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A long freight train hauled by an impressive mallet steam locomotive rounds a bend on the Los Arabis Creek garden railroad.

Photo Victor Ryerson

Trains Roar Through Lafayette's Happy Valley

By Victor Ryerson

The Los Arabis Creek Railway Company is not your average railroad. Although its long freights and flashy passenger trains wind along a creek and through the trees of Lafayette's Happy Valley, nobody is hollering, "Not in my backyard!" As a matter of fact, many

of us would hope to be so fortunate.

The Los Arabis Creek is a garden railroad, the creation of train lover Bob Evans, and it runs in his backyard. With his wife Norma, he recently opened it to visitors from all over the country, and to local friends and neighbors.

Attendees of the National Garden Railway Convention, held this year in the Bay Area, were their guests as part of a tour of local garden railroads. On July 10 neighbors and other members of the public were also invited to have a look. Nobody left disappointed. ... continued on page A12

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Lamorinda Limelight: Larry Olson

A Lifetime of Service Continues

By Cathy Dausman

Larry Olson has worn so many hats in his adult life it is a wonder you can see his face. The soft spoken Orinda man with a voice reminiscent of longtime Disney narrator Rex Allen claims to be retired, although it would be more accurate to say he continues to work but no longer gets paid.

Recently Olson flew his Piper J-3 Cub to Lompoc for the West Coast Cub Fly-in. He also owns a Cessna 172; these aircraft are not just his hobby, but tools of his volunteer trade. Olson has devoted 15 years' flight time to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

"Initially search and rescue was our main focus," he says, along with an aids-to-navigation inspection of the hundreds of markers spread along the delta waters, but the focus now is on Department of Homeland Security matters and drug interdiction.

Olson and his crew also act as a



Larry Olson Photo Cathy Dausman
living marine resources unit; searching for whales on the move or entangled in fishing gear, and noting the location of crab and salmon vessels.

... continued on page A9

How Proposed Transportation Sales Tax Will Impact Lamorinda

By Nick Marnell

The Board of Supervisors July 12 approved the expenditure plan of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, paving the way for a countywide one-half cent sales tax measure to appear on the November ballot. The plan proposes funding for several high-profile projects in the Lamorinda area.

Since 1988 the dollars generated through voter-approved sales tax measures C and J, and administered by the CCTA, have funded a wide variety of major Contra Costa County transportation projects, notably the Caldecott Tunnel's Fourth Bore. The current Measure J half-cent sales tax, in effect through 2034, will generate approximately \$2.5 billion. If the new half-cent sales tax measure is approved, it will bring in an additional \$2.9 billion through 2047.

The expenditure plan provides for funding over five major areas, including transit, major highway corridors, local streets and roads, the environment, and the safe trans-

portation of children, seniors and people with disabilities.

"It took a lot of compromise among many, many groups and organizations to bring us to where we are today," Board Chair Candace Andersen said.

In order for a jurisdiction to receive its share of the funds generated by the proposed sales tax, it must meet a long list of criteria, including the adoption of a development approval process that supports transit, bicycle and pedestrian access. Each jurisdiction must also demonstrate reasonable progress in providing housing opportunities for all income levels, and must maintain growth within clear urban limits.

"You want the voters' money, these are the rules," said Don Tatzin, Lafayette city council member and CCTA commissioner. A public oversight committee will make sure that the rules are followed.

... continued on page A8

Civic News A1-A12

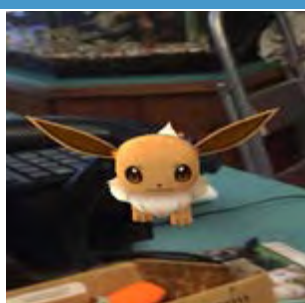
Orinda OKs biggest budget in its 32 years. - page A6

Fire District A8

Director Fred Weil decides not to run again. - page A8

Life in Lamorinda B1-B8

It's peekaboo with Pikachu as Pokemon GO takes over. - page B1.



Sports C1-C4

Former Lafayette rower is now headed to Rio. - page C1.



Our Homes D1-D16

Advantages to staging a home for sale. - page D1





Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

Monday, Aug. 1, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Aug. 8, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report June 26 to July 9

Alarms	104
911 Calls (incl. hang-ups)	6
Noise complaints	15
Traffic stops	115
Suspicious Circumstances	16
Suspicious Subjects	21
Suspicious Vehicles	26
Abandoned Vehicle	
900 block Moon Ct.	
4000 block Marianne Dr.	
Camino Diablo/Stanley Blvd.	
Moon Ct./Crescent Dr.	
Acalanes Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
900 block Acalanes Rd.	
Auto Recovery	
3500 block Marlene Dr.	
Battery	
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd.	
1000 block Second St.	
3400 block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Burglary, Auto	
900 block Risa Rd.	
3400 Monroe Ave.	
Burglary, Commercial	
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd.	
70 block Lafayette Cir.	
Burglary, Misc	
1100 block Garden Ln.	
Burglary, Residential	
10 block Arbor Way	
4100 block Hidden Valley Rd.	
Dispute, Verbal	
1100 block Loral Dr.	
700 block Silver Crest Ct.	
Disturbance	
1100 block Loral Dr.	
800 block Carl Rd.	
3400 block School St.	
1700 Springbrook Rd.	
3500 E View Dr.	
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd.	
30 block Silverwood Dr.	
DUI	
Oak Hill Rd./Hwy 24	
Fireworks	
800 block Mt. View Dr.	
El Curtola/Kinney Dr./WCR	
Sunset Loop/Meek Pl.	
Bickerstaff St./Dewing Ave.	
3500 block Silver Springs Rd.	
Highland Rd./Sundale Rd.	
St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr.	
Mosswood Dr./Village Center	
10 block Blackthorn Rd.	
St Mary's Rd./Lucille Ln.	
3200 block Camino Diablo	
1200 block Quandt Rd.	
900 Moon Ct.	
Burton Valley Elementary	
Fraud	
900 block Dewing Ave.	
Harassment	
Oak Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Health & Safety violation	
1000 block Carol Ln.	
Hit & Run	
3300 block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
900 block First St.	
4000 block Mt Diablo Blvd	
Deer Hill Rd./First St.	
20 block Lafayette Cir	
3600 block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
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Lafayette Website Offers Peek into Major Projects

By Cathy Tyson



Residents can check the progress of Town Center III, located behind Panda Express.

Photo Cathy Tyson

Who doesn't want to know about major construction projects in Lafayette?

Seeking to answer questions about projects that are sprouting up around town, the City of La-

fayette recently used a platform by iCityWork Inc. to create the Major Development Projects page on the city's website. The page will provide an interactive portal showing project locations, along with details about what it will look like when complete, including height, lot size and more.

Noting the level of interest

from buyers, sellers, developers and local residents of Lafayette properties, City Manager Steven Falk says the planning department is busier now, fielding inquiries and processing applications, than it has been in decades.

"Because the city runs a super lean operation, we look for tools that allow people to help them-

selves," Falk said. "Providing the public with a reliable online resource that provides transparent information about major development projects in Lafayette eliminates a phone call and allows our planners to concentrate on other tasks. It's good for everybody involved."

All new commercial construction, new multifamily construction projects of 5,000 square feet or more, and all major subdivisions are criteria for projects to be included on the website, according to Chris Juram, planning technician in charge of the project that launched on July 1. Current projects on the site include Lennar Homes, Lenox Homes, Lucas Ranch Estates, Town Center III and Woodbury I.

The Major Development Projects map is a new addition to the city website, but there are also 40 other maps that illustrate an array of helpful city aspects, from bus routes, street sweeping, FEMA flood maps, hiking trails and public parking. Visit www.lovelafayette.org and click on City Hall to get started.

More Public Parking Coming Downtown

By Cathy Tyson

With very little drama, the city was able to purchase the Oak Bridge Parking lot and an adjacent small parcel located at the corner of Golden Gate Way and First Street, with money that was already in the city's parking fund. Residents going to Plaza Way's new popular businesses Sideboard and A Runner's Mind, along with anyone else searching for a spot, can use one of the Oak Bridge 27 parking stalls in the very near future.

The papers are signed and escrow has been opened for the \$1,562,000 purchase from Chuck and Virginia Stuart who own the main lot, and the Wiley Family Trust, which owns the small adjacent parcel where the namesake bridge is located. Because the city can only pay fair market value, the sales price was determined by an appraisal, and that works out to \$57,851 per parking space. Both parcels combined are roughly half an acre, and the entrance is directly across from Hamlin cleaners. This lot will add to existing evening and weekend public parking next to the Park Theater on Golden Gate



New parking is coming to downtown directly across from Hamlin Cleaners on Golden Gate Way.

Photo Cathy Tyson

Way. Chalk it up to good parking karma for funding the new public lot. Meter revenue adds up over time, along with enforcement revenue, which can only be spent on parking. There's only one minor special request from the Stuarts: to lease eight parking spaces to adjacent businesses until their lease expires in 2018, at the rate of \$60 per space per month with annual increases.

What hasn't been firmed up is whether meters will be installed, said planning and building director Niroop Srivatsa; installing meters is a way to encourage space turnover, not to mention discourage BART parkers. The city has not yet taken possession of the lot, but when it does, a number of items will need to be decided: the hours of operation, fencing, meters and more.

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Reporter Wanted

Lamorinda Weekly is looking for a Lafayette City Reporter

Job Description:

Beat reporter for Lafayette. Attend 2-4 meetings per month in the town assigned. Maintain relationships with city officials and community leaders. Write 1-2 articles per week covering subjects such as decisions made at City Council or Planning Commission meetings, community events, citizen profiles, police activities, or other interesting news items.

Required Qualifications:

Excellent writing and communication skills. Ethical and professional. Live or work in the Lamorinda area and have the ability to write balanced, researched, well-structured articles. Prior newsroom experience helpful, but not required.

Compensation: Compensation is made on a per meeting/article basis.

Contact:

Lamorinda Weekly, PO Box 6133,
Moraga, CA 94570, (925) 377-0977,
wendy@lamorindaweekly.com
Attn: Wendy Scheck



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Senior Symposium 'Aging by Design' Set for Aug. 6

By Cathy Tyson

Now in its eighth year, the senior symposium, "Aging by Design," is back with valuable information for seniors in Lamorinda.

Sponsored by the Lafayette Community Foundation, the event will feature special guest speakers, include Dr. Sandra Karpenko, director of palliative care at John Muir Hospital, who will discuss "Love, Death and All That Matters." Other presenters will focus

on laughter yoga and hearing loss issues.

The free event will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 6 at Lafayette Elementary School, 950 Moraga Road. Organizers ask that people register for the free event. Register via the Lafayette Community Foundation website at www.lafayettecf.org or by phone at (925) 284-8214. Those who do have a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate at Diablo Foods.

Lafayette Seeking City Council Candidates

By Cathy Tyson

Want to serve Lafayette residents and are available on the second and fourth Monday nights of the month? The City of Lafayette has announced that nomination papers for three seats on the city council will be available at the city offices, 3675 Mount Diablo Blvd., suite 210, from now until the filing cutoff of 5 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 12.

Three of the five members' terms will expire in November of this year: Mayor Mark Mitchell,

vice mayor Mike Anderson and Traci Reilly. Reilly has already said she will complete her term, but won't run again.

According to city clerk Joanne Robbins, in case one or more of the incumbents don't file nomination papers by Friday, Aug. 12, the filing period will be extended to Wednesday, Aug. 17 for individuals who are not currently city council members. Contact Robbins for more information on the position at (925) 284-1968.

Citizens' Oversight Committee

The Lafayette School District is currently seeking applicants to serve on the Measure C Bond Citizens' Oversight Committee. Applications are available on the District website at www.lafsd.k12.ca.us or email Sharon Carman at scarman@lafsd.k12.ca.us for information. Applications are due by Sept. 9, 2016.

Consider Alternative Transportation to LSC Meet

By Peggy Spear

The fifth annual Lafayette Swim Conference Championship Meet will be hosted at Acalanes High School on July 30 and 31. This popular event is the culmination of the 2016 swim season for many local children, ranging in age from 4 to 18.

However, parking won't be as pretty as some of the swims because of the construction caused by solar installations in the Acalanes High School parking lot. The Lafayette Swim Conference has ar-

ranged several alternatives for families to alleviate parking issues on nearby streets.

It is encouraging attendees to use UBER, ride bikes or carpool. As an additional measure, the LSC has secured a private shuttle service to transport swimmers from the Lafayette BART parking lot to Acalanes High School.

Organizers are also urging attendees to be courteous and respectful of the surrounding homes and neighbors.

Local Sales Tax Update

After more discussion about sales tax language, and with the county deadline to place a measure on the November ballot looming, a final decision is expected at the July 25 city council meeting. It's expected to be unanimously approved to place the measure on the ballot and give voters a chance to decide if they approve of a general 1 percent sales tax measure for 29 years that would provide \$3 million annually, with citizens' oversight. All of the funds would be spent in Lafayette with priority for protecting open space, reducing downtown congestion, enhancing police protection, increasing downtown parking, acquiring land for downtown parks and other public uses, and revitalizing the historic Park Theater.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.

Send a letter to the editor:

letters@lamorindaweekly.com

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Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Sept. 6, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Aug. 22, 7 p.m.
Monday, July 25, 7 p.m. canceled
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

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 Report

D.U.I. 7/10/16: A 39-year-old male got out of his car at the Safeway parking lot around 7:30 p.m. and displayed what the police report calls, "objective symptoms of intoxication." After finding several open bottles of alcohol in the car, the subject performed and flunked a series of field sobriety tests. The fellow and his dog were transported to the Moraga Police Department, after signing a Promise to Appear they were released to a sober family member. He had a blood alcohol content of .31, almost four times the legal limit.

Another D.U.I. 7/9/16: A 22-year-old was speeding down Larch Avenue with multiple open bottles of alcohol around 7 p.m. He was arrested for DUI after field sobriety tests.

Yet another D.U.I. 7/08/16: A Volkswagen was pulled over for speeding on Larch Avenue and the 47-year-old driver was arrested and taken to the Martinez jail. His wife and child were also in the car and they were picked up by a sober family member. All three D.U.I. incidents were recorded by officer number 173, working to serve and protect Moragans.

Identity theft 7/08/16: A Country Club Drive resident was contacted by his credit monitoring service that advised him that his identity was used to open a Capital One credit card in another state. The would-be victim believes his personal information was stolen due to a security breach at his employer.

Car versus building 7/08/16: A driver lost control of his or her car and somehow damaged a Campolindo High School building. No one was hurt. "The building received slight damage. The vehicle sustained moderate damage," says the succinct police report.

Car break in 7/05/16: A window was smashed on an older Volkswagen Vanagon parked in a carport on Miramonte Drive; a bag with electronic hand tools was stolen.

Other crimes occurring in Moraga from July 5 -12:
Found property – St. Mary's Road, and an abandoned cloth backpack on Harold Drive.
False alarm – Blaine Court, Moraga Way, Rimer Drive, Larch Avenue, Sullivan Drive, Campolindo Drive, Camino Pablo
Misplaced or stolen tech equipment – Saint Mary's College
Identity theft – Louise Court
Missing person – Calle la Montana

Town Hopes to Start Culvert Repair by mid-August

By Sophie Braccini

Repair of the Moraga sinkhole will depend on the California Department of Transportation's speedy approval of the town's plans and permits of the repair of the Laguna Creek culvert.

The approval process leading to the repair of the sinkhole at the crossing the Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road is moving forward satisfactorily, according to Moraga Public Works Director Edric Kwan.

The culvert could be replaced by mid-October, but the road repair is likely to be delayed until 2017.

Kwan confirmed at the July 13 town council meeting that the total \$545,000 the town spent when the emergency occurred last March would be completely reimbursed by the Federal Highway Administration. The second phase or permanent restoration of the sinkhole will require the town to upfront the cost and contribute 11.47 percent of the final expense. The director added that some expenses, such as attorney's fees, might not qualify for reimbursement.

The process is managed by Caltrans. The local agency has signed

a Joint Stewardship and Oversight Agreement with the FHWA to manage federal aid. Its initial decision had been to deny the town's application, but the appeal was granted on July 1.

During the council meeting, vice mayor Dave Trotter noted that Mayor Mike Metcalf used the relationship he had formed working on transportation issues for the town with Randi Iwazaki, executive director of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, to help formulate the town's appeal.

Kwan said that one added element to winning the appeal had been convincing the agency that the town was serious about finding funding to tackle the larger issue of the storm drain system.

"They are now convinced that we are on the right track to get a funding source to get the storm drain system fixed and not have a similar problem happen again," Kwan said.

For information, the storm drain master plan that was received by the council last year had identified culverts as the weakest links of the system; the culvert that failed

had been designated as urgently needed repairs. The plan lists \$8.9 million of high priority work and a total of \$26 million of unfunded delayed maintenance. (See the August 25, 2015 article: www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0913/Creek-Culverts-The-Weakest-Links-of-the-Moraga-Storm-Drain-System.html.)

Kwan's objective is still to finish the replacement of the culvert that channels Laguna Creek before Oct. 15, the date that traditionally marks the beginning of the rainy season. He believes this is critical to avoid more damage, including potential upstream flooding and more property damage. Kwan estimates the replacement of the pipe to take 30 to 35 working days, meaning that the work should start mid- to late-August.

Before work starts the repair contract has to be awarded to a contractor, following a bid process of three weeks, in order to follow the proper protocol. Kwan therefore said at the July 13 meeting that all the required reviews and approvals from Caltrans would need to be secured by July 25. On July 25 Kwan

reported that CalTrans had not completed the necessary approvals and had not given his department an approval date.

The Director had prepared a contingency plan if permits could not be secured on time and the contractor will plug the holes and fill the gaps or the existing damaged metal culvert. Kwan confirmed that temporary repairs should withstand this rainy season and that the rest of the work, replacing the pipe and repairing the road will be done next year. Kwan continues to explore all possible options in case approvals are received in the next days.

Senior engineer Laurie Suggang added that the utilities of the different agencies that are located in the hole are being protected in place during construction. The East Bay Municipal Utilities District will repair its own pipe as the town repairs the culvert. Pacific Gas & Electric has diverted the broken gas line from the hole; it will also tie in the line after the town repairs the culvert. Other utilities such as Central San will let the town repair its utilities and will inspect the finished work.

Town Council Endorses All-access Park at Commons

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Council unanimously endorsed the universal design playground benefitting all children of all abilities that the Rotary has offered to donate to the town.

The council also threw its weight behind locating the new amenities in the center of town at the Commons Park, to maximize access, energy and visibility, rather than at Rancho Laguna Park. It offered to possibly fund any extra grading cost that would be needed to locate the structure at the Commons Park. The Moraga Rotary will soon unveil its fundraising campaign.

Several residents spoke at the meeting in favor of locating the park at the Commons. Their main focus was inclusion. "It's about doing it the right way; it's about special need kids not feeling special," said resident Barry Behr, detailing his conversation with Walnut Creek officials who chose the most central location in their city to include universal design play structures where kids already go to play.

Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Jeanette Fritzky, speaking as a resident, added that the Commons Park was the area where most of the town's energy was and that locating the new all-abilities structure there would demonstrate a degree of acceptance that the rest of society has not reached yet. Such a universal design park would be the first of its kind in Lamorinda.

Kevin Reneau, the president of the Moraga Rotary, explained after the meeting how the project originally was set to be located at the Rancho Laguna Park. "We first visited the Commons with Jay Ingram (Moraga's Parks and Recreation director) several months ago, then Rancho Laguna Park," he recalls. "In that park there is already a flat pad ready to receive a new structure. It seemed to be the most cost effective option."

It is likely that fitting the all-access structure at the Commons will require extra work. At the meeting Ingram showed a drawing that sketched where the new structure could be placed and explained that grading would be required, paths moved, and that the additional expense could be in the \$100,000 range.

Reneau said the Rotary needed certainty regarding the town's support to start their fundraising campaign. He added that a more central location was even better for the project, as long as the extra cost could be covered.

That's when the council stepped up to the plate. Council member Phil Arth said that the town could endorse the project



Image provided

without specifying the location, then he added, "If the Rotary comes with a quarter million dollars, then the town would come up with the \$100,000 from Palos money, a perfect use of it."

... continued on page A8

Clarification: In a story in our last issue, "Moraga Rotary Plans All Abilities Playgrounds," the Lamorinda Weekly mischaracterized the comments of Barry Behr. He said he is in favor of the park, and did not want to see it in a location that excluded some children from playing with other children at the playground, no matter the location.

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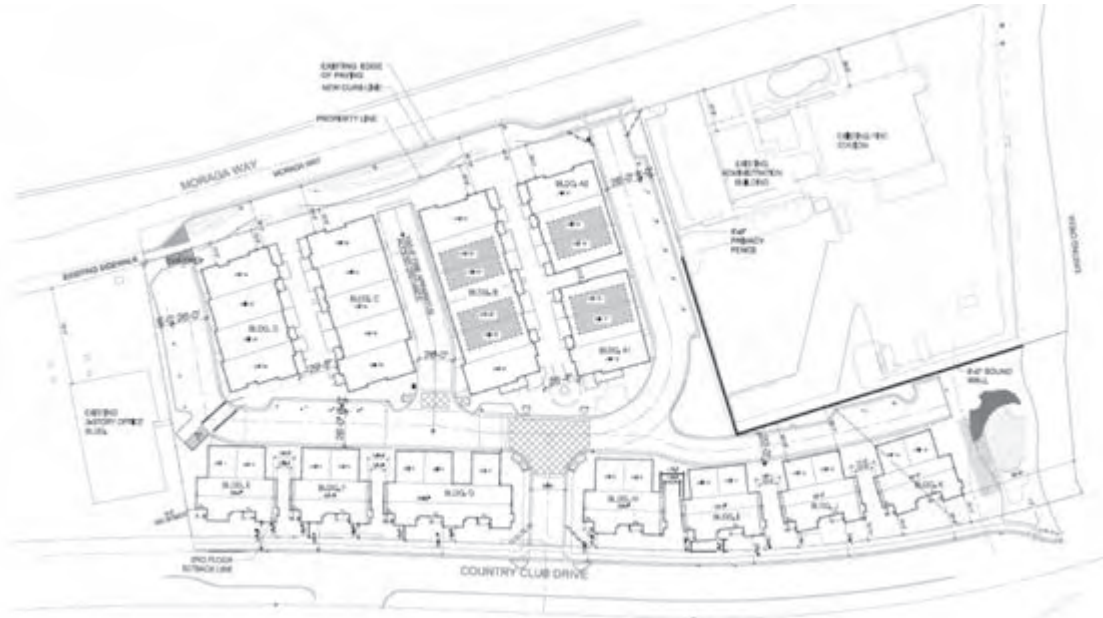
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Planning Commission Stalemate Stalls Moraga Center Homes

By Sophie Braccini



Map of the Moraga Center Homes.

Developer City Ventures met a hurdle on its way to building 36 condominiums along Moraga Way — the Moraga Planning Commission failed to approve its general conceptual plan (GDP) and tentative map.

The highly controversial project that had led a group of residents to file an opposing referendum has not been sent back to the drawing board. City Ventures appealed the commission's action, or lack thereof, and the issue will now go in front of the town council.

With two different perspectives from commissioners, the board was not able to reach a decision. One group, made of chair Steve Woehleke, commissioners Christine Kuckuk and Tom Marnane, contended that their role was to make sure that the plan presented was compliant with the Conceptual Design Plan that was approved with conditions by the council last year; the other group made of commissioners Kymberleigh Korpus, Ferenc Kovac and Suzanne D'Arcy explained that the CDP required more analyzing of the conceptual text to see if it complied with the town's regulations.

Charity Wagner of City Ventures presented a project now in its 13th public meeting. The new plan for the three-acre lot located between Moraga Way and Country Club Drive, next to the fire station, now includes a setback of at least 15 feet from Moraga Way, increases some of the setbacks buildings from Country Club Drive, splits Building A into two smaller buildings to reduce the massing, and reduces the height of units in Buildings C and D from three stories to two stories.

Image provided

It can be noted that in 2014 the planning commission had approved the CDP and that it was opponents that had appealed this approval to the council. In the meantime, new members were appointed to the planning commission, tilting the balance and adding commissioners willing to see if the project complied entirely with the municipal code.

Korpus made a 30-minute presentation where she explained that in her opinion the commission should examine as this phase the development standards as required by the code. "The GDP stage is when the rubber meets the road," she said.

Korpus added that the number of units, 36, was in her opinion inappropriate on the lot, "yet it was clearly decided by town council (and) we are stuck with that," she said.

She listed several aspects that in her opinion were not compliant with the Moraga municipal code. "We can meet our obligation to the developer and still protect the town and the guidelines," she said and proposed a new plan with much smaller units.

D'Arcy noted that this development at the edge of the Moraga Center specific plan does not integrate with the neighborhood and agreed that massive units along the scenic corridor needed a

wider setback; Kovac agreed that scenic corridor rules should apply to this development.

Planning commission chair Chair Steve Woehleke summarized the position of those supporting the approval, saying that the commission was not a policy making body, and that since the town council had approved the CDP, with conditions, the task of the commission was to make sure these conditions had been met, and if so approve the GDP. He, Marnane and Kuckuk said they felt the developer had complied with the council's conditions. It was noted in the staff report that this CDP had been approved with more details than is usually required because of the nature of the project at the center of town.

Phil Kerr, CEO of City Ventures, said that his company did not like to go the legal way but "the town has a legal obligation to act at this time to approve or deny (our project's) general development plan as it conforms with the conceptual development plan."

He said City Ventures would appeal the commission's decision. On July 20 Mayor Mike Metcalf requested to "call up" the planning commission's decision on this project to the town council.



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CalBRE#01908929

TIP OF THE WEEK

Yes, both the weather and the market are HOT! In addition to selling all of our local listings, we have been busy helping buyers purchase homes throughout the East Bay. Here are a few of the recent closings:

170 Shuey Drive, Moraga - \$1,190,000 – Larry Jacobs/Kress Hauri
 2426 Elgin Lane, Walnut Creek - \$1,086,000 – Jim Colhoun
 23 Carr Drive, Moraga - \$1,030,000 – Larry Jacobs/Kress Hauri
 8811 Seneca Street, Oakland – \$680,000 - Janine Hunt
 4116 Penniman, Oakland - \$650,000 – Maureen Caldwell-Meurer
 1810 Central Ave. #307, Alameda - Larry Jacobs/Kress Hauri - \$586,000
 4855 Edgewood Court, Oakley - \$290,000 – Tania DeGroot

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Aug. 2, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Aug. 9, 7 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
Orinda Library

Citizens' Infrastructure

Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
City Hall, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda

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 June 26 to July 9

Alarms	81
Noise complaints	9
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	11
Traffic stops	37
Suspicious Circumstances	5
Suspicious Subjects	16
Suspicious Vehicles	8
Barking Dog	
80 block La Espiral	
100 block Canon Dr.	
Battery	
40 block Lucille Way	
Burglary	
Reported to police	
Burglary, Auto	
Hwy 24/St. Stephens	
Burglary, Residential	
10 block Sol Brea Way	
200 block Overhill Rd.	
Disturbance	
10 block Owl Hill Ct.	
Chevron	
Safeway	
Dispute	
70 block El Gavilan	
40 block Diablo View Dr.	
10 block Camino Sobrante	
10 block Lost Valley Dr.	
40 block Lucille Way	
Fireworks	
El Toyonal/Alta Vista	
20 block White Oak Dr	
Loma Vista Dr./La Bolsita Way	
Orinda Senior Village	
40 block Tarry Ln.	
Acacia Dr./Hacienda Cir.	
70 block Diablo View Dr.	
Miramonte High School	
Harran Cir./East Altarinda Dr.	
La Encinal/El Toyonal	
20 block Camino del Monte	
Harassment	
300 block Tahos Rd.	
100 block Ardith Dr.	
Hit & Run	
200 block Moraga Way	
90 block Underhill Rd.	
Health & Safety possession	
Safeway	
ID Theft	
reported to police	
70 block Charles Hill Rd.	
20 block Ramona Dr.	
100 block Camino Pablo	
Illegal Entry	
700 block Ironbark Ct.	
Police/Fire/ EMS	
10 block Rheem Blvd.	
20 block Irwin Way	
Promiscuous Shooting	
Dos Osos/Alta Vista	
Lost Valley Dr./Valley View	
Reckless Driving	
Overhill Rd./Glorietta Blvd.	
Oakridge Ln./Tahos Rd.	
Camino Pablo/Moraga Way	
Bear Creek Rd./Camino Pablo	
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.	
Theft, Petty	
La Cuesta/Kite Hill Rds.	
10 block Spring Rd.	
700 block Ironbark Ct.	
60 block Moraga Way	
Theft, Grand	
Wagner Ranch Elementary	
Orinda Theater	
Trespass	
10 block Theatre Square	
300 block Camino Sobrante	
Vandalism	
Miramonte High School	
10 block Oakridge Ln.	



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Capital Improvements Highlight Orinda's Budget

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda adopted what may be its largest appropriations budget ever on July 5. The city's capital improvement plan (CIP) accounts for almost \$16 million of the \$18,241,511 expenditures and includes two new projects: stabilization of the city hall parking lot and the Camino Sobrante path at

La Plaza.

Fifty-eight percent of the CIP budget is devoted to roads, and that increases to 88 percent if draining projects are included.

While the city benefited from over \$1 million in grants, it also received the unwelcome news that, owing to an error in calculation, it

received an overpayment in sales tax receipts of between \$540,000 and \$560,000. The miscalculation occurred because of a mistake in the mileage included by Caltrans.

Orinda has opted to repay the amount over two years, which will reduce the city's return to \$228,000 for the next two years, after which

it will be \$440,000 for the remaining 15 years of that measure. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority will put another sales tax measure on the November ballot, which has been supported by Orinda. If it passes, the city stands to garner about \$1 million per year for the next 17 years.

Orinda's New Library Manager is One for the Books

By Sora O'Doherty



Sierra Campagna, the new Orinda Community Library Manager, says she feels at home with books. Photo Sora O'Doherty

Linton Weeks once wrote that, "In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim." Orinda's new Senior Community Library Manager Sierra Campagna hopes that is true.

Before arriving in Orinda, Campagna followed the yellow brick road of vocations, until she clicked her heels and whispered, "There's no place like home." Her career took her through various multimedia companies; she worked on editing TV commercials and film. She worked as an audio engineer for Grace Cathedral, for video stores, cafes and did retail. But when it came time for a job change, she asked herself, "Where have I been happiest?" And the answer was, at the library.

As a child Campagna happily wiled away her afternoons at the San Anselmo branch library. She likes hanging out with like-minded people, and librarians are just her type: witty, smart, kind and talented. So she got a degree in library science and started working in libraries — and she loves it.

Campagna lives in Berkeley with her two children, a daughter, 12, and a son, 14, and two cats she describes as "obnoxious and somewhat neurotic." She recently moved from the Walnut Creek Library to the Orinda Library, where she is the new Senior Community Library Manager. She has been in the Contra Costa Library system for four years. She worked at the Doherty Station Library in San Ramon, where she was the liaison with Diablo Valley College (DVC), and she also worked at DVC in Pleasant Hill as a substitute librarian. She started her master's degree in Library Science in 2008, and has worked in libraries for 15 years, including academic libraries, middle school libraries,

loves helping people connect. She loves working with the public and meeting so many people. She has always been interested in education and believes that education and libraries go hand-in-hand.

At Orinda she manages a staff of seven librarians, library assistants and clerks. They are assisted by volunteers, who operate under a volunteer coordinator. She was attracted to the job in Orinda because it is just the one branch, unlike Walnut Creek's two branches, which she believes will enable her to be more involved in the day-to-day operation of the library. She expects her time to be divided about 50/50 between administrative duties and more creative, consumer-oriented activities.

Libraries are open to all the public; they serve everyone. The library is a safe place, and, as a result, libraries see lots of individuals who are homeless. Some even have mental health issues. Campagna served on the Mental Health Task Team, and focuses on training library staff to recognize and handle mental health issues. The library has a patron conduct policy, and it is very clear what types of behavior are not acceptable. Library staff can ask a patron violating the policy to leave, and the person may be suspended from the library for a day. If the

person resists, staff can call upon the police for assistance.

Campagna praised former librarian Beth Grisham, and said that, for now, she wants to keep the library on the same steady course that Grisham set. But she looks forward to being creative, developing innovative ideas and helping with programming big picture fun things and library outreach. She wants to connect with the community and with Orinda schools.

In the 21st century, Campagna believes that libraries have changed dramatically. Libraries advocate for literacy, help people understand new technology, provide a gathering space for people to meet and exchange ideas. In addition, there are so many new online resources that can help if someone wants to learn to drive, learn a foreign language, stream movies, read electronic books or listen to audiobooks. There are resources for students to do research and the librarians are there to help students learn how to navigate the maze of too much information, and think critically about what they read to identify good information versus bad information. The library even provides passes to a variety of museums.

... continued on next page

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Orinda's New Library Manager is One for the Books

... continued from page A6

Librarians are popular characters in books and movies, and Campagna loves "Party Girl," an internet film in which becoming a librarian is the answer to the protagonist's problems. Campagna's undergraduate degree was in film. She admits that, while she used to read a ton, she has fallen off a bit lately, but is looking forward to getting back to reading more fiction and nonfiction. She is currently reading "Ruin and Rising," the third book in the Grisha series of young adult books by Leigh Bardugo. Her favorite book is Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice", and her favorite movie based on a book is "To Kill a Mockingbird," based on Harper Lee's novel of the same name.

Professionally she is proud of her work at a middle school in Hayward where she felt she was able to transform the students' views of what a library is: a safe, lively space where the love of

reading is encouraged.

Campagna noted that, while circulation is down slightly, library use is going up. "People today suffer from a lack of time," she said. "Librarians can help with that by assisting with research." She thinks that the circulation statistics do not yet take into account online borrowing of e-books and audiobooks. The library provides study programming, free wifi, desks with electrical outlets, and a computer docent if you need help using a computer.

Campagna also addressed the question of inequalities among the residents of different parts of Contra Costa County. She pointed out that books, wherever they are in the library system, are available upon request to any library user in any library. Some books are "ifloats" that live wherever they end up. Thus if a user from one library requests

an ifloat book, when that user returns the book to his or her library, it will stay there until it is requested by a user of another library.

The Contra Costa County Library Annual Book Giveaway takes place from Aug. 18 through Sept. 3 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding Sundays, at the Administration Shipping and Receiving area, 75 Santa Barbara Rd. in Pleasant Hill. Used books no longer needed in the collection are available free while supplies last. A large selection of free paperbacks and hard cover books in all subjects will be sorted into children's, adult fiction and non-fiction.

People who want books should bring boxes or bags. For more information, call (925) 646-6423 or visit www.libadmin@ccclib.org.

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MORAGA \$3,295,000
6/5 Exquisite home in Sanders Ranch, 6426 sqft, 1+ acre lot, beautiful pool & grounds
Elena Hood CalBRE #01221247



ORINDA \$2,975,000
7/4.5 Historic Country Club Estate designed by Walter Ratcliff. Magical Orinda setting.
Laura Abrams CalBRE #01272382



MORAGA \$2,595,000
5/4.5 Exciting & prestigious in Sanders Ranch, 4525 sqft, stunning kitchen, lovely garden w/pool!
Elena Hood CalBRE #01221247



ORINDA \$2,368,000
5/4.5 Peaceful private Gloretha home w/ fantastic views. In-law/au pair set-up. Spacious living.
Rick & Nancy Booth CalBRE #01388020



MORAGA \$2,099,990
5/3 Lovely 3730 sqft, updated kitchen & baths, private master, .30 acre lot w/pool & spa.
Elena Hood CalBRE #01221247



LAFAYETTE \$1,935,000
4/3.5 Elegant home w/stunning views! Gated community with club house, pool & tennis courts.
McAtee|Wilson CalBRE #01349169



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4/3.5 .46 acre. Lg LR & DR, Fam. Rms. Creekside lot w/pool & spa, patios & beautiful gardens.
Nancy Stryker CalBRE #01290021



LAFAYETTE \$1,550,000
4/3 Very private on over 1/2 acre. Wonderful yard with pebble-tech pool & expansive lawn.
Jim Ellis CalBRE #00587326



LAFAYETTE \$1,550,000
4/2 Fabulous light-filled home in Happy Valley Glen! 2174 appx. SF home on appx. .95-acre.
Michele Mckay CalBRE #01902466



MORAGA \$1,488,000
4/2.5 Moraga CC immaculate & impeccable Sequoyah model floor plan w/3424 appx. SF on private ct
Scott Winburne CalBRE #00466182



ORINDA \$1,425,000
3/2.5 Remodeled charming wood shingled traditional! Plus newly constructed 1000 SF Great room.
Laura Abrams CalBRE #01272382



ORINDA \$1,395,000
4/3 2333 approx. SF, .30 Acre Hacienda style bungalow deep in the Ivy Drive neighborhood.
Melanie Snow CalBRE #00878893



MORAGA \$1,125,000
4/2 Great floorplan, fresh paint & lovely finished floors, flat yard, cul-de-sac close to K-8.
Elena Hood CalBRE #01221247

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors
Wednesday, Sept. 7, 7 p.m.
Go to website for meeting location
For meeting times and agendas,
visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors
Tuesday, Aug. 16, 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.

Station 43 Firefighters Take First Steps To New Home

By Nick Marnell



Photo at left is station 43's old home from 1952 - 2016. The rendering at right shows the new station. Image provided nearby in the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church parking lot. A flyer announcing the move was mailed in July to more than 1,200 parcels that reside in the station 43 first-due area of north Orinda.

ripping through the roof, breaching the walls, crawling through the windows, all of the challenges we can run into on our jobs," Capt. Matt Nichols said. After a few days of the training exercises, demolition of the fire station will begin.

Nichols said that the flagpole structure and the classic station 43 signage will be transferred to the new station, expected to be completed in September 2017.

"We are still on schedule to meet that target date," said Fire Chief Stephen Healy.

Weil Will Not Run for Reelection in November

By Nick Marnell



Longtime MOFD director Fred Weil, second from left, has been an advocate for fairness. Photo Nick Marnell

Moraga-Orinda Fire District director Fred Weil stunned the audience at the July 20 district board meeting when he announced that he will not seek reelection to his Division 2 seat in November.

"It is important that a board member be fully committed to a four-year term without distraction, and I am not in a position to do that," said Weil, citing personal reasons for his decision.

Weil has served on the district

board since 2003 and has long advocated for excellence in the MOFD service model and for fairness in dealings with district residents and its employees. He pushed for a competitive wage for the firefighters and he balked at any mention of service cutbacks, even once lecturing the board that it was more focused on saving money than on providing long-term service. As recently as June, as the board listened to a presentation on prefunding dis-

trict retirement costs, Weil warned that properly running the district came first.

"He did a solid job helping our district through good times and bad times, and he always treated us fairly," said firefighters' union representative Mark DeWeese.

Weil often criticizes what he perceives to be sloppy performance, including that of other public agencies. He lashed out at PG&E for what he termed an in-

adequate response to the sinkhole that disrupted Moraga in March. Weil blamed Contra Costa County leadership for the collapse of fire station 46, a joint venture with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District that was estimated to save the district \$1 million a year in operating costs. Even so, Supervisor Candace Andersen praised Weil's "commitment to MOFD and strong desire to keep the citizens of Moraga and Orinda safe."

"Fred will be a tough act to follow," said long-time fellow board member John Wyro.

Weil does have his detractors. A grassroots group faulted Weil for his part in the improper calculation of Fire Chief Peter Nowicki's pension in 2009, costing the district millions of dollars over the chief's retirement period, and in 2015 demanded Weil's ouster from the board. "As long as he remains a member of the MOFD board, his judgment will be questioned," said Steve Cohn, group spokesman. Cohn declined to comment on Weil's announcement.

"I have enjoyed this immensely," Weil said. "Whoever my successor will be, I hope will enjoy the opportunities as much as I have."

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Lamorinda

Transportation Sales Tax

... continued from page A1

Officials of the Lamorinda communities outlined what the money from this proposed tax measure will provide for their jurisdictions.

Moraga

Benefits to Moraga residents include more than \$400,000 for local street and road maintenance over the life of the proposed measure, according to Ellen Clark, town planning director. The plan will also provide funding for pedestrian and bicycle projects throughout town, for enhanced transit service and for the Lamorinda School Bus program, which eliminates 3,000 automobile trips every school day. "Major streets projects like the new roundabouts planned along St. Mary's Road could also be funded with the measure," Clark said.

Orinda

"BART is a huge piece, because residents want access to BART," said Amy Worth, Orinda city council member and CCTA commis-

sioner. BART, however, will not receive proceeds from the sales tax measure until it meets contingencies, which include spending on its own infrastructure and funding by Alameda and San Francisco counties. Money will also go toward the design of direct access to east-bound Highway 24, the city's bicycle and pedestrian master plan, and the maintenance of Orinda roads. Worth said that the plan will address increased demand for senior services, as seniors wish to be able to age in place in Lamorinda.

Lafayette

Tatzin also led off with BART, noting that Lafayette residents are big users of the system, with money from the proposed tax allocated to increased capacity and ridership. Also planned is improvement of traffic and pedestrian flow and bicycle access in the downtown.

"We want to make the portion of Mt. Diablo Boulevard west to Acalanes Road a more attractive

route," Tatzin said. A bicycle trail along the East Bay Municipal Utility District aqueduct is also on the docket.

Not only did all of the 19 county jurisdictions support the expenditure plan, every member of each of the governing bodies voted yes. Orinda endorsed the plan in May, Moraga and Lafayette in June. Having been approved by the Board of Supervisors, the plan returns to the CCTA board for approval, then back to the supervisors for adoption of an ordinance allowing the sales tax measure to be placed on the November ballot, where it must garner two-thirds of the vote for passage.

"We have taken into consideration the needs of various interests, and we think this is going to be saleable to the public," said Supervisor Federal Glover, also a CCTA commissioner.

Moraga

All-access Park at Commons

... continued from page A4

He was referring to fees the city will collect from the Palos Colorados development.

Mayor Mike Metcalf agreed that using part of the developer's fee from the Palos Colorados project, already about \$2 million, to help fund this project would be appropriate. All other council members rallied around the idea, supporting the concept and its possible location at the Commons Park. They asked Ingram to come back at their next meeting, on Aug. 24 with a feasibility study and a more refined cost. The members want to also keep the Rancho Laguna park option open for now.

Jon Bawden of Ross Recreation Equipment, the company chosen

for the project, said that he had never had a discussion about the Commons Park and assured that the company's equipment was versatile and could fit into an existing space or multiple spaces to create an inclusive design. Ross will work with staff to look at the best possibilities at the Commons.

Ingram is working on a master plan for the Moraga Commons Park that will include public participation in the fall, and his plan was that the first concepts would emerge in November. The council still required an August presentation for that play structure because they do not want to delay decisions for the Rotary.

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Letters to the Editor

Clarifying Position on Playground

I want to clarify my position on the Special Needs Playground in Moraga. If you read the article in the Lamorinda Weekly July 13, you were given the impression I was not in favor of the playground at Rancho Laguna. On the contrary, I had no strong feeling on the location. My main concern was that the playground equipment was not going to be installed with the existing structures but be on the opposite side of the park.

My motivation for getting involved was that I feel strongly that all children should have the opportunity to play together. Acceptance of someone different than oneself is an important lesson.

I congratulate the Town Council for unanimously recommending the placement of the new equipment be located at the Commons.

Barry Behr
Moraga

Womenpriests Encourage Inclusivity

Dear Editor,

This is in response to last issue's Letter to the Editor about Womenpriests. It is my hope that providing some information may soothe the writer's feelings of being offended.

There are many different Catholic churches, each living their particular beliefs and traditions in an effort to "follow Jesus." Examples include: Roman Catholic, Eastern, Orthodox, and Anglican Communion. In the U.S., additional Catholic churches include: Old Roman, Celtic, Independent and Gnostic.

Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) beliefs include that Jesus lives within each of us, and each is called to use their gifts. The RCWP states their mission: "To spiritually prepare and support women and men from all states of life, who are theologically qualified, who are committed to an inclusive model of Church, and who are called by the Spirit and their communities to minister within the Roman Catholic Church" (RCC).

Within the RCC, several theologies are expressed such as Redemptive, Liberation, and Creation. The traditional RCC focuses on redemptive theology, whereas Roman Catholic womenpriests focus on both, redemptive and creation, the latter encouraging inclusivity.

The first women priests were ordained on the Danube River in Europe by two Roman Catholic bishops who acted in full apostolic succession. As a result, ordained women are valid in celebrating the Eucharist, although not approved by the Roman Curia. There are more than 100 womenpriests serving throughout our country, with several RCWP communities ministering in the Bay Area.

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

My hope is that, together, we can celebrate what we have in common, i.e., made in the image of God, and appreciate that we are different and unique.

The writer, and any others, are invited to join the Namasté Catholic Community for liturgy, which is held at 4 p.m. each second and fourth Saturday at the Orinda Community Church.

Papa John Kiefer
Lafayette

Support Lamorinda's Spirit Van Program

Dear Editor,

As you may know, the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program provides rides for older Lamorinda residents, ages 60 and up, so they can attend to medical and personal appointments, shopping, errands, social events, enrichment activities and the C.C. Café nutrition program. There are now four Spirit Vans, supported by 13 (and soon to be 15) drivers. The program currently provides 60 hours of service each week to residents in need in Moraga, and the Lamorinda community as a whole. This service is especially appreciated by folks in their 80s and 90s who no can longer drive and are thus somewhat house-bound.

For each of the past several years, the Town of Moraga has contributed \$9,000 to help fund the Spirit Van Program. The Town Council was unable to do so this year in adopting our 2016-2017 budget, due largely to the very significant increased emergency costs the town is incurring to address the sinkhole situation on Rheem Boulevard. While the council intends to revisit this request for funding at the mid-year budget revise next January, in the meantime the need for community support for the Spirit Van is real and immediate.

A very generous anonymous Moraga donor has agreed to match all contributions from the Moraga community, up to \$4,500, as part of a campaign to raise at least \$9,000 from private donations to help defray a small portion of the Spirit Van Program's additional annual costs. This is a worthy effort, for which I ask your support.

Moraga is a great community in which to live, raise a family and age gracefully at home – and Moragans have always answered the call when the cause is right. So please support this important community service. If you would like to help the Spirit Van Program, please make your tax-deductible check out to the "City of Lafayette," and write: "Lamorinda Spirit/Moraga" on the memo line. Checks should be mailed to: Lamorinda Spirit, Lafayette Senior Services, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette, CA 94549.

Dave Trotter
Vice Mayor, Town of Moraga



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Larry Olson

... continued from page A1

The Eleventh Coast Guard District stretches from California, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah to the coastal and offshore waters of Mexico and Central America and down to South America. Lt. Cmdr. Olson has assisted in the search for drug boats from Mexico, monitored Crescent City for high water after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami near Tohoku, Japan, and watched ships in the ports of Stockton and Oakland to ensure they remain in the proper channels.

"I like the marine life (portion best)," he says, because it is "so spectacular." Olson has been flying since he joined the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps at U.C. Berkeley. He spent two years stationed at Spokane's Fairchild Air Force Base and joined the Berkeley police department when he returned to the East Bay, working seven years and rising to the rank of sergeant.

Olson spent 17 years as Chief of Police and Fire for the East Bay Regional Parks district, during which he also established an independent police department for the Town of Moraga and become its first Chief of Police.

In 1986 he moved to Southern California and became Carson's Chief of Police. He held that position for three years, and spent the following 10 years as Carson's city manager.

When asked about Moraga's Robert Priebe making a similar move to fill the vacancy left by

Jill Keimach's departure, Olson admits "I gotta kick out of that." He said switching from having one boss as police chief to having five (city council) bosses with divergent viewpoints as city manager was tough.

"I had to learn how to count to three," said the man with a UC Berkeley criminal science degree, a master's degree in public administration from Cal State Long Beach and a law degree from Golden Gate University.

Olson also volunteered for the Alaska Iditarod for 10 years beginning in 2003. "That's why I got my ham radio license," he says. His last paid position was as executive director of Advanced Life Support for the city of San Mateo.

"Then I retired," Olson said simply, although cut back would perhaps be more accurate. Olson put aside his decades-old involvement with Rotary, and Contra Costa Kops for Kids because "it was too much."

He continues to fly for the Coast Guard Auxiliary and to volunteer with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District Support 241 team. He and his wife enjoy spending time with their four Moraga grandchildren; Olson has even coached a few of their little league baseball and soccer teams.

Asked if his grandchildren know about his lifetime of service, he says simply, "We don't discuss it a lot." Perhaps it is time they did.

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Reem's Steaks Brings Philly to Orinda

By A.K. Carroll



Reem's Steaks on Moraga Way in Orinda.

Photos A.K. Carroll

After weeks of lying dormant, 70 Moraga Way (former home of Turquoise Mediterranean Grill) is bustling with the efforts of a newcomer to the Lamorinda food scene — Reem's Steaks.

No, that's not a typo. Not to be confused with historic local Donald Rheem (namesake of Rheem Boulevard and the Rheem Theater), Reem's Steaks takes its title from Reem Masarweh, wife of Azmi "Alex" Masarweh, the owner of nearby Petra Café. Reem's Steaks — a simple sandwich shop that specializes in cheese steaks — is the couple's third restaurant venture.

When asked how he came up with the concept for his newest eatery, Masarweh replied, "It was easy. Orinda (already) had everything, except Philly steaks." Thanks to Reem's, that problem is solved.

The new digs are nothing fancy and not much different from when it was Turquoise Grill, aside from a fresh coat of paint and a change of hands. Half a dozen two-tops make up the seating in the tidy space, the rest of which is occupied by a cold case, counter, cash register and soda machine.

Late in the afternoon midweek, I hit the calm between lunch and dinner shifts and took the opportunity to chat with the kid behind the counter. He was helpful and friendly with a sort of small town eagerness that is refreshing

to find. His favorite offering right now is the Buffalo chicken, but my being a first-timer also steered me toward something more traditional.

The focal point of the menu is the namesake cheesesteak, a sandwich comprised of thinly sliced beefsteak smothered in melted cheese and stacked on a thick Italian hoagie bun. The origins of the entrée come from 1930s Philadelphia (hence, the "Philly") and have been attributed to hotdog vendor named Pat Olivieri.

Reem's cheesesteaks include the Original Philly, a mushroom cheesesteak, pepper cheesesteak and super cheesesteak, which features grilled onion, green pepper, and grilled mushroom add-ons. Reem's also offers chicken four chicken Phillys, including buffalo and teriyaki versions.

Other menu items include a short list of fresh salads, nearly a dozen burgers, fish and chips, chicken strips and shrimp. A smattering of appetizers and sides includes garlic fries, chili fries, calamari, fried zucchini, onion rings and cole slaw. A five-item kid's menu is available for little ones and dessert options consist of crepes and milkshakes.

Prices are modest, with appetizers starting at \$4, cheesesteaks and burgers averaging \$7-8, and entrees running from \$10-15. You can add fries and a soda to any meal for an upcharge for \$3.99.

One month after opening, Yelp reviewers have grumbled in one accord when remarking on Reem's bread-to-meat ratio, describing the hoagie as a sizable chunk of dough. My own experience was a little different. After much deliberation, I opted for the super cheesesteak, which supplements the standard serving of meat with a pile of grilled veggies. The sandwich didn't seem skimpy for the price point (I actually split it across two meals), but I can empathize with wanting a little more substance on the bun.

Meals are made to order — you can actually watch as your steak strips and peppers sizzle on the grill behind the counter — and easily plopped into take away containers for those who are headed to the reservoir or stepping out for a quick lunch break. But be forewarned, these sandwiches are best consumed immediately. The current hoagies easily sop up juices, but lack the structure needed to hold hefty contents, which leaves a limited timeline between a stiff and soggy sandwich.

In addition to the current menu, there is a regular rotation of daily specials, such as chicken corn chowder and grilled rib eye with au jus. Reem's also plans to add wraps and other options to their summer menu. Like many restaurants of its ilk, the sandwich shop wants to offer something for everyone, but to any first time visitor, I'd suggest starting with the standard. We may be a long way from Philadelphia, but you're only a short trip from a local cheesesteak.



Reem's Steaks is open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday.
70 Moraga Way Orinda, CA 94563, (925) 253-2004

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

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Business Bites

Compiled by Vic Ryerson

I Can See Clearly Now

Dominic O'Donovan is opening a local Fish Window Cleaning franchise. The St. Louis-based company is the largest window cleaning franchisor in the country, with more than 250 franchisees nationwide. To find out more about the offerings of the new business locally, check it out at www.fishwindowcleaning.com/3156, or call (510) 228-4949

BevMo Will Cut a Ribbon and Break a Bottle!

As previously reported, BevMo is opening a new store at 3590 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette on July 28. The 4,600-square-foot store, the company's 10th in the East Bay, is smaller in scale than its typical locations, but nonetheless packed with wines, beers, liquor and other fine fare. The ribbon cutting ceremony will be held from 4 to 6 p.m., with a traditional "saber" of a



bottle of champagne at 5 p.m.

Bev Mo! will hire 14 people to handle operations at the store, with more to be added during the holiday season.

Kudos to Broker

Dana Green of Pacific Union International, the nation's ninth largest residential real estate brokerage, has been honored as one of 250 top real estate professionals and teams nationwide in sales volume. Green also ranks 31 among the top 50 professionals by sales price. The rankings were made by REAL Trends Annual The Thousand.

Chamber Music Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

www.lafayettechamber.org (925) 284-7404

The Ten Chamber Mega Mixer will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, July 28 at the Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive, Pleasant Hill. Contact the Chamber for details.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

www.moragachamber.org (925) 323-6524

Don't miss the Chamber Mixer from 5 to 7 p.m., August 16, Beer at the Bruns/Cal Shakes. RSVP by August 10. For more info call (510) 548-3422 x118.

The Chamber/Community Barbecue is at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 23. Sponsored by Safeway. RSVP to kathe@moragachamber.org.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

www.orindachamber.org (925) 254-3909

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

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New Belgium

4-7 PM

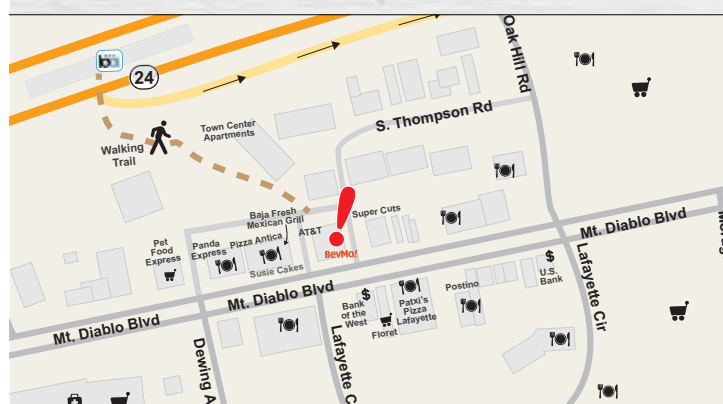
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Trains Roar Through Lafayette's Happy Valley

... continued from page A1



The colorful "Daylight" passenger train negotiates a replica of Tehachapi Loop on the scenic scale model backyard railroad. Photo Victor Ryerson

The model railroad is G (for "garden") scale, a 1:29 recreation that is much bigger than your indoor Lionel set. Originally started in the early 1990s for the benefit of their young son, it has expanded from its original 50-foot loop of track to a much more elaborate layout with two large loops that replicate the real world Tehachapi Loop in Southern California. It was initially rebuilt for the 2006 garden railway convention, but when that design proved too cumbersome, Evans dismantled it and rebuilt it

all over again. He spent a full year readying it for this year's convention.

Trains run through a realistic, meticulously detailed Western landscape of mining buildings and wooden shacks. A grove of Dwarf Alberta Spruce trees was planted in 1994, and now they soar to chest height. There are touches of whimsy, too. For example, a birthday party complete with balloons is in full swing just a short distance from a burial service.

Evans says he has loved trains

ever since he got his first Lionel train set at age six. He rides trains whenever he can, and goes camping near real railroads. The Los Arabis Creek is "a lot of work, but a lot of fun," he says. Nevertheless, the annual maintenance may become too much for him in the future, and the days of open houses may be numbered. "Still, open houses are a lot of fun and we still have more room outside than in, so who knows?"

To get on Evans' email list for future open houses, contact him at bob_e_94549@yahoo.com.

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Lamorinda Struck with Pokémon Fever

By Adam Blake



A Golduck relaxes in the Rheem Valley Pet Shoppe. Photos Jaya Griggs

Whether it's at the Lafayette Park Plaza, the Orinda Library, or the Moraga Commons, herds of gamers can be seen roving the community in pursuit of virtual creatures on their smartphones. The Pokémon Go craze has hit Lamorinda along with the rest of the nation as players of all ages feel they "Gotta catch'em all!" as the old Pokémon theme song declared.

The app is being hailed as the first large-scale augmented reality game, and uses the smartphone's camera and GPS to bring fantastical monsters into the player's actual environment.

Different physical locations serve as "Pokéstops" where players can collect items they can use to capture more Pokémon.

Unlike conventional video games, the app draws players outside of their house and into the real world as they explore and engage their surrounding environment.

"It definitely has me going places I don't normally go. I barely ever go to the reservoir but I actually made plans to go there to play," Lafayette resident Sam Stack said.

Pokemon started out as video games for the original Game Boy in 1995, and quickly expanded to trading cards, television shows and movies. In the alternate universe, humans catch and tame little monsters called "Pokémon" and then train them to battle each other.

San Francisco-based developer Niantic is responsible for the new game, which has toppled records for downloads and activity and sent Nintendo stocks skyrocketing. With the media franchise's tremendous comeback, many players are experiencing a wave of nostalgia as their childhood dream of catching Pokémon turned into a reality.



A wild Eevee was recently spotted at Orinda Theatre Square.

the Camp Galileo campus in San Ramon as many nearby residents enter the school searching for the nearby pokéstops during camp hours," said camp instructor and Lafayette resident Jared Ericksen. "I have to talk to at least eight different people a day, asking them to leave the camp so that the safety of our campers is ensured."

Acalanes student and avid player Peyton Li has caught over 100 Pokémon all over the Bay, including downtown Lafayette, Walnut Creek, UC Berkeley and UC Davis. He says that the stigma about distracted players does not reflect his experience with the game.

"The game is convenient because it doesn't require a person to be staring at his screen while walking," Li said. "Instead it vibrates when a Pokémon appears so people can be aware of their surroundings until a Pokémon appears. Overall I don't think the stereotype that everyone is distracted and walking around causing chaos is true."

Time will tell if the novelty will wear off, but in the meantime, don't be surprised if someone with their eyes glued to their smartphone bumps into you exclaiming, "Charizard escaped my pokéball!"

"I actually wished something like this would happen because when I was little I'd always play around with my friends and imagine catching Pokémon so this is basically a part of my youth come to life," Stack said.

Businesses across the nation are scrambling to find ways to profit off the phenomenon and draw players into their stores. Though the impact of Pokémon Go on many Lamorinda businesses is unclear at this point, employees have certainly noticed its popularity in public.

"Customers pretty regularly come up to me and ask me if I know anything about nearby pokéstops," Lafayette Whole Foods employee Chris Mickas said. "I'm not sure that it affects our business very much, but it does seem like some people come into the store just to look for Pokémon."

As the game trailblazes the nascent realm of augmented reality technology, it has exposed major concerns following a slew of troubling incidents resulting from the game. From a distracted player driving off a cliff in Southern California to robbers using it to lure victims in Missouri, the game has come under fire.

Though nothing to this degree of severity has been reported in the suburbs of the East Bay, qualms about distracted, disruptive players wandering around have surfaced. Police across the nation have issued statements warning players to stay alert and exercise caution as they catch Pokemon. Even PG&E recently issued a warning to players to stay a safe distance from gas facilities and equipment.

"The game is starting to pose a little bit of a security risk for

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Moraga Gallery Exhibit Showcases Unique and Beautiful Porcelain and Quilts

By Kara Navolio



A mixed media quilt by Denise Oyama Miller.

Photos Kara Navolio

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The Moraga Art Gallery is hosting the "Porcelain Poetry/Textile Treasures" show through Aug. 13. The show features two Bay Area artists: ceramicist Donna Arganbright and Denise Oyama Miller's work in textiles.

Arganbright, who has been working with ceramics since 1972, has created beautiful functional pieces in vibrant colored porcelain such as vases, bowls, cups and serving pieces. It's important to her that the pieces can be used and not just displayed which is why her process and materials ensure that the items can be put in the dishwasher and

warmed in the microwave.

"I like to make pieces with attitude and arrange them in conversational groupings," says Arganbright. This is apparent especially in the whimsical vases which resemble a person standing with hands on hips.

After balancing a career in teaching art and her professional art practice, Arganbright now devotes more time to her art practice since retiring from the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Her work can also be seen at Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek.

Oyama Miller's work includes stunning art quilts, silk scarves, and some mixed media pieces. Oyama Miller began quilting in 1976 when the American Bicentennial saw a resurgence in quilting. After years of making patchwork quilts and working with different media, she wanted a new challenge and began making art quilts, combining her knowledge of painting with her quilt-making skills. "I really enjoy textiles a medium," says Oyama Miller, "People are comfortable around textiles; it's more approachable."

Her quilts are made in a style similar to painting techniques of Pointillism or Impressionism as Oyama Miller uses tiny pieces of cut fabric (most are smaller than a quarter-inch) and arranges them as a painter would place strokes of paint, adding layers directly onto

the quilt batting. When she is satisfied with her arrangement, she covers the entire quilt with a fine tulle netting to keep everything in place. She then free stitches it, using line and texture to add depth and enhance the design.

Oyama Miller is inspired by nature and the landscapes she sees while traveling the county in her motorhome with her husband.

Her work can be seen all over the country. A quilt she is particularly proud of is part of an exhibit at George Washington University Textile Museum titled "Stories of Migration: Contemporary Artists Interpret Diaspora." Her piece is in the shape of a kimono and incorporates the story of her family's migration from Japan to Hawaii to California, including time spent in Internment Camps during World War II.

The scarves that she included in the Moraga show are made of repurposed silk sewn together in rectangular blocks of solids and unique prints. The silk comes from kimonos, saris, and other items collected from Asia.

For more information, visit www.moragaartgallery.com, www.ceramicworksbydonnamarie.com or www.deniseoyamamiller.com. The gallery is open noon until 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays, 570 Center Street in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center.

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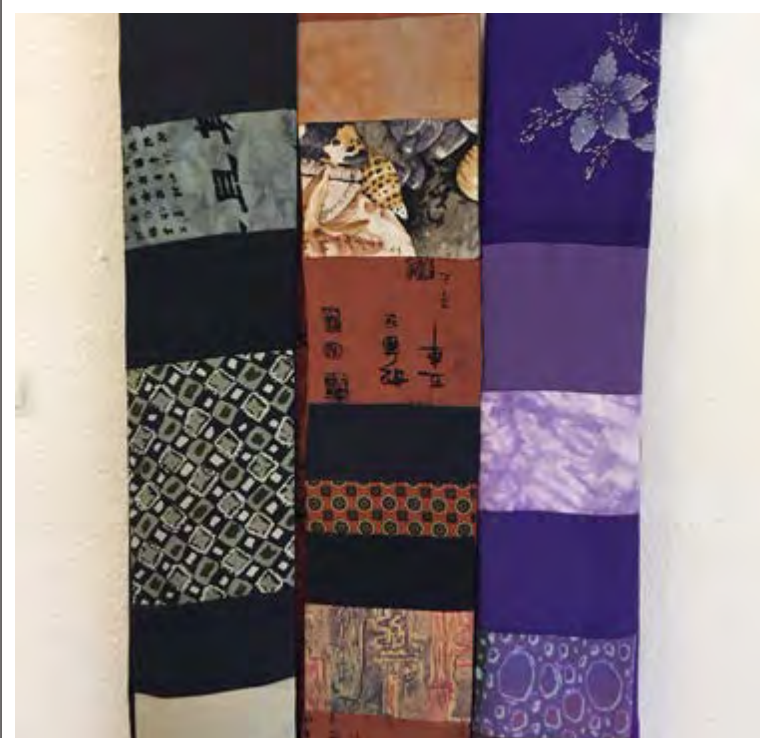
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Children's Fashion Show Highlights Their Own Creativity and Individuality

By Sophie Braccini



Isabel Azam hosted a fashion show at the Hacienda. Photos Sophie Braccini
 Isabel Azam held its second kids fashion show on July 20 in the Pavilion of the Hacienda de Las Flores in Moraga. The concept is original, having little girls choose their own pattern and fabrics and having the dress of their dreams created especially for them.

Jaleh Naasz, a fashion professional and mom of two little girls, created Isabel Azam. She is growing her company by hiring locals to sew the dresses, and by expanding the range of her products. At the heart of it all is the trust she has in children's creativity and her own passion for fashion.

Why did Jaleh Naasz call her business Isabel Azam? It is far from trivial. Isabel Azam is the combination of Naasz' daughters middle names, Persia Isabel and Raven Azam. She adds that Raven's middle name, Azam, in Farsi means all encompassing/grand.

"Azam was also the name of my aunt who passed tragically in her mid-30s when I lived in Iran" she adds. "I have distinct memories of her and a Montessori-style preschool she started in a village in Iran when I was little." This was a great accomplishment given the government and politics in Iran. "Despite having passed for many years, her joy of teaching music and art to little kids continues to inspire me daily," Naasz says.

Naasz came to this country with her family when she was nine. Her mother started an alteration shop as a means for the family's survival. The girl was a fashionista from the start and her husband says that he saw her prom picture with the 10 friends, for whom she had made all the dresses. She studied fashion at the Academy of Art in San Francisco and worked in that industry until she started a family herself.

"This is a tough industry, very cutthroat," she says, "but I decided not to give it up and create something myself."

At this second fashion show, little girls walked the runway all in their own style, from the confident to the bashful, by themselves or as sisters. The dresses were the expression of their desires. On www.IsabelAzam.com they had ordered the customizable dress kit that gives them the choices of patterns and tools to create their very own model. Then came the selection of colors and fabrics.

"When I took my 3-year-old daughter shopping for fabric I learned that she had a very definite opinion about what she wanted, and it was not necessarily what I would have recommended," says Naasz with a bright and genuine smile. "And it turned out very well." Clients choose their own fabric, buy the size indicated in the kit according to their measurements, and return everything to Naasz for fabrication.

New this year on the runway was a group of girls who had been in an Isabel Azam camp where they made their own dresses. The diversity of colors, styles and shapes was very uplifting; each girl really expressed something of themselves in these dresses.

For the past year Naasz has grown her business organically, adding adult dresses when moms asked her for a matching dress with their daughters', and adding hero shirts for boys who wanted to be included. Since everything is done locally and she wants to control the integrity of the output she has decided to continue to do the cutting and assembling herself, while she can work with local women to sew the dresses.

Now each dress created by a girl is named after her, displayed on the site and can be purchased and customized by someone else. Naasz also offers the option of getting the fabric for those who do not enjoy fabric shopping.

At the fashion show, many other women from the Lamorinda Moms group came to help. "They are all my friends," says Naasz. Many local businesses

sponsored her, such as Dry Style Lounge that helps with the hair of the little models, Melissa Bartlett for photography, Cotton Patch who gave the fabrics for the dress of the superstar of the show, Finley Brown, and many others that gave items to the raffle. Naasz's brother and his firm Paymun Real Estate & Mortgage was also there.

"Being immigrants here, there is a lot of entrepreneurship in our family," says Naasz, and they all support each other.

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Kiwanis Club Honors Graduating Seniors From Local High Schools

Submitted by Barry Behr



From left: Gloria Eive, scholarship recipient Fiona Stewart and Barry Behr. Photo provided

Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley presents an annual award honoring a graduating senior from each of Lamorinda three high schools. The three seniors who have received the Kiwanis awards this year are Fiona Stewart (Campolindo High School), Nathan Brickman (Acalanes High School), and Misaki Kobayashi (Miramonte High School). These outstanding seniors have devoted their time and energies throughout high school to organizing and actively par-

ticipating in philanthropic and community service projects on behalf of their fellow students and their community. Kiwanis is proud to honor these distinguished and exemplary students whose interests and priorities demonstrate their sense of responsibility and concern for their society.

For more information please visit the Kiwanis website at www.moragavalleykiwanis.org.

Girl Scouts Beautify Del Rey Campus

Submitted by Yuka Akera



Troop 32450 members, from left: Emi Ross, Lily Namdaran, Merrin Morrissey, Hannah Johnson, Courtney Mercer, Avery Welch, Ingrid Navarrete Gonzalez, Alexa Gutu, Lauren Stone, Alice Ball

Photo provided

Junior Girl Scouts in fifth grade at Del Rey Elementary, Troop 32450, decided to use its Bronze Award project to beautify the Del Rey elementary school campus by decorating the new chain link fence that was installed around the entire campus at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year. The girls installed 30 feet of chain link fence art

— two six- by 10-foot blue, white and grey dolphins (the school mascot) and a large 10-foot blue and white “Del Rey” sign. As they graduate from Del Rey, Troop 32450 hopes to inspire Del Rey school spirit and to encourage others to continue to add art to the fence to beautify the school.

Lafayette Rotary Supports Three Local Charities With \$5,000 Each

Submitted by Matthew Pease



Lafayette Rotary members pose by a giant check showing its gifts to charity. Photo provided

On Thursday July 21, the Lafayette Rotary Club made three donations of \$5,000 each to local charities who support excellence in education, community involvement and health, food and housing for those in need.

At the club's weekly meeting the club gave a grant to the Salvation Army's Garden Street Facility in Oakland that provides transitional housing for homeless families and early childhood education in the Oakland area. They also gave a grant to the Contra Costa Interfaith Housing organization that provides permanent, affordable housing and vital support services to homeless and at-risk families and individuals in Contra Costa County. The club also made a grant to the Court Appointed Special Advocates of Contra Costa County, which recruits, trains and supports volunteer advocates as a voice for the best interest of abused and neglected children during a court process, in order to help children thrive in a stable and permanent home.

“The mission of Rotary International is to provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through its fellowship of business, professional and community leaders,” according to Norma Evans, the President of the Lafayette Rotary Club. “We are delighted to support these worthwhile charities who have such an important impact in our local community.”

“We raise these funds through the events we host throughout the year and from the generosity of our members and businesses throughout Lafayette and it is rewarding to see these efforts put to good use,” said Dino Riggio, who as a past president of Lafayette Rotary led the efforts to make these awards.

Lafayette Rotary just completed its 70th anniversary and meets every Thursday from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. at the Oakwood Athletic Club. For more information about Lafayette Rotary, email info@rotarylafayette.org, or visit its Facebook page at [facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca](https://www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca).

Town Hall Theatre Awarded Major Grant from Leshner Foundation

Submitted by Laura Bergman



portant in helping us build momentum as we enter our 72nd season.”

Like most nonprofit theatres, Town Hall ticket receipts do not cover all operating costs. As part of their mission, ticket prices are deliberately kept affordable, so they cover only 40 percent of overall costs. The rest is covered through generous support from patrons, local businesses, and foundations.

Town Hall Theatre Company of Lafayette was awarded its first-ever \$20,000 grant from the Dean and Margaret Leshner Foundation. This was the most significant grant the nonprofit organization, with its modest budget and skeleton staff, has ever received.

Managing Director Dennis Markam, who also doubles as a Teaching artist, was thrilled. “Over the past decade Town Hall has taken sometimes slow, but always steady steps toward improving how we serve our community, our patrons, our volunteers, and our employees. This grant is immensely im-

The grant comes at the perfect time, as this year Town Hall is completing a new strategic plan that includes going green, hiring top notch artists for their Youth Program, and upgrading public areas to make them more welcoming. This grant is intended to help Town Hall cover these costs, and will be disbursed in \$10,000 increments over two years.

Town Hall is located at 3535 School Street in downtown Lafayette, CA. For more about the theatre, its shows or youth program, check out www.townhalltheatre.com.

7-Eleven Gives More Than Slurpees

By Peggy Spear



Moraga 7-Eleven owner Samir Saleh and employee Jennifer Wang pose with the boxes of pizzas that were delivered to the Contra Costa Food Bank. Photo provided

For many folks, July 11 — or 7/11 — was just about free slurpees at the retailer of the same name. But Moraga's 7-Eleven took it one step further. Owner Samir Saleh asked patrons, who were receiving the free drinks, to donate money to order pizzas for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. The pa-

trons responded, and within just eight hours, enough money had been donated to buy 108 pizzas that were delivered last week. “From the bottom of my heart I want to thank Moraga and I'm proud to be doing business in Moraga,” Saleh said.

In Memory



HERB SIHNER

Herbert Howard Sihner, 88, of Orinda, passed away peacefully at his home on Tuesday, July 12.

Herb was born on October 21, 1927 in San Francisco to Otto and Martha Sihner. Both of Herb's parents were immigrants from Germany. Herb graduated from Lincoln High School in San Francisco in 1943. He served in the Army with the occupation troops in Japan attached to the Sixth Army Engineers and received an honorable discharge in 1946. He graduated with honors

from U.C. Berkeley in 1951 and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in History of Architecture and Art. Herb started his career working as a planner for Kern County and Alameda County for about six years. In 1960 Herb and his family moved to Orinda after he became employed as a land planner at Lincoln Development Co. of Lafayette. Herb's work soon shifted to site design and architecture.

After Lincoln Development he worked as an architect for U.S. Plywood, Champion Paper, and Braddock and Logan. He was a senior partner at Braddock and Logan for the past 40 years. Herb did not know the meaning of the word retirement as he continued working until just a month prior to his passing. He was involved in community service in Orinda as he served on the board of directors of the Orinda Association before the city was incorporated. Herb enjoyed playing tennis for most of his life and was an avid sailor, spending many weekends out on the bay in his sailboat.

Herb is survived by his wife, Betsy (Johnson) Sihner; two sons, Christian Sihner and his wife Kathy of Colfax, Calif., Craig Sihner and his wife Martha of Castro Valley, Calif., daughter Wendy Sihner of Walnut Creek, Calif., two stepsons, Michael Furay and his wife Susan of Lafayette, Calif., and Jonathan Furay and his wife Erin Hawker of New York, NY; three grandchildren, Erin and Kelly Furay and Sara Sihner; and a brother, Howard Sihner and his wife Jonnie of Elk Grove, Calif. He was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife, Ann (Larimer) Sihner in 1973, stepson Christopher Furay in 1993, and his brother Bob Sihner in 2015. A celebration of Herb's life will be held at a future date.

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.

Thoughtful Food

A Simple Appetizer With a Zing

By Susie Iventosch



This easy stuffed mushroom appetizer adds pizzazz to any party.

Photo Susie Iventosch

This may be the world's easiest recipe, but it is so delicious. My daughter and I had something similar to this at Buceo 95 Tapas Bar in New York City and it was amazing. The only ingredients are cremini mushrooms, crumbled goat cheese and pistachios. These make

a great passing hors d'oeuvres or an excellent side dish to steak or chicken. Or, if you are so inclined, make enough to serve as a main dish.

We tried using both plain crumbled goat cheese, and also a flavored Montrachet-style goat

cheese log that was made with red peppers. We much preferred the simple, plain goat cheese rather than the flavored. It allows you to better taste the mushrooms and also the tartness of the goat cheese. The pistachios add a crunch and salty touch, which is perfect.

Pistachio-crusted Cremini Mushrooms, Stuffed with Goat Cheese

INGREDIENTS

- 18 cremini (or baby bella) mushrooms
- 4 ounces crumbled goat cheese
- ½ cup finely chopped, salted pistachios

DIRECTIONS

Clean mushrooms and remove stems (save stems for another use). Place mushrooms with the cavity side up on a baking sheet. Fill cavity with crumbled goat cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 15 minutes, or until mushrooms are cooked and cheese is beginning to melt. You can broil for a final minute or two to add color. Remove from oven and sprinkle chopped pistachios generously over cheese. Serve hot!

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.



Family Focus

With Young Children, Having a Strong Connection With Your Partner is Vital

By Margie Ryerson

Lately, more couples have been coming in for therapy reporting feeling emotionally distant from each other. They are hard-working, in an outside job or in the home, and are devoted to their children's well-being. They have all the ingredients for a strong relationship and family unit. So what's missing?

One couple, Dave and Molly, are in their early 40s with two sons, ages seven and nine. Dave works in finance outside the home, and Molly has a home-based business. Both participate actively in their sons' lives, helping with homework, extracurricular activities, and spending many weekends together as a family. Both Molly and Dave lead healthy, active lifestyles and regularly swim and work out at their gym.

The one commodity that is missing is personal attention for each other. They operate like a well-oiled machine in handling the mechanics of their lives, but they rarely spend time as a couple. They seldom touch or talk in a free-form way with each other. Their conversations are business-oriented, revolving around home maintenance, child matters, plans and schedules, and even the dog and cat.

It is definitely hard to make everything work well in a family and in a relationship. There always seems to be something that needs adjusting to get back to a good balance. But more and more, I see couples inadvertently sacrificing their relationships by putting many other considerations first.

Here are a few recommendations for strengthening your relationship:

- Children don't always need to come first. As a matter of fact, they thrive when their parents are a strong unit and the focus of attention is not always on them. As we know, it is not healthy for a child to grow up expecting to be the center of attention at home since no one else will ever be willing or able to duplicate this for him in life.

- Arrange for a regular babysitter, at least once a month but weekly or biweekly if possible. Line up a reliable person in advance. Just as people attend more plays or sports games with season tickets than if they have to make the effort of purchasing tickets for each event, scheduling a regular babysitter makes it a smoother process to go out as a couple.

It doesn't matter whether or not there is a compelling movie to see or new restaurant to try. The activity is secondary to spending relaxed time together. Just going on a walk or out for coffee or a glass of wine can be an opportunity to bond as a couple.

Once you are away from the children and house, concentrate on having fun together. Try to think of yourselves as individuals out on a date instead of responsible homeowners, or mommy and daddy.

- Make an effort to show affection toward each other. If there is a lack of verbal and/or physical affection, it may be more difficult to have a healthy intimate relationship.

- Share concerns about finances, the number one issue that can disrupt a marriage. Try to problem-solve together. Often a financial advisor can assist with forming a plan and help couples resolve differences in this area.

- If you are experiencing depression, anxiety or other problems, see a therapist for individual sessions. One partner's issues naturally affect the other and can cause an emotional divide in the relationship.

Bruce came in with his wife for couples work. After several sessions it became obvious that while his wife, Kara, was happy with her life in general and only wanted to improve their marriage, Bruce was extremely unhappy. He felt burned-out at work, worried about providing financial security for his family, and guilty if he took time for himself. In addition, he knew he

wasn't being responsive to his wife in many ways, but he didn't have much energy to put into the relationship.

The couple continued in couples counseling while Bruce also went for individual therapy. He was diagnosed with clinical depression and decided to go on medication. Six months later, the couple's relationship was much improved. They were able to stop coming in for therapy and to continue practicing necessary communication skills on their own.

- Practice self-disclosure. Your relationship will benefit if your partner can understand you more completely. And you will experience comfort if you can share your worries and fears, your regrets and your wide range of feelings.

- Practice accepting your partner's self-disclosures in an encouraging and supportive way. Obviously, no one will want to confide their personal feelings unless the listener provides an atmosphere of caring and acceptance.

Of course, there is much more involved in establishing a closer connection, but these pointers provide a good start. The simple act of giving each other more personal attention can go a long way in improving your relationship.



Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. She is the author of a book for couples, "Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship." Contact her at 925-376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com.

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ART

The public is invited to attend the Art and Photography Show, featuring works by some 80 adult students, at Acalanes Adult Education (AAE). Some items will be available for sale. Refreshments will be served. AAE is located at 1963 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek. The exhibit will continue on weekdays through July 29.

Valley Art Gallery presents their show, A Summer Place, which runs through July 30. A Summer Place is "your place" visualized by gallery artists — the places people visit, activities they enjoy. It features over 300 new works of art as warm and wonderful as Diablo Valley summers, including works from the best East Bay artists, for sale or rent. Plus, there are beautifully crafted ceramic, wood and glass pieces, and original designer jewelry. www.valleyartgallery.org.

The new Lafayette Library Art Gallery Exhibit features oil paintings by Geoff Meredith, pastels and watercolors by Dalia Alekna, and ceramics by Olga Jusidman. The exhibit runs through Aug. 31.

Valley Art Gallery will feature member artist Peter McNeil, a well-known local landscape and figurative artist, on Aug. 2. Utilizing oil paint and various drawing media, he is interested in the effects of light, shadow, and the more abstract patterns that occur in the observable world. McNeil lives and works in Walnut Creek and holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Design from UC Davis. www.valleyartgallery.org

MUSIC

Live Jazz at Lamorinda Music from 8 to 9:30 p.m. on Aug. 2 and 4. \$10 per person.

Orinda Summer Concerts in the Park Series continues from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Orinda Aug. 2: Spill the Wine, Soul/Rock/Funk/R&B with Streetdogs, Chicago style hot dogs; Aug. 9: The David Alt Big Band Concert. Sponsored by Orinda Rotary.

Thursday evening concerts continue 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Moraga Commons Park: July 28: Kings of 88 — Piano rock e.g. Elton John, Billy Joel, etc; Aug. 4: Fleetwood Mask — Tribute to Fleetwood Mac. Picnic on a blanket or lawn chairs on the grassy hillside in front of the band shell.

THEATER

Cal Shakes presents the Bay Area debut of Pulitzer-prize winning playwright August Wilson's "Fences" through July 30. For showtimes and to purchase tickets see www.calshakes.org.

Realization Theater presents "We Need Better Humans!" from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 7, at Waterfront Playhouse, 2020 Fourth St., Berkeley. "We Need Better Humans!" is a 90-minute multimedia production with live acting about a group of alien anthropologists who arrive on Earth. Cost: \$25. For more info see www.weneedbetterhumans.com or call (415) 579-2586 or email contact@weneedbetterhumans.com.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

From Burma to Syria — Spend an evening with Dave Eubank, founder of Free Burma Rangers, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 3 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Fellowship Hall. Eubank, a former Army Ranger Commander, his family and team risk their lives every day to help people caught in the crossfire of war. After spending 20 years in Burma, Dave decided to go to Kurdistan, Iraq, to deliver medical aid, food and love to innocent victims in the war with ISIS. Free to attend.

Local East Bay Democratic Clubs invite you to hear author David Dayen discuss his award winning book "Chain of Title: How Three Or-

dinary Americans Uncovered Wall Street's Great Foreclosure Fraud" starting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 16 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. The book tells the dramatic true story of how, in the depths of the Great Recession, a cancer nurse, a car dealership worker, and an insurance fraud specialist helped uncover the largest consumer crime in American history — a scandal that implicated dozens of major executives on Wall Street. Additional information is available at www.lamorindademoclub.org. Copies of the book will be available for purchase during the event.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Summer Movies in the Park Series: Movies begin at dusk on Thursdays at the Orinda Community Park. August 4: "Inside Out."

Calling all Makers, Tinkerers, Creators and DIYers: Celebrate the Summer of S.T.E.A.M. from 10 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 30 at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center. Demonstrations for all ages including: 3D printing, Air-powered Rocketry, Programmable Microcontrollers, Lego Robotics, Cosplay, and so much more. Hands-on projects like DIY Beauty Bar, Scribble Bots, DIY Instruments, engineering/building tinker area, photo booth, computer programming for beginners, DIY Ice Cream and more. There's something for everyone. All ages are welcome. Free event. Register online at: http://tinyurl.com/makerfestLAF2016.

Berkeley Kite Festival from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on July 30 and 31, Cesar Chavez Park, Berkeley Marina. Free Event. Kite Competitions, the "Octopile," Candy Drop, Kite Battles, Kid Zone with pony rides, bounce houses and more. Food, crafts and free kites. www.BerkeleyKiteFestival.com (510) 235-KITE or www.AnotherBullwinkeShow.com for vendor info.

Meet Orinda children's book author Ginger Wadsworth at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 2 at the Orinda Library. Wadsworth will share her newest book, "Seasons of the Bear," available for the first time outside of Yosemite National Park. Beautifully illustrated by acclaimed artist Daniel San Souci, the book is a poetic look at the year in the life of a black bear and her cubs. Ginger will talk about her research for the book and fascinating facts about our native black bears. She will bring a bear skull and bear ear tags supplied by Yosemite park rangers. For more information, contact the library at (925) 254-2184 or llook@ccclib.org.

Candy Sushi and 5 Minute Ice Cream from 2 to 3 p.m. on Aug. 13 at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center. This teen program will take place in the Arts & Science room and is for sixth-12th grade students. Teens can register using tinyurl.com/lafcandysushi5minicecream

OTHER

Contra Costa Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) will offer a free talk, "Savings Money on Prescription Drugs: 14 Tips and One Pitfall," from 1 to 2 p.m. on July 28 at the Moraga Library at 1500 St. Mary's Rd. The following topics will be covered: overview of Medicare Part D coverage and how to choose the optimal plan for you; other resources and programs offering assistance with drug costs; ways to save at the pharmacy and on the drugs themselves, and things to be aware of regarding Canadian online pharmacies. See www.cchicap.org or call (925) 602-4163 for more about HICAP.

Join the National Park Service for a free campfire program at 7 p.m. on Saturday, July 30 at John Muir National Historic Site (NHS) in Martinez, California. The program lasts roughly 1.5 hours. Rangers will lead the group in songs, skits and stories to celebrate the legacy of John Muir, one of the greatest naturalists and conservationists the world has ever known. No reserva-

tions are required. Meet at the front gate of John Muir National Historic Site, 4202 Alhambra Avenue, in Martinez. Come with picnic blankets, lawn chairs, marshmallows and a desire to have a good time.

Lights! Camera! Environmental Action! Sustainable Lafayette will be hosting its sixth annual summer film series at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, featuring recently released documentaries and short films. This year's film selections focus on clean energy, land preservation, East Bay trail restoration, the Grand Canyon, bicycle travel, and sustainable ranching. The series continues on July 26 and concludes on Aug. 2. All movies will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Hall of the Lafayette library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. July 26: "Rebels with a Cause."

Diablo Ballet's Annual Gourmet Gallop food and wine walk returns to downtown Walnut Creek for the sixth consecutive year from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 11. The event, sponsored by Diablo Magazine, invites guests to sip, sample and stroll their way through 13 downtown Walnut Creek locations as they experience a one-of-a-kind culinary adventure. Tickets are on sale now to the public and only \$39 if purchased on or before July 31. After that date, the price goes up to \$45 a person. Tickets are available online at www.diabloballet.org or by calling (925) 943-1775.

Concord's Japanese American Club's annual Summer Festival is from 1 to 9 p.m. on Aug 13 and from noon to 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 14 at the Japanese American Religious and Cultural Center located at 3165 Treat Boulevard in Concord. The festival features Japanese food, including tempura, sushi, teriyaki chicken, teriyaki beef, udon, and gyoza, as well as fresh baked goods. There will be games for children. Entertainment includes multiple Taiko drum performances, kendo and judo demonstrations, Koto performances, as well as Japanese dances. Admission is free.

Lafayette Library and Learning Center and Diablo Ballet present the 2016 Dance on Film Series. The films start at 6:30 p.m. and run through Aug. 18. Aug. 4: "SFDF International Dance shorts" and "Rare Birds"; Aug. 18: "Saturday Night Fever." Tickets are \$10 for the film series, or \$5 at the door. Register at tinyurl.com/LLLCDanceonfilm2016 or call (925) 283-6513 x102.

SENIORS

Anne Randolph physical therapy presentation: Pain Management, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 27 in the Tiny Tots Red Room, Lafayette Community Center. Learn how improving posture and muscle strength can reduce or eliminate pain altogether. Stop suffering and take control. Per class: Senior Services members: No charge; non-members: \$10

Lafayette Community Foundation's eighth annual Senior Symposium is from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Aug. 6 at Lafayette Elementary School Auditorium, 950 Moraga Road, Lafayette. See page A3.

GARDEN

Lafayette Community Garden and Outdoor Learning Center presents Honeybees in Lamorinda from 3 to 4:30 on Sunday, Aug. 7. Contra Costa beekeeper extraordinaire, Mike Stephanos, will talk about nature's little wonders: the honeybees. Whether you are a novice beekeeper or someone who loves honey and just wants to know more about the fascinating world of bees, this class is for you. Classes are free. However, a \$5 donation is appreciated to support its education programs. To register for classes or for more information, please visit www.lafayettecommunitygarden.org.

Please...



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MOVIE REVIEW

Film Clips

'Star Trek Beyond' is Explosive Good Fun for Even Non-Trekkies

By Derek Zemrak



The late Anton Yelchin and Zachary Quinto in "Star Trek Beyond." Photo Provided

The entire cast, since the 2009 JJ Abrams reboot of the "Star Trek" movie franchise, returns in the third installment, "Star Trek Beyond."

The cast includes Chris Pine (Captain James T. Kirk), Zachary Quinto (Commander Spock), Karl Urban (Doctor "Bones" McCoy), Simon Pegg (Scotty), John Cho (Sulu), Anton Yelchin (Chekov) and Zoe Saldana (Lieutenant Uhura). Sadly, Yelchin died in a freak car accident at his home on June 19 at the age of 27.

This time Justin Lin, best known for directing the "Fast and the Furious" movie franchise, directs this stellar cast. As you would expect from Lin, this Star Trek film has an added dose of adrenaline, speed and steroid-fueled digital effects. The \$150 million estimated budget gave Lin a lot of playing room.

When the USS Enterprise is destroyed, the courageous crew explores the deep uncharted area of space while ruthless mysterious enemies condemn them. We learn more about Captain James T. Kirk – who he is and his relationship with his father that drives him to continue his captaincy of the USS Enterprise. Kirk has all the adventures he could ask for as he is being falsely lured into uncharted space where he encounters Krall, portrayed by Golden Globe recipient Idris Elba (Luther), who plans to destroy the Federation.

During a few parts of the movie, I felt like I was watching another superhero film with all the building destruction and the battles taking place between good and evil, which is not the pace or elements of a meaningful "Star Trek" theme. But overall I enjoyed the film for what it has become – pure entertain-

ment of a great sci-fi spectacle. Some Trekkies will disagree with me but that is what makes the world interesting.

"Star Trek Beyond" will, without question, be receiving several award nominations for special effects during award season later in the year. It is rated PG13 and has a total running time of 120 minutes.

"Star Trek Beyond" is currently playing at the Orinda Theatre and is one movie that must be seen on the big screen. Do not miss it. "Live long, and prosper."

Upcoming Special Events at Lamorinda Theaters:

7 p.m. July 30: Charlie Chaplin Festival – See the 1921 classic, "The Kid" starring Charlie Chaplin with live baby grand piano score by Patti Liedecker and lecture by Derek Zemrak at the Rheem Theatre.

7 p.m. Aug. 11: FREE Movie Night at Orinda Theatre – "On The Waterfront"

Aug. 12 – 16: The International Film Showcase returns with the award winning film "The Clan," a true story from Argentina. August 13: Laurel and Hardy Festival with live baby grand piano score by Patti Liedecker and lecture by Derek Zemrak at the Rheem Theatre.

7 p.m. Aug. 20: Live Concert at the Rheem with one of the East Bay's great tenors, Douglas Bryson.

August 27: Gorilla Fest at the Rheem – Enjoy some of the greatest gorilla movies ever made, including "King Kong" (1933), "Mighty Joe Young" (1949), "Bela Lugosi Meets a Brooklyn Gorilla" (1952) and "Konga" (1961). Hollywood legend and Oscar nominee Terry Moore will be in attendance and will also be inducted into the Classic Film Hall of Fame.

Setting the Stage for the Lamorinda Idols

By Sophie Braccini



The arts and crafts table was busy as families picnicked on the lawn at Orinda Community Park, with singers in the gazebo. Photo Sophie Braccini

The Lamorinda Arts Council made it a complete family treat at the Orinda Community Park recently, offering craft and art activities for kids, family picnics on the lawn provided, if desired, by a food truck, while on stage, finalists and runner-ups among the 130-plus Lamorinda Idols 2016 participants serenaded the crowd.

"This is our 11th year (of the Lamorinda Idol)," said Lamorinda Arts Council's Jenny Staelin. "For the past three years we have added

with great delight that more young families were joining the event and participating, a testimony to a bright future for the arts in Lamorinda, she said.

Steve Harwood, chairman of the Lamorinda Idol program, had set up his equipment. "We have more than 30 people now involved in the (Idol) committee," he said. The popularity of the singing competition is ongoing with over 130 participants this year from grades K to 12 competing either solo or in group.

"The finals will be on Sept. 4 at the Orinda Theater," said Harwood, a local businessman who volunteers his time to the organization. "It will be an all-day long event where the audience will give its feedback and professional judges will select the winners."

On the night of July 20, the singers were just there to showcase their talent and practice for the big day. Some amazing voices were heard, with all styles of music including rock and country music. The 2016 Lamorinda Idol will be a vintage one. More information at www.lamorindaarts.org.

Please submit:

- Events:** calendar@lamorindaweekly.com
- Stories:** storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com
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8/9	Gary Wegener	Motorcycling thru Russia
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8/23	Prof. Jack Citrin	Presidential Elections in Wild 2016
8/30	Capt. Joe Hester	US Coast Guard Drug Interdictions
9/6	Chris Lardge	Cracking the Enigma Code
9/13	Andy Dolich	National Sports Marketing Guru
9/20	Jeanette Fritzy	Medication management & your health
9/27	Catherine Baker	CA State Assemblywoman for Contra Costa
10/4	Ron Coccimiglio	Cal football athlete development

Rotary



Service Clubs Announcements



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

July 29
Mack Riddle exposes himself in true Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary fashion.

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Acalanes Grad to Row at Second Olympics Games

By Karl Buscheck



Two-time Olympian and Lafayette native Anthony Fahden. Photos provided

When Dana Hooper first met Anthony Fahden back in 2002, he would never guessed that the young rower would go on to become a two-time Olympian.

“One of the things that kind of stood out about him as a junior rower (was that) I don’t think I would have ever said that he was going to go to the Olympics,” said Hooper who is the managing director of the Oakland Strokes.

Fahden grew up in Lafayette and began rowing for the East Bay powerhouse back in 2001 when he was a sophomore at Acalanes. Hooper started coaching Fahden, who’s now in the midst of making his final preparations for his second Olympic games.

“In hindsight, all the personality traits were there that allowed it to happen,” Hooper said. “He was always just very straightforward. He came in (and) there was no drama. He came in and did his work. (He was) just super solid and very personally motivated to do well.

“In hindsight, it seems like something that could definitely happen,” Hooper added with a laugh.

Once he started coaching Fahden, it didn’t take Hooper long to realize that he was working with a uniquely gifted athlete.

“I pretty quickly identified him as someone who had the talent to step into the varsity boat, which he did as a junior,” Hooper said. “But I think it was really during his senior year that I saw him as kind of a special kid and someone who was going to lead the boat and just drive it for-

ward.”

Now 30, Fahden has been a member of the U.S. Rowing Senior National Team since 2009. He insists his day job is just like anyone else’s.

“After a while, it starts to feel just like a normal job,” Fahden explained in a phone interview from the team’s headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey. “It’s pretty much a full-time gig and you’re expected to travel with the training group all year (for) every year that you’re on the team. In that sense, it’s just like any other normal job.”

After graduating from Dartmouth in 2008, Fahden spent a year with the under-23 team before earning a promotion to the senior squad in 2009. He made his Olympic debut as a member of the lightweight four boat at the London games in 2012.

As Fahden admitted, his boat almost didn’t make the cut.

“We just narrowly missed out on qualifying the year before (at the World Championships),” Fahden said. “There was one last chance – a final qualifier in Switzerland the year of the Olympics, just a few months before.”

The lightweight four ended up making the grade, but Fahden described the last-minute qualification as far from an ideal ticket to London.

“That’s typically not the way you want to do it,” Fahden said. “You end up spending the whole year training – not sure if you’re going to be to go and compete in your country’s boat. And we were lucky enough to qualify and earn the right to go.”

After placing eighth in 2012,

Fahden enters his second Olympic go-around with the mindset of a true veteran of the sports grandest stage.

“Honestly, it’s not that dissimilar from just the World Championships, which is obviously a big event itself,” said Fahden of the preparation process.

The Strokes alum has rowed in the World Championships on five occasions.

“Your competition is the same. These are people you see every year. The distance is the same,” Fahden said. “The only real difference is that there’s a lot of pomp. There’s a lot of media presence. So, there’s more attention. But as far as the actual competition, it’s really not that different.”

Fahden deflected when asked to share his objective for his business trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

“The goal – we actually don’t talk about the result we’re hoping to get,” Fahden said. “I mean, certainly we’re hoping better than last time. But when we’re talking about just our day-to-day rowing, the content of the conversation is mostly just about improvement.”

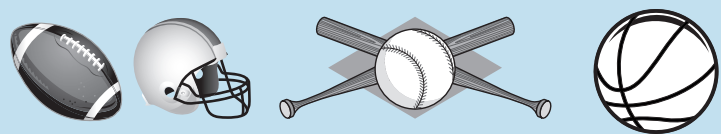
With the games set to begin in less than two weeks, Hooper will be among the many family members, friends and supporters back in the Bay Area, watching with a big smile on his face.

“I think the coaches like to see it as a feather in their cap,” Hooper said. “But really it’s all down to the athlete, it’s all down to Anthony. And what he’s done is really incredible.”



Anthony Fahden on left

Youth Sports Registration



Lamorinda Lacrosse Club

Registration for the Spring 2017 season will open on **Sept. 15** to returning players. **New player registration will open Oct. 1.** Please go to www.lamorindalacrosse.com for more information and details regarding spring registration and fall ball clinics. Contact Jin Peavey at lamorindalaxops@gmail.com if you have any questions.



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Orinda Aquatics Host Junior Olympics at Soda Center

By Karl Buscheck



Photos Gint Federas

Orinda Aquatics had so many athletes competing in the Junior Olympics Meet that co-head coach/founder Ron Heidary was stumped when asked to highlight his star swimmers.

"We have a very good group of 11/12 (year old)'s and 13/14's," explained Ron Heidary, who founded the club along with his twin brother and fellow head coach Don back in 1995. "I wouldn't say I could pick one out, but our 11/12's and 13/14's were strong and very competitive in the meet."

Over 1,200 swimmers were in attendance for the Junior Olympics, including more than 100 from Orinda Aquatics, which hosted the event from July 7 to July 11 at the Soda Aquatic Center in Moraga.

"What we're proud of is that we do

a good job of it," R. Heidary said. "Our parents work so hard and we want to be the best meet host in Pacific Swimming and I think we're at least one of the best if not the best."

Pacific Swimming is the third-largest of USA Swimming's 59 regional association, consisting of more than 120 clubs and 16,000 swimmers from across Northern California.

"We provide a great atmosphere for the swimmers and the coaches and the facility is one of the best in the Bay Area," Ron Heidary said. "I think it's a tremendous opportunity, not only for our kids to compete but all the kids in Pacific Swimming. So, we are very proud to do it and we feel good about what we've done."

Like his brother, Don views the Soda

Center as the ideal setting for one of the premier meets of the summer schedule.

"I think the most important thing was to try and provide a venue for so many young kids to compete at a high level," Don Heidary said. "And I think we did a good job of that."

According to Ron Heidary, the Acalanes Union High School District and the Soda Center leadership deserves plenty of credit for making the Junior Olympics such a success.

"Honestly, the reason we can do it is because the district and the aquatic director are very accommodating and they help us facilitate this meet," Ron Heidary said. "We bid on it for next year and at this point we're planning on hosting it."



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2015-2016 Girls DFAL All League, Spring Sports

Softball

First Team

Megan Bowers (Miramonte)
Alex Grant-Hudd (Acalanes)

Second Team

Aleha Pagan (Miramonte)
Ashley Thoms (Campolindo)
Amanda DeVecchi (Miramonte)
Carly Johnson (Miramonte)

Honorable Mention

Mary Keeler (Acalanes)
Kaitlyn Johnson (Acalanes)
Katelyn Poole (Campolindo)
Grace Deskin (Campolindo)
Abigal Murriss (Campolindo)
Lucy Kasella (Miramonte)
Jennifer Giron (Miramonte)

Girls Lacrosse

First Team

Taylor Geary (Miramonte)
Katie Hawkins (Miramonte)
Perrie Lundstrom (Miramonte)
Sophie Hubbell (Campolindo)
Kate Cimino (Campolindo)
Sam Repstad (Acalanes)
Sophie Ross (Acalanes)
Lucy Stenovic (Miramonte)
Francesca Veverka (Miramonte)
Claire Cimino (Campolindo)
Peyton King (Campolindo)
Marie Whitmore (Acalanes)
Julia Mueller (Acalanes)

Honorable Mention

Grace Burnite (Campolindo)
Liv Lagomarsino (Campolindo)
Susie Bush (Acalanes)
Morgan Johnson (Miramonte)
Lauren Ramirez (Miramonte)

Girls Track

1st Team All - League

Hannah Fishlow (Miramonte)
1600M, 4x400 Relay
Julia Lyons (Acalanes)
100M, 200M, Long Jump, 4x100 Relay
Sarah Cella (Campolindo)
800M, 4x400 Relay
Muppy Gragg (Acalanes)
300M Hurdles, Long Jump, High Jump
Cassy Haskell (Miramonte)
1600M, 800M, 3200M
Jordyn Bryant (Miramonte)
Shot Put, Discus Throw
Juliet Arnswald (Campolindo)
300M Hurdles, High Jump, 4x400 Relay
Julie Hyatt (Campolindo)
4x400 Relay
Lauren Williams (Campolindo)
4x400 Relay
2nd Team All - League
Windy Margerum (Acalanes)
100M Hurdles, 300M Hurdles
Masina Mayo (Miramonte)
100M
Arden Creson (Miramonte)
400M, 200M, Long Jump, 4x100 Relay
Veronica Marrone (Acalanes)
4x100 Relay
Maya Michon (Acalanes)
4x100 Relay, 4x400 Relay
Mari Florine (Acalanes)
4x100 Relay
Imani Boggan (Acalanes)
800M, 4x400 Relay
Annie Klopstock (Acalanes)
4x400 Relay
Mikaela Troung (Acalanes)
4x400 Relay

Honorable Mention

Hana Sun (Campolindo)
1600M
Lauren Williams (Campolindo)
100M
Hannah Ruane (Campolindo)
3200M
Madelyn Robinson (Miramonte)
Triple Jump, 4x100 Relay
Molly Colwell (Miramonte)
Pole Vault
Christy Xie (Acalanes)
Discus Throw
Mesina Mayo (Miramonte)
4x100 Relay, 4x400 Relay
Kathryn Silvera (Miramonte)
4x100 Relay, 4x400 Relay
Rosie Cruz (Miramonte)
4x400 Relay



Megan Bowers Photos Gint Fedaras



Alex Grant-Hudd



Taylor Geary



Sophie Hubbell



Sam Repstad

Girls Swimming

1st Team All - League

Emily Lo (Acalanes)
Alicia Campbell (Campolindo)
Sophia Cavalli (Campolindo)
Ashleen O'Brien (Campolindo)
Emily Ward (Campolindo)
Brooke Presten (Campolindo)
Audrey Chang (Miramonte)
Katrina Drake (Miramonte)
Sophia Kosturos (Miramonte)
Katie Lyons (Miramonte)
2nd Team All - League
Shannon Campbell (Campolindo)
Lauren Etyre (Campolindo)
Sydney Smith (Campolindo)
Eloise Engs (Miramonte)
Honorable Mention
Rachel Hendricks (Campolindo)
Erin Neustrom (Campolindo)
Emily Rasmussen (Campolindo)

Submit stories to sportsdesk@lamorinda weekly.com

(We prefer to receive your original photo file, minimum size: 200 dpi and 1200 pixels wide.)

Lamorinda Girls Lacrosse Club Finishes Successful 2016 Spring Season

Submitted By Dave DiFranco



The Flash, the G13A team of the Lamorinda Girls Lacrosse Club, played in the NCJLA championship game.

Photo provided

The goal of the Lamorinda Girls Lacrosse Club is fun and success, and it achieved both this season.

The G15A Thunder team of eighth graders made the Northern California Junior Lacrosse Association playoffs for the first time ever. They won two playoff games and advanced to the semifinals, losing to Pleasanton, the eventual champions, in a very tight game. Jess Mucci, Mark Simmonds and Kellie Barker were the coaches.

Meanwhile, the G13A Flash were the first Lamorinda Girls team to ever make the NCJLA Championship game. This was a major accomplishment for them and the young club. The team was made up of sixth and seventh grad-

ers. They won two playoff games and made it to the finals. They lost to the Diablo Scorpions in the finals, but went 14-3 on the season. They were coached by Cristen Andrews and Mike McCauley.

The G13B Wind had a solid season, started to peak at the season's end, and won a game in their end-of-season tourney. The G11 Strike won 10 games after winning 1 last season and had great success against some of the top programs in the Bay Area. The G11 Quakes competed all season in their down year, but won their flight in their end-of-season tourney. The G9 Volts and Storm rolled through the season, and both did well in their end-of-season tourneys.

The club also has about 40-50

girls playing competitive, travel lacrosse for Tenacity Elite, the top girls' lacrosse program in Northern California, and another 30-40 playing in Tenacity Select, a new local travel lacrosse program.

The club capped off the season with an end-of-season party, which featured a coaches versus players game, and included an appearance in goal and a talk by Liz Hogan, the Team USA goalie and No. 1 pick in the first professional women's lacrosse league draft.

Registration for the 2017 Spring season starts on Sept. 15 for returning players and Oct. 1 for new players. For more information visit www.lamorindalacrosse.com.

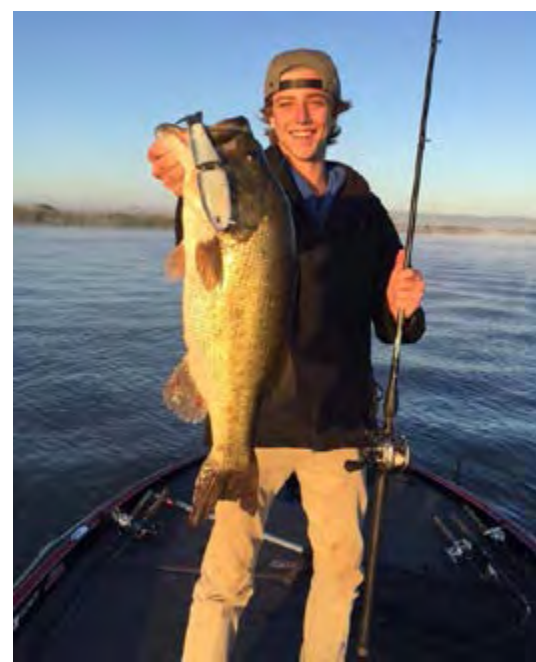
Big Catch

Submitted by Ned Wood

Sixteen-year-old Jed Wood of Lafayette, who will be a junior at Acalanes High School in the fall, is already a big fish. Or at least he's an expert at catching them. Jed won the C.O. Pro-Teen Classic Bass Fishing Tournament held July 17 at Russo's Marina in Bethel Island. More than 60 youth entered the tournament from as far north as Oregon and as far south as Fresno.

Jed Wood

Photo Ned Wood



Water Polo Team Wins Bronze

Submitted by Pam Drake



Top row from left: coach Lance Morrison, Katrina Drake, Hannah Henry, Ava Johnson, Madison Davis, Skylar Savar, Laine Mcpherson, Drew Halvorson, Erin Neustrom, coach Jon Leach; bottom row from left: Camille Russell, Grace Tehaney, Carson Broad, Jolie Trujillo, Zoe Crouch, Nina Flynn

Photo provided

The 680 Drivers U16 Women's Water Polo team brought home bronze in the United States Club Water Polo Championships.

The team, led by coaches Jon Leach and Lance Morrison, pulled off an impressive 11-6

victory over Rose Bowl in the semifinal game. Sixteen of the top teams in the country were invited to compete for the title. The girls beat five Southern California teams to bring home a medal in the notorious water polo com-

petition between Northern California and Southern California.

These teams are likely to meet again in the Junior Olympic Water Polo tournament held in Palo Alto, July 28-31.

Moraga Valley Pool Takes First Place at Annual Mini Meet

Submitted by Amy Campbell



Meadow Team with coaches

This year's 46th annual Mini Meet, hosted by Meadow Swim and Tennis Club, took place on Sunday, July 17. Over 500 swimmers ages 8 and under from nine separate Orinda Moraga Pool Association (OMPA) clubs com-

peted in the event. Moraga Valley Pool took home the trophy for first place, followed closely by Orinda Country Club in second place, with home team Meadow rounding out the top three.

Photos provided

Here are this year's results:

1. Moraga Valley Pool: 600 pts.
2. Orinda Country Club: 591 pts.
3. Meadow Swim and Tennis Club: 395 pts.
4. Moraga Country Club: 371 pts.
5. Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club: 345 pts.
6. Orinda Park Pool: 186 pts.
7. Moraga Ranch Swim Club: 170 pts.
8. Miramonte Swim Club: 109 pts.
9. Campolindo Cabana Club: 8 pts.



Fun with dolphin

MBA 9U All-star Team Takes All World Summer Shootout

Submitted by Brian Myers



Photo Shirley DeFrancisci

Over the July 9-10 weekend, the Moraga Baseball Association 9U All Star Team won the All World Summer Shootout in Fremont. A 10-team tournament covering all stretches of the Bay

Area, the 9U's went 4-0, giving up only six runs and scoring 26 for the tournament.

The young MBA team wrapped up the tournament in a close final game, winning an all-

Lamorinda championship game over Orinda 3-1. Congratulations to the 9U's on a strong finish to the summer season.

Orinda 8U All-Star Baseball Team Wins Dale Wilson Tournament

Submitted by Jill Yung



Front row from left: Wyatt Feusier, Will Leibowitz, Dylan Scott, George Gilbert, Carlito Pearce, Graham Jenkins, Noah King, Casey Yung, Ian Hughes, Augie Martinez, David Roman, Theo Destino; back row from left: coaches Brett Gilbert, James Jenkins, Don Destino, John Martinez, Carlos Roman

Photo provided

The Orinda 8U All-star baseball team bested the undefeated San Bruno Green Summer Tournament team, 6-4, to win the Dale Wilson 2016 Fourth of July Tour-

namment in San Bruno on July 4. The kids played every out and every inning of three doubleheaders with the hearts of lions. Great defense combined with tremendous hitting

propelled Orinda to a perfect record of 6-0, despite having faced strong travel and all-star teams from several Peninsula and South Bay cities.

MBA Mavericks 11U Capture Summer Breeze Tournament

Submitted by Brent Meyers



From left: Dashiell Weaver, Brendan Comerford, Nick Rogers, coach Doug Nimura, Lucas Concepcion, James Gordon, Justin Meyers, Charlie Hill, coach Steve Hammond, Tyler Panos, Evan Olson, Robbie Mascheroni, Grant Roesch

Photo provided

The Moraga Baseball Association Mavericks 11U team successfully closed out their summer season, hoisting another championship trophy at the

Xtreme Diamond Sports Summer Breeze tournament in Morro Bay.

The Mavericks went undefeated through the weekend, ul-

timately besting Bakersfield 7-4 in a thrilling game featuring five lead changes until the Mavs put it away for good with a four-run fifth inning.

Submit stories to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 11 Wednesday, July 27, 2016



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

...read on page D12

Setting the Stage for a Home Sale

By Cathy Dausman



Before staging.

Photo courtesy Sarah Kellar, Dana Green Team



After staging.

Photo Jennie Norris, Stagedhomes.com

You need a bigger home; you want a smaller home; you need to live in a different location. For whatever reason, you've decided to sell your home. You've hired a real estate agent and signed a contract. The stage is set for foot traffic; now let the offers start rolling in. Or will they? Do you think your home looks marketable? Should you elect to have your home-sweet-home professionally staged, and what advantages will that bring?

Home staging has ceased to be an add-on real estate strategy and has become the norm, says realtor Dana Green of Lafayette's Dana Green Team. Where remodeling focuses on what Green calls the cosmetics of a property, she says staging breathes life into a property, represents each room with its proper scale, and declutters and neutralizes a home. Professional stagers, Green says, focus on preparing homes for sale to appeal to the broadest market of buyers while maintaining a fresh and updated inventory of accessories.

"I always hire a professional stager to come into the property and do a consult once we have signed a listing agreement," says Hollie Howell of Fusion Real Estate Network in Walnut Creek. Howell is a full time Realtor who has earned Accredited Staging Professional credentials. She is confident enough in the value added of home staging to split the cost with the seller as a credit against her commission. "I have yet to have a case where (staging) has not paid off," she said.

Not all Realtors are stagers, says Jennie Norris, president and CEO of Stagedhomes.com, but they all need to know how to educate their sellers about the process. Norris, a past resident of Danville, Walnut Creek and San Ramon, says staging really took off in the San Francisco area 15 to 20 years ago. Before Norris listed her own home she says, "I had never heard of the term or process" but when her Realtor brought in a stager "our house looked great, (and) we got sold."

... continued on page D4



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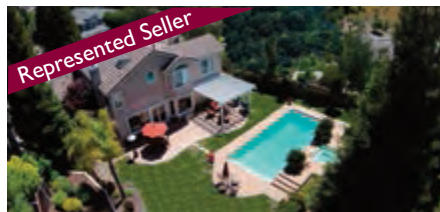
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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	18	\$840,000	\$3,700,000
MORAGA	13	\$419,000	\$1,975,000
ORINDA	11	\$1,135,000	\$3,600,000

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

LAFAYETTE

839 Avalon Avenue, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1548 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 5-17-16

2460 Cherry Hills Drive, \$940,000, 4 Bdrms, 1780 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$745,000, 10-24-07

3184 Diablo View Road, \$1,122,500, 5 Bdrms, 3293 SqFt, 1991 YrBlt, 5-23-16;
Previous Sale: \$850,000, 05-30-02

3400 Echo Springs Road, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1873 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$582,000, 10-16-98

3259 Elvia Street, \$1,320,000, 4 Bdrms, 2443 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$493,000, 06-07-91

700 Francis Drive, \$840,000, 4 Bdrms, 2069 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$314,000, 06-03-97

766 Glenside Drive, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2490 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$925,000, 07-24-15

3299 Greenhills Drive, \$1,725,000, 3 Bdrms, 3082 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 5-19-16;
Previous Sale: \$708,000, 03-19-90

3905 Happy Valley Road, \$3,050,000, 6 Bdrms, 4578 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,900,000, 01-22-03

7 Hartwood Court, \$1,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 2226 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$300,000, 11-10-86

4151 Hidden Valley Road, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 1794 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$730,000, 11-02-04

1064 Leland Drive, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1621 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-18-16;
Previous Sale: \$840,000, 08-15-06

3963 Los Arabis Drive, \$1,900,000, 3 Bdrms, 2185 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 08-29-14

3687 Nordstrom Lane, \$3,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 4381 SqFt, 2009 YrBlt, 6-23-16;
Previous Sale: \$2,950,000, 12-21-12

3654 Walnut Street, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 1525 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 6-21-16;
Previous Sale: \$550,000, 02-10-04

3546 Silver Springs Road, \$1,695,500, 3 Bdrms, 1834 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 09-18-09

3266 Withers Avenue, \$1,030,000, 3 Bdrms, 1388 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 6-23-16;
Previous Sale: \$270,000, 07-15-94

1013 Via Roble, \$1,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 2294 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 5-17-16;
Previous Sale: \$342,000, 03-15-95

MORAGA

2129 Ascot Drive #7, \$419,000, 2 Bdrms, 1314 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 6-21-16;
Previous Sale: \$136,000, 04-10-90

758 Augusta Drive, \$873,000, 3 Bdrms, 1917 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-27-16;
Previous Sale: \$785,000, 08-20-13

316 Corte Gabriel, \$820,000, 3 Bdrms, 2018 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 5-19-16;
Previous Sale: \$196,000, 12-30-86

135 Devin Drive, \$925,000, 3 Bdrms, 1545 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$340,000, 05-05-95

400 Deerfield Drive, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 3041 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 6-22-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,170,000, 09-16-11

11 Doral Drive, \$775,000, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 5-19-16;
Previous Sale: \$578,000, 11-05-01

... continued on page D13

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Setting the Stage for a Home Sale

... continued from page D1



Photo courtesy Sarah Kellar, Dana Green Team



Photo courtesy Sarah Kellar, Dana Green Team



Photo courtesy Sarah Kellar, Dana Green Team

Ironically, Norris moved to an area where she said staging was considered unnecessary. Stagers will tell you the unstaged homes are the ones that boost the sales price of homes that have been staged.

Barbara Schwarz, founder of the International Association of Home Staging Professionals, likens transforming your home into something potential buyers see as their home to theater design. The project includes a director or professional stager, producers (the seller and listing agent), and an audience composed of potential buyers. There even may be critics (other agents) eager to point out the listing shortfalls.

Schwarz says home staging works in a variety of locales with homes either vacant or occupied, with new construction and resale residences.

Schwarz emphasizes the “three C’s” of home staging – cleaning at a top-to-bottom, white-glove level, decluttering, and assessing the color of walls and furnishings. Too much color may overwhelm potential buyers, too little will brand the spaces dull and drab. Schwarz suggests the stager and homeowner strive for neutral background colors then add punch in small doses with pillows, curtains or area rugs. A neutral gray wall color is currently in vogue.

Green says there are five steps sellers should take during the staging process. They should remove personal items, including family photos and children’s art, remove items of value, clear floors of clutter, organize closets and repaint and clean or replace carpets.

Nothing beats flowers when it comes to freshness, and both Green and Howell say they include a combination of quality artificial and real flowers in their staged homes. Howell cautions that real flowers must be changed out weekly, a chore she usually leaves to the professional stager.

Howell suggests adding a complete landscape “haircut” and fresh paint to the to-do list if timing allows; she’d also recommend a complete flooring update before a house goes on the market.

“If a client wants an ‘as is’ sale, they will take less of a price hit if at least those elements are covered,” she said. Kitchens and bathrooms sell houses, Howell continues. When staging and remodeling are combined, the result “can often make more than a \$100,000 or greater difference in the net (price),” she says. It may also trigger over-list-price offers.

A 2015 Profile of Home Staging by the National Association of Realtors says the median dollar cost to stage a home is \$675. It lists the most common rooms to be staged in order of importance as living room, kitchen, master bedroom, dining room, bathroom, children’s bedroom and guest bedroom. A house can be staged either using the homeowner’s furniture or with items brought in from a stager’s inventory of furnishings.

“We can do as little or as much as the client needs,” Norris says.

For more information on staging, visit: <http://blog.pacificunion.com/spring-staging-tips> or <http://www.iahsp.com>.



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Stylish Solutions

Christmas in July? Planning Prevents Panic

By Ann McDonald



Photos courtesy of Couture Chateau

How has your summer been so far, Stylish Suburbanite? I hope it's been refreshing, relaxing and filled with fun gatherings of friends and family.

While you're basking in the summer sun, I am excited to share this month about what goes on behind the scenes during this time of year for me, from late July to September, that very few know about. However, this makes fall and winter especially enjoyable and peaceful. The whole thing has to do with "Planning, to Prevent Panic."

For what are we planning? Well, just like we till soil for our gardens and plan retirement accounts for a financial season down the road, this part of the year is all about preparation for the Holiday Season.

I can hear you, and see you say "Hold on... No!"

But wait. Give me just a minute, and please don't disconnect. I said planning! Not decorating.

This is important. Do you plan your finances? Okay. And what happens when you don't? Precisely.

Now, what is more important than the atmosphere in your home? Especially around the holidays? Can you imagine if this year, there was actually peace? And no overspending last minute on décor items you didn't really need, or even want? Then planning, Stylish Suburbanite, is the key, and the time to use that key is now.

The Design Calendar: A Little Insider Information

Every year in January, there are runway shows for materials to be used in holiday collections that designers will debut in late July and August.

My team and I work in mid-December on next season's designs. Come January, we are in Atlanta, making sure we are on track with what is dropped into our hearts to design, via those runway shows.

In the retail world, you find holiday items popping up as early as August for purchase. Why? Because people are actually buying then. My counsel to clients who are offended when they see items in the store? As Disney Princesses sing, "Let

it go." Don't be moved by someone else's calendar, but DO take hold of your own. That's why we are always planning! It's to provide peace. Remember the financial example? Now, consider your home atmosphere again...for the upcoming holidays.

Planning also prevents overdoing the décor. If we are able to create a beautiful aesthetic on paper ahead of time, there is no last minute super tacky add-in. If we love whimsy, we can plan for a singing reindeer, in a very specific place.

Every year at this time, my team and I are busy designing and fabricating custom holiday items to be manufactured in August and September, and delivered to clients' doorsteps, in October and November. You can plan the same way we do.

How fun would it be if, when the holidays arrive, you were all planned out? While friends are in a panic rummaging through storage to find items, you can be enjoying the season, knowing a little bit of planning during the summer earned you free hours during the fall to work with a little less stress, and get in an evening tennis game.

So what can you do?

First, it's simple. Walk your home today. Ask yourself some very simple questions:

1. Where will I decorate this holiday season?
2. What colors do I want to use?
3. What can I do ahead of time?

... continued on page D10



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Stylish Solutions

Christmas in July? Planning Prevents Panic

... continued from page D8



It's not too early to start planning for holiday decorations.

Photos courtesy of Couture Chateau

Second, plan out the rooms you want to decorate and call out, to the best of your ability, each item and type. Source those items now. If they are in storage, where are they? Make a folder, write it down.

If you love to shop in the middle of the “season” for fun and to see what’s out there, that’s great. But do so by leaving only a few unplanned portions.

For our projects and clients, we are designing now. Orders go in no later than Aug. 15. If you think this might work for you, email me today, ann@couturechateau.com.

If you are more of a casual workshop learner, we host friends in September, after school is back in session, and show a hands-on method, complete with samples to learn with. You can find more on these workshops on my website.

The final way we recommend clients learn is from our online course, “Stress



Free Holiday Homes.” When our workshops kept selling out, this online course was the result. It provides true insider information, down to budgets and planning. What’s nice? You enjoy in the privacy of your own home, on your own timeline.

The best part of being a Stylish Suburbanite? You get to decide.

Until next month, live beautifully and peacefully, and get to planning!



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



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August Gardening Guide

Don't Tell Bees to Buzz Off

By Cynthia Brian

"I am weary of swords and courts and kings. Let us go into the garden and watch the minister's bees." — Mary Johnston



Passion Flower. Look closely at the intricacies of this beautiful specimen.

Photos Cynthia Brian

There is a symphony playing daily in my garden. While my husband turns on the stereo to listen to his favorite tunes, I merely open my door or window to hear the melodic concert of nature. My favorite musicians include the thousands of bees buzzing, hummingbirds bustling, birds singing, frogs croaking, water trickling, owls hooting and crickets chirping. Sometimes the hawks or turkey vultures swoop low with the sound of their flapping wings creating a "whoosh, whoosh" like a strong base. The orchestra changes by the minute as the pollinators search for nectar that produces one out of every three bites we consume.

This week as I was sitting on my porch putting on my boots, a hummingbird came to inspect the red mandevilla blooms next to me, then, rapidly moved to hover three inches from my nose for about 10 seconds. It was



Blackberries are big and juicy this year. Eat raw or make a simple blackberry tart.

a magical moment photographed in my mind.

With much of summer spent outdoors, I've had individuals tell me that they don't like to be in their gardens because of their fear of bee stings. Honeybees, bumble bees and other native bees are passive as they busily forage. They are not interested in humans and will only sting to defend themselves. With the thousands of bees serenading in my landscape, the only times I have been stung is when I've tried to rescue a bee from a swimming pool, fountain or other water feature. (Of course, if you are allergic to bees, it's always good to have an updated pen of epinephrine on hand.)

Yellow jackets are meat eaters. Although these black and yellow carnivorous creatures are also pollinators, they are mostly attracted to meat, fish, sugary substances, garbage, and, alas, our barbecues and picnics. Unlike bees that sting once and die, yellow jackets have the ability to sting repeatedly. If you have bees landing on your plates as you are enjoying a meal outdoors, you have an invasion of yellow jackets, not bees. Bees flock to flowers, yellow jackets to flesh. Find the nest and call Vector Control, (925) 685-9301, a countywide free service paid through our taxes to eradicate these pests. Yellow jackets are not music to our ears.

For the rest of the butterflies, moths, bees and musicians, cue the conductors and buzz on! Go into the garden to enjoy the show.

... continued on page D14

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

MORAGA ... continued

- 334 Fernwood Drive, \$1,359,000, 4 Bdrms, 2390 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$880,000, 09-04-03
- 68 Gaywood Place, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 3369 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 5-18-16;
Previous Sale: \$425,000, 09-27-95
- 3 Haven Court, \$1,315,000, 3 Bdrms, 2283 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 5-20-16;
Previous Sale: \$444,000, 12-13-90
- 1305 Knoll Drive, \$1,975,000, 3 Bdrms, 3419 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 5-18-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 07-25-00
- 152 Miramonte Drive, \$689,500, 2 Bdrms, 1514 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 5-19-16;
Previous Sale: \$565,000, 03-28-08
- 124 Santa Catalina Court, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2653 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 6-21-16;
Previous Sale: \$895,000, 09-29-03
- 11 Williams Drive, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 2552 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,285,000, 08-31-06

ORINDA

- 125 Alta Haciendas Road, \$3,600,000, 6 Bdrms, 4647 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 5-20-16
- 130 Camino Sobrante, \$1,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 2368 SqFt, 1929 YrBlt, 6-23-16;
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 06-27-90
- 116 Coral Drive, \$1,556,500, 6 Bdrms, 3041 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 5-19-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,375,000, 08-28-13
- 1 Crescent Drive, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 2895 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 6-23-16
- 11 El Verano, \$1,135,000, 3 Bdrms, 1706 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 6-23-16;
Previous Sale: \$835,500, 12-16-11
- 42 Michael Lane, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 2228 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 5-18-16;
Previous Sale: \$510,091, 12-01-98
- 35 Oak Road, \$1,879,000, 4 Bdrms, 4124 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 6-24-16;
Previous Sale: \$935,000, 10-21-99
- 49 Scenic Drive, \$1,135,000, 4 Bdrms, 1856 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-17-16;
Previous Sale: \$915,000, 06-09-04
- 29 Tara Road, \$1,150,000, 6 Bdrms, 2988 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 5-17-16
- 16 Valley View Lane, \$2,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 4453 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 5-18-16;
Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 10-21-09



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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

... continued from page D12

Refresher Steps for Sustained Buzzing

- Build a house: allow for a small pile of leaves or branches to provide shelter.
- Provide a fresh water source: birdbaths, fountains, ponds, even a small mud puddle for the butterflies.
- Don't use pesticides, insecticides or other chemicals that will kill the pollinators.
- Offer a continual source of nectar and pollen by planting fennel, parsley, dill, lavender, tubular, colorful flowers, milkweed and shrubs.
- Attract a diversity of buzzers to your garden with drifts of the same plant so that they can see and smell the buffet.
- Don't be afraid of the native bees, honeybees or our other flying winged friends. They are not interested in harming you unless they are defending themselves. Let them do their business.

Trending in my garden:

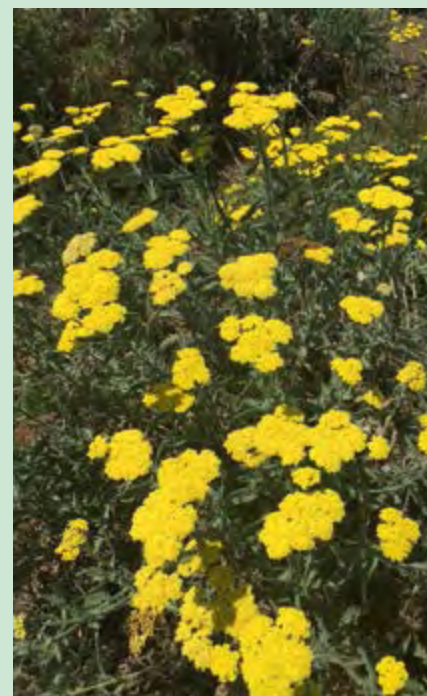
- Santa Rosa plums, cherry plums, Asian pears, apples, blackberries and tangerines are finding their way to tarts, barbecues, sauces, salads and drinks.
- Zucchini is growing as fast as the pods in "Invaders of the Body Snatchers."
- Wisteria boasts a second flush of purple.
- Roses and stargazer lilies perfume the air and beautify my garden.
- Herbs (parsley, basil, cilantro, fennel, sage, thyme, oregano, rosemary and tarragon) are flourishing.



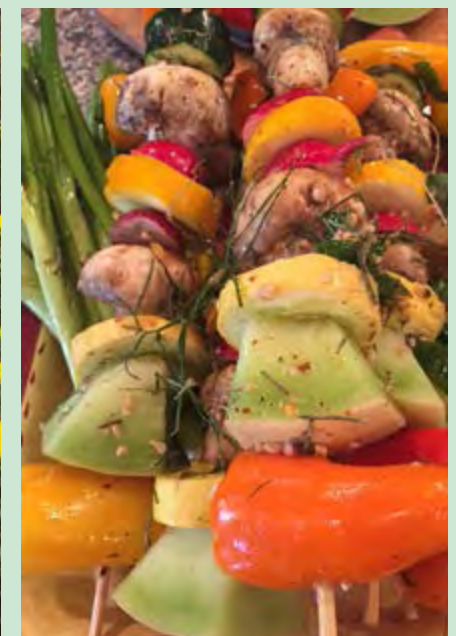
A drip system irrigates the bucolic garden leading to the peaceful pond.

Photos Cynthia Brian

- Hydrangeas are finally blooming. I love putting a hydrangea in a Deckorations container from www.Jberrynursery.com, then planting in a shaded area when the blooms fade.
- Passion lower vines are growing on my fence featuring intricate show-stopping blooms.



Yarrow flowers



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Monthly Tips:

KEEP fruited plants evenly moist to avoid blossom end rot.

PRE-ORDER new garlic varieties for a September delivery. Four new ones that are offered by Sow True Seed (www.sowtrueseed.com) include Early Red Italian, Red Russian, Georgian Fire and Majestic. Everything tastes better with garlic.

DRY herbs and flowers during the summer to use for infusions into homemade cosmetics, shampoo, steams and masks.

EAT the tendrils of peas. Stir-fry or eat raw. Many unexpected veggie greens are edible, including turnip, radish and beets. Never eat the leaves of rhubarb as they are poisonous.

PINCH back annuals for a fuller display all summer.

EMPTY any vessel holding water, even as small as a bottle cap to prevent mosquito larvae from breeding. Change birdbaths daily or add Dunks to non-moving water.

DEEP soak trees like magnolia or redwoods, especially when you see them dropping abundant leaves.

CHECK outdoor pots and containers daily for moisture level. Pots dry out very quickly in this hot weather.

SNIP the tops of your herbs as they flower to use in your salads and sauces.

SKEWER vegetables and fruits from your garden to barbecue on your grill. Toss the items in a bowl with olive oil, lemon, and herbs, refrigerate overnight, skewer, grill and enjoy. I use peppers, melons, plums, apples, radishes, zucchini, tomatoes and mushrooms.

ADD pea gravel to paths for easy walking and to prevent mud runoffs in the winter.

CONTACT Vector Control if you have a mosquito, skunk or yellow jacket problem. The phone number is (925) 685-9301.

HANG yellow jacket traps **ONLY** on days that you are having a picnic or outdoor event. If you have traps always engaged, you will attract more yellow jackets.

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing!

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Cynthia Brian

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Cynthia Brian with sunflowers by a summer water feature for pollinators.



SERVE on an Agricultural Task Force

Interested in preserving and promoting agriculture in Contra Costa County where the value of crops rose 7 percent? The Contra Costa Board of Supervisors is seeking individuals who are interested in serving on the County's Agricultural Advisory Task Force. Meetings take place in Knightsen. Application forms can be obtained at www.co.contra-costa.ca.us or by telephoning the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors (925) 335-1900. Applications are due no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, August 12 to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, Room 106, County Administration Building, 651 Pine Street, Martinez, CA 94553. For more in depth intel, contact Chad Godoy, agricultural commissioner and director of Weights & Measures, at chad.godoy@ag.cccounty.us or (925) 646-5250.

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New Listing

83 Coral Drive Walk to 12 years of top rated Orinda schools. This open floor plan with high ceilings features 6 bdrms, 4 full baths in 2,283 sq. ft. on .26 acre lot. Lovely serene patio & level yard. Newer kitchen. **\$1,225,000**

ORINDA



96 Rheem Blvd. Spacious 4bd/3ba home. Eat-in kitchen with Wolf range, hardwood floors throughout, huge family room, au pair suite with separate entrance. **\$1,250,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

23 Ivy Drive Opportunity abounds in unique living of 2 units in one house (or combined for 1 large home). Beautifully updated with new baths + kitchens & lovely quality features. Quiet & peaceful setting. **\$1,295,000**

ORINDA



10 Van Tassel Lane Exceptional custom remodel of highest quality, lovely craftsmanship. Prime Sleepy Hollow street. One level living with vaulted ceilings, Chef's kitchen. Pool, lawns, gardens add to allure. **\$1,299,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

11 Southwood Court 1930's Orinda gem with a "10" location on private .52 acres. Serene setting with beautiful views. Formal living & dining updated kitchen & baths, family room/ 4th bedroom & more. Top rated schools! **\$1,499,000**

ORINDA



105 Crane Terrace Exceptional 4.87 acre gated estate traditional of incredible appeal on alluring knoll, private setting of panoramic views. Classic custom craftsmanship. Lovely grounds w/ lawns, gardens, mature trees. **\$3,000,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

1396 Camino Peral New remodeled interior! Beautifully updated 1440 sq. ft. 2 story townhome in popular Moraga de Casitas. Gourmet kitchen, hardwood floors, remodeled baths, private courtyard. **\$689,000**

MORAGA



1056A Larch Avenue Located down a private driveway off Larch Ave is a fabulous 3bd/2ba home w/contemporary remodeling thruout. Vaulted ceilings, hardwood flrs, & spacious bdrms. Close to schools, town. **\$1,195,000**

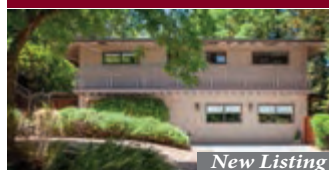
LAFAYETTE



New Listing

808 Las Trampas Road Tucked behind beautiful pine trees, this completely remodeled 3 bed/ 2 bath home w/modern finishes, large kitchen w/eat in peninsula, custom cabinets, stainless steel finishes. Wide plank hardwood floors throughout. Beautiful half acre lot! **\$1,189,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

3455 Goyak Drive Great open-space floor plan of granite kitchen, informal dining, large family area, viewing deck, garden & entertaining areas. Walk to Springhill Elementary and Acalanes High. **\$1,380,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

640 Augustine Lane Burton Valley at its Best! Updated single story with ideal floor plan on .30 acre level landscaped yard with pool on cul de sac. Remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, fabulous family room. Top rated schools. **\$1,599,000**

DANVILLE



New Listing

171 Tivoli Lane Great location in desirable Belvedere w/ private yard & updates throughout! Light & bright townhome w/ 2 master suites & bdrm/ full bath downstairs, vaulted ceilings, hardwood floors, designer carpet & more! **\$799,000**

MARTINEZ



New Listing

1887 Olympic Drive Traditionally-styled 4 bed/2 bath home of 1517 sf on corner lot of cul-de-sac. Open kitchen/ family combo floor plan w/ brick fireplace adjoining a spacious living rm. Fresh paint, new carpet & flooring. Cozy backyard w/deck. **\$538,000**

OAKLAND



New Listing

6945 Chambers Drive Private & sunny Montclair home! This 2274 sq. ft. home has 5 beds, 3 baths & a lovely garden with grassy play area, decks, outdoor dining area & chickens! Renovated kitchen & baths. **\$998,000**

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

625 Shadowhawk Way Beautiful level-in Rossmoor home on Grey Eagle Ridge w/incredible views, large patio, plantation shutters, high ceilings, laundry room & attached 2 car gar. Large eat-in kitchen & family rm. New HVAC. Call for appt **\$1,475,000**

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

156 Brodia Way New construction by KT Builders, a local, high-end home builder. Captivating views of Mt. Diablo & La Casa Via Valley. High ceilings, open flr pln & large .92ac lot at end of cul de sac. **\$1,895,000**



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