposed phases of the project no longer included the 20 casitas, the wine cave and crush center, or the community pool and spa. The new

plaza entrance was also thinned out. What was left for the first phase was a restaurant and large indoor banquet center on the ground floor and five bedrooms upstairs, including a large suite – enough amenities to generate an estimated income of over \$2 million a year.

With phase one of the plan, the public would continue to have access to meeting rooms on the ground floor of the Hacienda and to the new restaurant, unless it is rented for a big event. The architect added that if all goes well with the first phase of the project, the

next phases would include the creation of a wine cave and crush facility, as well as an improved community center where the Pavilion is located, possibly with the reconstruction of the original pool and the addition of a spa. A consensus is forming that could lead to a Request For Proposal to implement the plan before the end of the year.

The part of the report that was unanimously criticized was the economic study conducted by PKF Consulting. Mayor Mike Metcalf noted that the town paid

little for the study and should expect little in return.

Gould Evans noted that the scope of the study, which stated that the five- or six-bedroom facility would only have a 25 percent occupancy rate, was limited to the viability of a hotel in Moraga. “Saint Mary’s College alone, with visiting families and guests, would fill more than this,” said Metcalf. The mayor asked the architect why it painted such a pessimistic picture of the economic potential of the Hacienda at a time when investors will be sought to partner with the town in developing the property.

Several people, including resident Edy Schwartz and Wendy Scheck, the president of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, added that PKF should have studied the Hacienda in the context of greater Lamorinda, not Moraga specifically. Scheck offered to organize a local think tank to conduct a more meaningful economic study of a remodeled Hacienda.

The proposed change of access to the Hacienda was also scrutinized. While all agreed that a new access had to be designed, preferably from the Moraga Road side, they also noted that the slope and low visibility of the current asphalt thoroughway that comes from Moraga Road to the Hacienda does not offer safe access.

... continued on page A12

Giant Wakes Up From Its Slumber

Palos Colorados development returns to the forefront of discussions

By Sophie Braccini

Seven years ago the Town of Moraga approved the amended Precise Development Plan for the Palos Colorados Project, a 460-acre development located north of the Lafayette border, just off Moraga Road. In March the town plans to approve the final map and possibly the grading permit for the proposed 123-home development. If both are approved, the town will receive over \$2 million this year.

Debi Chung from Richfield Real Estate Corporation, the developer, expressed her contentment to be back in Moraga after so many years. Richfield’s agreement with the town had to be modified as the town process for issuance of a grading permit had changed since the agreement had been signed. In order to comply with the new process, Richfield will pay the town a deposit of \$2.5 million – most of which will apply toward the second installment of its development fee – following the Town Council approval of the final map. The sum is not refundable unless the town rejects the grading permit.

The approval of the final map and the grading permit will be handled by staff with no public debate. “There is no discretion on the part of the Town to deny the map,” confirmed Ellen Clark, the town planning director. “Public Works is the lead on processing all of the final map requirements, because it’s very much a technical process at this

point. The town engineer will (also) issue the authorization for the grading permit, ministerially, once all of the requirements have been met, (and) Richfield has secured all of the outside regulatory agency permits.”

The agreement with Richfield includes a total payment of \$14.5 million in four installments to the town

of Moraga to compensate for the loss of recreational requirements due to the replacement of a golf course with open space. The first \$3.5 million has already been paid, and the second \$3.5 million – less the deposit mentioned above – is due within 120 days of the issuance of the grading permit. The final installments will be paid on

a pro-rata basis at the time of issuance of each building permit and each certificate of occupancy for the Palos Colorados Project.

At the developer’s request, the final map approval has been delayed to March 9. The applicant has not provided a date for when it would request issuance of the grading permit.

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New Spirit of Collaboration Emerges Between Council and Moraga Center Property Owner

By Sophie Braccini

Economic feasibility and market constraints are some of the elements that the Bruzzone family, which owns most of the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) area property, would like to see taken into account as the town develops the zoning of their property located in the heart of Moraga.

A recent walk-through by the Bruzzones, elected officials, staff and planning commissioners seems to have fostered an improved dynamic between the owner and the town. While some councilmembers who have been dealing with this owner for over 10 years are urging staff to move forward no matter what, others are celebrating what appears to be a new spirit of collaboration.

“The field trip was the idea of Councilmember Onoda and Commissioner Kovacs, who are both also serving on the Steering Committee (for the implementation of the MCSP),” said Planning Director Ellen Clark. Dave Bruzzone, who came to the town meeting on Feb. 11 when the council reviewed the first draft of the MCSP implementation plan (see the Feb. 10 article, “Implementing the Moraga Center Specific Plan” in the online archives), said that he felt fortunate the field trip took place with the members of the steering committee. “It was a productive exchange,” he said, adding that it is important for the committee to listen to what the property owner has to say about market constraints, engineering requirements and phasing of the project, so a viable downtown could

emerge. Bruzzone reiterated his desire to continue working with staff and Opticos, the consultant working for the town on the zoning, in order to have a successful process.

“We’re meeting with Opticos, Mr. Bruzzone and his engineer in a couple of weeks,” confirmed Clark in the days following the council meeting. “The goal is to better understand the Bruzzones’ ideas and concepts for the Specific Plan area. To the extent we can reflect these in the zoning standards, without deviating from the direction set by the Steering Committee, Planning Commission and Town Council, we will try and do so.” If there are any substantial changes from that established direction, or alternate ideas that staff feels are appropriate to look at, then Clark says those proposals would need to go back to the Steering Committee as a first step for consideration.

Mayor Mike Metcalf reminded the council that the Bruzzone family had refused to negotiate a development agreement with the town when the MCSP was approved, after seven long and arduous years of negotiating. He warned staff not to stall the process, but agreed that involving the property owner was positive. “We want this to be approved in 2016,” concurred Vice Mayor Dave Trotter, who also has extensive experience on this topic.

Staff is scheduled to bring the first set of draft zoning standards back to the Steering Committee before sending them to the Planning Commission for review.

Moraga Citizen of the Year Nominations Requested

Do you have a person in mind for the Town of Moraga to honor as 2016 Citizen of the Year?

Criteria are as follows:

- Must **NOT** be a current elected or paid member of any city council, school board or commission;
- Must be a current Moraga resident;
- Must be someone who has given their time, money or energy to help make Moraga a vibrant community, one where people want to live, work and shop;
- Must be someone who brings the community together and makes us proud to be residents of Moraga.

Please email your nomination to nominations@lamorindaweekly.com or send it to Moraga Citizen of the Year nominations, Lamorinda Weekly, PO Box 6133, Moraga CA 94556. The deadline for submitting nominations is Thursday, March 17.

A celebration dinner will be held on Friday, April 29 at the Soda Center at St. Mary’s College to honor the winner. The 2016 Moraga Citizen of the Year Award is co-sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, St Mary’s College, the Lamorinda Weekly and Kiwanis of Moraga Valley.

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This 2BR townhome is located in a well maintained complex close to top-rated schools and the Rheem Shopping Center. It has its own rear patio & features hardwood floors in the living room. **Call Jim Colhoun at 925.200.2795 for more information.**

CalBRE#01029160

471 Millfield Place, Moraga



PENDING

Gorgeous, updated traditional home has 4 bdr. and 4 full baths, plus an office and hardwood floors, within its 3691sf (per appraiser). Located near top-rated Moraga schools, it sits one .28 acre lot with ample outdoor living spaces, including lawn areas and a pool. Offered at \$1,650,000. **Please call Ruth Eddy at 925.788.5449 for more information.**

CalBRE#01313819

3435 Little Lane, Lafayette



PENDING

Rare opportunity to own a beautiful 4BR/3BA home on a quiet court in one of Lafayette’s favorite neighborhoods--the Trail district. The backyard has a nice swimming pool and a patio covered with ivy that offers excellent shade in the warm summers. **Offered at \$1,395,000 by Jim Colhoun, 925.200.2795.**

CalBRE#01029160

627 Linden Lane, Martinez



PENDING

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CalBRE#01313819

TIP OF THE WEEK

LAMORINDA REAL ESTATE STATISTICS
 12 months, ending 1/31/16

City	# of sales	Avg. Sales Price	Median Sales Price
Lafayette	352	\$1,404,231	\$1,275,000
Moraga	215	\$1,082,714	\$1,050,000
Orinda	260	\$1,335,854	\$1,250,000

We are still experiencing a low inventory of homes, and great interest rates for buyers. This is a great time to SELL! Please feel free to contact us for any assistance you may need!

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Julie Georgiou
 925.200.8246
salesbyjulie@gmail.com
 CalBRE#01043977



Kress Hauri/Larry Jacobs
 925.899.5739/925.788.1362
larry.jacobs@bhghome.com
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Jim Colhoun
 925.200.2795
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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

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

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

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

School Board Meeting Orinda Union School District

Monday, March 14, 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 Jan. 31 to Feb. 6

Alarms	26
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	2
Traffic Stops	19
Suspicious Circumstances	2
Suspicious Subjects	4
Suspicious Vehicles	9
Burglary, Misc.	
100 block Las Vegas Rd	
Burglary, Residential	
90 block La Cresta Rd	
20 block North Ln	
300 block El Toyonal	
Civil Problem	
10 block Owl Hill Rd	
Death, Non-criminal	
100 block El Toyonal	
Dependent Child	
McDonald Nursery	
Disturbing the Peace	
Santa Maria/Camino Pablo	
Littering	
Charles Hill/El Nido Ranch Rd	
Panhandling	
Safeway	
Police/Fire/EMS Response	
Starbucks	
Probation Revoked	
Glorietta Blvd/Heather Ln	
Public Nuisance	
Dos Encinas/El Camino Moraga	
50 block Via Floreado	
70 block La Espiral	
Reckless Driving	
BevMo	
Road Rage	
San Pablo Dam Rd/ Camino Pablo	
Robbery, Armed	
Theatre Square	
Theft, Petty	
20 block Orinda Way	
20 block Wild Rye Way	
10 block Las Piedras	
First Republic Bank (from vehicle)	
Theft, ID	
10 block Dos Encinas	
Vacation House Checks	13
Verbal Dispute	
100 block Bates Ct	
Warrant Arrest	
CVS	

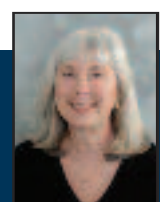
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Council Decides to Take Smaller Bite, Puts \$25M Bond Measure on June Ballot for Roads

By Victor Ryerson

The Orinda City Council has placed a \$25 million general obligation bond issue on the June 11 ballot to continue the city's road and drainage repair program, despite the reservations of at least two council members who would have preferred to seek the entire \$47 million necessary to complete the job. In a dramatic about-face, Council Member Darlene Gee voted in favor of the smaller bond measure on Feb. 16 to provide the four council votes necessary to put the measure before the vot-

ers this year and keep the program moving forward. Council Member Eve Phillips cast the lone dissenting vote.

"We have tried the whole enchilada (twice) before" without success, observed Mayor Victoria Smith. But if this measure passes, the risk is that voters may not approve raising the final \$22 million down the line if they perceive it as unnecessary. "The reality is, almost everyone votes their own pocketbook," and not necessarily in the community's best interest as a

whole, lamented Gee. With the majority of the road work completed and a lot of residents satisfied, it might be harder to obtain the two-thirds vote necessary to approve the final round of road work.

Council Member Amy Worth was more optimistic. Expressing "very serious concerns" that Orinda voters would approve the full \$47 million at once, she favors the more cautious incremental approach as one that has already been accepted by the electorate. Smith agrees that this so-

cial compact has essentially been made. With the reluctant support of two of their more hesitant colleagues, they paved the way on Tuesday not only for this spring's campaign, but likely for another in two years.

The current measure will require a two-thirds vote to pass. Voters can expect to receive a lot of material in the mail this spring as efforts are made to explain or oppose the council's action. In the meantime, scheduled road repairs will continue unabated – until the money runs out.

Spirited Discussion Ends with Approval for More Surveillance Cameras

By Victor Ryerson

Citing the effectiveness of last year's pilot program of using surveillance cameras and license plate readers to deter and catch bad guys in Orinda, Police Chief Mark Nagel made a successful pitch to the City Council to expand the program and make it permanent. The victory did not come easily, though, as privacy concerns surfaced about the availability of data produced by the technology to members of the public – including those who could use them for the wrong purposes.

Particularly strong support for the action came from residents of Wilder, where use of the new playing fields has created a sense of uneasiness among those living in homes just over the rise in the valley to the south (see related story on page D1). Nagel expressed a particular need for cameras at appropriate Wilder locations, because there has been a spate of automobile break-ins in the playing field parking lots, and at least one incident in which a stolen car was abandoned there. Mailboxes have been vandalized and mail stolen within the development on several occasions, and residents also told the council they have observed unfamiliar cars in the development – one took off in haste when residents approached and asked if the occupants needed help.

At the request of a friend in Wilder, David Fried of Tiburon, which was the first Bay Area city to adopt the use of surveillance cameras five years ago, spoke in support of the camera program. Since license plate readers were installed, he said, there has been a 50 percent reduction in serious crimes in his city, and the system has aided in solving crimes as well. His remarks to the council were of particular interest because Tiburon, like Wilder, has only one road in and out from the freeway interchange that serves it. Others who spoke in support of expanding the program included Michael Yim, whose home was entered last December by an intruder who pistol-whipped a nanny in full view of his 5-year-old daughter. With the aid of Orinda's surveillance cameras, the suspect was apprehended in Oakland within a matter of hours.

Not all of those who appeared before the council spoke in support of the program, and some of the speakers were quite passionate about the potential threat to privacy presented by the availability of data from the cameras. In a dramatic demonstration of the hazards of retaining the video images, one speaker whipped out a tablet device and showed a clip of a car driving on an Orinda street.

"Council Member Worth, this is you," he said. He then displayed the travels of Chief Nagel on video. He and others recited a litany of information that can legally be obtained from the images using open-source software. Examples include observations of the comings and goings of residents, thus providing information about when homes are vacant, and of children who are unaccompanied when walking to school. The data mining from this source can also be used for other purposes when further processed.

Retention and production of the information are governed by state law and implementing policies of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department, limiting control by the city. Orinda takes the most conservative approach allowable for retention,

keeping license plate readings for one year and surveillance tapes for 90 days.

At the end of the hearing, the protection of Orinda residents and their property won out over concerns about misuse of the cameras or the data they produce. The council voted 4-1 in favor of purchasing eight additional RECONYX surveillance cameras to be placed at locations where they will fill existing voids in coverage, two automatic license plate readers (ALPRs) to be installed at Wilder locations, and an additional ALPR to be mounted on a police vehicle. Council Member Eve Phillips, who regarded the action as going too far under the circumstances, cast the dissenting vote.

The vehicle-mounted device will augment one that is already in service,

but only during daytime hours because of nightly maintenance of the vehicle and the greater need for daytime coverage, when home burglaries typically occur. This measure will provide round-the-clock coverage. In addition to the acquisition of more cameras, the council made the program permanent, but added a requirement for annual statistical review of the results of the program. Referring to the current national controversy over cell phone security, Council Member Amy Worth reminded staff of the need to keep a close eye on electronic security developments to insure that the city's implementation of the technology is kept within current legal parameters.

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School District Appoints New Superintendent

By Victor Ryerson



Carolyn Seaton Photo provided

The Orinda Union School District has announced the appointment of Carolyn Seaton as the next superintendent, succeeding Dr. Joe Jaconette, who retired

last month. Seaton will assume office on May 2.

Seaton comes to Orinda from Manhattan Beach Unified School District, where she is currently Executive Director of Human Resources. She holds a bachelor's degree in history from Southern Methodist University and a master's in education from the University of North Texas, and is expected to receive her Ed.D. in K-12 Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California this May. She began her career in public education as an elementary teacher in Texas in 1984, and has served as a middle school teacher, assistant principal, principal, and administrator in

Manhattan Beach.

Seaton's selection follows a process that involved extensive public input to guide the board in selecting a leader who would reflect the aspirations of the community. "I look forward to partnering with district, school, community, and business organizations to expand the educational opportunities available for our students," she says. "I am passionate about teaching and learning and committed to providing Orinda's children with the educational experiences that will best prepare them for college, career and life."



Orinda Union School District Seeking Applicants to Serve on Parcel Tax Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee

The Orinda Union School District seeks applicants to serve on its Parcel Tax Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee. Currently there are two openings: one two-year term and one four-year term. The committee meets twice annually during normal business hours. The primary objective and purpose of the Committee is to ensure that the parcel tax proceeds are spent for their authorized purpose and to report annually to the Board of Trustees and the public regarding the expenditure of such funds.

If you are interested in serving on the committee, please submit an application to the Superintendent's Office, Orinda Union School District, 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda, CA 94563, via email to kfrenklach@orinda.k12.ca.us, or by fax to (925) 254-5261.

Applications are available on the district website: www.orindaschools.org or by email from kfrenklach@orinda.k12.ca.us

Application Deadline: Friday, March 5, 2016, by Noon

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

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 2, 7 p.m.
New Meeting Room:
Moraga Town Council Chamber
335 Rheem Blvd, Moraga
For meeting times and agendas,
visit www.mofd.org

ConFire

Board of Directors
Tuesday, March 8, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber room 107,
Administration Building,
651 Pine St., Martinez
For meeting times and agendas,
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

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

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the editor:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com

Orinda Response Times Frustrate MOFD

By Nick Marnell



MOFD engine navigates Sleepy Hollow Lane in north Orinda. Photo courtesy Moraga-Orinda Fire District

For years emergency medical call response times in Orinda have exceeded those in Moraga. The terrain and the narrow, winding roads in sections of Orinda make it difficult for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District to safely transport personnel and equipment to the emergency scenes. As fire chief Stephen Healy prepares to update the MOFD Standards of Coverage, a deployment analysis of district resources, he again confronts the reality of the lengthier Orinda emergency response times and what, if anything, can be done to reduce them.

Based on district records, the 2011 average medical emergency response time in Orinda ran six minutes and 15 seconds. The 2015 average

Orinda response time jumped to a hair under seven minutes. The Moraga times rose from five minutes and 47 seconds to just over six minutes.

A 2011 MOFD facilities report stated that for the district to improve inadequate emergency response times into the Sleepy Hollow, Orinda Downs and Upper El Toyonal portions of north Orinda, it should relocate station 45 to a site near the Camino Pablo and Miner Road intersection. Healy said that the district has no money to do that, and furthermore, he noted that moving station 45 would place it farther away from target hazards in Orinda, like Highway 24, the Caldecott Tunnel, the BART tunnels, senior assisted living facilities

and a convalescent hospital. "This is an example of how every contemplated fire station relocation has potential positive and negative effects," he said.

The report also called for structuring aid agreements with adjacent Alameda County and East Bay Regional Parks fire districts. Healy said that MOFD has executed automatic aid and mutual aid agreements with the Berkeley Fire Department and EBRP.

Some have proposed using smaller, more nimble apparatus to quickly navigate that difficult terrain and those narrow roadways. "What we'd pick up in size we'd give up in tools and equipment," said the chief.

District union representative Anthony Perry agreed. "The narrow roads and numerous blind spots of Orinda dictate the speed of the apparatus," he said. "A smaller response vehicle would have the same limitations, and yield no faster response."

As for those narrow roads, the district can expect no help from the city of Orinda. According to Chuck Swanson, director of public works and engineering services, Orinda is only reconstructing the road pavement, and because of the high cost will not be widening or straightening the city roads. "Also, many of our residents like the semi-rural character of the roads the way they are," he said.

In that case, those residents need to prepare themselves even more so for a major disaster, when evacuation times will matter maybe more than response times. District emergency preparedness coordinator Dennis Rein advises Orinda residents to not wait for the community warning system alert, but to take action on their own. "If there is any doubt in your mind, go," he said.

As Healy works on his Standards of Coverage document, and his geographic information system analyst crunches the numbers yet again, the chief conceded that the fact of longer response times in Orinda will not go away.

"It may be an unavoidable issue," he said.

January Projected Reopening of Lafayette Station 16

By Nick Marnell

Inside the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District 2016 Operational Plan lies one sentence that Lafayette residents have been waiting to read for nearly four years: the district will propose to its board that "we open a newly rebuilt Fire Station 16 in January 2017."

The county closed the uninhabitable Lafayette fire station in 2012, and as the proposed station 46 joint venture between ConFire and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District dragged on, ConFire opted to rebuild its own station for \$1 million rather than spend three times the money to erect a shared station at the Lafayette-Orinda border.

A structural engineer delivered the district a positive report on the condition of the building, and ConFire awaits the results of a geothermal test on the soil beneath the floor slab. The report should be completed by mid-March. "The slab has settled, probably as a result of soil loss under it, and will most likely require us to mitigate surface runoff from the street," said fire chief Jeff Carman.

Concurrently, the district will select an architect, and should then be ready to draw documents and put out

bids for the station construction. Once all of the documents are prepared, the district will secure a rough price estimate and be then able to go to its board for project approval.

"We are still feeling good about

our original direction that we can use the existing foundation and rebuild the station," said the chief. "With anything like this, we are prepared for the unexpected and think we can react to whatever is thrown our way. Worst

case scenario is we will have to rebuild the entire structure, which I think we are even prepared for should that happen."



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:

The February 10, 2016 article "Community Outreach Meeting Kicks Off Downtown Parking Study" helpfully provided overview of the January 27, Parking Study meeting where the Orinda City Manager introduced TJKM, the City's consulting firm. Held in the same auditorium in which the City Council meets, a large body of Orindans with parking concerns was present. The article referenced the methodology of the study, but failed to describe the size & type of comments made by the public, noting only that "public comments were received". Thus the article omitted the substance of the public comments. Given the clearly significant importance of the Study to the readership, which in many ways is as important as a meeting of the City Council, one wonders why this omission.

Council meetings allow microphone access so all public speakers can be heard, and audio and video are recorded. For this Meeting, however, disregarding those unable to attend but interested in following the public dialog, the City apparently chose to not use that same voice/video recording system that is used in Council meetings. Absent those Council meeting features, members of the public were not given access to a microphone. Instead, they had to almost shout trying to make their comments audible to all, and the audience was straining trying to hear what was being said by members of the public. Many worthy comments were not heard by all, likely including by the consultants.

Lastly, there was no apparent electronic recording of audio or video of that Parking Meeting. Rather, unbelievably, one TJKM person was seen taking abbreviated notes using hand markers on an easel, clearly an obsolete technique, involving inherent filtering of the public comments by the person writing with the markers. It is simply not understood why the exact comments made by the public were not amplified, and not accurately and properly recorded. What was the City afraid of? Do we not deserve a chance to study those comments and perhaps continue the dialog? Just asking.

Thank you for your recent article, "Call It a Dam," which brought attention to the plight of fish and other aquatic life in San Pablo Creek. Not only could fish return to their natural habitat if the small dam/drop structure on Bear Creek Road is removed (or at minimum, maintained regularly by EBMUD to keep the opening clear of debris), but this would restore the more natural functioning of the creek.

Unaltered waterways balance erosion with deposition in carrying their sediment load. Prior to 1990 streams were engineered to "control nature" and an unfortunate consequence was to disrupt this balance. It has since been shown that dams and other concrete projects increase erosion downstream by creating "hungry" water without a natural "load." At the same time, they are only temporary structures because sediment and debris fill up the waterway behind the dam. This is a physical reason they are being dismantled all over the country. The biological objective is to allow fish and other aquatic creatures free movement upstream and downstream in a healthy environment; fish also need the gravel trapped behind the dam to spawn.

The creek behind Orinda Village is another example of an engineered problem that needs restoration. The channel was straightened, narrowed and placed in concrete in 1958, but a few years later half of the concrete blew-out in a storm and traveled downstream blocking a major culvert. The now bare banks were/are exposed to "hungry" water and created an erosion problem we still have today. In addition, the failed project increased the likelihood of flooding by decreasing the capacity of the natural creek. In the last two decades, hardscaped projects began to be replaced with natural riparian channels. Re-vegetating banks and restoring some of the meanders would not only be aesthetically pleasing and improve habitat, but also slow runoff and increase the capacity of the creek to hold flood waters. (To see the creek, walk behind Siam Orchid and Orinda Veterinary Clinic on Orinda Way, where trees have regained a foothold over the last 55 years.) Friends of Orinda Creeks has been working on these two projects for years. Orinda is lucky to have fisheries biologist Brian Waters and UC wildlife professor Reg Barrett engaging with EBMUD and other government bodies.

Cinda MacKinnon, hydrogeologist (ret.)
Orinda

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Dana's Hair Addiction
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Divine Consign
Earth and Sea Yoga
East Bay Divorce and Financial Planning

Elmwood Stationers
Esther Barbounis, Farmers Insurance
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Business

Rêve Bistro: An Oasis Of Culinary Excellence In Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini



Paul and Laura Magu in their new Lafayette restaurant, Rêve Bistro

Photo Sophie Braccini

What makes a good casual neighborhood bistro in France, aside from the checkered tablecloth instead of a white one, is excellent quality food at an every day price. This is the spirit of Rêve Bistro in Lafayette, recently opened by Paul Magu – a rigorous and ambitious 5-star chef. Magu was trained both in

France and in the United States, climbing the ladder of culinary responsibilities. Coming from the Ritz Carlton and St. Regis hotels in San Francisco, he could have chosen to open a very pricey spot. Instead, Magu opted to fulfill his dream (Rêve in French) of creating a neighborhood bistro where locals can flock a few times a week.

Magu decided in his teens that cooking was to be his life – not the most obvious choice for a diplomat's son. Magu's taste was formed in the French kitchen where his mother prepared dishes for receptions. At age 18 he decided to go the technical school route and started years of training, part-time in school, part-time in professional kitchens. Magu trained at the Ferrandi culinary school and his second internship was at The Lido, one of the largest cabarets in Paris, with a kitchen of 38 people. "I was blown away," remembered Magu. "It is such an organization, running like clockwork." After he got his degree, Magu was selected by his school to compete for the Meilleur ouvrier de France (best worker competition) and got second prize. This distinction allowed him to get a job at Gérard Besson's, a two Michelin star restaurant.

"This is where I learned the most about cooking and about discipline," said Magu. For the chef, cooking is an art, but one that requires rigor and scrupulous attention to quality at all stages of the cooking process, from the selection of the ingredients to the way clients are served at the table.

At Gérard Besson's, Magu learned a lot about game and winter vegetables. "I love this season," he said. "I enjoy everything – the specific sauces, the venison, the mushrooms." Magu then moved up the hierarchy and went to work at Paul Ducasse's restaurant. "In every

restaurant I worked I learned something different," he said. "With Ducasse, I learned the respect of the product, not overpowering it with seasoning, just adding enough to magnify without hiding."

In 1998 a friend of his parents who lived in Houston, Texas told Magu about the best French restaurant there, La Colombe d'Or, and of their need for a new chef. Magu did not hesitate, and headed to Texas with an 18-month visa in his pocket. "I loved it there," he said. During that time, a New York chef who was going to take over the Ritz Carlton in San Francisco stopped at La Colombe d'Or and asked Magu to join his team.

Magu joined the Ritz in 2000, first as dining room sous chef, then chef of the banquet department. "Then I moved to the St. Regis where I stayed until 2015," said Magu. He always thought that one day he would have his own place. While working at the Ritz he met Laura, who was in charge of hospitality. "To me she was the most professional," he said. Laura Magu now manages the serving staff at Rêve Bistro, on top of raising their three young daughters.

Rêve Bistro's menu is seasonal. Magu has connections in the Bay Area and he knows where to get the quality he wants, and he has the confidence to reject what is not up to his standards. The menu combines what people expect from a French bistro with modernized concepts that are

found in the best bistros today, such as a surprisingly delicious raw kale salad, tender, with no trace of bitterness and nicely paired with apples, radishes and seeds. In the same spirit, the main dishes include the classic bistro "steak-frites" and the "moules-frites," and add dishes with venison, guinea hen, cod or braised beef cheeks. Vegetables are also interesting, as accompaniment or as a vegetarian dish: mushrooms, quince, celeriac root, and chestnuts. The winter menu will change to the spring menu by the end of March.

Rêve Bistro was an immediate success from the day it opened, just through word of mouth. "We take reservations," said Laura Magu, "but we keep a few tables open so people can come up spontaneously." On the first Saturday night after their soft opening, a line formed outside the door of the intimate restaurant on Moraga Road in Lafayette. Because of limited parking and city regulations, it is only open in the evening. The restaurant has a charming garden that will open as well as soon as weather permits.

Rêve Bistro
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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

24 Hour Fitness Moraga Welcomes New Club Manager 351 Rheem Blvd., Moraga (925) 377-2400 – 24hourfitness.com

Patrick Russell, the new club manager at 24 Hour Fitness Moraga Rheem, has worked in several 24 Hour Fitness clubs throughout the Bay Area during his career. Russell brings a passion for fitness to his new position that works well with the large variety of fitness options that the club offers to members of all ages and fitness levels. Amenities include personal training, TRX Suspension Training, TC24 (the latest group training programs) as well as Group X classes including specific classes for the Active+ audience, yoga, Zumba and Step. "Fitness has been incredibly impactful on my life, both professionally and personally, and I am thrilled to share my passion with the town of Moraga. Our club and its programs bring together a community of like-minded people," he said. "Moraga residents visit the gym to take classes with friends and explore new fitness solutions. This kind of support is proven to reinforce our core lifestyle principles of mindset, movement, nutrition and regeneration – the essential recipe for achieving personal fitness goals."



Patrick Russell Photo provided

Miramonte Alum Joins Pacific Union Real Estate 51 Moraga Way, Suite 1, Orinda (510) 282-4420 – TerriBatesWalker.com

Terri Bates Walker, an Orinda native and graduate of Miramonte High School Class of 1989, brings an extraordinary professional background to Pacific Union Real Estate. A former practicing real estate attorney with a passion for architecture and design, Walker is one of the area's top producers, representing both sellers and buyers in the Lamorinda community and beyond. "Through my association with Pacific Union, I can offer my clients unparalleled marketing and networking power, while remaining 100 percent committed to client satisfaction and achieving a successful outcome," says Walker, who is a graduate of University of California, Davis (B.A. 1994) and University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law (J.D. 1997). She lives in Orinda with her husband, Henry, an attorney and graduate of Acalanes High School Class of 1988, and their three sons, who attend Sleepy Hollow Elementary, Orinda Intermediate and Campolindo High schools.



Terri Walker Photo provided

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

Monthly Mixer at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24 at Las Trampas, 3460 Lana Lane.

Coffee with the Mayor, Mark Mitchell, at 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 26 in the Chamber Conference Room.

Citizen of the Year Dinner Honoring Tom Steuber from 6 to 9 p.m. March 18 at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa. The Lafayette Chamber is proud to present this year's special

If you have a business brief to share, please contact
storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

award, with co-sponsor Lamorinda Weekly, to Tom Steuber, who has presided as Scoutmaster for Lafayette's Boy Scout Troop 204 for 12 years, and through his company, Associated Services, has reached out and supported underprivileged teachers, schools and classrooms throughout the Bay Area. He is a remarkable humanitarian and a special Lafayette neighbor. For reservations, visit lafayettechamber.org or call (925) 284-7404. Please make your reservations no later than Wednesday, March 16.

Moraga

March Entrepreneur's Lunch. Attorney Asha B. Wilkerson will discuss "Key Laws to Know as you Launch and Grow your Business" from noon to 1 p.m. on Monday, March 14 at Home/made kitchen café & bakery located at 337 Rheem Blvd. in Moraga. Members and non-members welcome. Meet and mingle with other local business owners. \$10 includes lunch. Reservations are required at Kathe@moragachamber.org.

Orinda

Save the date for "A Night of Comedy," featuring headliner Brad Williams from Showtime's highest rated comedy special, "Fun Size," and Ben Feldmen at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 4 at the Orinda Theatre. For ticket and event information, visit www.orindachamber.org, or call (925) 254-3909. (See story page B4)

Celebrating an Anniversary?

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

Model T Ride Drives Centenarian's Surprise

... continued from page A1



Family members gather in front of a group of 100-year-old cars. From left: Michael (family friend), Bryan Bashin, centenarian Saul Bashin, Brendan Bashin-Sullivan, Lauren Bashin-Sullivan, Shari Bashin-Sullivan and Michelle Bashin. Photos Cathy Dausman

"We've been thinking about this [birthday celebration] for 100 years," joked Bryan Bashin, who contacted local members of the Bay Area Horseless Carriage Club to ask if they could supply Model T cars and surprise his father. BAHCC club members arrived in style. Don Azevedo showed up in a 1914 Model T Ford, Orinda's Rich Green in a 1914 Model T Ford, Bill Cassidy and Bill Austen drove 1915 Model T Fords, Jon Alff had a 1913 Buick and Norman Schwartz of Lafayette drove a 1925 Model T Speedster.

There was one Ford product holdout: Whitney and Diane

Haist, who came in costume, drove a 1926 Dodge Brothers. "We liked the idea, [of surprising Bashin]," said Haist. BAHCC plans to invite Bashin along on a club tour as well as to be their guest speaker at an upcoming meeting.

"We enjoy sharing our cars with people who know them," Haist said.

As for 100-year-old Saul Bashin, being around working cars that are as old as he is lit a certain spark in his eyes. "Of all the passions [my dad has had], the enduring one has been cars," Bryan Bashin said.



The button on Bashin's lapel, given to him by BAHCC, says: "I rode in a horseless carriage."

Smile. Police Body and Car Cameras Are Rolling

... continued from page A1

Footage placed in this digital evidence room is admissible in court and can be difficult to dispute.

Police cars have an even simpler saving mechanism. When the cars park at the police department office in Desco Plaza, officers don't have to do anything; the data is automatically wirelessly transferred to the secure server. The car cameras also have the ability to go back in time. Car cameras are activated whenever the flashing lights are turned on, in the case of an accident, when the officer hits the brakes, and of course when the camera is manually activated. By constantly buffering, the camera records the prior 90 seconds before the video is turned on, capturing exactly what happened.

Recalling working at Great America as a young man, Christensen shared the advice he received with staff: "Remember that you are on stage." Initially there was a bit of hesitation about the cameras with some of the force, but by the end of training

everyone was on board.

"There is no expectation of privacy in public," the Chief explained. That extends to other people in cars at the time of an incident, or comments made in the back of a patrol car. Officers are not required to tell you they are filming; the cameras will simply be on during any police-public interaction. While police misconduct has not been an issue in Lafayette, officers are accountable for their actions, and the recordings are something the Chief sees as a way to "correct employee behavior."

There is no data so far showing the cameras have brought down the number of citizen complaints because they are so new, according to City Manager Steven Falk. "My bet is that the cameras will increase the civility of the interactions between officers and citizens, and reduce to zero the number of disputes. I am expecting the number of complaints will go down significantly," wrote Falk in "The Weekly Roundup."

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Smile. Police Body and Car Cameras Are Rolling

... continued from page A1

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Moraga

Scaled Down Plans and Phased Approach for the Hacienda de las Flores

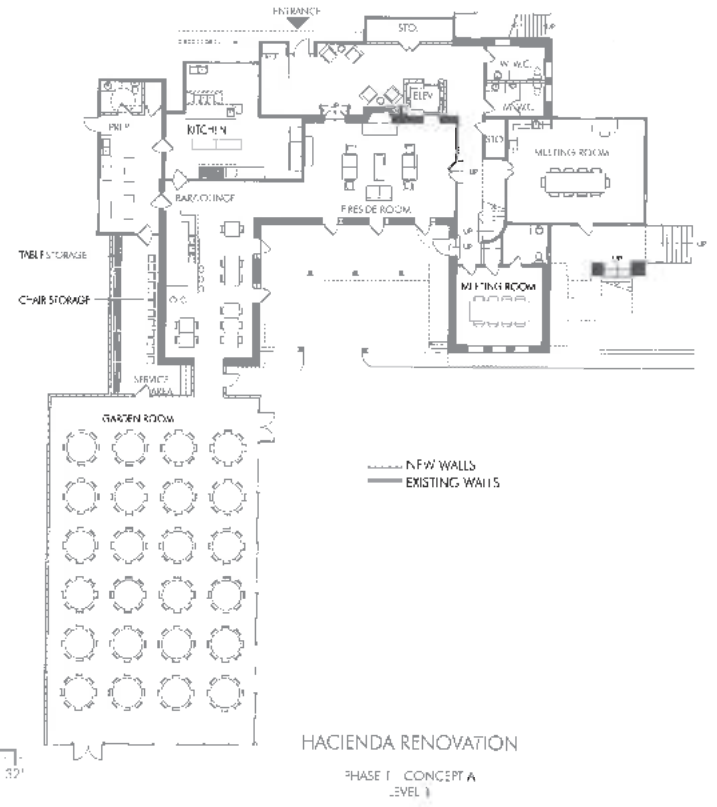
... continued from page A4

This road is currently only used by maintenance vehicles and pedestrians. Councilmember Teresa Onoda proposed that the historic entry point, on Moraga Road close to Devin Drive, be explored. While the rest of the council supported the idea, the architect noted that an access point close to an intersection was not recommended.

Gould Evans is planning a community open house at the Hacienda on Feb. 25. The council will then review the final concept plan for approval.

What will happen then and how the project will move forward is unclear at this time. The staff person in charge of the project is Park and Recreation Director Jay Ingram. When asked, he was not sure if the task to "sell" the Hacienda to possible partners/investors would be his job alone or if the council would appoint another consultant. Ingram confirmed that he was meeting with the Chamber of Commerce. Scheck added that she was as-

sembling a small group of local business people with experience in the development or hospitality industry to support the market research efforts of the town.





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Campolindo Robotics Team Sends Designs to International Space Station

By Zoe Portnoff



The Campolindo Robotics Team sporting "Made In Space" T-shirts.

Photos Zoe Portnoff

Recently, millennials have taken up a new name for themselves within the scientific community: Generation Mars. With exciting new developments such as zero gravity 3D printers, scientists have reason to look hopefully toward the future of space exploration and technology. At Campolindo High School, students in the Robotics Club can be found directly contributing to these advancements. Campolindo students are acting as a pilot group for Space Games, a program launched by Made In Space. In this program, students have been designing a game to be 3D printed in the International Space Station.

Mary Jo "MJ" Marggraff, the creator of Space Games, first approached Campolindo teachers about the program in 2014, and began working with the Robotics Club in September 2015. The Campolindo Makers Club was also involved in creating the earlier designs. "It was actually going to be a competition between multiple schools, but it ended up being just our school that would be creating a design for the first year," explained Bennett Coates, co-captain of the club. "We first made a lot of sketches, but now we are going to make a rough model and 3D-print it on Earth, and the final model is going to be printed on the ISS by the Made In Space printer."

Space Games proved to be a difficult but fun challenge for the Ro-

botics Club. The design was limited to certain dimensions, and small loose parts were not allowed due to safety hazards. In addition to fulfilling these requirements, Campolindo students hoped to create a game that could only be played in space. "It's difficult trying to make a game for outer space when all you've ever known is a 1G environment for games. All of our earlier designs were things we've played on Earth with slight variations," Coates noted. Altenberg added, "Our program will hopefully inspire students to pursue engineering careers where they are able to learn and contribute to the production of things not necessarily just in space, but in 3D printing in general, which is a really revolutionary manufacturing technology."

Made In Space, the company that launched Space Games, created the first 3D printer able to operate in zero gravity, which was sent up to the International Space Station on Sept. 21, 2014. The company hopes that this new technology will accelerate space development and enable the future of space exploration.

"The ability to construct from one material almost infinitely many devices and objects is really incredible, especially in space, where we have a really limited number of resources. Having the ability to produce things without a huge manufacturing process is really important and impressive," Ray Al-

tenberg, co-captain of the Robotics Club, explained. "While our project doesn't have a necessarily practical application, the brainstorming and the effort that goes into developing such a product is similar to the work that goes into creating more essential items. The concept behind this challenge is that we have to come up with something that would be interesting on, say, a trip to Mars, which would take two to four years. The idea that you could have someone on earth design these things for you, send a file to you, and then you could have the object even though you're millions of miles away in space is pretty fantastic."

Campolindo's Robotics Team is also currently participating in First Tech Challenge, or FTC, a nationwide competition in which students in grades 7-12 design, build, program, and operate robots to work with or against other teams to complete a certain task. "Bad hardware made our season far more troublesome than expected, but we still finished with six awards and accomplished a lot," Altenberg said about the season.

Campolindo's Robotics Club was created in 2005, making this season its 10th year participating in First Tech Challenge. Recently, the Campolindo team won the Judges' Award at the Intel Folsom Qualifier, a FTC competition, for their efforts in Space Games.



The Campo Robotics Team hard at work

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Orinda Vet Receives Highest French Military Honor

Patrick Byrne is Knight of French Legion of Honor

By Diane Claytor



Counsel General of France Pauline Carmona congratulates Patrick Byrne as he receives the Legion of Honor Medal during the Jan. 20 ceremony. Photos © Consulate General of France in San Francisco

Most people, as they enjoy their golden years, likely believe that their major accomplishments are behind them. But longtime Orinda resident Patrick Byrne is not like most people.

At 91, Byrne, a widower, still lives independently in the same house he has for over 40 years. He still drives. He's active and sharp. And he has a keen sense of humor. Last December, when Byrne received a letter from Pauline Carmona, Consul General of France, he was overwhelmed. "I have the honor to send you my warmest congratulations on ... your nomination as a Chevalier (Knight) of the Legion of Honor, by a decree signed by the President of the French Republic ...," the letter read. "I was so honored when I saw that the

president of France nominated me," Byrne proudly stated. This extremely prestigious award is in addition to the Good Conduct Medal and four Bronze Stars Byrne previously had received.

The French Legion of Honor, which is similar to the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor, is an order of distinction established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. It is the highest military honor bestowed in France and is given to veterans who fought on French territory and risked their lives to defend and preserve the independence of France. Byrne is in excellent company; other American recipients of the Legion of Honor medal include general and President Dwight Eisenhower, generals Douglas MacArthur and George Patton and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel.

In 1941, several days before his 18th birthday, Byrne, living in Connecticut but originally from Dublin, Ireland, enlisted in the Navy. He attended Naval Radio School before being assigned to serve as a radar technician second-class aboard the USS Augusta, a Navy flagship. In August 1941, the USS Augusta hosted the Atlantic Conference between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill; young Byrne was onboard at the time and was incredibly honored to see these two men.

On June 6, 1944, with Gen. Omar Bradley commanding D-Day landing forces from the bridge, the Augusta turned her guns on the shores of Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. The fight came to be known as the largest seaborne invasion in history as well as the beginning of the end of World War II. Thousands of troops were wounded during this invasion and, unfortunately, Byrne was one of those critically injured. He was transported off the ship and spent the next six months recuperating at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Philadelphia before being honorably discharged.

Byrne does not talk much about his military service, and he cer-

tainly does not talk about combat. "I saw too many bodies floating in the water and out of respect for them and all the others who didn't survive, I don't talk about it," he said. He did say that when you "hear the phrase, 'man your battle stations,' you know what you're facing, you know you're going into aggressive mode."

Following his service industry discharge, Byrne moved to California. "I had a senior officer that I really admired," Byrne noted. "He had graduated from Cal so I decided that I, too, wanted to go there." Byrne went on to work for Motorola, returned to school for a master's degree and became a college-level computer programming instructor.

On Jan. 20, Byrne, along with friends and family, traveled to the French consulate in San Francisco. There, flanked by two of his grandchildren, he stood and proudly listened as Consul General Carmona, pinning the medal on him, said, "Today we celebrate a hero whose courage, faith and dedication contributed, more than 70 years ago, to defend and preserve the independence of France and to save our common values: freedom, tolerance, democracy It is almost impossible for us to imagine how much courage and bravery it must have required ... to fight as you did ... your courage and bravery are precisely the reason why the president of the French Republic has decided to award you this highest French recognition."

The accolades continued. The city of Orinda honored Byrne by officially recognizing him at its Feb. 16 City Council meeting. Council members and those in the audience gave Byrne a standing ovation as Mayor Victoria Smith presented him with a Certificate of Recognition for being the recipient of the Legion of Honor award, calling it a "small token of our appreciation." She added that the City of Orinda joined both the United States and France in their gratitude for his service.



Orinda's Patrick Byrne, wearing his Legion of Honor Medal, with Counsel General of France Pauline Carmona, right, is surrounded by family and friends following the presentation ceremony.

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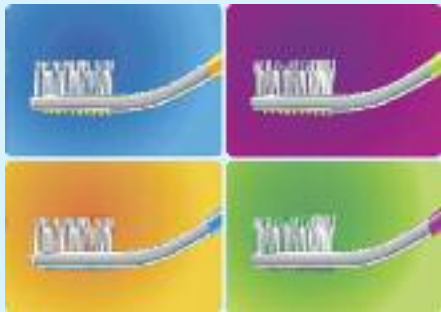
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Orinda Becomes Comedy Central on March 4

7th Annual Night of Comedy at Orinda Theatre

By Diane Claytor



Night of Comedy's headliner, Brad Williams

Photo provided

Everyone's heard that old saying: laughter is the best medicine. If that is, indeed, true, the Lamorinda community has the opportunity to greatly improve their health next month. That can be done by attending "A Night of Comedy," the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's very popular, and very funny, annual fundraiser. For the past six years, this event has had audiences practically rolling in the aisles. This year's March 4 evening at the Orinda Theatre promises more of the same.

Ben Feldman, named one of 2013's Best Comics to Watch by the San Francisco Weekly, will open the show, delighting the audience with his acerbic, playful wit. He'll then turn the stage over to the evening's headliner, Brad Williams, considered one of the funniest, most in demand comedians working today.

Williams is a little person (or, as he describes himself, "a dwarf, midget ... I say them all interchangeably"). But the only thing small about him is his 4 foot 4 stature. He has more energy and personality than people twice his size. In fact, the late, great Robin Williams once called him "Prozac with a Head."

"My comedy doesn't revolve around my size," Williams said. "I'm not going to talk about how I can take a bath in a thimble, but of course, my stories are told from my vantage point. I don't know how to tell a joke from the perspective of a 5-foot 10-inch blue-eyed blonde man."

Williams, a Southern California native, has been doing standup for 13 years, a career that started as a fluke

when he was a sophomore at USC. He had gone to a local comedy club when the performing comedian started making jokes about midgets. "The audience around me wasn't laughing," Williams said, which caused the comedian to take notice. "He brought me up on stage and started asking questions," Williams continued. "My answers got laughs and as soon as that happened, the adrenaline just soared through me. I remember it so vividly. That was the moment."

From there, Williams began attending open mic nights at comedy clubs throughout Southern California; he'd hustle, often driving for hours to get to a club where 'I'd have 15 minutes to make people laugh. It's a grinding, slow build," he reported. But he made it.

Williams has appeared on numerous TV shows, including Dave Attell's Comedy Underground, The Tonight Show and Jimmy Kimmel Live. He has two comedy albums, which he promotes by promising fans that "if you buy a comedy album from a midget you automatically get into heaven." He's a regular on a Los Angeles radio talk show and, along with his friend Adam Ray, produces "About Last Night," a weekly audio podcast. He just finished recording his second Showtime special, which will be out within the next several months. This follows on the heels of the Showtime special he did last year, which was the cable channel's highest rated comedy special of 2015.

A review of Williams' first CD, "Coming Up Short," said Williams' "approach to comedy is a smart one. Williams is a passionate comedian with some truly funny observations... he makes the world a better place by making us laugh."

On Friday, March 4, you'll have the opportunity to laugh hysterically, smile continually and witness Williams in action. You will also be able to enjoy adult beverages from the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association and the new Cine Cuvee.

Charlie Chaplin once said, "A day without laughter is a day wasted." Don't waste another day.

Tickets for this riotous evening, which begins at 7:30 p.m., are \$30. Front row, VIP seating, along with complimentary access to a private bar where champagne will flow all night, is available for \$100 per person. Tickets may be purchased by going to the Orinda Chamber of Commerce website, www.orindachamber.org.

'Angels In America, Part Two'

Town Hall Theatre Company confirms top league status

By Sophie Braccini



The Messenger Has Arrived; Ginny Wehrmeister as the Angel Of America. Photos Stu Selland

Following last year's stellar production of "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches," which landed Town Hall Theatre Company seven Shellie Awards, including Outstanding Production of the Year, THT once again pushes the envelop with part two, "Angels In America: Perestroika," Tony Kushner's 1990 play which opens Feb. 27. This bolder and fully mastered production definitely places the Lafayette theatrical group at the top of the Central Contra Costa/Diablo Valley region companies.

This season all the actors are back performing in the roles they embodied in the 2015 "Millennium Approaches" production. They pick up right where they left off, but seemingly with a deeper understanding of their characters that has developed since "Millennium."

"This is bigger than anything we've ever pulled off—the language, the story, the complexity," says director Joel Roster.

"Angels in America: Perestroika" is deep, cruel, uncompromising. It includes a criticism of the Reagan years, where, in Kushner's eyes, happiness was reachable only if you were in the norm and healthy. But it is also a fierce dissection of human behaviors when confronted with the worst adversity. Kushner desperately seeks a solution. Should humanity stand still, as the angel proposes, waiting for the return of God, or forge ahead however painful it might be. The play that deals with the AIDS crisis addresses universal questions. Throughout the course of the play every character has their assumptions challenged, their alliances broken and recreated in new ways. Hu-

manity survives in the end. "Angels In America" is, after all, an optimistic play.

There are lighter moments as well with irony that will make the audience smile. But the richest pleasure lies with the level of the actors' performances, and how they can take the audience with them into their deepest emotions, without cheapening or overacting the great text.

Jeffrey Draper as Prior Walter is poignant and deeply moving. His fight with the angel is epic, his quest reaching a mythological proportion. Jerry Motta playing Roy Cohn does not become more likeable as he approaches death, but his struggle is grandiose and Motta is at his best. Dennis Markam, Alexandra Bogorad Coleman and Kerri Shawn show their value and give fully of themselves to the difficulties of the play. Ginny Wehrmeister, who plays the angel, carries the incredibly poetic language of Kushner to levels of lyricism. Alan Coyne as Joseph Pitt is vulnerable and weak, touching and struggling, trying to find his place in the maelstrom that rages inside and outside him.

Roster directs his actors and the incessant ballet of the ever-changing decor with precision. Over the course of the evening, furniture comes and goes; lights spot one side of the scene or the other. It is also a technical masterpiece.

... continued on next page



Another 'American Gothic'; Joe Pitt (Alan Coyne) and Harper Amaty Pitt (Alexandra Bogorad Coleman)

Free French Film Festival Offered at SMC Through March 12

By Sophie Braccini



time and cultures. “Timbuktu” will be shown on March 9. The Oscar-nominated film is a must see. “Timbuktu, which will be introduced by our specialist on African history, professor Jennifer Lofkrantz, was an Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film,” says Lenart-Cheng. “The film presents stunning imagery and timely questions about conflicts caused by Jihadists in the Malian city of Timbuktu.” She adds that both that movie and the next, “The Nun,” deal with the question of dogmatism and religious fanaticism.

Based on the 18th century novel by Diderot, “The Nun” tells the story of Suzanne, a 16-year-old girl whose family forces her into a convent against her will. Inside, she is confronted with brainwashing and unfair treatment, and tries to survive as she fights to regain her freedom. The movie is not against religion or even against the idea of convents. It is about the battle of a young woman to be true to herself, armed with her passion alone to fight an entire institution and her own family. “For those who have seen the 1966 adaptation by Jacques Rivette it will be interesting to compare the two adaptations,” adds Lenart-Cheng. “The Nun” will play at 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 12 in Hagerty Lounge, De La Salle Hall at Saint Mary’s College.

Some of the perks of having a college in your midst are the cultural activities offered: plays, concerts, conferences, exhibitions – and festivals. Now in its fourth year, the French film festival, which opened last week with the free showing of “Hiroshima Mon Amour” and “La Chambre Bleue,” offers an affordable way to foster a cultural and intellectual understanding of other countries.

“We aim to present a representative selection of films, ranging from those likely to attract wider audiences to the more experimental ones,” says Helga Lenart-Cheng, a professor in the department of modern languages who started the program. “To reflect the diversity of contemporary French cinema, we have selected a variety of genres (fiction, documentary, historical, animation, etc.) We want to showcase both emerging and established

talents, so we choose famous directors and actors as well as less known ones.”

Lenart-Cheng teaches French at Saint Mary’s College to a small but dedicated number of students who either major or minor in French. “Cultural programs such as this French Film Festival are highly important because they open our students’ eyes to the world and they challenge them to examine views that they rarely encounter in U.S. mainstream media,” she says.

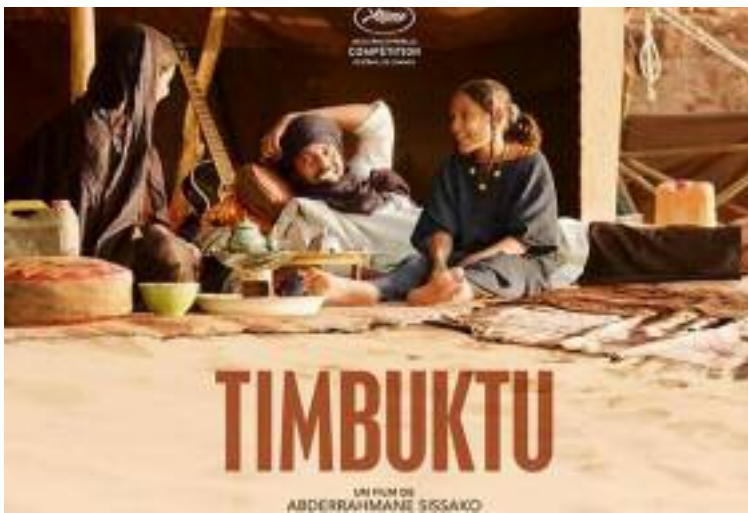
The French American Cultural Exchange Foundation (FACE) offers the films to universities. Lenart-Cheng puts together a team of professors and students that choose five contemporary films and one classic film among those proposed by FACE.

The film “Deux Jours Une Nuit” (“Two Days, One Night”) – directed by the Dardenne brothers and starring

Marion Cotillard (“La Vie En Rose,” “Rust and Bone”) – will be shown at 7 p.m. tonight, Feb. 24, in SMC’s Hagerty Lounge, De La Salle Hall. The Belgian brothers have been recognized many times at the Cannes Film Festival and are known for their intimate and pragmatic style, with movies often filmed with the camera in hand, close to the actors and the action, capturing every raw emotion. Their stories can be tough, but like with “Two Days, One Night,” there is often the possibility of a miracle.

On March 3 at 7 p.m. another great French actress, Juliette Binoche, will be featured in “Clouds of Sils Maria,” a story about the inescapable passage of time, directed by Olivier Assayas. Maria Anders (played by Binoche) is cast in the same play that started her career 20 years prior, only this time she is cast in the older role. Binoche is magnificent in this story about the clash of a young woman and a more mature one, which ends in the suicide of the older. This is a beautiful film that discusses the changes of

Photos provided



‘Angels In America, Part Two’

... continued from page B4



Agreeing to Disagree; Louis Ironson (Dennis Markam) and Belize (LaMont Ridgell) from Town Hall Theatre’s production of “Angels In America: Perestroika”.

Those who saw part one last year won’t want to miss the denouement this year. Although it is not necessary for the audience to have seen part one to understand “Angels in America: Perestroika,” Town Hall Theatre is offering staged readings of “Millennium Approaches” at 2 p.m. on the

Saturday afternoons preceding that day’s performance.

“Angels in America: Perestroika” will run from Feb. 27 to March 19 at 3535 School Street in Lafayette, with previews on Feb. 25 and 26. For information, visit www.townhalltheatre.com.



Preparing For What Comes; Hannah Pitt (Kerri Shawn), Prior Walter (Jeffrey Draper), and Roy Cohn (Jerry Motta)

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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.

Orinda Troop 303 Honors Three New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Jim Brovelli



From left: Kyle Wallace, David Whisnant and Jonathan Date-Chong

Photo provided

Boy Scout Troop 303 in Orinda honored three new Eagle Scouts at a Court of Honor Award Ceremony on Feb. 21 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek. Kyle Wallace, David Whisnant, and Jonathan Date-Chong earned the highest advancement rank in Scouting by fulfilling requirements in the areas of leadership, service and outdoor skills, as well as completing at least 21 merit badges and organizing and leading a service project benefiting his community. These four young men joined

the less than 4 percent of all scouts who achieve Eagle Rank.

For his Eagle project, Wallace, a senior at Miramonte High School, designed and built a rainwater harvest system and garden bed for his former preschool. The project cleans, collects and stores up to 330 gallons of rainwater used to water vegetables and plants grown in the garden bed. The project educated the young students about water conservation and provided hands-on learning opportunities.

Whisnant's Eagle project included the construction of a wooden framed stair system leading from the parking lot of the Oakland Zoo up to the Veterinarian Clinic. It was an intense process of grading the hillside before assembling the wooden stringers and risers and securing the assembly to the ground. This project was a necessity to the zoo, as it provided staff with an easier way to transport sick and injured animals to the clinic. Whisnant is a freshman at Campolindo High School.

Date-Chong, a senior at Miramonte High School, designed and directed the construction of four wooden benches for Wagner Ranch Elementary school. The benches, painted to match the trims of the school buildings, were installed in areas where there was previously no seating for the students.

For over 52 years Orinda Boy Scout Troop 303, chartered by the Rotary Club of Orinda, has been providing boys with a variety of hiking, camping, community service and leadership opportunities. To learn more about the troop, visit www.bsatroop303orinda.com or contact scoutmaster Jim Brovelli (925) 997-8437.

DAR Good Citizens Award Winners Announced

Submitted by Louise Diracles



Photo provided

The Acalanes Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented awards on Feb. 6 to local students who had entered

the DAR Good Citizens Award competition. These students were nominated by staff at their schools for their achievements and contributions to

school and community. The contestants also submitted essays on a patriotic topic to a panel of judges. Pictured, from left, are: Susan McGill, Good Citizens Award chairperson, award winner Ivy Li from Miramonte High School, award winner Fiona Stewart from Campolindo High School, Susan Skilton, DAR Acalanes Chapter Regent, and Leslie Pfeifer, District IV California DAR Director. Not pictured are award winners Sabrina Elliott from Acalanes High School, Sarah Wong from Contra Costa Christian High School, and Alexandra Kurland from Las Lomas High School. Fiona Stewart, the Acalanes Chapter winner, was also recognized as District IV winner, and was presented the award for the district by Leslie Pfeifer. Fiona will go on to compete for the California State award.

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.



Celebrations

Lafayette Resident, Colleen Starrett, Turns 99



Photo provided

Colleen Starrett turned 99 on Feb. 17. Born of Sicilian immigrants in 1917 in Forth Wayne, Ind., Colleen, along with her two brothers and one sister, were raised in San Francisco where she went to elementary schools throughout San Francisco and attended Mission High School. Colleen's four daughters were born and raised in San Francisco. Her youngest daughter attended

Lafayette community, where they rode the first BART train from Lafayette to San Francisco in 1972, when they worked for lithograph companies and commuted daily to San Francisco until they retired in 1978. Colleen and Ken enjoyed the Lafayette open space and reservoir, beautiful downtown Lafayette areas, and proximity to Sun Valley Mall.

Acalanes High School and graduated in 1973.

A resident of Lafayette since 1969, Colleen moved from San Francisco to a lovely brick house behind Acalanes High School where she still continues to update her house and yard to make it as spectacular as ever. Colleen and her husband, Ken Starrett, loved the

Colleen spends time every day in her garden, talking to neighbors and family, and keeps up-to-date on current events, reading the daily newspaper, enjoying crossword puzzles and reading books of all types. Colleen is a talented seamstress and continues to sew for enjoyment. She also enjoys spending time with her four daughters, eight grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

In Memory

Joan Freitas Favors

Aug. 16, 1929 – Feb. 2, 2016



Joan Freitas Favors died peacefully Feb. 2 in Anacortes, Washington with her daughter by her side.

Joan was born to Albina and Archie Freitas on Aug. 16, 1929 in Oakland, California. She and her two older brothers, Robert and William, grew up in Oakland and spent their summers at the family cabin in Pinecrest. Joan attended Holy Names High School, and graduated with a degree in education from Stanford University in 1951. Shortly after graduation she married Arch Monroe Favors (Jack) and began her life as matriarch of a large and boisterous extended family in Lafayette, California. Together they had five children, John, Gregory, Mary, Billy, and Jane. Joan inspired them all with a lifelong love of the family cabin in Pinecrest and time spent at the beach in Monterey. Later she was blessed by her six grandchildren, Jeremy, Tia, Lindsay, Alex, Jackie and Trevor, and her great-grandchildren, Zoe, Mackenzie, Jackson, Mason and Heath and soon to be great great-granddaughter.

Joan was a devoted parishioner of St. Perpetua's Catholic Church. She volunteered teaching Catechism, Great Books and later was active in many of the church functions. She was also a long-standing member of her book club and investment club. Later she became an avid antique dealer.

Joan was loving and devoted to her family and her friends. After the sale of the family home in Lafayette she moved to Anacortes, Washington to live with her daughter Jane and grandchildren Jackie and Alex. She enjoyed many trips with her grandchildren and dogs travelling to Canada, Yellowstone, Jackson Hole, the Cascades, Oregon and California. She enjoyed sitting in the sun and telling stories.

She is preceded in death by her loving husband, Jack, her parents Arch and Albina, her brothers Robert and William and many aunts and cousins. And though we are left with broken hearts we are blessed by her example of love, compassion and forgiveness.

Funeral Mass to be held at 10 a.m. Feb. 26 at St. Perpetua's Catholic Church in Lafayette.

Ray Muer

July 11, 1932 – Feb. 1, 2016



Raymond "Ray" Joseph Muer, 83, of Manhattan Beach, Calif., passed away peacefully on Feb. 1, with family at his bedside.

Ray Muer was born in Detroit, Mich., on July 11, 1932. He graduated from De La Salle High School and University of Detroit with a bachelor's degree in philosophy. After graduating college he briefly attended Sacred Heart Jesuit Seminary.

Ray spent 32 years in advertising management and radio sales with companies such as Kenyon and Eckhardt, Blair Radio and KGO Radio. During this time he lived in San Francisco, St. Louis, and Moraga. After retirement he moved to Manhattan Beach.

In addition to his executive and sales history, Ray was a classically trained pianist. He possessed the ability to play piano by ear and enjoyed a particular talent for jazz. After his retirement, Ray played jazz piano in many San Francisco Bay Area restaurants. Our fondest memories of Ray involve him playing the piano surrounded by family and friends.

Ray is survived by his wife of almost 60 years, Joan Marie Muer, and three children, Lisa Muer Tanner (Glenn), Julie Muer, and Thomas Raymond Muer (Susann). He is also survived by six grandchildren, Devin Ray Tanner, Spencer Thomas Tanner, Amanda Marie Tanner, Natalie Violanda Natole, Cora Albrecht Schoppe, and Tolya Ray Muer. Ray is preceded in death by his parents, Anna and Anthony Muer the 2nd, and his brother, Anthony Muer the 3rd.

A funeral mass will be held at 1:30 p.m. Friday, March 11 at American Martyrs Church in Manhattan Beach. A reception will be held immediately following the mass. A committal ceremony will be held at a later date at the Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Lafayette, Calif., where he will be laid to rest. In lieu of flowers a donation may be sent to the Alzheimer's Association, 5670 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 1800, Los Angeles, CA, 90036.

Acalanes Presents 'The Drowsy Chaperone' March 3-5

Submitted by Mandy Chivers



Acalanes High School students at a recent rehearsal of "The Drowsy Chaperone"

Photos Rick Sasner

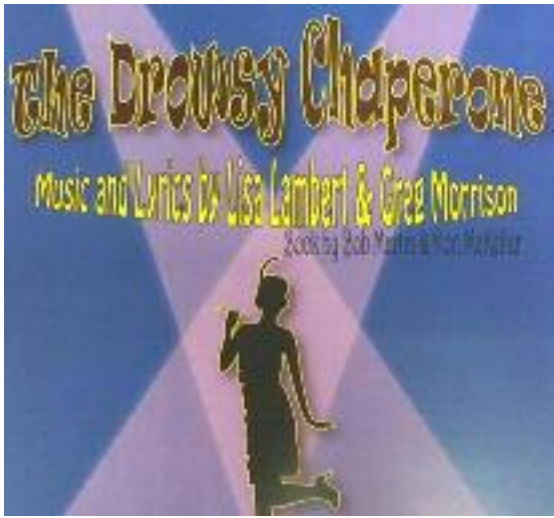


Image provided

Acalanes High School's spring production of "The Drowsy Chaperone" – a Tony award-winning farcical play within a comedy by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison – is sure to delight. The "Man in the Chair" is your guide as you navigate his favorite musical from the '20s: "The Drowsy Chaperone."

The tale is one of slapstick comedy, improbable situations, and a wedding that may or may not happen. The show travels in and out of the Man in the Chair's imagination, strung together with snappy, upbeat '20s-influenced song and dance.

"The annual spring musical is a total Performing Arts collaboration," says Bruce Lengacher, director of choral activities and Acalanes Performing Arts Department chair. "The Drama department contributes set design, set construction, some advanced drama students, and the technical crew. Instrumental Music provides the musicians for the pit orchestra for every performance, and some of the top players in the program are

in the pit. Choral Music provides the bulk of the cast and production company, which is made up entirely of students."

This year's production has a student director, producer, publicist, and make-up key, Lengacher says. "In a mere nine weeks, we go from table read to three full-scale performances and conclude with an empty theater waiting for next year's adventure!"

You can see the production of "The Drowsy Chaperone" at 7 p.m. March 3-5 at the Acalanes Performing Arts Center. For more information, visit acalaneschoral.org. Tickets are open to the general public: \$18 for adults; \$16 for seniors (60 and older) and students, and are available at the Acalanes Webstore, <https://acalaneshs.revtrak.net/tek9.asp?pg=products&grp=38>.



Acalanes Choral Director Bruce Lengacher with Student Director Charlie Manzano and Student Producer Taylor Wondolowski

The Four Must Dos on Campus Visits

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

Among the most exciting parts of the college search, and certainly one of the most important, is the campus visit. There is no better way to find out if a college is the best fit for you than to register for an information session and arrange a campus tour. Today's busy families make sacrifices in time and money to tour campuses, so make yours count by planning to do four things that help ensure a successful visit.

1. Work closely with the admissions office.

The student should register for the visit using his or her dedicated college email account (one used only for college admission purposes so nothing gets lost or missed). Registering allows the admissions office to record your interest in their school and to properly schedule your visit. If you have questions in advance, contact the admissions officer assigned to work with students who live in your home county or state. Send questions in advance. Ask if she or he can make arrangements, for example, to meet with students who share your interests, speak with faculty in your intended major(s) or to meet with a counselor in the career development center. Most admissions officers will take the time to answer all of your questions and help you to make these appointments. They also keep detailed records of each visiting student's interests. These records might make a difference in an admissions decision or result in an invitation to become part of a unique living and/or learning opportunity, such as an honors program or scholarship.

2. Take the campus tour, then tour some more.

When you take a campus tour, you are most likely to see a dorm room, the library, athletic facilities, the recreation center, the dining hall, the

student union/center, classrooms, labs and performing arts facilities. You might receive invitations to attend events on campus or a discount to shop at the campus store. But there's a lot more to a college campus than you will see on the formal tour. It pays dividends to walk around, and find out where students go to socialize, take breaks from classes and eat meals off campus. You will want to try a meal in the dining hall, and if you have special dietary needs, find out if the school can meet them. You should also find out where students go to receive medical care. At some colleges the answer is easy; the school has a health center, maybe even a hospital on campus. At other schools, you might need to go off campus for medical care. Also, notice how students get around campus. It's easy to walk around a school that occupies only a few city blocks. But you will need to take shuttles to get around campuses at many larger, more spread-out universities.

3. Get the scoop from the college's students.

You will get first impressions on the campus tour. But you get only a small number, at best, of student impressions and then only from students who are among the happiest on campus. If your tour guide offers you a business card, take it. That person could be very helpful as you make your short list of schools as well as your final decision. But as you venture on your own, stop and talk to students. Ask them if they like the school. Was it easy or hard for them to get into the major that they wanted? To transfer to a different major? To see a professor for help on a paper or exam? What is the social center of the campus? Where do students live after the first year? Take and read a copy of the campus newspaper, so you get a

sense of hot topics on the campus, cultural events, athletic spirit and guest speakers – and add it to the other information you gather.

4. Check out the community off campus.

The campus is not the complete picture of a college community. There are many differences between a school that's in a large city versus one in a smaller "college town." The college town is more likely to look to the college to be the cultural center of the community; a large city will have a cultural life that is not over-dependent on the college for support. You're more likely to find more "school spirit" in the college town. But you're also likely to find more cultural and entertainment options in the larger city. In either case, be sure that you see how easy or hard it is to get into the community surrounding campus. Can you walk right into town? Or do you need to rely on public transportation or a car to get around?



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.

The Chabad House of Lamorinda Helps Locals Explore Their Jewish Identity

By Sophie Braccini



Children learn how to make olive oil used in an oil lamp at the Chabad. The olive press is shown on the left. Photo provided

A new community center in Lafayette, steeped in the Jewish tradition, aims to provide educational and outreach activities for people of all ages with Jewish roots. Rabbi Yisroel Labkowski, who recently opened the Chabad House, follows the words of the founder of the Chabad movement, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who said that "(a Chabad) should serve as a key to open the hearts of all who will visit it and all who will come under its sphere of influence – open their hearts to the very core of their Jewishness."

Labkowski says that Jews are equal, regardless of their circumstance, and therefore everyone is welcome in the Chabad. "A Jew is a Jew regardless of his affiliation, regardless of his observance; he is born Jewish and will always be a Jew," he says. "The idea is to awaken the Jewish identity everyone born Jewish has. There is no idea of membership into the Chabad, it is a place open to everyone interested."

Labkowski was born into a religious Jewish family with Russian origins in Brooklyn – the 11th in a family of 12 children. He studied in Canada, Israel and Los Angeles. He and his wife, Tzipora, were both raised by parents who were part of the Chabad movement. "We were both raised with the idea that it's not just important to live your own life, and mind your own business," he says, "but with the idea that a Jew's mission in life is to help out another Jew." Therefore rather than staying in their

comfort zone, they decided to venture west. There are about 4,500 Chabad Houses throughout the world. The Labkowski asked friends and family for seed money so they could start their service.

One of the first steps the Labkowskis took was to ask the Lafayette City Council to let them install a menorah on the Plaza during the eight days of Hanukkah. "This was a symbol of light, warmth and beauty that we wanted to share with the community," says Labkowski. "Now we have started to offer classes and activities for all ages and open to all. The activities are for people to be involved; we are not preaching. For the children, it is very hands-on, teaching by feeling." For example, children made candles for Hanukkah or they made their own lamp, learning to press olives that produced the oil that burned in the lamp.

There are many classes and activities offered: Mommy and Me, Hebrew school, monthly community Shabbat dinners, Torah reading, Jewish history, and many more. There is also a special class for women, challah bread making, which provides an opportunity of women to socialize and reflect on the meaning of challah. The next challah bread making class is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1. The Chabad also organizes celebrations for each Jewish holiday, the next one being Purim March 23-24.

For more information, go to www.chabadoflamorinda.org.

Campolindo High School Named 2016 East County Regional Academic Decathlon Champion

Submitted by Jonathan Lance



Campolindo's Academic Decathlon team Photo Diane Morrell, CCCOE

Campolindo High School won the 2016 East County Regional Academic Decathlon Feb. 10 for the sixth straight year. Along with being the East Bay Regional winner, the team will also represent Contra Costa County in the California State Academic Decathlon competition. Following Campolindo were Las Lomas High School (Walnut Creek), second place; and Dublin High School, third place. Teams from Acalanes and Miramonte also participated in the event.

Directed by the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) and with the assistance of community volunteers, the Academic Decathlon provides an opportunity for high school students to compete as individuals and teams in a series of 10 academic tests and demonstrations. The subjects in the competition include art, economics, literature, mathematics, music, science, social science, essay, interview, and speech

(prepared and impromptu) – plus the SuperQuiz.

Approximately, 120 participating high school students have been studying and preparing for this event with their coaches since September. This year's Academic Decathlon theme was "India."

Along with earning their sixth consecutive year as Contra Costa County's Academic Decathlon champion, Campolindo was also last year's national Academic Decathlon winner in the Medium School Category. High school teams are made up of nine students, grades 9-12, with a maximum of three students in each of the following divisions: Honors (3.75-4.00 GPA), Scholastic (3.00-3.74 GPA) and Varsity (2.99 GPA and below).

The Campolindo team will represent Contra Costa County at the California State Academic Decathlon, to be held in Sacramento, March 17-20.

Lamorinda's Religious Services



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org
"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"
 Join us Sundays at 10 a.m. | Sunday School 10 a.m.

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Lafayette United Methodist Church



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

Worship and Faith Formation Sunday 10 am
 Sacred Space for Lent Wednesday 6-7pm

Music. Meditation. Candlelight. Holy Communion.

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church A Loving Community

Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM

In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare
 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

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- Programs for all ages
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24 Orinda Way (next to the Library) - 254-4212

Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am
 Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm
 Reading Room/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat 11 - 2

www.christianscienceorinda.org



Sunday Worship Services 9 & 10:30am



Now enrolling for Fall 2016!
 Preschool Hours 9am to 12:30pm
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Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422 www.holy shepherd.org



8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
 9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
 10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship
 Coffee Fellowship at 9:30 and 11:45 a.m.
 Childcare available for ages 5 and younger

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9am Sunday School &
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 traditional liturgy +
 inclusive theology

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ART

"Intercepting Light: The Mind's Eye" at the Moraga Art Gallery features eye-catching landscapes by photographer Wenda Pyman, whose work calls to mind such masters as Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter. The show, which includes paintings, ceramics, jewelry, and more by the gallery's 15 member artists and several guest artists, runs through March 19.

The Lafayette Art Gallery's show, titled "12x12," runs through Feb. 28. It will feature small works all done in a 1-foot by 1-foot format with some other, larger works in a square format also on display. In addition, the talented group of local member artists will be exhibiting numerous new works in various mediums: ceramics, glass works, sculpture and jewelry. For info, visit www.lafayetteartgallery.com.

"Two Painters" - An Exhibit featuring husband and wife Robert Poplack and Deborah Kirklind, both professors of art and artists themselves, in their first show together at the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery. Still life and abstract, separate in subject but joined by a life-long partnership. The exhibit runs through March 19.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art will feature the following exhibits through April 2016: "Environmental Impact," William Keith, and "The Battle for Hetch Hetchy." In addition, "Instagals," a student Instagram exhibition, displays the best photographs the student community has to offer, but also provokes fundamental discussions about the identity of art, while David Maxim's "Points of View" explores the eternal mysteries of metaphorical meaning and ambiguity. The museum is open from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For info, visit www.stmarys-ca.edu/museum.

MUSIC

The senior ensemble at California Academy of Performing Arts (CAPA) is holding a benefit dance show "Gladiator in a Tutu" to raise money for Camp Okizu (a camp for kids with cancer) from 7:30 to 8:15 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26 at Bentley school. Tickets are available at the door: \$15 adults; \$12 students.

Pacific Chamber Symphony presents the second concert of its 27th season with "Delightful Strings and Joyful Songs." Maestro Lawrence Kohl, orchestra founder and conductor, will lead the performance at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall. Tickets: \$10 to \$35. Children with paying adult are free. Tickets are available at www.brownpapertickets.com or by calling 1-800-838-3006.

Love jazz music, like "Cantaloupe Island" by Herbie Hancock or "There Will Never Be Another You" by Harry Warren? Can't get enough classical? Local community members can listen to the musical styling's of award-winning student jazz combos, a string quartet and a "little big band" as part of the second annual "Orchestra and Band on the Run" event at 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Lafayette. The event includes dinner, an auction and dancing afterward to music provided by D.J. Scott Haney. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased at Brown Paper Tickets, www.2016orchestraandbandontherun.brownpapertickets.com.

The Welsh-American Society of Northern California will hold its annual Gymanfa Ganu - Hymn-Singing Festival - at Lafayette United Methodist Church from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28. Everyone who loves music is invited to attend. A Te Bach (Little Tea) will follow the singing.

Solo Opera's "The Computer Kid's Magic Night," a great show for the entire family, runs at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 4 and at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 5 at the Leshler Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Seating is reserved; group discounts are available. Tickets: \$25-\$35. For tickets call (925) 943-7469; or visit the Leshler Center box office, or online at <https://lesherartscenter.showare.com/evntperformances.asp?evt=412>. For

more information, visit www.SoloOpera.org.

The Leshler Center for the Arts presents "Tales of Fantasy and Adventure" at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 8 at the Leshler Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Ticket prices: adult \$17; seniors \$14. Free admission for students. Tickets are available through the Leshler Center for the Arts Ticket Office at 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, by calling (925) 943-7469, or by ordering online at <http://lesherartscenter.showare.com/TalesofFantasyandAdventure>.

Diablo Choral Artists presents "Bach and His Predecessors," a concert featuring works by Bach, Schütz, Telemann and Buxtehude, including Bach's Jesu, Meine Freude and Buxtehude's Magnificat, with string ensemble at 8 p.m. Friday, March 11 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1924 Trinity Ave., Walnut Creek, and at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 13 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda. Tickets available at brownpapertickets.com: adults \$25, seniors 60+ \$18, students \$5, (\$3 discount - adult & senior - before March 8). For info, visit www.dcachorus.org.

Early piano quartets by Mendelssohn and Richard Strauss, as well as Spanish Serenade for cello and piano by David Popper, will be featured on Convictions. These early works of composers show blossoming talent and flashes of brilliance. Featured musicians are pianist Yana Reznik, cellist Eugene Lifschitz, violinist Moni Simeonov and violist Pamela Freund-Striplen. The concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 12 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. A pre-concert talk will start the evening at 7 p.m. Tickets: \$37.50 general, \$32.50 senior, \$15 student. To order tickets, visit www.gcplayers.org or call (925) 283-3728.

THEATER

Tony Kushner's Pulitzer-winning magnum opus comes to its jaw-dropping conclusion on the Town Hall Theatre stage this February, as the entire cast of last season's critically-acclaimed "Angels In America: Millennium Approaches" returns to finish what they began, beginning work on Part II: "Perestroika." The show will run from Feb. 27 through March 19. Check online for show times and ticket prices. For info, contact the Town Hall Theatre Box Office at (925) 283-1557 or visit www.TownHallTheatre.com.

Acalanes High School Presents the Performing Arts Musical "The Drowsy Chaperone" by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison, a farcical play within a comedy. The tale is one of slapstick comedy, improbable situations, a wedding that may or not may not happen, all strung together with snappy, upbeat '20s influenced song and dance at 7 p.m. on March 3, 4, and 5 in the Performing Arts Center. Tickets are open to the general public: \$18 for adults, \$16 for seniors (60 and older) and students. Available on the Acalanes Webstore.

Campolindo High School presents "West Side Story," one of the most beloved romantic musical dramas of all time. Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim's iconic score and lyrics capture the turbulent world of two young idealistic lovers caught between rival street gangs in New York City in the 1950s. Come enjoy community theater with its rich blend of drama, dance and music. There are eight performances from March 10-20 at Campolindo High School, 300 Moraga Road, Moraga. For info on show times and ticket prices, visit <http://www.campochoir.com/>.

For our 2016 season, East Bay Children's Theatre proudly presents a World Premiere Musical Event: "Aladdin and the Lamp." Based on the timeless "Arabian Nights" tale, "Aladdin and the Lamp" retells the story of a boy who is lost on the highway of life. After being trapped by a comical villain; Aladdin falls in love, discovers a magical lamp and its occupant, changes his ways, and finally learns what it truly means to be "like a man." Public performances will be presented at 1 and 3

p.m. Sunday, March 13 at The Jewish Community Center of the East Bay in Berkeley; and Sunday, March 20 at the Orinda Library Auditorium in Orinda. Tickets are \$12-\$15, and may be purchased online at www.EBCTonline.org.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Zulu nurse and healthcare activist Sister Abigail Ntleko, author of "Empty Hands" and a recipient of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's Unsung Heroes of Compassion Award will be visiting from South Africa to share her incredible story of overcoming poverty, racism, and sexism to earn her education, and live a life in service to her community by adopting dozens of children orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic over the course of her eighty years. This free program will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center in the Community Hall. Register online at tinyurl.com/EmptyHandsLAF.

Berkeley Repertory Theatre Docent Lecture of the world premiere of "Aubergine" by Julia Cho at 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25 in the Mosaic Room at the Hacienda de Las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga.

"Facing Life and Death: a film and discussion" at the Orinda Library at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25 in the Garden Room. Death is a subject that much of modern western society prefers to avoid. Following the 26-minute film screening Dr. Peticolas will lead a moderated discussion where participants may share stories and listen to the stories of others. For info, visit www.secretsofifeanddeath.com. Free. For more information, call the Orinda Library at (925) 254-2184.

"Perscription Drug Abuse - What Every Family Needs to Know" at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 29 at St. Perpetua's Church Parish Hall in Lafayette. Highly addictive opioid prescription drugs have devastated communities throughout the U.S. Seven young men from Lafayette have died in the last three years from this epidemic - a catastrophe in such a small town. Join us for an evening of education and frank discussion about what can be done to help prevent the devastating downstream impacts prescription medications such as painkillers, sedatives and stimulants can have on youth and adults of all ages. This presentation is appropriate for adults and youth who are 13 years and older.

Saint Mary's College Creative Writing Series will feature Claudia Rankine at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 in the LeFevre Theatre. Claudia Rankine is the author of five collections of poetry including "Citizen: An American Lyric" and "Don't Let Me Be Lonely;" two plays including "Providence of Beauty: A South Bronx Travelogue;" numerous video collaborations, and is the editor of several anthologies including "The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind."

The League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley and Health Care for All - Contra Costa County are presenting a discussion about Health Care in Contra Costa County from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 19 in the McHale Room, Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive, Pleasant Hill. The public is invited. Panelists will address the following questions: "How are health care providers meeting current needs?" "What are some systemic changes we might consider?"

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Lafayette Library Teen 'Scape presents Angry Birds! Play real life Angry Birds, enjoy the Angry Birds video game, and make an Angry Birds craft from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Teen Center.

The 30th session of the California State Summer School for the Arts seeks teen artists, writers and performers for summer 2016 (July 9 through Aug. 5 - four weeks of embracing creativity). Applications must be completed by Feb. 29. Financial aid available. For info, visit CSSSA.ca.gov.

... continued on next page

MOVIE REVIEW

Wine, Appetizers, Lecture and Movie

Just another day at Lamorinda Theatres

By Derek Zemrak

Vincent Price Wine “House on Haunted Hill”



“House on Haunted Hill”

Photo provided

The Vincent Price evening of celebration is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 26 at Cine Cuvée, Orinda Theatre Square’s new wine lounge adjacent to the theater. The event starts at 7 p.m. with wine tasting from the Vincent Price Signature Collection and appetizers from his world famous cookbook, “A Treasury of Great Recipes” (1965) that Price wrote with his wife, Mary. His daughter, Victoria Price, will be attending and will reminisce about her father – a man who loved life, art, wine, food, his family and entertaining people.

Vincent Leonard Price, Jr. was an actor, writer, art connoisseur and gourmet who was born in St Louis, Missouri on May 27, 1911 to Marguerite Cobb (Wilcox) and Vincent Leonard Price, Sr. He traveled through Europe, studied at Yale, became an actor and made his screen debut in 1938. After many minor roles, he began performing in low-budget horror movies such as “House of Wax” (1953). He achieved his first major success in “House of Usher” (1960). Known for his distinctive, low-pitched, creaky, atmospheric voice and his quizzical, mock-serious facial expressions, he went on to star in a series of acclaimed Gothic horror

movies, such as “Pit and the Pendulum” (1961) and “The Abominable Dr. Phibes” (1971). In the mid-1970s he started doing cooking programs for television. Price’s final acting role was in “Edward Scissorhands” (1990). Vincent Price died on Oct. 25, 1993 at age 82 of lung cancer and emphysema.

A special screening of the original (1959) “House on Haunted Hill” will be shown at 9 p.m. at the Orinda Theatre.

An eccentric millionaire, Frederick Loren (Vincent Price) has a proposal for five guests at a possibly haunted mansion: Show up, survive the night and receive \$10,000 each.

Sounds easy?

Prior to the screening of “House on Haunted Hill,” Victoria Price will be giving a lecture on her famous dad. Seating is limited for the wine tasting event. Get your tickets early online at lamorindatheatres.com.

Tickets for the wine tasting are \$10 for which you will receive a 3-ounce pour of each of Price’s wines. Movie and lecture tickets are \$10 or free with a purchase of a bottle of wine. Do not miss this special evening.

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.

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



We meet Friday mornings at 7:00 am at **The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa**, 3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

February 26:

Outstanding high school speakers compete in annual Rotary 4-Way Speech Contest

March 3:

Our own Eve Phillips, Orinda Vice Mayor, updates the goings-on

Wine Barrel Raffle: 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winner drawings on May 1, 2016 Buy \$10 raffle tickets on-line at www.lamorindasunrise.com, or from our Rotary Club members

Lafayette Rotary Club

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

February 25:

Peter Brooks will talk about the White Pony Express

March 3:

Dave Luebkeman - sustainable family farms, Plant with Purpose

www.rotarylafayette.org

SOROPTIMIST OF 24/680



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

Please join us for our next meeting:

WHEN: Wednesday, March 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.

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

Not to be missed

KIDS, ... continued

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage will sponsor a new relocation college scholarship program to help a deserving student with college expenses. The winning student will receive \$2,000 towards the college of his or her choice. All high school students set to graduate in the spring semester of 2016 who meet the eligibility requirements are invited to submit an original and thoughtful essay of 1,000 words or less exploring the topic of relocation. Essays will be accepted starting March 1 of this year and must be submitted no later than June 15 in order to be considered. For more information regarding the Scholarship Program, please contact Kathy Denning at (925) 771.5273 or kathy.denning@westrsc.com.

The student musical group "Symphonics" will offer the classical music and narrated performance of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 1 at the Moraga Library. This free event is open for all ages, no reservations necessary. For more information, please visit ccllib.org or call (925) 376-6852.

Celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday at the Moraga Library on Wednesday, March 2. Dr. Seuss books will be available to read all day in the picture book nook. There will be special Seussian storytimes and crafts at 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. Seussian activities and crafts for older kids will take place from 4 to 5 p.m. Free. No registration required.

Moraga Summer Camp Expo from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 5 at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive in Moraga.

OTHER

Contra Costa Living presents "Solar Energy Seminar - Top 10 things to know before you install solar" from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25 at Lafayette Veteran's Memorial Center, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. You will learn about the top 10 things you must know before you invest in a solar energy system for your home. Free. For more info, visit https://10thingstoknowbeforeyoubuysolar.eventbrite.com or call (925) 297-5335 or email Pete@ContraCostaLiving.com.

Diablo Valley Literacy Council Opportunity - English Tutors Needed. Volunteer to help adults in your neighborhood to read, write and speak English well enough to function in our society. Working one-one-one, you can help people to get a better job, apply for citizenship, read to their children...the possibilities are endless. No teaching experience is required. The next workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 and Saturday, March 5 at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 4000 Clayton Road in Concord. You must attend both sessions. There is a nominal fee to cover the training and material costs. For more info or to register call the hotline and leave a message at (925) 685-3881, email DVLC4ESL@gmail.com, or visit dvlc.tripod.com.

Lovebugs for Leap Year! Find your very own at Community Concern for Cats Adoption Event from 1 to 4 p.m. Feb. 27 and 28 at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. Hours are noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 27 in Lafayette. For more information, see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

Lafayette resident, Papa John Kiefer, will offer workshops on “How to Raise Your Own Chickens.” Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction. Workshops are free and will be held in Lafayette from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 28. Reservations are required. For info, contact jhkiefer@comcast.net.

Join Jewish women and girls ages 12 and up from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda for an evening of Jewish pride, unity and inspiration at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 1 in the Lafayette Library Community Hall. Pre-paid registration required. Cost: \$20, or \$36 for a mother and daughter pair. Register at ChabadofLamorinda.com/ChallahInLine.

Do you dream of being your own boss and taking control of your future? Starting with an overview on franchise ownership, followed by presentations from top franchise companies that are looking to expand in Northern California - this three-hour seminar is filled with viable information to help determine if franchising is an option for you. The seminar runs from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 in the Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mount Diablo Boulevard,

Not to be missed

Lafayette. For more information and to RSVP, contact Liz Carmona at (408) 772-9868.

Saint Mary's College Guild's Game Day And Luncheon - Join friends for a day of Bridge and Bunco from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, March 4 in the Soda Center. Luncheon will be served at noon. Wine will be available. Table prizes for winners. Cost: \$36 per person. Make check payable to St. Mary's College Guild and mail to Dolores Mc Gonigle, 828 Crossbrook Ct., Moraga, CA 94556; (925) 376-4339.

The big semi-annual book sale will be held at the Moraga Library from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 12. There will be hundreds of books in various categories priced from 25 cents to \$4. From 1 to 2 p.m. a large paper bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with as many books as it can hold.

The Moraga Movers will hold their monthly dinner meeting at 6 p.m. Monday, March 14 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Center. The social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. La De Da, a ladies cappella vocal quartet will provide the entertainment. Reservations can be made online at www.moragamovers.org. Cost is \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members.

SENIORS

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St. Moraga. Social hour 11 a.m., lunch at noon. The after-lunch speaker on March 2 will be Mr. Tim Kawakami, sports columnist for the Mercury News and Contra Costa Times, analyzing all sports for the two newspapers including interviews with well known sports figures. In addition, Mr. Kawakami has written a fascinating book about the boxing champion, Oscar de la Hoya. For membership information, call Larry at (925) 631-9528

GARDEN

Basic Composting for the Home Gardener from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 at the Moraga Library. Basic composting will teach you how easy it is to make a positive impact on the soil in your garden. Learn how to turn your garden waste and kitchen scraps into sweet-smelling organic soil conditioner. The

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program will cover the benefits of composting, most common compost methods, uses for compost, and composting problems. Q&A. Free. For info, call (925) 376-6852 or visit ccmg.ucan.edu/.

Lafayette Garden Club meeting from 9:45 to noon Thursday, March 10. Lafayette Garden Club is excited to present “An Andalusian Legacy.” Speaker Katherine Greenberg will discuss creating beautiful and sustainable gardens suited to California’s Mediterranean climate. Meetings are held at the Lafayette Veteran’s Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For info, email Carolyn Poetzsch at cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its March meeting at 9:30 a.m. at the Gardens at Heather Farm, Monday, March 14. Business 9:30 a.m., social 10:30 a.m., speaker 11 a.m. Program: “Photo Essay of the Animals and Plants Found on Mount Diablo” by Dirk Muehler, Shell Ridge open space nature photographer.

Montelindo Garden Club meeting will be at 9 a.m. Friday, March 18 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Visitors welcome. Topic: From Farm to Vase Floral Designs. The speaker will be Anna Campbell, owner of The Floral Cultural Society flower shop in Oakland, who will demonstrate her farm-to-table floral design style. For info, visit www.montelindogarden.com.

Registration for the Sunday, May 1 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is now open. This year’s tour will fill; register now to reserve your place. A variety of bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, water conserving, low maintenance gardens that contain 60 percent or more native plants will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 1 at various locations throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. More than 40 garden talks will be scheduled throughout the day. For info, visit http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/registration-pl.

Lamorinda Weekly

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Crunchy Shaved Cauliflower Salad Deliciously Delivers

By Susie Iventosch



Shaved Cauliflower Salad with Radicchio and Walnuts

Photo Susie Iventosch

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Cauliflower is often the forgotten vegetable, but it is so versatile and delicious, and comes in a variety of colors: yellow, purple, green, and, of course, the basic white. It can be eaten raw as a crudité, (with or without dip), sliced in salad or puréed as a soup, steamed, sautéed, roasted, barbecued or even turned into fluffy cauliflower couscous.

We recently had a side dish at a restaurant that I had a tough time figuring out until further microscopic in-

spection, and it turned out to be very, very finely sliced cauliflower in vinaigrette. It was absolutely delicious and it got my recipe wheels rolling. Because normal cauliflower is just plain white, I thought it would be fun to add some color by using some yellow cauliflower, radicchio and also little bit of parsley. This salad has a lot of crunch, with toasted walnuts tossed in for good measure. If you are feeling really adventurous, you can use the purple or green cauliflower, too.

INGREDIENTS

(Makes enough for 6 side dishes)

- 1 head yellow or white cauliflower, (I used both), thinly sliced on a mandolin or the flat edge of a traditional cheese grater
- 1/2 head radicchio, julienned
- 1 small shallot, finely diced and sautéed until translucent, optional
- 1/2 cup large walnut pieces, toasted
- 1/2 cup Pecorino Romano, grated
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped parsley

Dijon Vinaigrette

- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Clean and thinly slice cauliflower on a mandolin or cheese grater. Some of the cauliflower will grate into very tiny pieces, but don't worry, just get as many slices from the stems as possible. Place in salad bowl. Cut or snip radicchio into thin julienne strips and add to bowl along with toasted walnuts and grated Pecorino Romano (or Parmesan). If you like the idea of adding sautéed shallots, add them now.

Place all dressing ingredients in a jar or a container with a tight-fitting lid and shake well. Pour over salad ingredients and toss well. Serve cold or at room temperature with an extra spoonful of grated cheese and parsley sprinkled over the top.

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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Campo Advances to NCS Semifinals; Acalanes, Miramonte Bow Out

By Karl Buscheck



Ryan Rossi is expected to be named DFAL Defensive MVP.

Photos Gint Federas

Thanks to a 4-3 shootout win, Campo boys' soccer is moving on to the NCS Division II semifinals after drawing 0-0 in double overtime against Montgomery in Santa Rosa on Feb. 20.

"Our focus all year has just been on improving, so that we could be contenders by the time NCS rolled around," head coach Shane Carney explained of his sixth-seed Cougars. "We knew we were going to be very small and very young compared to most opponents, so it's been about working hard, playing smart and improving every night we go out there."

After taking down the No. 3 seed, the Cougars (8-1-3 in league and 16-3-6 overall), who landed in second place in the DFAL, are now set to clash with Concord.

Campo will host the No. 10 seed Minutemen in Moraga at 6 p.m. on Feb. 24. For the Cougars, the entire team has chipped in, but there's a giant in the heart of the defense.

"Honestly, this truly has been a team effort all around this season. We've had solid consistent play and the team often plays better than the sum of the parts," Carney said. "Our senior captain, center back Ryan Rossi is the DFAL Defensive MVP and has saved us many times in the back, but we've got a number of guys who are stepping up late in the season."

In the opening round of NCS, the Cougars didn't waste any time smashing past No. 11 Arroyo 4-1 at home.

"We wanted to play on their nerves and try to get an early lead," Carney said. "We managed to score twice early in the match, which set the tone for the rest of the night."

Acalanes also earned a big win in the opening round, toppling No. 1 seed Redwood 1-0.

"At the end of the day, that's why

you have the playoffs," head coach Paul Curtis said after the No. 16 seed Dons trekked to Larkspur and grabbed the win courtesy of a second-half goal from sophomore Cameron Shapoorian. "Teams have to play each other. And so, it's a matter of execution on the field as to which team is going to end up winning."

Even though the hosts were heavily favored in the tilt, Curtis declined to dub the win an upset.

"I never really consider them an upset because you've got to play the game," Curtis explained. "So, it's a matter of which team executes the best on any given night. It's nice. It's a good win for the boys. I'm happy for them. They've worked hard for it."

The coach also wouldn't bite when asked if the squad's status as the No. 16 seed – despite a 9-9-5 record overall and a 5-5-2 mark in DFAL – served as extra motivation.

"You know, it might have. We didn't really talk about it, to be frank about it," Curtis admitted. "We were pleased to get in and have the opportunity to play. The boys try and take each match one at a time and that was their approach."

The team's NCS Division II run came to a halt on Feb. 20, however, when De Anza edged past Acalanes 2-1 in El Sobrante.

Looking back at the season, Curtis was at a loss when asked to single out an individual Don who had been the star of the show.

"You can hear me hesitate and the hesitation means, 'No.' It's been – different match, different boy," Curtis said. "There are 23 (players) on the roster and I think almost all of them have been man of the match at some point during the season. Very few have two man-of-the-match recognitions. And so, that shows good team work and balance in how they ap-

proach each match."

Like Acalanes, Miramonte cashed out of the postseason in the quarterfinals after losing 3-0 against Marin Academy on Feb. 20.

Marin, the No. 2 seed in the Division III bracket, scored an early goal in San Rafael and sank the Mats with a pair of second-half strikes. Even though the campaign ended, head coach Masood Ahmadi was impressed with his team's showing.

"We had some ups and downs throughout the season with losing some key players due to injury but the players stepped up and the team took on the challenge and overcame the bump(s) to qualify into NCS for a second straight year after many years of not going to the playoffs," Ahmadi said. "This year (was about) taking it one step further than last year."

The No. 7 seed Miramonte (7-8-4 overall and 4-6-2) arrived in the semifinals after thumping Cardinal Newman (No. 10 seed) 4-0 on Feb. 17.

"The key to success in winning this game was that the boys played with lots of confidence," Ahmadi said. "That was the first home playoff game in a very long time at Miramonte for the boys program and I believe the boys were proud of that and made sure to make it count."



Rupert Dusauzay

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Acalanes, Miramonte advance to semifinals in NCS Tournament

By Emily Dugdale



Senior Regan McQuain and junior Allison Merrill each scored a goal – along with sophomores Emily Smith and Kierra Krawec – during the Lady Dons' 4-0 win over Newark Memorial last Wednesday.



Photos Gint Federas

It's crunch time for girls' soccer this week as rivals Acalanes and Miramonte both advanced to the semifinal rounds of the North Coast Section (NCS). The Lady Mats ousted the Lady Dons in the semi finals of last year's Division II tournament, but this winter, the Mats moved to the newly minted Division III bracket.

No. 2 seed Acalanes (11-2-2) faced No. 15 Newark Memorial Cougars (8-9-6) in its first-round matchup last Wednesday, and handed their opponent a 4-0 shutout loss. Despite playing on a flooded, soggy field, the team "did a good job to keep their heads above and pull it out," according to head coach Evan Sassano.

Wednesday's match proved the Lady Dons' offensive depth. Each goal was scored by a different player: senior Regan McQuain, junior Allison Merrill and sophomores Emily Smith and Kierra Krawec.

"It's always a good sign when that happens – as a coach, you're happy," Sassano said. "Our style is very much the collective way of playing - we try to attack in a lot of different ways and not give it just to one player."

The Lady Dons had a reserved confidence heading into their quarterfinals match last Saturday against No. 7 Tamalpais.

"We're confident with ourselves, but we definitely don't get ahead of ourselves," Sassano said. "They're a strong team, and we're just focused on getting better this way and making our way through with the same focus – taking it one game at a time."

Their focus paid off, as the Lady Dons beat the Red Tailed Hawks 2-0 that evening, moving on to a semifinals match-up against the No. 3 Las Lomas Knights (16-1-5) – the team that handed them their first DFAL loss in two seasons earlier this month. The two teams will meet Wednesday, Feb. 24.

Sassano was optimistic but measured when

asked about his team's chance of winning its first sectional title. "Anything could happen," he said. "We're trying to stay really organized and do a good job at that defensively, and also work hard together offensively."

Reigning Division II champion Miramonte, entered the Division III tournament as the No. 3 seed. In the first round, the Lady Mats took care of No. 14 Encinal (7-11-1) with relative ease, winning 5-1.

Despite a few late-season losses for the Mats, head coach Mark Daus felt his team was well prepared before the match. The second half of season league play was "some of the best soccer we have played this year," he said. "I think getting positive results against good teams at the [end] of conference play is good for our team's mentality."

With their shutout against Encinal, the Mats were confident for their Saturday's quarterfinal match-up against No. 11 Ygnacio Valley Warriors (9-7-3). The girls prevailed with a 2-0 shutout. They will now meet No. 3 Saint Mary's (Berkeley) in the semi final on Wednesday Feb. 24.

"The big thing for us was trying to enter the tournament on an upswing, which I think we have accomplished," Daus said.

He credited the team's upperclassmen with preparing the younger players for a successful playoff run. "Towards the end of the year the seniors and captains have really stepped up and took control of this team not only on the field but took control of the locker room as well," he said. "I have no doubt their experience winning NCS last year will help carry younger players who haven't been here yet."

Campolindo (7-12-3) won the tournament in 2014 and reached the finals in 2015, but did not qualify for NCS this winter. The Cougars were young, graduating just four seniors. Head coach Ernesto Silva believes a more experi-

enced group of returning players will "give us the continuity we need," for years to come.

"I feel we were able to be competitive

throughout the season, [and] our young players will take this experience and come back stronger next year," he added.





Kyra Rossiter



Gina Crosetti (9) scored the game-winning goal against Campolindo in last year's Division II NCS final. Isabel Fine (8).

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St. Mary's Basketball Teams Looking for Late-Season Burst

By Dean Boerner



Sophomore Emmett Naar has played a big role in the Gaels' success this winter.

Despite their respective successes this season, neither Saint Mary's basketball team is completely satisfied with their progress to this point. With just a few weeks left before the WCC tournament, both squads recognize the importance of finishing the season strong.

For the men's team (22-4 overall, 13-3 WCC), it's all about reviving a conference-leading offense that's been somewhat dormant lately.

"Our offense has been a little bit stagnant as opposed to what it was earlier in the season," said sophomore center Jock Landale.

In many games in the second half of the season, the Gaels have had trouble reaching their team averages of 76 points and 18 assists per game. Nevertheless, the Gaels are still vying with Gonzaga for the top spot in the conference standings.

With a win over LMU earlier in

the month, Saint Mary's reached the 20-win mark for the ninth consecutive season. With four players averaging in double figures and two more sitting at nine points per game, the Gaels feature a balanced attack that many teams struggle with.

"We just enjoy playing together," said forward Dane Pineau. "I think that's why it's such a balanced spread. We have pretty good guard play which helps move the ball as well."

The Saint Mary's starting backcourt, consisting of Emmett Naar and Joe Rahon, accounts for about 12 of the team's 18 assists per game. Such adept guard-play leads to endless open looks for a team where almost everyone is a three-point threat.

In addition to rejuvenating their offense as the season winds to a close, the Gaels will work on playing a full game and avoiding in-game lulls. "One of the big things

we've been harping on in the locker room is that we haven't been able to play through an entire game like we were before Portland," said Landale.

The Portland game Landale refers to is an 89-74 late January win over the Pilots in which the Gaels registered 19 assists and shot 62 percent. If there is a model game that typifies the Saint Mary's offense, that Portland game is it.

With narrow wins on the road over Portland and Gonzaga this past week, the Gaels are now in driver's seat for the WCC's top spot. Saturday marked the Gaels' first regular season sweep over the Zags in 21 years.

Like the men's team, the women's team (21-6 overall, 12-4 WCC) is positioned nicely in the regular season's closing weeks. While the top spot held by BYU is out of reach, second place is attainable.

"I think we can still definitely

get the second seed," said sophomore guard Stella Beck. "We just have to end really strong."

Beck has had to assume more of a scoring role lately in the absence of injured leading scorer Lauren Nicholson, and she has responded with impressive totals. On the road against LMU earlier in the month, Beck scored a career-high 27 points on 10-11 shooting.

To head into the WCC tournament as the second seed, Saint Mary's will have to maintain their rebounding advantage while limiting turnovers, a weakness all season. They'll also have to work on playing a full game.

"We need to play great from the first half to the second half," said junior guard Devyn Galland.

"We can't just try to pull it out in the fourth quarter." Both Beck and Galland point to a February 11 loss against Pepperdine as a bit of a wakeup call. "We were feeling really

good up until we lost to Pepperdine," said Beck.

In that 62-58 loss to the Waves, the Gaels fell behind early and couldn't overcome a second half deficit. "We had a ton of turnovers that game," said Galland. "We came out too relaxed and then tried to come out in the fourth quarter, but it was too late."

The Gaels seem unlikely to revert to that type of play with their remaining games, as they're focused on positioning themselves nicely for the postseason tournament. On Saturday, the Gaels dismantled Portland by 42 points, its largest margin of victory in 17 seasons.

The men finish their regular season with a home game against Grand Canyon University at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 1, while the women end regular season play against USF at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27.



Devyn Galland

Photos Tod Fierner

Miramonte Pole Vaulters Sets Indoor School Record

Submitted by Doug Bockmiller



Photo provided

On Jan. 16, at the annual Pole Vault Summit in Sparks, Nevada, Miramonte senior Molly Colwell broke the indoor pole vault school record with a jump of 10-foot-2-inches. The event attracts more than 3000 pole-vaulters every year, from all over the world for training clinics and competitions. Colwell also did a 10-foot-6-inch jump, but the bar fell off a few seconds after she landed in the pit. This spring, she has set her sights on the school outdoor record of 11-feet-6-inches, and is well on her way to breaking it. Molly is also a ranked competitive sailor and trains year round for both events. Other Miramonte Pole Vault Club vaulters participated in the event, including: senior Sam Whiting (12-feet-6-inches), junior Mathew Immesoete (12-feet-10-inches), freshman Thomas Erisman (9-feet-2-inches), and freshman Daniel Erisman (seven feet).

MBA to Host Opening Day Parade Feb. 27

Submitted by Lauren Fritch



The Moraga Baseball Association (MBA) is hosting its Opening Day Parade on Saturday, Feb. 27 from 9:30-10 a.m. The parade will feature over 250 Moraga baseball players ages 6-14, with graduating eighth graders riding in convertibles, music by the Joaquin Moraga Band, and the Moraga Fire and Police Departments.

St. Monica 3rd Grade Boys CYO Team Wins Diocese Championship

Submitted by Laura Revelos



Back, from left: Mark Robeson, Shawn Clancy, Eric Van Olst Middle: Cooper Chang, Joe Revelos, Max Robeson, Gian Maguire, Kai Van Olst, Anthony Sanguinetti Front: Blaise Clancy, Luke Bonardi. Photo Mike Bonardi

On Jan. 31, the third-grade St. Monica Spartans American basketball team completed a perfect season by winning the CYO West Diablo League Championship.

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 26 Wednesday, February 24, 2016



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D16

Into the Wilder-ness

By Victor Ryerson



The Wilder development in the Orinda hills

Photo Victor Ryerson

It may be a bit of an exaggeration to say that the residents of Wilder are pioneers, but being the first homeowners in a whole new community is a phenomenon Orinda has not witnessed since the middle of the last century. Surrounded by open space and accessible only from Highway 24, Wilder is isolated like no other Orinda neighborhood, yet it is a stone's throw from downtown, and just a little farther from the bright lights of the East Bay. Wilder residents can easily choose between the two for their shopping and entertainment needs, yet they are cloistered in a valley so rural at this point that they have to take precautions to ensure their pets do not become dinner for the coyotes that roam the hills around them.

Once part of a ranch owned by airline mogul Ed Daly, tucked in the Gateway Valley between the Orinda

crossroads and the Oakland Hills and set on 1,600 acres of land, with homes boasting 2,500 to 6,000 square feet of living space, Wilder is its own oasis. It took almost three decades for Wilder to get to the point where homes started rising on the newly graded hills, and the path is nearly as littered with defunct developers as the Chilkoot Trail is with the artifacts of Alaska gold seekers. With 16 of the 19 finished homes actually occupied, their occupants, at least for now, are very much pioneers in Orinda's outback.

They are coming from places close by like Lafayette and Berkeley, and from faraway places like Atlanta and New York. They are predominantly families of young professionals with children ranging from newborn to college age. Their reasons for coming are familiar to all Orindans: Orinda's proximity to the metropolitan

centers of San Francisco and Oakland; its celebrated schools; and the quality of life in a remarkably peaceful semi-rural town buffered from the urban world just over the hills by seemingly endless open space.

Mark and Shannon Vicencio, the third residents to move into Wilder, came from Lafayette with their two teenage sons. They have lived there for over two years, enabling them to get a feel for the rhythm of life in the new community. "I love it," Shannon says of her life in Wilder. One feature of the development that she finds particularly appealing is what she calls the "stadium effect" of the construction, with houses built either uphill or downhill from one another, which means that neighbors will not be looking across the street into each other's living rooms.

For Madelyn Mallory, 60, and her husband, Dr. Mark Bresnik, 64, Wilder's location was an important factor in their decision to move from just over the hill in Berkeley's Hiller Highlands neighborhood. Mallory, a financial planner who works in San Francisco, had previously lived for many years in Orinda and was eager to return. Bresnik, who works in San Mateo, supported her aspirations, but made it clear that Wilder was as far as he was willing to commute from the Contra Costa side of the tunnel. It was a good compromise: She takes BART from Orinda, arriving early enough to find parking at the station, while he battles the traffic to get to his job in Foster City.

Not surprisingly, real estate in Wilder does not come cheap. Lots have been selling in the range of \$700,000 to \$1.5 million, and homes from about \$1.8 million to just under \$3 million. The demographics of its inhabitants reflect these prices.

... continued on page D4

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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	10	\$810,000	\$3,275,000
MORAGA	6	\$660,000	\$1,710,000
ORINDA	7	\$823,000	\$2,117,000

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 Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 21 Burnt Oak Circle, \$1,080,000, 3 Bdrms, 1481 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 1-28-16;
Previous Sale: \$85,000, 08-16-76
- 3 Foothill Park Terrace, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2282 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 1-21-16;
Previous Sale: \$655,000, 08-07-01
- 3693 Highland Road #3695, \$875,000, 2101 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$368,000, 09-29-98
- 610 Huntleigh Drive, \$1,330,000, 4 Bdrms, 2038 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 1-21-16;
Previous Sale: \$993,000, 05-07-10
- 3397 La Caminita, \$1,925,000, 5 Bdrms, 3260 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 1-22-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,420,000, 08-20-10
- 4146 Los Arabis Drive, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 1727 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 1-29-16;
Previous Sale: \$725,000, 06-27-14
- 20 Ruth Court, \$863,000, 5 Bdrms, 2106 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 1-28-16;
Previous Sale: \$910,000, 07-20-05
- 23 Sessions Road, \$3,275,000, 5396 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 1-26-16
- 3185 Stanley Boulevard, \$810,000, 3 Bdrms, 1124 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 1-21-16
- 3331 Vaughn Road, \$1,308,500, 4 Bdrms, 1945 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 1-22-16

MORAGA

- 176 Calle La Mesa, \$1,075,000, 4 Bdrms, 1946 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$994,000, 06-30-06
- 1438 Camino Peral, \$660,000, 3 Bdrms, 1348 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$542,000, 12-03-13
- 1084 Larch Avenue, \$1,135,000, 2 Bdrms, 2596 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 1-25-16
- 3 Paseo Linares, \$1,710,000, 4 Bdrms, 5074 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 1-28-16;
Previous Sale: \$725,000, 08-16-90
- 307 Rheem Boulevard, \$916,500, 3 Bdrms, 1685 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 1-29-16;
Previous Sale: \$235,000, 10-04-88
- 1817 School Street, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2050 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$78,500, 09-11-75

ORINDA

- 53 East Altarinda Drive, \$2,117,000, 4 Bdrms, 3145 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 1-28-16;
Previous Sale: \$890,000, 08-29-01
- 7 Hartford Road, \$823,000, 3 Bdrms, 1936 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$765,000, 11-07-03
- 12 Las Mesas Path, \$840,000, 2 Bdrms, 1268 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 1-15-16
- 18 Lind Court, \$1,247,500, 3 Bdrms, 1350 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 1-22-16;
Previous Sale: \$560,000, 05-03-02
- 17 Overhill Road, \$975,000, 3 Bdrms, 1969 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 1-15-16;
Previous Sale: \$345,000, 07-07-89
- 26 Parkway Court, \$2,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 3769 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 1-21-16
- 21 Sandy Court, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3311 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 1-29-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 04-11-06



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Into the Wilder-ness

... continued from page D1

Brooks Street's Perry says that about 20 percent of Wilder's current residents are empty nesters.

Bresnik and Mallory fit this profile. Essentially empty nesters – Mallory's 27-year-old daughter has boomeranged home while she gets her career established – they claim to be Wilder's oldest residents. As the sixth to move there, next door to the very first occupants, they are certainly among the earliest. The younger residents tend to work for large tech companies like Sales Force, Paypal, and Survey Monkey, or in biotech. Many of the children attend nearby private schools, but some attend Orinda public schools and high schools in the Acalanes Union High School District. Buses are available for students of both public and private schools.

Both families extol Wilder's proximity to open space, and they make full use of it. Mallory says she and her daughter particularly enjoy hiking the winding trail between the development and neighboring Sibley Regional Park to get away from it all. The Vicencios make regular use of Wilder's local system of trails and paths to walk their two golden retrievers. The valley is home to a great many songbirds and raptors that are generally in view, and Mallory especially likes to watch the local flock of redwinged blackbirds doing aerobatics "at that magic time" before dusk.

To most of us who zip past Wilder on Highway 24, the most salient feature of the project is the growing group of five sports fields that cascade down from the



Photo Andy Scheck

top of the saddle separating the valley from the rest of the world. The fields, included in Wilder as a condition for building the development, are already busy, especially after school and on weekends. Michelle Lacy, Orinda's Director of Parks and Recreation, reports that they are used for youth and adult soccer, lacrosse, youth

and adult rugby, adult softball, youth baseball, and field hockey. She cites 2015 use by no less than 19 different sports organizations from both sides of the tunnel, including some from Berkeley and Martinez-Pleasant Hill.

... continued on page D17



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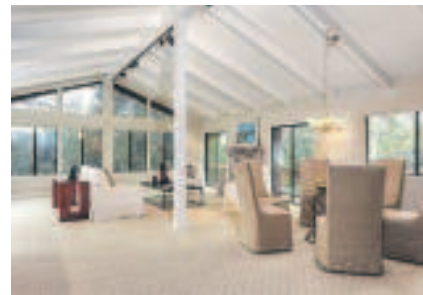
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The Ebb and the Flow

By Andi Peterson Brown

The spring selling season is upon us, and our market has never been hotter. While most people are aware that our housing market is part of broader economic cycles, many people do not realize that there is also a seasonal influence affecting market activity throughout the year. And when it comes to this annual cycle, all months are not created equal. Sleepy August cannot hold a candle to lively March, spirited April, and bubbly May. And poor January. It tends to get lost in the shuffle.

Why is this? The answer is quite logical. The spring and early summer weather is the perfect backdrop for selling a home. Gardens are blooming, the sun is shining, and it's easy for buyers to get out and see what's available. Many of those buyers also pay attention to kindergarten and school registration dates. Thus, market activity is almost always at its highest during April, May, and June. We tend to see activity drop off towards the end of July as both buyers and sellers take their vacations and enjoy their summer days. Here in Lamorinda, once the school year kicks in and routines are established, there tends to be a second surge in market activity. This "mini-spring" lasts through the beginning of November, but once Thanksgiving hits, market activity usually drops off. Most people are in holiday mode, and buying or selling real estate slides onto the backburner if it is not a necessity.

Spring buyers are out in full force. If you've been thinking about selling your home, there has never been a better time.



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Stylish Solutions

Discovering New Design Trends "Behind the Drapery"

By Ann McDonald



Ambiente Trade Show tabletops are drool worthy for this lover of all things dining. Exhibitors come from across the globe to showcase what's new and next. Here, for 2016 we see pastels and primary colors in bakeware and tabletop. Official press photo, 2016 www.messefrankfurt.com

Welcome to "the season," as we say in the design business. We are in the middle of a time of year when trade shows abound, and comfortable shoes start traveling with us discreetly in purses, whipped out for the walk between booths and parties. From the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show in Las Vegas to the shows across the pond, I thought it would be fun to give you, Stylish Suburbanite, an inside peek at a few standards, as they say, "behind the drapery."

These are industry-only trade shows where designers, architects, builders, suppliers and manufacturers showcase their wares. We glean training, access to unreleased products and test models, and learn about what will hit the market six to eight, or in some cases, 12 to 16 months out.

KBIS: The Kitchen Bath and Industry Show. Held in different locations across the country, the 'mac-daddy' for the western United States is held in Las Vegas, often in conjunction with several smaller home-gear shows having to do with drapery, building and property development.

At KBIS, designers learn about new introductions from appliance manufacturers to tile companies, hardware brands to lighting manufacturers. What was the hot ticket this year? Custom cabinetry and pretty much custom everything.

Ambiente. Just finished, this is the leading international consumer goods show held in Germany. Here we find the newest from enamel cookware to Versace home's latest porcelain introductions to the next best-unknown lighting designer. Ambiente is an extraordinary show, and often showcases trends that will hit the U.S.

market, six to 12 months out. The trends this year? Nature on and in man-made materials, including porcelain. We see sand and other raw materials transferred and printed onto and into anything from porcelain to textiles. From table linens to tiles, nature influences, from raw to overtly floral and colorful, were everywhere.

Maison Objet. The show. Well, not the only show, but considered "the" show, here you find the most fabulous introductions of textiles, product and furniture design as well as historical and educational seminars with inside access to designers and fabricators. Exhibitors come from across the globe. One of the hallmarks of this show, as well as Ambiente is the use of unusual and custom materials.

The use of hand formed objects, from hand blocked fabrics, to non-assembly line pillows, and lighting fixtures where even the 'same form' was not an exact replica of the one adjacent stands out. There is a return to perfectly imperfect in the design world, a stronger sense of couture level production, where you are acutely aware that a hand has made this, not a machine alone.

Maison has a U.S. show scheduled for the second time this year in Miami.

High Point North Carolina. Every year, twice a year, designers pilgrimage to High Point for new product releases, fabrics and furniture, accessories and educational seminars. This actually is "the show" for furniture and fabrics. Due to the overwhelming volume of product at this show, my team and I plan for weeks in advance depending on the goals for our time in North Carolina each season. Many brands and designers debut new furniture lines and use High Point to educate on product construction or uses. We will often spend half our time behind the scenes on private tours or in closed-door sessions with those leading the market.



This photo showcases a traditional look, still popular with clients. Cabinetry by Teddwood Fine Cabinetry, Design and Installation by David Calvani & Sons, David Calvani

... continued on page D14

Coming Soon!



111 Bear Ridge Trail, Orinda

New Listing
8.41 Acre Parcel



Springhill Road, Lafayette

Custom Design



5 Burton Vista Court, Lafayette

Pending



20 Whitfield Court, Pleasant Hill

Sold



539 The Glade, Orinda

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23 Sessions Road, Lafayette



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Stylish Solutions

Discovering New Design Trends “Behind the Drapery”

... continued from page D10



Photo courtesy Ambiente, www.messefrankfurt.com

What's hot? The transitional traditional is still holding court. While I love a contemporary space, at the end of the day, people – no matter how austere in their design aesthetic – still need someplace to sit and sleep. We are seeing fresh takes on traditional, fewer completely dark rooms, and mixed metals and florals are back – in a big

way. There are reprints of classic floral patterns a la the chintz of 1980, albeit with an updated flair, used in moderation, or not, to remind us of softer, gentler living. It's rather nice. I think every room can use a flower or two!

Las Vegas Market. Similar to North Carolina, but on a much smaller scale, the Las Vegas market is packed with furniture, fabric and accessories and is also run in conjunction with the accessories and gift shows. While many in Lamorinda are getting ready for swim meets, my team and I are often headed off to source holiday décor in the dead of summer. It is funny to wholesale Christmas trees, and then fly back for the OMPA, but therein lies the truth behind the drapery for designers.

There are so many more ideas I could share from boutique shows run alongside the majors, where artisanal wares are showcased by the artist themselves, to other national trade shows, but I have learned to edit. For the Lamorinda design-savvy suburbanite, these are our majors. After each show, my team and I gather trend reports for

those who desire a more in-depth experience. For a recap from our travels last year, be sure to read the June 3 article, “What's New in the World of Design” in the Lamorinda Weekly online archives. For this year, we continue to scour the globe to bring you the best available.



Would you like to attend one of our post-trade show trend mornings? We gather professional real estate agents, and other

interested individuals for in-depth presentations, private or group, after each major trade show. Book your office or real estate agent group today. Don't fall behind with outdated design counsel. To learn more, visit www.couturechateau.com/trends

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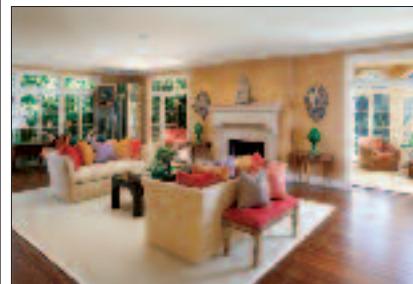
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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Fence Me In

By Cynthia Brian

“Good fences make good neighbors.” – Robert Frost



A crew builds a fence.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Growing up on a ranch we had all kinds of enclosures. Fences to keep the cattle in, fences to keep the deer out, coops for the chickens, hutches for the rabbits, paddocks for the horses, pens for the sheep, and extra corrals for the injured animals we would rehabilitate before release. What we didn't have were human fences.

While traveling to the East Coast and the southern states, I noticed a lack of fences between homes. Lawns rolled into one another, gardens meandered, play structures appeared to belong to no one or everyone. In the California sierras, the same mentality holds true for many homeowners. But in the cities and suburbs of California, strong fences create good neighbors, especially if you live near a house that reminds you of Miss Havisham's ruined mansion in Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations," albeit with abandoned cars on blocks, rusting washing machines, and a backyard piled



A mangy coyote on the hill.

high with trash. The sturdy redwood fence dividing your properties could be your sanity savior.

Here in our neck of the woods we experience a different kind of problem. Deer! With few predators and plenty of open space deer have been multiplying exponentially. This is not good news for gardeners. Of all the correspondence I receive from readers, the majority of the questions concern these trespassing foragers.

“What can I plant that deer won't eat?”

“How can I keep the deer from breaking my sprinkler systems?”

“What can I do to keep the deer out of my garden?”

Over the years I have written articles about our dear deer and after three decades of trying literally every trick suggested, I am convinced that there is only one answer.

Build a fence!

I decided to call several fencing companies to find out if they have experienced a rise in requests for deer fencing. The answer was a resolute “Yes!” Ryan Collins, the estimator for C & J Fencing, informed me that 95 percent of the calls he had been on in the last month were all related to building deer fencing. Despite the fact that C & J builds custom decks, arbors,

handrails and benches as well as offering ornamental iron and chain link, putting in redwood and galvanized wire deer barriers has become an important part of protecting landscapes.

If you are considering installing a fence, repairing, upgrading or replacing an old one, as a homeowner, what do you really need to know? I interviewed Collins more in depth and also tagged along on an installation. Here are some tips that I gratefully learned through the generosity of C & J as well as through my own observations:

1. Get recommendations from friends, family, or neighbors you trust.
2. Invite two or three legitimate companies to look at your location and bid your job. Ask how long each has been in business. Make sure all are licensed, carry Workman's Comp Insurance, General Liability Insurance, and Auto Insurance.
3. To be fair to all, make sure each estimator is bidding apples for apples. Show each of the contractors exactly where you want the installation. Share your expectations, and your fears, if any. Be clear about how high you want your fence. To keep the deer and coyotes out of your garden, seven feet is the recommendation.

... continued on page D18

Into the Wilder-ness

... continued from page D4

Three fields are completed and in use, and were reserved for a total of 6,166 hours in 2015; two more fields are scheduled to come online shortly. As might be expected, all of the new life and activity in Wilder have brought with them what Mallory calls “growing pains.” The empty new streets were quickly discovered by skateboarders, who could not resist the temptation to try them out for an exciting ride. There have been a few incidents of mailbox break-ins and minor vandalism at construction sites because there are not yet a lot of eyes in the valley, she says, and some problems with construction trash and violation of construction hours in the valley. There have also been a few instances of vehicles abandoned on the property that may be related to the easy access afforded by proximity to Highway 24. Residents are working closely with the developer, the Orinda Planning Department and the Orinda Police to address these concerns, and heightened enforcement of permit conditions and stepped-up security measures, such as installation of surveillance cameras, are expected to resolve most of these issues. Others will simply disappear as the construction ends and the valley fills up with new residents.

The Wilder community is settling at a slower pace, with only 16 of the proposed 245 custom homes in the development occupied, and 23 more under construction. How quickly Wilder will build out is anyone’s guess. “The market will dictate the velocity of sales,” says Perry, but “every sale adds new word of mouth.” Vicencio believes it will not take long, perhaps until the end of 2017, because “progress is amazing.” Mallory thinks it will take a longer time, maybe five to 10 years. In the meantime, Wilder’s pioneering residents are busy building a community by doing the kinds of things pioneers have always done: hosting potluck dinners and throwing progressive Christmas parties to get acquainted, and banding together to address their community issues. In addition, they have done something their historic counterparts did not traditionally do. They hired a concierge to handle all of the duties that title implies in the hospitality world, plus a few others such as coordinating community events.

“We’re very pleased to be here, and very fortunate,” says Mallory. And while she and her neighbors have Wilder all to themselves, their pioneering lifestyle is unique to Orinda.



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Fence Me In ... continued from page D16



A pear tree in bloom flanked by a blooming camellia.



A magnificent tulip magnolia burst into bloom.

4. Ask and get in writing the materials that will be used. Will the fence be redwood, Douglas fir, pressure treated, metal, chain link, or something else? How deep will the posts be set? (Two feet or more is best.) How much concrete will be used? If using wood, are the posts to be set eight feet on center with 16-foot top rails? Where will gates be placed? Is the wire galvanized welded? Is there an up charge for the longer lasting black or green vinyl coated wire?

5. What is the experience and expertise of the crew

who will handle the job?

6. How soon can the fence be started and completed?

7. Does the company contact the utility companies or is it the obligation of the homeowner to know where pipes, cable, electrical, and gas lines reside? If it is the homeowner's responsibility, call 811 to schedule a free inspection.

8. Is the leftover debris recycled? What happens to it?

9. Is there a warranty and, if so, how long?

10. When is payment due?

Costs vary widely between companies. Most fencing companies quoted an additional \$2 a linear foot for the upgrade to the green or black vinyl coated wire while another company quoted \$5 a linear foot. Some companies offered discount coupons; others were willing to negotiate within reason based on client needs. The key is to know exactly what you want and ask for it. Although a wood and wire fence could last 25 years or longer, warranties for the pressure treated posts and kickboards tended to be 15 years and gates one year. Other than special order items which required a deposit, payment for the structure is due upon completion, according to the companies I interviewed.

Once you have installed a redwood fence, should it be left natural, stained or painted? Collins indicated that this is a personal choice, however, staining or painting will extend the life of the wood because it will be better protected from the elements, especially moisture.

I watched C & J's crew chief, Lopez, with his six man crew as they were unloading trucks, digging post-holes, hauling bags of concrete, cutting wood and erecting the fence. Every person was on his game, non-stop working until the job was finished and the area cleaned



A spectacular white tulip stellata magnolia adds brilliance to the landscape.

and cleared. Depending on the size of the job, a crew consists of two to four men, with a few more usually arriving the first day to unload. Lopez's crew were so impressive that I asked Collins if all of the 12 crews run by C & J were equally as hard working and diligent. He responded that because C & J is a family-run business, each crewmember is hand picked, resulting in a pride of ownership mentality. Many times they hire siblings of a dedicated worker. Lopez, an eight-year veteran of C & J, brought his two brothers on board.

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A crew with a post hole digger.

This information made me realize that asking about the expertise and work ethic of the specific crew assigned to a project is a critical part of hiring the right company for the job. I wondered if some companies were charging higher fees because of El

Nino. (I had heard that roofing companies were known for that practice.) Collins responded that a company with integrity quotes the same fees year-round. Many people believe the misconception that winter is a time when fencing contractors scramble for work, but that is not the case. If you need a fence, do it when you want it. Don't wait.

To help you explore your options, here are four local companies to consider:

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- A & J Fencing
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Cynthia Brian with Ryan Collins, and the crew from C & J

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