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Photo Andy Schreck

## Celebrating 10 Years of the Crosses

By Michael Lupacchino

It's become part of the Lamorinda landscape: the collection of white crosses on a hillside in Lafayette. Known as The Crosses of Lafayette, the memorial was erected 10 years ago to recognize American service members who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In honor of the 10th anniversary of this unique and powerful landmark, there will be a special event at the crosses this Veterans Day, at 5:15 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11. With special guest Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, the event will feature

speeches and poems reflecting on the memorial and its history in Lafayette. All are welcome to attend.

Although the memorial was created as a peaceful protest against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the hillside of crosses has dealt with its fair share of controversy.

The plot of land running along Deer Hill Road is owned by the Clark family. In 2003, Jeff Heaton, a longtime resident of Lafayette and family friend of Louise and Johnson Clark, inquired about setting up a memorial on their property. He

saw potential in the hillside situated across from the BART station and Highway 24.

"I was frustrated with the war," he said. "I had been protesting in San Francisco with thousands of others, and I wanted to do something. The idea came from the World War II movies I watched as a kid which showed fields of crosses, as mass graves for fallen soldiers." The Clark family agreed and in 2003, fifteen crosses were placed on the land, and were quickly removed by vandals. ... continued on page A16

**LAMORINDA WEEKLY**

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## Lamorinda Seniors Face Disparity in Parcel Taxes

By Nick Marnell

The four Lamorinda school districts treat residents aged 65 and over inconsistently when they apply for the senior parcel tax exemption on their owned and occupied Lamorinda residence.

The Moraga, Lafayette, Orinda and Acalanes school districts use revenue from parcel taxes to augment funding from the state, parent clubs and education foundations to support district operations. Parcel taxes levied annually by the Moraga School District total \$517; Lafayette School District, \$563; Orinda Union School District, \$509; and Acalanes Union High School District, \$301.

Seniors who own and occupy their residence can be exempt from paying the parcel taxes, but qualifying for that senior exemption is easier in some districts than in others.

According to district documents, MSD and OUSD allow the senior exemption only for seniors who are members of a "very low income household," defined as a household that does not exceed 50 percent of the area median income. OUSD lists that median figure for a two-person household as \$52,650 on its 2016-17 exemption form, while MSD uses \$39,000.

So in order to qualify for the exemption, OUSD and MSD seniors must fill out the exemption form every year, attach a portion of their federal tax return and supply a copy of their property tax bill and proof of age. The OUSD deadline for submission is June 15 each year; MSD allows until July 15.

By contrast, the AUHSD and LSD exemptions are avail-

able to all senior homeowners, without any proof of income.

Because all residents 65 and over are eligible for the parcel tax exemption, AUHSD does not require seniors to provide a copy of their federal tax return, and does not require them to reapply with the district every year. Seniors need provide only once a proof of age and a proof of residence. "We wanted to make it as simple as we could for our seniors," said Julie Bautista, AUHSD chief business official.

A similar procedure is followed by the LSD, but the district also requires a copy of a utility bill. "Once your application is accepted you will NOT need to reapply in subsequent years, provided your ownership and residence remains unchanged" is underlined at the bottom of the exemption form.

Dr. Carolyn Seaton was not around when the parcel tax language was written, but the new superintendent of OUSD gave her opinion on the district's senior exemption restrictions. "In my experience, residents, including senior citizens, are often supportive of a local school parcel tax because they believe strong local public schools are an investment in their community and help maintain their property values. In the short time that I have been in Orinda, I have observed the full school community, including our businesses, local agencies and our residents, to be extremely supportive of our schools," Seaton said.

The MSD parcel tax language preceded Bruce Burns, district superintendent, who said that he does not know why the very low income household qualification was used in the

original ballot measure, but that the latest parcel tax committee wanted to ensure there was consistency between the taxes of 2004 and 2014. "It was maintaining a system that was in place," Burns said.

From the latest information supplied by each district, AUHSD recognizes a total of 40,603 taxable parcels of which 5,242 qualify for the senior exemption. For LSD, 10,284 parcels, 1,666 senior exemptions. OUSD, 7,865 and 78; MSD 5,935 and 52.

In a typical year, Lamorindans pay more than \$21 million in parcel taxes to the four local school districts.

**Election 2016**

This issue we take a look at three controversial items on the Nov. 8 ballot: BART, marijuana and Measure C.

On page A9, writer Nick Marnell examines Measure RR, the \$3.5 billion bond BART is seeking to improve and update its service.

On page A11, Marnell takes a glimpse at how everyday Lamorindans view Proposition 64, which would legalize pot for adults age 21 and over in the state.

And on page A12, we offer up a Pro/Con on Lafayette's volatile sales tax, Measure C.

Look for a wrap-up of local election results in the Nov. 16 issue of the Lamorinda Weekly.

<b>Civic News</b> A1-A16	<b>Life in Lamorinda</b> B1-B10	<b>Sports</b> C1-C4	<b>Our Homes</b> D1-D12
Lafayette scrambles to find new city offices – page A2.	SMC delivers a winning "Twelfth Night" – page B1.	Local football teams gear up for post-season - page C3.	"Founding Gardeners" pay a visit to local garden club – page D1.
<b>Fire Districts</b> A8	MOFD doesn't take up tax group concerns – page A8.		





**Public Meetings**

**City Council**

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

**Planning Commission**

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

**Design Review**

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

**School Board Meetings**

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

**Lafayette School District**

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

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

**City of Lafayette:**

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

**Chamber of Commerce:**

www.lafayettechamber.org



**Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 2 - Oct. 15**

<b>Alarms</b>	95
<b>911 Calls (incl hang-ups)</b>	16
<b>Noise complaints</b>	10
<b>Traffic stops</b>	76
<b>Suspicious Circumstances</b>	16
<b>Suspicious Subjects</b>	20
<b>Suspicious Vehicles</b>	26
<b>Abandoned Vehicle</b>	
3600 Block Walnut St.	
Sweet Rd./El Curtola Blvd.	
800 Block Revere Rd.	
3200 Block Ortega Ave.	
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.	
Ortega Ave./Circle Creek Dr.	
<b>Animal Cruelty</b>	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.	
<b>Auto Burglary</b>	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
1000 Block Brown Ave.	
1000 Block Brown Ave.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
200 Block Lafayette Cr.	
3500 Block Brook St.	
Happy Valley Rd./Deer Hill Rd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
<b>Battery</b>	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
<b>Civil Disturbance</b>	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3600 Block Deerhill Rd.	
<b>Disturbing The Peace</b>	
10 Block Topper Ct	
<b>Drunk In Public</b>	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Golden Gate Way/1st St.	
<b>Embezzlement</b>	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
<b>Fire/Ems Response</b>	
10 Block Fiesta Ln.	
1100 Block Glen Rd.	
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct	
<b>Fireworks</b>	
Acalanes Rd./Coralee Ln.	
<b>Found Property</b>	
Miller Dr./Brown Ave.	
10 Block Brookwood Ct	
<b>Grand Theft</b>	
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
<b>H&amp;S Violation</b>	
Golden Gate Way/1st St.	
Pleasant Hill Cr./Acalanes Ave.	
<b>Harassment</b>	
500 Block St. Mary's Rd.	
3300 Block Helen Ln.	
<b>Hit And Run Misdemeanor</b>	
Moraga Rd./School St.	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dolores Dr.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Pleasant Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24	
Reliez Station Rd./Glenside Dr.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
<b>Identity Theft</b>	
3900 Block Rancho Rd.	

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**Loss of Lease Sends Lafayette Scrambling for City Office Space**

By Victor Ryerson



A Lafayette Police Department cruiser, haphazardly parked, takes up two spaces. Photo V. Ryerson

In a development that Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk told the city council “was not only predictable, but ... was predicted,” the city and police department must move from their current Desco Plaza office complex to a new location in a mere eight months.

With absolutely no prospect of building its own facility, the city is scrambling to find at least a short-term home. The task is not an easy

one in a city short of appropriate space, and the options being considered include placement of portable trailers on one of the few available sites near downtown, and even moving the offices outside the city limits.

Although the crisis has been brewing for years, it came to a head on Oct. 19, when Falk met with Curt Blomstrand, managing general partner of owner Gray Horse Investors, to discuss converting

four parking spaces at the current site to electric vehicle charging stations, two for city use and two to share with the general public. Blomstrand informed Falk that the request could not be considered because growth of the police department over the years had contributed to a shortage of available parking at Desco Plaza. In fact, he pointed out (and Falk agrees), the current situation does not comply with the requirements of the city’s own per-square foot standard, which would provide 10 spaces for police department use; current usage is estimated to be between 20 and 30 spaces more than that, and the department is even parking its ATV in a planter area and its motorcycles on walkways.

The city’s lease will expire on June 30. The landlord is willing to renew the lease for the city’s administrative offices on the site, but not for the entire police department. The problem is that the two

functions are now inseparable as a practical matter, because they share a technology hardware and software platform (“telephones, servers, integrated copy systems, GIS systems, emergency radio systems and antennae, etc.,” according to the city’s staff report), that requires co-location of the two city offices. Consequently, the city has determined that it must move its entire operation elsewhere, and the landlord says it will not prepare a lease renewal for the city, but will offer the 9,000 square foot space on the open office market.

The city once separated the two activities, but it simply did not work. “Our experience during that time was that coordination between administrative staff and the police department suffered; there was less communication between managers; there was poorer oversight of the ... most important and costly services” and other problems, the staff report says. ... continued on page A8

*Lamorinda Limelight*

**Principal Travis Bell Takes the Helm at Acalanes High School**

By A.K. Carroll



Travis Bell Lamorinda Weekly archive

For eight years, Travis Bell spent his summers driving a houseboat on Lake Shasta and the Sacramento River Delta. It provided a laid-back environment in which to connect with the students of Sunshine Ministries summer camps. In some respects, his role on the houseboat reflected Bell’s role in the classroom at

Dougherty Valley High School, where he taught English and leadership, a class that altered his career.

“I had to see a bigger picture than just my classroom,” Bell said of overseeing leadership. “To navigate the lens of a school culture and climate, decide what the class would do, and discern

how that would effect the campus environment. It was much more school-wide focused.”

When Bell decided to pursue a master’s degree in education administration and leadership, it was a natural extension of his passion for the subject. ... continued on page A8

**VOTE “NO” ON LAFAYETTE SALES TAX MEASURE C**

*East Bay Times Editorial agrees with us, says “No” to Measure C – September 21, 2016 “too much for one bite..Worse, the increase would last 29 years, a ridiculously long time for a tax that could be used for any government purpose.”*

*The Contra Costa Taxpayers Association, which supported the Lafayette School District facilities bond last June, has expressed concerns about “transparency and accountability” and does not endorse Measure C*

- It’s a \$100 Million blank check, because the City is not obligated to spend the money on any of the six items listed in Measure C
- The City removed the language about its real intentions for the money - a new \$26.25 Million “civic building ...could cause some voters to vote No on the measure” (City memo July 11, 2016)
- More taxes are not needed to fund any of the six items in Measure C
- All the money raised will not stay in Lafayette – as much as \$40M in interest and loan fees will go out of Lafayette
- Even if Measure C fails, the City has a great deal of cash available, its coffers are growing and we can always pursue a better, transparent sales tax increase of up to 1%, if needed, in the future
- This is the same administration that took away our right to vote on a major land project, is being investigated for wrongdoing by the California Fair Political Practices Commission, has already had one City Commissioner fined by the State and is not consistently enforcing its own General Plan and Ordinances.

**Vote NO on Measure C, the Sales Tax Increase Proposal for Lafayette!**  
If passed, the increase in the sales tax would raise about \$3 million annually and would be for a 29-year period, or over \$100 million in total dollars.

**In recent years our City administration has repeatedly failed to significantly protect or improve most of the six items in Measure C, despite having funds available.**

**Measure C DOES NOT LEGALLY REQUIRE the City to spend any of the money from Measure C on these six items nor prevent the City from undertaking a major borrowing, paying \$Millions in interest to out-of-town lenders, or acquiring and building the new civic building shown on the City’s July 11 plans and which the city estimates will cost \$26,250,000 plus interest. On October 20 the city manager announced the intent to relocate the city offices and police to a new unified location.**

**GUY ATWOOD**  
FORMER LAFAYETTE  
PLANNING COMMISSIONER  
AND CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

**SCOTT SOMMER**  
FORMER LAFAYETTE  
SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT

**PETER K. CLARK**  
LAFAYETTE RESIDENT

**SUSAN CANDELL**  
LAFAYETTE RESIDENT

**CHAD FOLLMER**  
LAFAYETTE RESIDENT





## Student Makes a Splash With Res Run Tee-shirt Design



This year's Res Run tee-shirt design.

Photo Holly Sonne

He didn't even need to run yet to be a winner. At center, Acalanes student Nicolas Davidson is the student digital artist whose design was chosen to grace the tee-shirts of the 2016 Reservoir Run. He is pictured with, from left,

Acalanes Instructor Susan Lane and Lafayette Chamber's Executive Director Jay Lifson. This is the fourth year Acalanes students have designed the artwork for the run. — P. Spear

## Lafayette BART to get Solar Panels

Local BART director Gail Murray reported to the council that solar panel arrays will be installed over two of the four Lafayette BART station parking lots, covering 400 to 500 spaces. The work will be performed by Solar City. Installation is expected to begin in December and be finished by March 2017. Currently, the only station with a large solar panel installation is Warm Springs, which has not yet opened.

Although there will be some closures while the work is being performed, no parking spaces will be lost as a result of the construction. One byproduct of the work is that water that now drains into Happy Valley Creek will be captured and kept on the BART station property.

Council Member Don Tatzin suggested that BART consider reserving the parking spaces closest to the station for the use of carpoolers. — V. Ryerson

## Parklet to be Removed

One of two parklets installed as a pilot program to test public response will be removed after the program ends on Nov. 1. The council allocated funds from the city's budget to remove the parklet on Mt. Diablo Boulevard in front of Amarin Thai and El Jarro restaurants because survey results indicated that there were concerns about adverse impacts on parking,

public safety and aesthetics. The second parklet at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Mountain View Avenue was better received, and will remain for now with some weatherproofing added for the rainy season.

The council will determine whether to install permanent parklets in Lafayette at a later time. — V. Ryerson

## Fall Market in Lamorinda!

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## Our endorsers POSITIVELY support Measure C!

Measure C's endorsers are community leaders who hold a positive vision for Lafayette.

They're people who won't be dissuaded by the critics and all their conspiracy theories. They're residents who know that Lafayette is well managed (no pensions) and who take City Council members at their word when

they pledge, unanimously, to use Measure C proceeds for these and only these purposes:

- Open Space
- More and Better Parking
- Improved Traffic
- Enhanced Policing
- Downtown Parks, and
- A revitalized Park Theater.

Orinda did it, Moraga did it, and now it's Lafayette's turn to capture the sales tax cap before a regional agency does, and to keep those funds local.

**Stay positive! Vote YES on Measure C!** It's the best way to keep our money local, get the projects we want, and make Lafayette the very best it can be.

### We endorse Measure C!

- Lafayette Chamber of Commerce  
Candace Anderson, Contra Costa County Supervisor  
Mark Mitchell, Mayor of Lafayette  
Mike Anderson, Vice-Mayor of Lafayette  
Brandt Andersson, City Council Member  
Traci Reilly, City Council Member  
Don Tatzin, City Council Member  
Carl Anduri, Past Mayor of Lafayette  
Carol Federighi, Past Mayor of Lafayette  
Anne Grodin, Past Mayor, 1999 Citizen of the Year  
Erling Horn, Past Mayor of Lafayette  
Ann Appert, Former Lafayette School Board Member  
Jeanne Ateljevich, Planning Commissioner  
Geoff Bellenger, Parks, Trails, and Rec. Commissioner  
Larry Blodgett, 2008 Businessperson of the Year  
Cameron Burks, Chair, Crime Prevention Commission  
Caity Meaney Burrows, Lafayette Library Foundation  
Judy Carney, 2009 Citizen of the Year  
Tom Chastain, Planning Commissioner  
Sereta Churchill, 2000 Businessperson of the Year  
John Coleman, EBMUD Director

- Kristin Connelly, Lafayette Library Foundation  
Steve Cortese, 2005 Businessperson of the Year  
Marechal Duncan, 2015 Citizen of the Year  
Roger Falcone, Fmr Lafayette School Board Member  
Nancy Falk, Past President, LPIE / LASF  
Dennis Garrison, President, Chamber of Commerce  
Teresa Geringer, Member, Lafayette School Board  
Seth Hamalian, Pres., Lafayette Library Foundation  
Lynn Hiden, Circulation Commissioner  
Alison Hill, Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commissioner  
Julie Hurd, 2014 Stanley PTA President  
Maurice Levich, 2007 Businessperson of the Year  
Budd MacKenzie, 2004 Citizen of the Year  
Karen Maggio, Former Planning Commissioner  
Mary McCosker, Former Laf. School Board Member  
Toni McShane, 2014 Citizen of the Year  
Meredith Meade, 2015-16 LPIE President  
Karen Mulvaney, 2011 Citizen of the Year  
Tom Mulvaney, Former AUHSD Board Member  
Suzy Pak, Member, Lafayette School Board  
Caesar Perales, Treasurer, Chamber of Commerce  
Carol Singer, Parks, Trails, and Rec. Commissioner  
Tom Steuber, 2016 Lafayette Citizen of the Year  
Kristina Sturm, Chair, Circulation Commission  
Richard Whitmore, President, AUHSD Board

- Cathy and Fred Abbott  
Julia Ackley  
Brian Aiello  
Sharon Anduri  
Forrest Arakawa  
Nicole Arakawa  
Ruth Bailey  
Don and Joan Beerline  
Sally Bellenger  
Karen Blodgett  
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Arne Brock-Utne  
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Larry Chalacombe  
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Julia Goddard  
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Robin and Dick Holt  
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Don and Linda Jenkins  
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Mike Zampa

# Love Lafayette: Vote YES on Measure C.

Paid for by Lafayette Yes on Measure C Committee | [www.LafayetteYesOnMeasureC.com](http://www.LafayetteYesOnMeasureC.com)





## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

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

#### Planning Commission

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

#### Design Review

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

#### School Board Meetings

##### Moraga School District

Thursday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium  
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
www.moraga.k12.ca.us  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

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

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

## Moraga Police Report



Sept. 27 - Oct. 4

### Sept. 28: Love your neighbor as yourself?

Corte Granada neighbor was unhappy when a neighbor "with issues" walked onto his property to peer into his backyard.

### Sept. 30: Stolen Vehicle

Reported on Miramonte Drive. Car was entered into the Stolen Vehicle System registry.

### Sept. 30: What the #@!\$%??

A Moraga driver was less than thrilled to find a flyer containing offensive language on his windshield. Police said similar fliers were discovered at Orinda and Lafayette BART parking lots.

### Sept. 30: Loud and Unruly

A loud party at an Ascot Drive apartment complex earned the residents a warning and cancelled the party-goers' fun.

### Oct. 1: At the Sound of My Voice...

Is Karaoke a civil offense? Depends upon how loud it is. An anonymous call alerted police to a party being hosted for a 16-year-old. His mother received a warning notice, and agreed they should lower the decibel level. At least no one was carted off to Sing-Sing.

### Oct 2: Not the Safest Way

A Moraga shopper learned the hard way never to leave her purse unattended in a shopping cart. While she was comparing apples to oranges, someone else checked out...her purse. The thief got away with the whole enchilada - cash, credit cards and checkbook. Police were notified. Victim was advised to cancel her cards and watch for ID theft.

### Alarm responses:

Sept 29: Greenfield Drive  
Oct 5: Claudia Court  
Oct 6: Rheem Blvd.  
Date unlisted: Larch Ave.  
Oct 9: Whitethorn Dr.  
Oct 10: Moraga Rd.

### Domestic

#### Sept 27:

An area doctor notified Moraga police of suspected domestic violence. Police advised the victim to call if the suspect returned.  
Oct 5. A woman called police when her husband pushed her during a heated dispute. The husband had left before police arrived; victim declined to file charges, but police forwarded the case to the county District Attorney.

Oct 6: A man reported his former girlfriend after enduring nine months of her cyber harassment.

# Planning Commission Takes First Pass at Hillside Regulations

By Sophie Braccini

Hillside and ridgeline protection is the second most important public policy topic for Moraga residents, just after rapid response to 911 calls, according to a recent survey. So reviewing the rules that regulate development on those beloved and pristine features is a process taken with the utmost care by civic leaders and residents alike.

After two years of work that included several public meetings, a steering committee drafted proposed amendments to standardize and sometimes amend the rules across the different regulatory documents that drive the development process. The next phase is now for the planning commission to review the committee's recommendations and transmit the document to the town council with their suggestions.

The steering committee identified 10 key issues and proposed some changes of the rules.

- The first issue is the MOSO open space map. In 1986 Moraga residents approved the Moraga

Open Space Ordinance, MOSO, that protects some of the undeveloped areas of Moraga. The open space map was created without the use of a Geographic Information System (GIS). Over the years, some discrepancies appeared between the original map and the town zoning map. The committee's recommendation was the adoption of a single map that would align with the boundaries of existing private properties, which was not always the case in the original MOSO map.

- The second issue is the MOSO ridgeline map that also presents inconsistencies over different town's regulatory documents. In particular, a portion of Indian Ridge (undeveloped land above the country club toward Canyon) is considered a minor ridge while the rest is designated as major. The committee recommended labeling the entire ridge as a major ridgeline.

- The third issue pertains to the high risk area map that was included

in the MOSO initiative. The rule is that in open space areas of high risk (history of soil slippage, slope grade, accessibility and drainage) the maximum development density be one unit per 20 acres. The issue is that when applicants have submitted a geological study of their parcel, the result does not match the determination made in MOSO. The committee supported the creation of a new map that was prepared using a GIS and added that when applicants are requesting a final determination of high risk status they should use as the basis for this request the same methodology.

- The fourth issue regards the definition of the term development. The General Plan and the MOSO guidelines (rules developed after the adoption of MOSO to implement it) define development as much more than just the erection of structures. For example it includes the placement, discharge or disposal of any material, or grading. The MOSO ordinance itself does not include a definition of the term

development. The committee recommended using the General Plan definition consistently across all regulations.

- The fifth issue regards the hillside development permit (HDP). This permit is a document that predates the adoption of MOSO and other more detailed regulation. Does the town still need an HDP as a separate document? The committee recommended to maintain but improve the HDP to make sure that all projects on hill-sides are specifically analyzed.

- The sixth issue addresses the non-MOSO ridgelines definition and regulation. MOSO lists and protects a number of ridgelines in town, but there is no standard rule to define if a piece of land not included in MOSO is a significant ridgeline requiring protection from development: should it be based solely on elevation, or on its visibility from the scenic corridors, or on its visibility from roads and trails?

... continued on page A11

# After Sinkhole, Town Looks at Storm Drain Repairs

By Sophie Braccini

Yes, Moraga public works director Edric Kwan was right when he said that the rainy season starts on Oct. 15. Actually, it started just a day early, on Oct. 14, but his team had done what needed to be done and the Moraga sinkhole at Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road was ready to endure the wrath of Mother Nature.

So far, the preparation work has protected the infrastructure from further catastrophe. And the director sees past his current sinkhole problem and wants to find ways to address the deep backlog of storm drain issues, with the crux of the matter finding the \$23 million needed to repair Moraga storm drains before the grounds fail under Moragans' feet.

When Kwan presented a

storm drain study during the summer of 2015 the council adopted it, but noted that they did not have the money to start repairs. The report had identified the area that failed in the form of the infamous sinkhole. Kwan says that the cost of repair prior to failure would have been \$1.7 million, a cost that more than doubled as a result of the hole. It has been a town goal to find a way to fund the repairs and Kwan is bringing to council on Nov. 9 a proposal to conduct a drain funding feasibility study.

The director explains that a consultant will look at available documents, such as the storm drain master plan, the revenue enhancement committee report and interview key players, to understand the town culture and profile. Kwan says that there are

many different ways to fund the needed maintenance. Another sales tax, comparable to Measure K that permitted to repave many neighborhood roads, a parcel tax such as the one on the ballot now for the school district's delayed maintenance bill, or the creation of a storm drain utility district are all funding possibilities.

Kwan adds that whatever the recommendation will be, they should be required to base it on a defined methodology.

In the meantime, the preparation for winter storms planned at the sinkhole has been effective so far. Run-offs are being diverted from the hole, and inside the culvert the repairs are holding. It is a big creek that can go down that drain if rains get intense, but it is not an El Niño year and Kwan says that the town engineer, Glen

Anderson from Schaaf & Wheeler, is making sure that culvert patching is holding.

No permanent repair will be attempted at the sinkhole until next year and drier times.

## Rheem Blvd Closed from Nov. 7 to Nov. 10

To accommodate PG&E's work in permanently rerouting a gas line, the intersection at Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road will be closed to traffic on a few occasions this week, weather dependent, starting on Nov. 3 for three days. Residents and shoppers will be invited to detour through the shopping centers on both sides of Rheem Boulevard and along Moraga Road. — S. Braccini

He thinks it is escalating.

**Oct 7:** A woman was battered by her date. He was arrested, taken to the police department and released. An emergency protective order was issued on behalf of the woman. Info was forward to the DA's office.

### Loud Party:

**Oct. 9:** Police dispersed 20 loud partygoers at a Miramonte Drive residence. Hosts received a warning notice; no further action.

### Media threats

**Oct. 6:** Alleged social media threats at Campolindo High School were unfounded.

### Public drunkenness

**Oct 10:** A pugilistic imbibor made it easy for police when he raised fisticuffs near Moraga police department. Round one went to police, as they transported him to Martinez Detention Facility.

### Sexual Assault

**Oct 10:** Police are investigating a rape report from a mandated reporter.

### Traffic collisions:

**Oct. 7:** St. Mary's Road/St. Mary's Parkway. No injuries

**Oct. 11:** St. Mary's Road/St. Mary's Parkway. Again, no injuries.

**Oct. 11:** Hit & run, Moraga Rd. minor damage.

### Vandalism

**Oct. 6:** Vandals sprayed the walls of Rheem Shopping Center, leaving nothing behind but the spray cans.

### Vehicle Theft

**Sept. 30:** Car manual, phone charger and FasTrak transponder taken.

**Oct 4:** Ascot Drive: Items valued at \$900 stolen.

Ascot Drive: Registration and insurance info stolen.

**Oct 7:** A thief took an expired credit card and prescription medications from an unlocked car parked along Camino Ricardo

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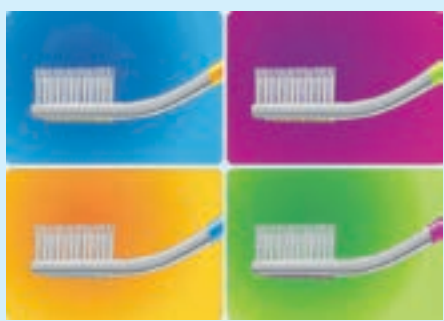


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## Moraga Rotary Celebrates Start of Playground Fundraising

The proposed Lamorinda All-Access Playground fundraising effort was announced by Rotary Club of Moraga in a low-key party at the project site in the Moraga Commons on Oct. 6. This project has been spearheaded by Moraga Rotary to commemorate its 50th anniversary in June, according to Kevin Reneau, the club president. More than 40 Moragans attended this kickoff party, including Mayor Michael Metcalf, Councilman Phil Arth, and former Moraga Citizens of the Year Cliff Dochterman, Edy Schwartz, and Graig Crossley.

"This is an ambitious fundraising effort and we want to involve every part of our community," said Reneau, chair of the

project, who indicated that the club hopes to raise over \$250,000 over the next 12 months. Reneau said the fundraising plan included raising \$125,000 from the local community and an equal or greater amount from area foundations and corporations.

Reneau reported the early fundraising outreach has been very encouraging and more than \$25,000 was pledged the night of the event. The Town of Moraga has earmarked \$45,000 for the project. Donations can be sent to the Moraga Rotary Foundation, P.O. Box 122, Moraga, CA 94556. As a 501(c) 3 entity, a tax receipt will be sent to all donors, and tax ID will be provided. Further information will be provided by Reneau at 925-376-8000. — P. Spear



A gathering of well-wishers kick off fundraising for the All-access Playground to be installed at Moraga Commons.

## Saint Mary's College Will Continue to Light its Intramural Field

A bitter battle raged from 2012 to 2015 between Saint Mary's College and some of its neighbors over the noise and glare coming from a new intramural field into the Bluffs neighborhood.

After the college agreed to modify the lights and to strict reporting of any type of complaints,

it was authorized by the town to leave the field opened and illuminated for students until 10 p.m.

One condition of this approval was that a review be conducted by the council one year after the permission was granted. Such hearing was led on Oct. 26. No one other than college representatives came

to the meeting and the town report showed that no complaint had been logged since the permit was given. College security produced a similar empty log. The council commended the college for its improvements and unanimously agreed to confirm its decision to allow the field to be lit until 10 p.m. —S. Braccini

**Veterans Day Ceremony**  
**Friday, 11/11**  
**9:00 am – Commons Park**



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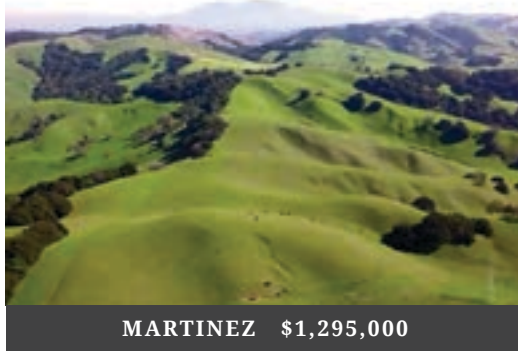
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Sharry Chimienti | 925.258.1111



MARTINEZ \$1,295,000

1 Hardisty Lane | Lot  
Karen Richardson | 925.258.1111



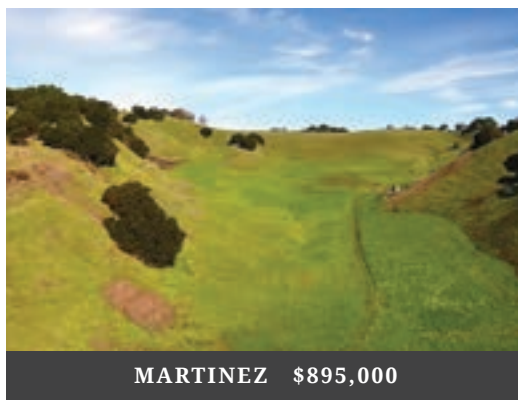
ORINDA \$1,199,000

122 El Toyonal | 3bd/3.5ba  
Karen Richardson | 925.258.1111



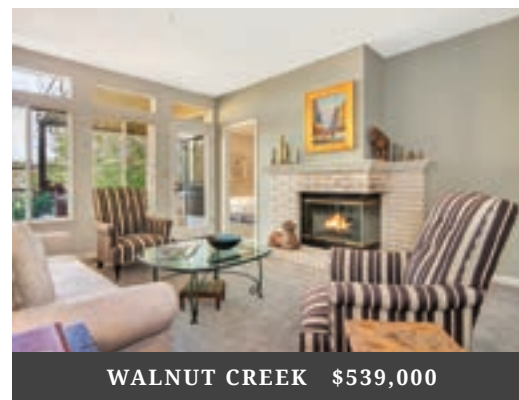
WALNUT CREEK \$1,150,000

1918 Trenton Court | 6bd/3ba  
Mary Staten | 925.258.1111



MARTINEZ \$895,000

Rancho De Maria | Lot  
Karen Richardson | 925.258.1111



WALNUT CREEK \$539,000

4615 Terra Granada Drive #3A | 2bd/2ba  
Ruth Eddy | 925.258.1111

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# Orinda

## Public Meetings

### City Council

Tuesday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
Orinda Library

### Citizens' Infrastructure

#### Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
City Hall, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda

### School Board Meetings

#### Orinda Unified School District

Monday, Nov. 14, 6 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda  
www.orindaschools.org  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

### City of Orinda:

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

### Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

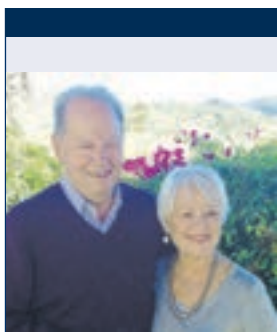
### The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



## Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 9 - Oct. 22

<b>Alarms</b>	45	<b>Hit &amp; Run</b>	2
<b>Noise complaints</b>	2	<b>Safeway</b>	3
<b>911 Calls (includes hang-ups)</b>	3	<b>Illegal Entry</b>	45
<b>Traffic stops</b>	45	<b>20 block Orinda Way</b>	
<b>Suspicious Circumstances</b>	12	<b>ID Theft</b>	11
<b>Suspicious Subjects</b>	11	<b>100 block Claremont Ave.</b>	
<b>Suspicious Vehicles</b>	14	<b>500 block Tahos Rd.</b>	
<b>Barking Dog</b>		<b>Reported to police</b>	
<b>10 block Virginia Dr.</b>		<b>Police/Fire/ EMS</b>	
<b>10 block Tarabrook Dr.</b>		<b>Pine Grove Business complex</b>	
<b>Battery</b>		<b>80 block Ironbark Pl.</b>	
<b>Orinda Convalescent</b>		<b>20 block Bryant Way</b>	
<b>Burglary, Auto</b>		<b>20 block Irwin Way</b>	
<b>Orinda Community Center</b>		<b>Casa Orinda Restaurant</b>	
<b>BevMo</b>		<b>Public Nuisance</b>	
<b>Theatre Square</b>		<b>Orinda Library</b>	
<b>Burglary, Commercial</b>		<b>Reckless Driving</b>	
<b>10 block Country Club Plaza</b>		<b>Camino Pablo/Hwy. 24</b>	
<b>Burglary, Residential</b>		<b>Moraga Via/Glorietta Blvd</b>	
<b>10 block Broadview Terr.</b>		<b>Rheem Blvd./Zander Dr.</b>	
<b>Civil</b>		<b>10 block Rabble Rd.</b>	
<b>10 block Crescent Dr.</b>		<b>Ardilla Rd./Camino Pablo</b>	
<b>Death, non-criminal</b>		<b>10 block Lost Valley Dr.</b>	
<b>20 block Irwin Way</b>		<b>Camino Pablo/Manzanita</b>	
<b>DUI</b>		<b>Camino Pablo/El Toyonal</b>	
<b>Acalanes Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.</b>		<b>Rheem/Glorietta Blvds.</b>	
<b>Disturbance</b>		<b>Moraga Way/Stein Way</b>	
<b>Lavenida Dr./Donna Maria Way (2)</b>		<b>500 block Tahos Rd.</b>	
<b>Lavenida Dr./Estabueno Dr.</b>		<b>Theft, Petty</b>	
<b>300 block Glorietta Blvd.</b>		<b>location n/a</b>	
<b>Theatre Square</b>		<b>Safeway (2)</b>	
<b>Dispute</b>		<b>400 block El Toyonal</b>	
<b>100 block Crest View Dr.</b>		<b>Threats</b>	
<b>Hall Dr/Moraga Way</b>		<b>10 block Woodcrest Dr.</b>	
<b>10 block Lost Valley Dr.</b>		<b>Unauthorized possession</b>	
<b>20 block El Verano</b>		<b>80 block Camino Encinas</b>	
<b>10 block Estates Dr.</b>		<b>Uncontrollable juvenile</b>	
<b>Drunk in Public</b>		<b>70 block Muth Dr.</b>	
<b>Starbucks</b>		<b>Unwanted guest</b>	
<b>500 block Moraga Way</b>		<b>42 Morello Pl./Wild Plum</b>	
<b>10 block Rheem Blvd.</b>		<b>Vandalism</b>	
<b>Safeway</b>		<b>20 block Bryant Way</b>	
<b>H&amp;S Violation</b>		<b>Warrant Service/Arrest</b>	
<b>Donald Dr./Hall Dr.</b>		<b>Brookwood Rd./Camino Pablo</b>	



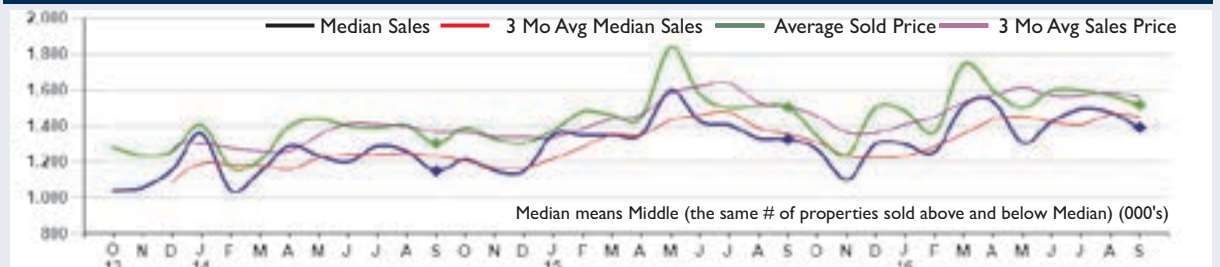
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## MARKET ACTION REPORT September 2016

Lafayette, Orinda



The Median Sales Price in September was \$1,390,000, up 4.9% from \$1,325,000 in September of 2015 and down -5.6% from \$1,473,025 last month. The Average Sales Price in September was \$1,517,124, up 0.9% from \$1,504,152 in September of 2015 and down -3.2% from \$1,567,287 last month. September 2016 ASP was at highest level compared to September of 2015 and 2014.

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# Majority of Orinda City Council Agrees to Move Ahead with Development Consultants

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council continued to move forward towards downtown development at its Oct. 18 meeting, asking staff to come back with proposals from both Urban Land Institute (ULI) and Mainstreet America, although vice mayor Eve Phillips voted no. Phillips expressed concerns that there would be no "common ground" found in Orinda.

Members of ULI were present and addressed the council about how they work, and members of the public also contributed to the discussion. Drummond Buckley, director of planning, presented

the staff report and told the council that letters have been sent to all downtown property owners seeking their input.

The cost for a technical advisory panel (TAP) by ULI is \$15,000, which some speakers and council members consider a bargain. Mainstreet America would charge \$18,000 plus \$3,000 for transportation costs. Buckley, who has had numerous conversations with the head of Mainstreet America, thought that their work would be complementary to ULI's work. Mainstreet America would provide market analysis, a transformational strategy development service and an updated retail "leakage" study in about 90 days.

City Manager Janet Keeter said that she thought that both projects could be funded with money reserved for the Orinda General Plan update insofar as it pertains to downtown. A question was raised about Mayor Victoria Smith's potential conflict of interest as she rents office space in downtown, but she said that she had consulted the Fair Political Practices Commission, and, based on their response, determined that this would not constitute a conflict; she declined to recuse herself.

ULI San Francisco Executive Director Dana Van Galder brought another ULI staff member and two volunteers to the meeting to answer questions from the council. Phillips questioned each of the four as to whether they represented developers. While one, volunteer Alan Talansky, is a developer, he stressed that multidisciplinary professionals who volunteer their time to work on TAPs agree that they will engage in no business with the community, so there is no potential conflict of interest.

The council asked the ULI representatives if they have worked on cities similar to Orinda. They mentioned Hercules, the Point Molate area of Richmond, Concord and Brisbane. Brisbane is quite similar to Orinda in size, but not in composition. Brisbane had a large industrial center which, since the recession, was almost vacant and the city was almost bankrupt. There was no downtown grocery store, no drug store, no gas stations, and only lunch restaurants. The Brisbane



The entrance to the empty Phair building.

Photo Andy Schek

TAP recommended bringing in more housing downtown to create clientele for the amenities that the city wants to attract.

Council member Amy Worth pointed to the development of Todos Santos Plaza in Concord and noted that Hercules has big retail developments. She wondered what Orinda can do to attract retailers. Council member Darlene Gee wondered how the city can interact with stakeholders and was interested in options. She was in favor of going forward with both ULI and Mainstreet America, noting that the city could obtain great advice with no commitment. Council member Dean Orr asked if ULI had ever worked with Mainstreet America. ULI responded that the San Francisco ULI has not, but she believed that the national ULI has and that there is a lot of compatibility.

Orr was wholly in favor of moving forward, and said that the ULI TAP would be his first priority. Smith was very impressed with the presentation by ULI. She found them to be very San Francisco-based, which is important to her. She was also interested in Mainstreet America regarding economic development and preservation of historic buildings.

In public comments, Daniel De Busschere suggested that Orinda first address the economic issues. He wondered why 25 Orinda Way cannot get tenants, and whether the internet is killing brick and mortar stores. Chet Martine opined that parking and traffic are key issues, and blamed Highway 24 and BART. He also brought up the potential earthquake danger with three sets of high voltage transmission lines over Orinda.

Hillary Murphy of What's Up with Downtown Orinda urged the council to keep the momentum going, and not to allow fear to keep Orinda from moving forward. It is clear, she said, that after 30 years Orinda can't develop downtown on its own, and said that the price of the ULI TAP was a gift falling into the city's lap. Jud Hammond agreed that he liked the idea of both ULI and Mainstreet America and that for not much money it would be a good starting point to use both.

After receiving directions from the council, Buckley said that he believed that staff could quickly return with proposals for going forward with both ULI and Mainstreet America, perhaps in as little as two weeks.

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**Tom Torlakson**, State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**Joan Buchanan**, former CA Assembly Member, District 16,  
**Orinda Education Association** (Orinda Teachers)  
**California School Employees Association**, Orinda Chapter

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## Orinda Council Briefs



From left: back row: Darlene Gee, Amy Worth, Leslie Ward, Dean Orr; front row: Eve Phillips, Sal Captain, Victoria Smith. Photo Sora O'Doherty

**Oct. 4: Sal Captain of Captain Vineyards, Moraga, and Leslie Ward of Los Arabis Vineyards, Lafayette, accepted a proclamation recognizing October 2016 as Lamorinda Wine Growers Association Month in Orinda. The Lamorinda Wine Growers Association (LWGA) started in 2005, recognizing a number of small vineyards in Lamorinda. The area has actually had vineyards for over 100 years. In March 2016 Lamorinda was recognized by the U.S. Department of**

**the Treasury as the 233rd American Viticultural Area (AVA) in the nation and the 138th in California. The Orinda Planning Department helped by preparing the maps for the application.**

**The Orinda City Council extended warm thanks to interim clerk Sherry Kelly as she moves on to her next assignment in Hercules, and welcomed new city clerk Sheri Spediacci, who has recently become engaged to Orinda resident "Fred." Mayor Smith said, "Fred,**

**your gain is our gain!" The mayor swore in the new clerk and presented her with a city of Orinda pin. Spediacci said she is thrilled to be in Orinda, "I adore Orinda; I have the bumper sticker and all!"**

**Kris Jachens of Stand for Families Free of Violence (STAND) accepted a Proclamation declaring October 2016 Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the city of Orinda.**

**STAND is Contra Costa County's only full service family violence service organization and dedicated domestic violence shelter and will soon be marking its 40th anniversary.**

**Oct. 18: Jaime Rich of the Center for Human Development in Contra Costa County accepted a Proclamation declaring Oct 23-31 Red Ribbon Week in the City of Orinda. Portions of the proclamation were read by Mayor Smith, including acknowledging the harmful effects of marijuana on the developing teen brain, citing recent statistics that 23 percent of local 11th graders admit to using marijuana in the past month. Orinda remains strongly committed to a drug free environment, not only during Red Ribbon**

**Week but all year long.**

**City Manager Janet Keeter noted that Todd Trimble, who had been serving as the interim Parks and Recreation Director, has been made permanent.**

**The Dec 6 city council meeting has been cancelled because the results of the election will not be certified in time for the traditional reorganization of the council. A special meeting will be held on Dec. 13.**

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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



**LAFAYETTE \$2,595,000**  
5/4.5 Coveted Trails neighborhood. Beautiful open floor plan, park like setting. A 10!  
The Beaubelle Group CalBRE #00678426



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



**BRIONES - MARTINEZ \$1,895,000**  
4/2.5 Magnificent Country Estate Built 2006, the perfect mix: equestrian facility/home/grounds.  
Abrams|Geoffrion CalBRE #01272382|01878803



**ORINDA \$1,875,000**  
6/6 Exquisite Orinda Country Club retreat w/private au-pair/in-law quarters. Spacious thru-out  
Laura Abrams CalBRE #01272382

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"My family and I have moved several times over the years due to work related transfers, so we are well informed as to what makes a great Independent Sales Associate (and what doesn't). I have found Lana to be by far the best REALTOR® I have worked with. As a tough minded businessman and New York native, Lana will be the first to tell you I don't hand out compliments and praise loosely."  
-Vince Campisi, Danville Seller

**Meet Soraya Golesorkhi:**  
"Working with Soraya was a breeze. She clearly knows the East Bay very well and opened our eyes to neighborhoods we had previously ruled out for no reason. This helped us stay in budget and find the perfect place to call home. Because Soraya is highly regarded with other colleagues, she was able to use her relationships with other REALTORS® to help us win the day. Never pushy, always available with informed answers and fun to work with make her a great choice for anyone trying to navigate this competitive housing market."  
-A. Saeedi, Moraga Buyer



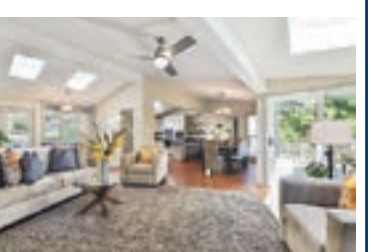
LANA FITZPATRICK



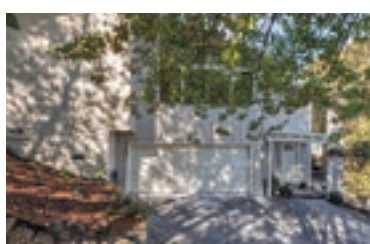
SORAYA GOLESORKHI



**LAFAYETTE \$1,495,000**  
4/3 Stately Traditional boasts a FAB remodel & a location 1 block from downtown Lafayette.  
Patti Camras CalBRE #01156248



**ORINDA \$1,295,000**  
6/3.5 Spacious contemporary home with updates throughout & au pair unit. Level yard area.  
Meredith Linamen CalBRE #01918299



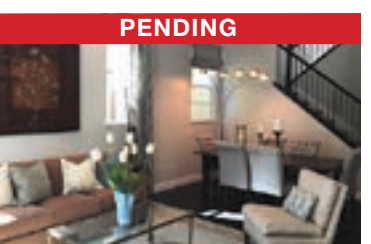
**LAFAYETTE \$880,000**  
3/2 Beautifully designed Custom Contemporary home w/open floor plan and scenic hillside views.  
Laura Abrams CalBRE #01272382



**ORINDA \$2,775,000**  
4/3.5 Exquisite 4095sf Mediterranean estate w/750sf 1bd 1bth guest cottage built in 2008.  
Lynn Molloy CalBRE #01910108



**ORINDA \$1,875,000**  
4/3.5 Fantastic remodeled ranch home. Vaulted ceilings, great room opens to patios & level lawn.  
Rick & Nancy Booth CalBRE #01388020|01341390



**ORINDA \$1,525,000**  
5/3 Beautiful new construction close to downtown. Spectacular appliances/finishes throughout.  
McAtee|Wilson CalBRE #01349169|01809247



**MORAGA \$1,195,000**  
3/2 One-story Campolindo Home with large, private yard with pool. 3 bedrooms plus office.  
The Holcenberg Team CalBRE #01373412

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## Fire Districts

### Public Meetings

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District** Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Nov. 2, 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7 p.m.  
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)

**ConFire** Board of Directors  
Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1:30 p.m.  
Board Chamber room 107,  
Administration Building,  
651 Pine St., Martinez  
For meeting times and agendas,  
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

# MOFD Fails to Dampen Frustration of Orinda Citizens' Group Regarding Tax Differences

By Nick Marnell

Orindans dissatisfied with the allocation of resources by the Moraga-Orinda Fire District will have to wait another day for relief as the district tabled indefinitely any discussion of tax inequity and community service modifications.

In June, Orindans unhappy with the perceived inequities between taxes paid and services received by the residents of Orinda and Moraga presented their case to the MOFD board. The board set aside a portion of its Oct. 19 meeting to hear additional detail of the residents' complaints.

"It's not about tax equity or about fairness," said Steve Cohn, spokesman for the grassroots Orinda Citizens Emergency Services Task Force, which has long demanded additional district ser-

VICES for what it believes are short-changed Orinda residents. "It's about carrying through a contract between the city of Orinda and the residents of Orinda." Cohn produced no such written contract, pointing only to statements printed in a voter's pamphlet for the 1997 election in which citizens voted to form the fire district; specifically, statements made by the Orinda City Council assuring that fire protection dollars paid by Orindans will stay in Orinda.

Board president Steve Anderson of Orinda likened the discussion to the perpetuity of the undead: "It keeps arising and re-aring. We need to put a stake in it," he said.

The Orindans' demand for service equal to taxes paid has been outlined numerous times to various

public agencies over the years but has yet to effect any changes in the fire district. "It's the same old argument, offered again and again, just repackaged," said Moraga resident and past MOFD director Dick Olsen, who presented the analogy of the Orinda police patrolling neighborhoods of Orinda only in proportion to the amount of taxes that each neighborhood pays.

Orinda directors Alex Evans and Brad Barber did not agree with "putting a stake in it," as Barber insisted that the board be prepared for the inequity topic to come back again and again. "Equity problems kill partnerships," Evans explained to the two dozen or so in attendance. "We're not going to solve this problem, but we should not ignore it."

Director Fred Weil, whom Cohn urged to resign in 2015 over Weil's role in improperly funding a retiring fire chief's pension, has always relied on the level of service as the true measure of district performance and has continually refuted Cohn's argument, once referring to it as a flawed polemic. "Stop this discussion now," Weil demanded.

"This is not going to go away," warned Cohn, though despite his presentation and a task force petition signed by 129 people insisting that MOFD and the city of Orinda deal with the perceived taxation-service inequity, the board gave no direction to its staff to further analyze the Orindans' complaints and set no date for revisiting the discussion.

## ConFire Not Rattled by \$75 Million Pension Bond Downgrade

By Nick Marnell

Moody's Investor Services recently downgraded \$75 million in Contra Costa County Fire Protection District pension obligation bonds but district officials, while conceding that pension costs remain high, said the action poses no immediate threat to district finances or operations.

The credit rating company lowered the district bond rating from A1 to A2 based in part because of "the long-term challenge the district faces in addressing its rising pension costs, which are an unusually large portion of the district's operations." Indicating that the growth in short-term property

tax receipts will mitigate the risk of ConFire's pension expense, the New York firm removed its negative outlook on the bond rating.

"Pension related costs are a significant portion of ConFire's operating budget and will continue to be through fiscal year 2022-23 when the district's pension obligation bonds will be paid off," said county administrator David Twa, but he added that even the recently confirmed \$2 million increase in the pension payment to the Contra Costa County Employees' Retirement Association should have no negative impact on the district.

According to Jackie Lorrekov-

ich, district chief of administrative services, the ConFire pension obligation bonds cannot be called by the issuer nor can the interest rate be increased because of the lowered rating. She emphasized that the bonds are secured by a unique tax-intercept feature requiring the county to set aside the first annual apportionment of property taxes collected in order to cover debt service payments before ConFire receives any property tax revenue for its operations. "This, in my opinion, makes the bonds very secure from an investor perspective," Lorrekovich said.

District officials stressed that

the rating drop will have no effect on district operations. The rebuild of station 16 in Lafayette will not be impeded and ConFire should have no problem financing additional apparatus. Were the district to try to issue a second pension obligation bond, the lowered rating on the current bonds would hypothetically impact the interest rates available to the district, Lorrekovich said, but ConFire has no plans to issue more pension obligation bonds.

"I think we are in better financial shape than we have been in a long, long time. That is why the rating drop is perplexing to me," Fire Chief Jeff Carman said. "We

have sufficient reserve, more than is required by the board." Not only does ConFire recognize more than \$30 million in available reserves but in 2016, determined to add a new revenue source, the district assumed the bulk of the Contra Costa County ambulance transport contract, projected to net an additional \$2 million to the district in its first year. In part because of improved district finances, ConFire announced Oct. 25 that it will reopen fire station 87 in Pittsburg, closed since the middle of 2013.

"Barring a catastrophic economic collapse I think we are very stable where we are," Carman said.

### Lafayette

## Loss of Lease Sends Lafayette Scrambling for City Office Space ... continued from page A2

Falk insists that until the city builds and owns a purpose-built facility — such as a city hall — it must move to find a new home.

This will not be easy in a city that is experiencing robust growth, parking problems, and a shortage

of appropriate sites for the activity of civic offices, including a location that will satisfy critical emergency response time requirements. The current need is for a site of approximately 10,000 square feet because of new space requirements due to

recent developments such as the hiring of female police officers, who need their own locker room. The city has been paying about \$280,000 per year for its current space, and hopes to pay a comparable price for the new space. Mov-

ing costs are expected to exceed \$100,000, because of the technology that will have to be relocated.

This is a tall order for city staff, who will be working under tight time constraints to find a new facility, or at least a site on which to lo-

cate a temporary one. Nobody has come up with a satisfactory solution and, faced with this situation, the three members of the council present at the Oct. 24 meeting essentially did nothing more than instruct staff to keep trying.

### Lafayette

## Principal Travis Bell Takes the Helm

"I felt like the work that I was doing as the leadership teacher and the time that I was putting into developing the school culture and the program were substantial," said Bell. His goal in going back to school was to eventually teach leadership full time.

Though Bell was looking to make a larger campus-wide investment, he never pictured himself at the helm of a school. In 2012, Bell moved from teaching English and leadership at Dougherty Valley to overseeing leadership and serving as associate principal at Acalanes High School. It was a transition that was both surprising and inevitable for

the third generation educator.

Bell is who is now settling into his first semester as principal, one that has seen uplifting school spirit and the terror of a school lockdown on Oct. 13. To say it's been eventful is an understatement.

Each month he runs a Q&A during First Forum, a monthly event designed to update parents on the programs, opportunities, and general happenings at Acalanes. This month we've done a little Q&A of our own with the new captain at Acalanes.

**Lamorinda Weekly: How did you decide to go into teaching?**

Travis Bell: With a last name like Bell you don't really have a choice. My mom was a principal, so I grew up always being around schools and in classrooms and I knew at a young age that was something I was interested in.

**LW: Why take the helm at Acalanes?**

TB: I really love the Acalanes community. I think they're doing some really cool things to support students both academically, socially and emotionally. There are some big changes coming up and a lot on the horizon. I want to be there to support that work.

**LW: What unique perspective do you feel you bring to your role?**

TB: Being a communications major gave me a broader perspective on effective communication, and having taught leadership gives me insight into creating a broader culture and perspective for schools. I also think that being younger in the profession helps me to connect a little more with our students (not that you can't if you aren't, but I try to leverage that).

**LW: Is there anything you miss about teaching?**

TB: I miss teaching every day. I really miss having a smaller group of

students that you get to know really well and invest in over the course of the year. As an admin you still invest in culture and community, but it's on a larger level and you don't always feel or see the benefits as directly. You have more of a say in bigger decisions that impact students, which is cool, but the responsibility is also weightier.

**LW: How have you seen the field of education change in the past several years?**

TB: There's been a dramatic increase in the use of technology to augment and enhance the student experience and provide resources for teachers in the classroom. There's also more and more emphasis on building a school culture and community.

**LW: If you weren't a principal, what else would you do?**

TB: I have aspirations of doing lots of things. I really love the service industry—I've always wanted to be a waiter—I would also love to manage a venue and work on events. I love seeing needs and meeting them in a relational setting.

**LW: What is your stress-reducing activity of choice?**

TB: Running, swimming, and yoga are my go-to stress reducers. I love reading as well.

**LW: What are some of your particularities?**

TB: I'm a coffee snob and a foodie. I drink black coffee every day, but my go-to drink is a dry cappuccino. My all-time favorite restaurant is Pizzaiolo in Oakland. The menu changes daily so you can't get the same thing twice, which is what I tend to do that at restaurants.

**LW: What is the last thing you watched on Netflix?**

TB: I binge on "30 Rock" and I laugh out loud a lot. My most recent new show was "Stranger Things." My wife and I watched it in three or four days over the course of a week

or two.

**LW: What is something your students wouldn't expect about you?**

TB: I played Shark Boy in a weekly production at a summer houseboat camp, which is pretty much exactly what it sounds like.

**LW: If you could take one class as Acalanes, what would it be and why?**

TB: There are a lot. Right now I would take drama. The times that I walk into that class students are always up and moving and interacting with each other. I think it'd be really fun.

**LW: What is your hope for yourself and your role at Acalanes?**

TB: When I was teaching leader-

... continued from page A2

ship I created a philosophy of relational leadership, which was to befriend, encourage, model and challenge and ourselves and others to be leaders on our campus and in our community. I carry that with me. I want to befriend the students, staff, and parents of Acalanes, to know who they are and learn about what they value and what they want out of their educational experience. I want to encourage them to jump in and invest and be involved and a part of that community. I want to model what it looks like to be a part of that community and then challenge them to go deeper. Acalanes is a great school, but let's not settle for where we're at. We need to constantly be looking at what we're doing and making it even better.

## Lockdown at Acalanes High School October 13



Principal Travis Bell and local law enforcement officers responded to the Oct. 13 lockdown. Photo Gint Federas

Police officers flocked to Acalanes High School after the school was put on lockdown Oct. 13. Two auto burglary suspects were arrested after a chase from Pleasant Hill to Lafayette, and a search of the school found one suspect hiding in the boys locker room. The other suspect was found in a nearby backyard, Lafayette police Chief Eric Christensen told local news outlets. — P. Spear

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Monica Fitzsimmons

author of the "Keep Orinda Moving" petition on Change.org

"Gee, Miller Clearly Best For Orinda Council." The East Bay Times



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**Nov. 8 Election Coverage**

**BART Ballot Measure RR Evokes Passion on Many Fronts**

By Nick Marnell

Lamorinda voters will help decide in November the fate of a bond measure larger than the entire budget of Contra Costa County and one of the largest monetary requests by a local public agency in the state of California.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit system, a critical transportation link connecting the East Bay with San Francisco and the northern Peninsula, seeks authorization through Measure RR to issue \$3.5 billion in general obligation bonds to rebuild much of the system infrastructure, with the bonds to be repaid through property taxes in Contra Costa, Alameda and San Francisco counties. According to BART estimates, the maximum yearly tax rate would be \$17.49 per \$100,000 of assessed value of a parcel. The measure requires a two-thirds vote for passage.

By law, public agencies may not mount campaigns for their own ballot measures, but BART spokesman Taylor Huckaby was able to outline the benefits of Measure RR to Lamorinda residents.

Huckaby explained that the bond funds would go toward replacing miles of badly deteriorated power transmission infrastructure, replacing 90 miles of eroded rail, waterproofing the tunnels in downtown San Francisco, and other

projects designed to bring the 44-year old system up to current standards.

"Two-thirds of Lafayette and Orinda station riders go to the four main downtown San Francisco stations — improvements there and elsewhere in the system benefit Lamorinda riders," he said.

He also noted the planned upgrade to the Berkeley Hills Tunnel where, thanks to the Hayward fault, the tracks are misaligned and trains are creeping ever closer to the tunnel walls.

The Committee to Keep BART Safe and Reliable 2016 lists endorsements from a phalanx of business leaders and public officials who urge a yes vote on Measure RR. Orinda Union School District trustee Sarah Butler, with a UC Davis degree in environmental planning, bases her support on the environmental impacts of maintaining a good transportation infrastructure. She said that by getting more cars off the road, the measure will reduce traffic congestion and help relieve the air pollution caused by automobiles.

"It actually costs us more to do nothing since the cost of traffic congestion impacts us all in lost time and higher fuel costs per trip which has been estimated by transportation experts such as TRIP, a

national transportation research group, to cost significantly more than the cost of Measure RR," Butler said.

Supervisor Candace Andersen also supports Measure RR because it will increase capacity for ridership. "While I continue to have concerns about BART management and especially the handling of strikes, I am hopeful that we will elect new leadership in November...and they will ensure that the funds raised by Measure RR will be used effectively and as promised to the voters," she said.

Andersen's concern is voiced by many, and Huckaby addressed it. "It has been suggested the passage of Measure RR could result in BART curtailing the transfer of operating funds to capital projects for the purpose of inflating salaries and benefits — but such speculation is political innuendo. Unequivocally, Measure RR funds could not be 'backdoored.' Again, per California law, funds can only be used for capital projects," Huckaby said.

Assemblywoman Catharine Baker is not convinced, slamming the measure as an inappropriate method to fund the system, "in no small part because the money that is supposed to be used for capital improvements of the train system

itself can be used to back-fill the very generous labor costs that are unsustainable," Baker said.

Even more direct in his opposition was State Senator Steve Glazer of Orinda. "Lamorinda voters expect more from BART, which has had years to prepare for the day they would need system upgrades but did nothing. Instead, BART gave away big raises to management and union employees, showing no signs that they can be trusted with our tax dollars. I don't think we should reward bad behavior and expect anything to change."

Neither of the three Lamorinda municipalities took an official position on the BART measure, but Moraga's mayor Mike Metcalf, speaking as a private citizen, said he will look past what he termed a flaw in the ballot language which seems to give the board the ability to use some of the bond proceeds for salaries and benefits. He said he would rely on the BART board to ensure that the bond measure does not become a tool for balancing its budget.

"That will depend in large part on the quality of BART board members, which indicates that the election for BART board members in November is critical. Lamorinda needs to have faith that

the BART board moving forward will keep their pledge to the voters to use bond funds for capital improvements, not labor-related purposes," Metcalf said.

Three of the four candidates for the BART board seat in District 3, which includes most of Lamorinda, support Measure RR, with former Moraga mayor Ken Chew opposed. (See <http://bit.ly/2ep7716>)



**CRAIG JORGENS**  
FIRE DISTRICT - MOFD



**MOFD has complex challenges:**

- \$65 million unfunded pension/medical liability
- Severe fire hazard zone in 50% of North Orinda
- Substandard response times in Sleepy Hollow and El Toyonal

**Knowledgeable**

- Retired executive in Engineering, Finance and Business
  - President – public satellite company
  - Lead merger, acquisition and business development executive for AirTouch (\$60 billion cellular company)
  - Strategy Management Consultant
- BS in Engineering/Business Economics; MBA
- HOA president

**I believe MOFD must:**

- Manage future pension obligations and improve investment fund performance
- Reduce fire danger using hot spot mapping and more proactive prevention
- Reduce response times by positioning emergency equipment and responders using predictive data

**Experienced**

- Introduced new repaving method to Orinda, lowering costs 15% while increasing road life by 50%
- Worked with Governments as regulators, partners and investors in emergency communications
- Endorsed by over 250 Orinda voters

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Lynn's Top Five

# Give Yourself the Gift of Year-end Charitable Gifting

By Lynn Ballou, CFP®

In our very generous community, year-end charitable gifting is a hot topic. Let's explore ways you can still make a difference before the end of the tax year.

**1) Gift Appreciated Assets:** Tried and true good friend to all planners, this strategy involves gifting an asset that has appreciated, thus avoiding selling and paying tax on the gain and instead benefiting from a deduction for the fair market value, subject to some limitations. There are many types of property that you can use for this, from publically traded assets such as stocks to less liquid assets such as real estate holdings. Work with your team of advisors to discuss which asset will work best in this scenario.

**2) Donor Advised Funds:** Want to gift but not sure to whom? Would you like your children to participate in your largess and decision making? These are two reasons that Donor Advised Funds (DAF) are becoming a more popular planning technique. A DAF is established at a public charity and

your deduction occurs in the year that you donate to the fund. However, you can have the DAF keep the cash from the sale of the asset on hand for multiple years and advise them annually how much and to whom you'd like to gift. This is an excellent tool for raising socially aware and financially literate children and an excellent idea for those who want to give over time but need the deduction this year.

**3) Gift up to \$100,000 of your annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD):** If you have already turned 70-and-a-half you know the joys of paying taxes on required minimum distributions from retirement accounts. The good news is that you can satisfy your RMD and donate to your favorite qualified charity by transferring up to \$100,000 directly to that organization from your retirement account in lieu of a required distribution. You won't qualify for a further tax deduction, but you won't need to include the RMD in taxable income, either, thus lowering your AGI (adjusted gross income).

Don't forget that the funds must go directly from your qualified retirement account to the charity and not paid to you first for transfer.

**4) Charitable Remainder Trusts (CRT):** I mention this simply to pique your interest as setting up a CRT is a sophisticated technique that involves advanced planning. In its simplest format you make an irrevocable gift to a qualified charity and receive an income stream and a present value income tax deduction. At your death or the end of the period set up for the income stream, the asset goes to the charity. This is an important tool for those with charitable intent and highly appreciated, often highly valued assets, who are additionally interested in reducing their taxable estate while still retaining some benefit from the asset. That said, there are many nuanced forms of charitable trusts that can be utilized to fit your needs. You definitely want a sharp and experienced advisory team guiding you during design and implementation.

**5) Gifting to family:** They

do say charity begins at home, and while there's no likely income tax deduction here, there is the joy of removing the asset from your estate, avoiding tax on the appreciation if it's sold for an amount higher than its basis, and the joy of benefiting a loved one. Maybe your gift will be outright cash, or maybe you'll fund their Roth IRA for the year (check the limitations!). No matter your approach and motivation that's a powerful combination of benefits and a wonderful gift. For many there's no greater joy than helping those you love while you are alive and can see the impact your gift makes in their lives.

Hopefully these ideas are helpful and resonate at this time of year when we reflect on what matters most and find ways to share our bounty and improve the lives of others. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season!

"The review, assessment, and/or opinion expressed in this column are limited to and in association with general financial planning subjects. They are intended to intro-

duce the reader to a general financial planning topics. This column should serve as a tool that should assist readers in the development of subsequent discussions with a financial planning professional. Always consult an accountant and/or attorney to assess your individual situation prior to implementing any financial planning strategy, including any strategy directly or indirectly referenced in this column."



Lynn Ballou is a Certified Financial Planner. Information used in the writing of this column is believed to be factual and up-to-date, but we do not guarantee its accuracy and it should not be regarded as a complete analysis of the subject(s) discussed. All information is derived from sources deemed to be reliable. All expressions of opinion reflect the judgment of the author as of the date of publication and are subject to change.

## Business Bites

Compiled by Victor Ryerson

### Ready for the Season?

The folks at Assistance Way Side Thrift Shop in Lafayette's La Fiesta Square always seem to have a seasonal event to get you in the mood for what is coming next. This time it's "Thanksgiving and Skiing in the Sierra," with hand-picked merchandise to complement both. As to the latter, I admire the organization's optimism.

### Musical Chairs

There seems to be a lot of movement going on in Lamorinda these days.

**Gymboree** is moving into new digs at 3450 Mt. Diablo Blvd., in front of Merrill Gardens, after five years in its current quarters. You can attend the ribbon cutting this Thursday, Nov. 3, at 5pm.

As we reported in our last issue, **Home Care Assistance** will have its ribbon cutting Thursday, November 10, from 4 to 6pm at 3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd., and the folks there are very excited about it. You are welcome to drop in for a look.

The **Moraga UPS Store** in the Moraga Shopping Center has finally made its long-awaited move to larger quarters around the corner in Suite C, next to the CVS drugstore. Hopefully, the move will ease the threat to its staff of being buried under a stack of boxes or a mountain of plastic "peanuts" if the Big One were to hit at the end of the work day, always a worry at its cramped former location.

Speaking of the **Moraga Shopping Center**, word is that talks are continuing with two restaurateurs who are considering moving

into the former Terzetto's space in the same complex. Eager locals who have lost too many of their casual dining options recently are watching and waiting.

Then, of course, there is the **City of Lafayette's** impending move to new quarters yet to be found (see story on page A2). If you happen to have about 10,000 square feet of office space with 60 parking spaces around it for lease near downtown, by all means give City Manager Steve Falk a call. He would dearly love to hear from you.

### Chamber Music

**Lafayette Chamber of Commerce** www.lafayettechamber.org (925) 284-7404 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 9: Social Media Workshop, "Instagram for Business 101."

Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16: Mixer, Bistro Burger & Grill, 965 Mountain View Drive, Lafayette. Bring your business cards!

**Moraga Chamber of Commerce**

www.moragachamber.org (925) 323-6524

**Orinda Chamber of Commerce**

www.orindachamber.org (925) 254-3909

For announcements of more business related events and nonprofit fundraisers, be sure to check the chamber of commerce websites. There is a lot going on in Lamorinda, especially during this busy fall season.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com).

# Our Candidates for State Assembly are like Apples and Oranges



Catharine BAKER



Cheryl COOK-KALLIO

### PARTISAN POLITICS

- Baker is "fixed on results instead of party labels" and is "independent and effective." (Source: San Francisco Chronicle)
- Endorsed by the local Democrat, Republican, and Independent leaders we trust. (Source: BakerforAssembly.com)

- Cook-Kallio is another party-line vote. (Source: Evolve survey)
- Lacking bipartisan support. (Source: votecookkallio.com)

### TAXES AND SPENDING

- Voted for a bipartisan bill to pay down pension debt. (Source: Official Assembly Records)
- Opposes new and higher taxes. (Source: BakerforAssembly.com)

- Left the city she represented with \$160 million in pension debt. (Source: The East Bay Times)
- Pledged to support over \$5 billion in new and higher taxes. (Source: Evolve survey)
- Pledged to eliminate Proposition 13's taxpayer protections. (Source: Evolve survey)

### EDUCATION

- Authored legislation to reform the teacher seniority system so schools can consider the needs of children, not just the rigid seniority rules. (Source: Official Assembly Records)
- Co-authored bipartisan legislation to put California students first in University of California admissions. (Source: Official Assembly Records)

- Testified in Sacramento against basic, common-sense tenure reform and against reforming rigid seniority rules that hurt kids and teachers. (Source: Official Assembly Records)

### BART STRIKES

- Supports ending BART strikes. (Source: BakerforAssembly.com)

- Supports BART strikes and her campaign is funded by the BART unions. (Source: votecookkallio.com)

### TRANSPARENCY

- Refuses to fill out secret "surveys" that make promises to Sacramento special interests and lobbyists. (Source: BakerforAssembly.com)
- Passed a bill to make Bay Bridge meetings open to the public for more accountability. (Official Assembly Records)

- Looking for campaign support, Cook-Kallio made secret, written promises to Sacramento special interests and lobbyists about how she would vote, but she refuses to show those written promises to voters. (Source: votecookkallio.com)



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**Nov. 8 Election Coverage**

**Lamorindans Speak Out About the Legalization of Pot in California**

By Nick Marnell

With California claiming it loses hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue each year to the marijuana black market, the state placed Proposition 64 on the November ballot. The proposition, known as the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, will legalize the recreational use of the drug for adults 21 and over and impose a tax on cultivation and retail sales. Though pot would be legal in California, the sale or possession of marijuana remains a federal offense.

Two things this article promises: You will read no worn-out double entendres about inhalation, vegetation or elevation; nor will you hear pontification from candidates, public officials or law enforcement. Presented are the opinions of real-life, everyday Lamorindans, captured candidly around town in September and October, giving their take on the legalization of marijuana.

"I'm having long talks with my children about this," said Carol McDonald of Lafayette. She wasn't quite ready to give the bill two thumbs up because she was concerned about one particular aspect of the marijuana business. "I'm not sure I want to see a dis-

pensary in my neighborhood," she said. Not all municipalities will permit legal dispensaries but as a tradeoff, they will not share in the state revenue. Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda all ban marijuana dispensaries.

Lafayette's Alma Heidary and Kim Shaw of Orinda are all for the regulation and taxation of the drug. "It will create more jobs, maybe lower crime," Shaw said, seconding the state's expectation that if marijuana is decriminalized, criminals will go out of business.

"Certainly," said Joe Viola, a proponent from Orinda. "But there should be a limit on how much you are allowed to have." Viola needn't worry too much, as the statute will limit possession to 28.5 grams.

Orinda mom Lisa Lyon voiced a strong yes. "It's easier for kids to get grass than it is liquor. They'll need an ID, the control will be better and the purity can be regulated," Lyon said. To that end the Department of Consumer Affairs will license and oversee marijuana retailers and distributors, and the Department of Food and Agriculture will license and oversee marijuana cultivation, ensuring its environmental safety.

"Regulating pot is a good thing," said Lafayette soccer official John Topping, who ultimately favors legalization with one caveat. "My qualms are the education of the youth, and the impact the drug would have on their brains," he said. Per the statute, revenue from marijuana sales will provide funding to invest in public health programs that educate youth in order to prevent and treat serious substance abuse. Also, the law will ban dispensaries from within 600 feet of schools.

Aneesh Seth, whose wife attends Saint Mary's College, thinks pot is no big deal. "And it's a waste of our resources to police it," he said. Speaking of the college, a surprising feature of this survey was that younger adults were not gung-ho to pass the measure. SMC student Matt Harris had no opinion, as he does not use the drug. Moraga's Kelly Jacobs, 21, said she hopes the proposition does not pass. "It's too dangerous to drive while on pot," she said. The law will disallow using marijuana while driving, and the current laws prohibiting driving under its influence will be enforced.

Lily Shaw, 22, of Orinda argued that

passage will get rid of the mystique and the stigma that pot makes people lazy and unproductive. "People think it's worse than it really is," she said.

Most journalists are not big on anonymous sources, but many of those in favor of Prop 64 offered solid reasons for not being quoted. A Lafayette man said that his clients would not appreciate hearing what he had to say about the measure. Similarly, people feared backlash from their neighbors if their position appeared in print.

One Moraga respondent not in favor of legalizing the drug understandably wished to remain anonymous. "Because I don't want to pay taxes on it. I have a great deal with my dealer!" said the young man.

Though you were promised no words from public officials, Lamorinda's next-door neighbor contributed an anti-comment that was very hard to pass up. "Marijuana plants are not pretty," said Loella Haskew, mayor of Walnut Creek, when she urged her city council to pass a resolution opposing Prop. 64, which requires a majority vote for passage. You just never know what can swing the undecideds.

**Moraga**

**Hillside Regulations**

The committee decided that the criteria would be visibility from any public place, including existing and future trails, and the scenic corridor. Some of these ridges are Sanders Ridge (above Saint Mary's College), Bollinger Ridge (undeveloped land West of the Bluffs), and part of the "painted rock" property off Rheem Blvd.

The seventh issue addresses protecting ridgelines and view sheds. The General Plan states that the town has to protect the view shed along Moraga's scenic corridors, but it does not explain what "protect" means. The committee proposed to establish new standards to ensure that an adequate visual separation is provided between the highest point of new development and the ridgelines, whether these ridges are in MOSO or not. It also recommended adding that view analysis consider all viewpoints along the scenic corridors, not just one.

The eighth issue talks about limiting development in MOSO land on steep slopes. The current rule prohibits development on site with an average slope greater than 20 percent, but does not define how to map the portion of land that will serve to calculate the average. The committee recommended that the portion of land, or cell, used to calculate the average slope not exceed the site of the proposed house and disturbed landscape (retaining walls, fills, etc.).

The ninth issue deals with the remediation of high risk areas. The original MOSO text does not make any reference to remediation of high risk areas and how this could affect the density of allowed development. The guidelines that were drafted afterwards allow for such practice and permit to change the housing density from one unit per 20 acres to one per 10 or one per 5 acres. The committee's recommendation was to allow remedia-

tion in high risk area, but not the change the development allowed density.

The 10th issue considers the size of buildings on large lots. The current regulation does not limit the size of homes on lots greater than 20,000 square feet. The committee proposed to limit the size of homes on lots up to one acre located on visible hillsides to a maximum of 5,500 square feet. It did not propose to limit home size on lots over one acre.

At the end of October the planning commission started a series of meetings to study these recommendations. The commissioners noted that no current member of the planning commission had been part of the steering committee. The work of the committee spanned over several years and the commissioners that were part of it timed out. They were not replaced for continuity reasons, but they stopped reporting to the planning com-

... continued from page A4

mission.

Commissioner Kymberleigh Korpus said that she was not sure that the committee had done enough work to reach a conclusion, that she did not have enough information to be sure, and therefore could not make an informed recommendation to the town council. Commissioner Christine Kuckuc said she would appreciate to hear what went on during the deliberation, to see that everything had been explored. The planning commission work is ongoing and will continue until the commissioners agree to a set of recommendations.

The conclusions of the committee are challenged by the Bruzzone family that owns a significant portion of remaining undeveloped land in Moraga. Joan Bruzzone and her son David repeatedly stated that the rules unfairly target their properties and are tantamount to a taking of their land.



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- Amy Worth**  
Orinda City Councilwoman
- Dean Orr**  
Orinda City Councilman
- Darlene Gee**  
Orinda City Councilwoman
- Carol Brown**  
Orinda School Board Member
- Susie Epstein**  
Acalanes Union Board Member
- Rebecca Saltzman**  
Bart Director Dist. 3
- Sue Severson**  
Former Mayor
- Bobbie Landers**  
Former Mayor
- Bill Judge**  
Former Mayor
- Tom McCormick**  
Former Mayor
- Pat Rudebusch**  
Former Orinda School Board Pres.
- Linda Landau**  
Former Orinda School Board Member

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## PRO vs CON Measure C public forum

### Measure C Supporters Hold a Positive Vision for Lafayette

By Budd MacKenzie, Teresa Gerringer and Anne Grodin

Two years ago, with the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center completed and the road repair program funded, the Lafayette City Council conducted a series of community conversations throughout the city to hear from families about their 20-year vision for Lafayette.

More than 700 residents participated, and they said that the city's top priorities should be to preserve open space, enhance public safety, improve parking and traffic, and revitalize the Park Theater. And so the council placed Measure C, a one-cent-sales tax increment, on the November ballot.

Since that time, hundreds of people have come forth to support the measure and work on the campaign. Measure C's endorsers are community leaders who hold a positive vision for Lafayette. They're people who won't be dissuaded by the critics and their fabricated "facts" and conspiracy theories. They're residents who know that Lafayette is well managed, recalling that the city:

- Has no pensions or pension obligations;
- Has a large emergency reserve;
- Has a AAA rating from Standard & Poor's (the highest possible rating);
- Efficiently contracts for most of its services;
- Was recently ranked by Transparent California as among the top 10 percent of California's most efficient cities.

Residents know about the city's aggressive crime prevention efforts, and how Police Chief Eric Christensen has used technology and community policing techniques in innovative ways to solve the crimes that do occur. Last year, Lafayette's police solved 60 percent of the residential burglaries – a figure unheard of in other cities.

And they've seen how the city even gets the little things right – like the new reflective street name signs that give paramedics and fire fighters clear direction to our homes in the event of a true emergency.

This is a city council that has delivered, time and again, on its promises.

And so residents can take City Council members at their word when they pledged, unanimously and unambiguously, to use Measure C proceeds for these and only these purposes:

- Open Space
- More and better parking
- Improved traffic
- Enhanced policing
- Downtown parks, and
- A revitalized Park Theater.

To quell any remaining doubt, remember, too that Measure C orders that an Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee will monitor expenditures to ensure that the city is in full compliance with the ballot measure.

Orinda did it, Moraga did it, and now it's Lafayette's turn to capture the sales tax cap before a regional agency does. If you don't think BART, MTC, and Contra Costa County aren't eyeing future tax measures, think again.

Stay positive! Vote YES on Measure C!

It's the best way to keep our money local, get the projects we want, and make Lafayette the very best it can be.

*Budd MacKenzie is Founder, Trust in Education and 2004 Citizen of the Year; Teresa Gerringer is a member of the Lafayette School Board; Anne Grodin, is a former mayor and council member, 1999 Citizen of the Year and Founder of the Lafayette Community Foundation.*

### Vote No on C — No Restrictions on Expenditures

By Mike Griffiths

The Lafayette City Council proposes a 1 percent sales tax to raise \$3 million a year for 29 years, at least \$87,000,000. As a general tax it can be spent on any governmental purpose.

The ballot statement promises "priorities" will be open space, reducing congestion, police, parking, parks, the Park Theatre, and that all sales tax "will stay in Lafayette." The city's ballot statement does not disclose plans to fund a sales tax revenue bond up to \$58 million and build a new civic building.

On Feb. 8 and July 11 the council considered a "Scenario 2 — Completely bonded; 30-year bond against 100 percent of the annual revenue stream" to borrow \$58 million in principal, and using "bond proceeds from sales tax measure \$13 million" to acquire a site for a "Civic Building." On July 25 the council confirmed a "Sales Tax Revenue Bond" would be used. Another July 11 memo, citing polling results, states that although mentioning a civic building "as a means of increasing transparency is understandable...there is a risk that including such language could cause some voters to vote no on the measure." That same day the words "including a civic building" were removed from the ballot statement.

Emails on July 13-14 between the building site owner and the city negotiating an agreement end with "better for us to wait to see if the sales tax measure passes on the November 2016 ballot." Clearly, this civic building site remains under consideration. That July 11 civic building memo shows \$17.25 million for site acquisition and \$9 million for construction costs. The memo states the cost of the building itself would not be covered by sales tax proceeds, but this is accomplished by shifting \$4.25 million of other city funds to site acquisition, and another \$6 million to construction.

Measure C would be used to replenish that \$10.25 million — essentially a shell game. And the ballot statement promising "all" of the sales tax will stay in Lafayette will not be true if used to repay a Sales Tax Revenue Bond up to \$58 Million. Tens of millions of dollars in interest and fees will leave the city. The \$26.25 million for the civic building, with 28 years interest at 3.4 percent, amortizes to close to \$40 million over 40 percent of the \$87million Measure C revenue over 29 years.

This information should not be withheld from Lafayette voters. The Editors of the East Bay Times called the 1 percent increase "too much" and the 29 year term "a ridiculously long time for a tax that could be used for any governmental purpose." The Contra Costa Taxpayers Association declined to support Measure C.

*Mike Griffiths is President of Save Lafayette, a city government watchdog group he founded in 2015, and has been a resident of Lafayette since 1989.*

## ROB STURM – THE RESPONSIBLE CHOICE

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"Our District opens with almost \$1 million in deficit spending and forecasts 'financial insolvency' by 2018 on our current fiscal trajectory. That's alarming." **Rob Sturm, attorney, teacher and volunteer on behalf of children**

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- Has identified material opportunities to end wasteful District spending to eliminate deficits, enhance academic excellence, further support special education and invest in teacher pay increases. Additional parcel taxes should be an option of last resort
- Widespread current and former local School Board support, including non-returning Lafayette School Board Members Jean Follmer and Nancy Wallace; Ann Appert; Craig Cheslog; Roger Falcone; Art Kapoor; Tom Mulvaney; Shayne Silva, Scott Sommer; Stephenie Teichman
- Endorsed by numerous other civic leaders and engaged community members



**For more information please visit [www.robsturm.com](http://www.robsturm.com) or contact Rob at [c\\_robert\\_sturm@hotmail.com](mailto:c_robert_sturm@hotmail.com). 415.913.8995**

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1. Nurture trust by helping the district spend the infrastructure bond money effectively
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4. Collaborate with parents of children with special needs to foster the best possible relationship
5. Advocate for continued enrichment of STEM curriculum while enhancing our art and music programs

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- **Tom Mulvaney**, Former Acalanes School Board Member
- **Roger Falcone**, Former Lafayette board member
- **Craig Cheslog**, Incoming Acalanes School Board Member
- **Kathy Merchant**, Former Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation Executive Director
- **Jennifer Russell**, Lafayette Parks, Trails, and Rec Director (Ret.)
- **Marechal Duncan**, 2015 Lafayette Citizen of The Year
- **Karen Mulvaney**, 2011 Lafayette Citizen of The year
- **Steve Hirsch**, Former Moraga School Board Member
- **Mark Jewett**, San Ramon Valley School Board Member
- **Quinlan Tom**, Former LPIE Board Member & PTA President
- **Ann Farrell Diemer**, Capital Projects Assessment Committee Member
- **Lee Thompson**, Capital Projects Assessment Committee Member
- **Bob McClain**, Capital Projects Assessment Committee Member
- **Dan Reynolds**, Mount Diablo USD Teacher Of The Year
- **Kathleen Crenshaw**, San Lorenzo USD Teacher (Ret.)
- **Sara Savacool**, Contra Costa Labor Education Committee Chair
- **Kenny Tuckerman**, Parent and Advocate

If you would like to know more about me or if you want to have a chat, please visit [www.markkindhouse.com](http://www.markkindhouse.com) or email me at [kindhouse2016@gmail.com](mailto:kindhouse2016@gmail.com). **I would love to speak with you!**



# Letters to the Editor

## Spirit Van Says Thank You

Dear Editor,

To the members of the Moraga Town Council, Town Manager Priebe, and the Moraga community,

Each year, we ask Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda to financially support the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program. This has been a very difficult year for the Town of Moraga to consider funding us as it is focused on financing the repairs to the sinkhole.

I would like to thank Moraga Vice Mayor Dave Trotter for writing a letter of support for the Spirit Van. Because of Mr. Trotter's letter, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous is matching donations up to \$4,500 to help the Town of Moraga provide \$9,000 in funding to the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program. In response to these efforts donations are coming in, and another donor who also wishes to remain anonymous has said s/he will make up any shortage. These efforts ensure that Moraga's usual contribution of \$9,000 will continue for 2016-2017. Since the Moraga Town Council has agreed to revisit the possibility of funding the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program in January after more is known about funding the sinkhole repairs, Moraga's contribution from the town and from private donations may turn out to be more than \$9,000. For this financial support, the City of Lafayette, the passengers, and I are very appreciative.

A big "Thank you," to vice mayor Trotter, the Moraga Town Council, and Moraga community donors for making this happen! Thank you to John Warshaw for setting up the Active.Netdonations site via facebook.com/lamorindaspiritvan! Thank you to Jay Ingram and Kimberly Nelson for setting up the Electronic Reader Board!

Mary Bruns  
Lamorinda Spirit Van Program  
Lafayette

## Lafayette Measure C

Dear Editor,

We strongly urge our fellow Lafayette citizens to vote Yes on Measure C.

All funds raised by the Measure and associated expenditures will be tracked and reviewed by an independent Citizen Oversight Committee. This committee will be an effective check on how these specific dollars are spent.

In addition, our city council has bi-weekly meetings where all citizens are encouraged to speak on any and all matters, including thoughts and ideas pertaining to Measure C funds.

Remember all Measure C monies will be placed in a separate category account so that the oversight committee and all Lafayette residents can see, report and comment on Measure C expenditures.

Protecting open space, reducing downtown congestion — including parking — enhancing police protection and potentially acquiring land for a downtown park are some of the elements Measure C is intended to address.

Please join us to make Lafayette, the town we all love, a better place to live.

Vote Yes on Measure C.  
Karen and Tom Mulvaney  
Lafayette

## Lafayette Doesn't Need More Taxes

Dear Editor,

I am writing concerning your Oct. 5 Measure C article.

While Prop C is billed as a one percent increase in the sales tax, the increase from 8.5 percent to 9.5 percent is an approximately 12 percent increase. Add to this a potential 1/2 percent increase from Measure X, bringing the total to 10 percent, this sales tax increase could be nearly 18 percent. And to top it off is a measure to continue the 1/4-percent increase that Governor Brown promised would expire.

Were it not for these measures the tax rate should have dropped to 8.25 percent. So this potential rate of 10 percent we're looking at is in actuality a 21 percent increase, when in-

flation is under 2 percent. And this comes at a time where homeowners are seeing regular annual increase in their property taxes, increases in other county fees and taxes, and when the city is not only reaping the rewards of these continued increases but is showing a significant surplus each year. Many articles have told the story of how the cost of living in the Bay Area is climbing out of control. Yet, one of the key areas in cost of living are all these numerous tax increases and fees that are popping up everywhere, and on top of these, there are BART increases, toll increases, utility increases ... the list is endless. I recently went to book a small airfare and the tax was more than 50 percent of the fare.

Every time a homeowner goes to the hardware store, a parent picks up a hot meal on the way home, this is taking out another bite.

Lafayette should be giving the stretched middle class homeowners a tax break when it has a surplus, not an increase.

Ty Allison  
Lafayette

## I Voted Yes on C

Dear Editor,

I voted yes for Measure C because I trust the judgment of those supporting it and the members of the city council who unanimously concluded, after extensive hearings, adding 1 percent to the sales taxes is in our interest. Adding to our tax burden is not something they would recommend if they didn't think it was important. The knee-jerk reaction of most constituents is to oppose all tax increases. In fact 28 percent of voters vote no on every proposal that increases their taxes.

I'm not tied to the priorities listed by the council. They are today's priorities established by a survey taken that most of us, including me, didn't take the time to complete.

I wouldn't mind if someone is able to persuade the council to spend money on something that is not on the list. I trust in local government and our ability to influence decisions that are made. If the 1 percent went to Washington D.C. or Sacramento I'd be voting no.

I do believe there is a correlation between what we invest in the city and schools and the value of our homes. I can't possibly justify refusing to pay an extra 1 percent on the taxable items I purchase in Lafayette given how much my home has appreciated. I appreciate the stewardship provided by members of the city council, all of whom volunteered their time. Bottom line, I'm a happy camper.

Finally, I don't think we should take the risk that other taxing authorities will make it impossible for the city to add 1 percent later. The sales tax in Lafayette is already 8.5 percent and the maximum allowed by state law is 10 percent. I think it will reach the maximum even if Lafayette doesn't add anything to the sales tax burden.

If you can't afford it certainly vote no on C. But, if you can and still decide to vote no then at least be civil. It is important that we be respectful of opposing views. This much we know from observing the presidential candidates and their talking heads.

Budd MacKenzie  
Lafayette

## YES on Lafayette's Measure C

Dear Editor,

For the past two years the city has held community meetings to listen to the thoughts and opinions of residents on a 20-year vision for Lafayette's future, The Citizens' Vision.

More than 700 people participated and said that their priorities were to preserve open space, improve traffic flow and parking, enhance public safety, and add a new downtown park to enhance the quality of life in Lafayette.

Voting YES on Measure C will give Lafayette the funds it needs to accomplish those visions of its future.  
Anne Grodin  
Lafayette

Because of the high amount of election-related letters received this issue, they will appear on pages A13, A14 and A15, organized by category.

## Preserve Lafayette's Hillside with C

Dear Editor,

Please vote yes on Measure C. Measure C will give Lafayette resources that will make Lafayette an even better place to live, but most important in our view, that will help Lafayette protect and preserve open space for everyone's benefit for years to come.

We cannot take for granted that the undeveloped portions of our hillsides and ridgelines will remain undeveloped. Most of the open hillsides and ridgelines that we see are privately owned, and the owners have the right to build — in accordance with the city's ordinances. The pressure to build will continue to grow, and even with the most exacting application of the city's hillside ordinances, we will see buildings on the hillsides and ridges, the open vistas will be lost, and trail corridors will be blocked.

Lafayette has simply not had the resources necessary to protect and preserve open space. This is our opportunity to significantly improve Lafayette. We cannot let it pass by.

Please vote Yes on Measure C.  
Carl and Sharon Anduri  
Lafayette

## Disappointed by Measure C

Dear Editor,

I now understand why the East Bay Times recommended a NO vote on Measure C. The "sales tax increase is too much for one bite" and lasts "29 years, a ridiculously long time for a tax that could be used for any government purpose" (East Bay Times 9/20/16). Surprisingly, it requires only a simple majority (50% + 1 vote) to pass.

Measure C lists spending priorities based on survey responses of 4 percent of our residents. There is no legal requirement that the money will be spent on only these items. I am disappointed that what some are calling a "blank check" for the city requires only a simple majority to pass. When you ask citizens to vote for a tax of this size (\$100 million) and duration (29 years), it should require at least 2/3 of the votes to pass. If it can't achieve that threshold, then it is insufficiently supported by voters and should be reexamined to identify its shortcomings.

I happily endorsed and voted for the OTHER Measure C — the school bond we passed in June with over 73 percent of the vote. It required a 2/3 vote and restricted the use of funds to itemized needs. THIS Measure C is starkly different. It requires only a simple majority and does not legally restrict the use of funds.

Unlike Orinda, whose voters passed by 69 percent a 10-year sales tax generating approximately \$7 million, and Moraga, whose voters passed by 70 percent a 20-year sales tax generating approximately \$20 million, Lafayette's Measure C would last 29 years and generate approximately \$100 million. The magnitude of Lafayette's proposed tax is out of sync with our neighboring communities' taxes.

I love Lafayette, but I don't love Measure C. I hope that in the future our city leaders will follow an approach more similar to those of our school board or our neighboring towns.

Linda Murphy  
Lafayette

## Vote Yes on Measure C – A Vote for Increased Public Safety

Dear Editor,

I believe Lamorinda residents and especially Lafayette voters should vote for Measure C on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Our residents are increasingly concerned about public safety. Part of the Measure C revenue will be used to further assist Lafayette's police department in order to ensure we have sufficient personnel and the tools to keep the city safe.

The monies Measure C generates will also help preserve open space and improve downtown parking.

Note the money raised by Measure C will stay in Lafayette, and expenditures will be overseen by a Citizens' Oversight Committee.

Let's make Lafayette a better place and vote Yes on Measure C.  
Erling Horn  
Lafayette

## Yes on Measure C

Dear Editor,

I understand that within our community there is some concern over the need for, and transparency around, future expenditures that would result from passage of Measure C and the significant revenue that would be developed by this increase in sales tax. We should always demand clarity when taxes are imposed, but also recognize when they are necessary for the good of the community.

I believe that many of us agree that there are serious infrastructure needs that we in Lafayette need to address, that these have been well-captured by the wording of Measure C, and that we have reason to expect and trust our government leadership to be responsive to the community in the future, based on past performance and the commitment of local folks to pay attention to how our representatives perform.

Measure C addresses local issues, for example by preserving additional open space, addressing parking and traffic concerns and enhancing our police services. A Citizens Oversight Committee will monitor the way Measure C funds are spent, and this transparent process is very encouraging.

I urge my neighbors to vote Yes on Measure C.  
Roger Falcone  
Lafayette

## Measure C is Example of Citizen Involvement

Dear Editor,

Measure C proposes a sales tax increment, a general tax. Since general taxes cannot be legally restricted to specific purposes, voting for a general tax requires a level of trust in those making decisions on how to spend those revenues.

Over the past 20 years, the city of Lafayette has managed to stretch modest city revenues and find additional funds to reconstruct all of the city's failed roads; develop a successful and vibrant downtown; and build a beautiful Veterans Hall and a library. Through good times and recessions, Lafayette has balanced its budgets and maintained a healthy emergency fund.

All five members of the city council, as well as the new council member, who will take his seat in

December, have pledged to make the elements of the Citizens' Vision for Lafayette the priority for all expenditures of the sales tax revenues. They will seek to leverage those precious revenues to obtain additional funding for the Citizens' Vision.

A Citizens Oversight Committee will report regularly on the revenues of the sales tax increment and the expenditures made from those revenues. To make that easier, Lafayette's budget will include a separate budget category for the sales tax revenues so that the committee can see exactly what is received and what is spent.

Measure C is an example of how to make citizen involvement in city affairs work. The financial stewardship the city has demonstrated over the past decades will continue for the coming decades as well.

Love Lafayette – Vote Yes on Measure C.  
Mary McCosker  
Lafayette

## Why Were Signs Removed?

Dear Editor,

Two "No on C" signs were recovered Friday, Oct. 21, from the Lafayette public works yard, one homemade by a resident, and the other made by Save Lafayette. Both were given to me on Friday after the recovery. Both of these were put up at Springhill and Pleasant Hill Road on Oct. 19. Both were removed by city staff on Thursday, along with possibly other signs at this location (we don't know how many others, if any). Four signs remained at this location after staff removed these. Neither of these "No on C" signs were in violation of any city signage rules, as the homemade sign was to the right of the bulk of the signs, and the official sign to the left, possibly too close to another sign. Both were recovered by another citizen from the public works yard.

I know that staff was instructed on Friday to not continue removing specifically the "No on C" signs, or at least not to specifically target any one sign over any other. I also know that on Oct. 19, at least one of the official "No on C" signs was in an inappropriate location in the median on Pleasant Hill Road near Acalanes High School. It's clear that this one should have been removed.

What troubles me is the removal of the homemade sign. It was not in any clear violation of any "reasonable" city signage rules, as it was put in a "reasonable" location at this site. It is clearly homemade, but wasn't any larger or smaller than the other signs. I have been trying hard to think of any reason that a staffer could have used to justify removal.

The resident who made the sign did reach out to me, and doesn't feel justified in putting it back up. That is just awful, and should not be how our residents feel about expressing their opinions in our city.

Please, some acknowledgement by staff for the reasons why this one particular sign was removed should be made public. Justifications should be given, or apologies expressed.

Susan Candell  
Lafayette

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](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. **email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com)**; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

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# Letters to the Editor ... continued

## Lafayette School Board

### Sturm for Lafayette School District Board

Dear Editor,

As a Lafayette Unified School Board member, I have worked to ensure a world-class education for all students while maintaining fiscal responsibility. I support Rob Sturm because he embraces this same ideal. Rob believes, "We are fortunate to have a wonderful school district and superintendent and fantastic teachers and staff. Nevertheless, there are opportunities to regain fiscal stability and improve upon Lafayette's academic preeminence."

California's unstable school funding requires districts be fiscally disciplined. To protect against cuts in down economies, our district maintains reserves which we have historically avoided spending in up economies. However, we recently approved a budget with an \$800,000-plus deficit which leaves us below reserve levels recommended by experts. Projections show our reserves being exhausted within the next two years. When asked about this at a candidates' forum, the other candidates gave flip responses about passing another parcel tax. Rob Sturm was the only candidate to answer that a parcel tax should only be used as a last resort, particularly given that we recently passed a \$70 million bond and a permanent parcel tax. Rob used his professional training to review our budget and identify areas of inefficiency that could be addressed without affecting the education students receive. His assessment is sophisticated, substantive and reflects his professional expertise and a respect for the burden that parcel taxes place on our residents. We need that kind of thinking on our board.

Rob is also dedicated to ensuring a preeminent education for all our students. We provide an exceptional education to most of our students. However, there are valid concerns that we may not be adequately serving our special needs and gifted students. As an attorney with experience providing equal opportunity counseling, Rob has expertise that will benefit our special needs community and our district by avoiding unnecessary legal expenses. Rob also wants to see our district actively consider accelerated academic offerings (an area we have recently reduced). Rob will be an advocate for all our students.

Please vote Charles ("Robert") Sturm for Lafayette School Board. Nancy Wallace Lafayette

### Vote Meade and Kindhouse

Dear Editor,

I am writing today to express my concerns regarding recent posts on "Nextdoor" and statements at a recent debate by one of the candidates running for Lafayette School Board.

Last week, a candidate posted messages stating that the Lafayette School District was in dire financial condition. Then, during the PTA Candidate Forum on October 25th, the candidate stated again that the district would be fiscally insolvent by 2018. This type of alarmist rhetoric is concerning. Uninformed stakeholders can easily over react to such language: teachers wonder whether they should look for new jobs; parents worry about losing educational programs; seniors wonder what a district bankruptcy might mean for housing values.

I have been in banking and finance my whole career, I have a pretty solid understanding of what insolvency means: it means your long-term liabilities are greater than your assets and that you do not have the cash flow to service those liabilities. It means you are on a path to bankruptcy or, in the case of a school district, a potential take-

over. The Lafayette School District is not insolvent, far from it.

Not only is it supported by an affluent and growing local tax base, but the district owns property all over town (e.g. White Pony) and has millions of dollars of assets with substantial equity value. For these reasons, I was discouraged by what Rob Sturm had posted on "Nextdoor." I felt sure that going bankrupt in one year wasn't feasible – and a bit of research proved that feeling to be true.

When Rob claimed district insolvency again during the recent PTA debate, the other two candidates jumped in to correct him. They referenced district data and pointed people to the district website.

I've never written a letter to a newspaper before, but what the community is hearing and seeing is distressing. No election is worth causing fear amongst parents, teachers, and citizens of our district. For these reasons, I am clear in who I am voting to be added to the Lafayette School Board: Meredith Meade and Mark Kindhouse. I urge you to do the same.

Alec Thompson Lafayette

### Sturm for Lafayette Schools

Dear Editor,

One of the primary reasons my family moved to Lafayette in 2010 was because of its schools. My family, and the entire Lafayette community, place enormous importance on the level of education provided to our children. We have the best teachers, aides, assistants, staff, administration and school board in the world and, as a family, we are profoundly grateful to them.

I know that Rob Sturm feels the same. It's imperative that we continue to enable premier education for our kids and I have complete trust and confidence in Rob to work collaboratively with the board to do so. I'm voting for Rob for Lafayette School Board and I encourage you to do the same.

Rob brings a seasoned background and skills that will aid the District in meeting the need to maintain and enhance high-quality academic standards while also ensuring that Lafayette's School District is operating as cost-efficiently as possible. His experience as a nearly 25-year attorney with a proven track record of fiscal diligence and problem-solving will help the district save substantially in order to ensure fiscal stability and redirect non-value-added spend to productive purposes such as enhanced academic offerings and teacher pay and eliminating the District's deficit spending.

Not only will Rob will provide the board with a proven leader who has a well-established record of success and ability to bring fresh perspectives to the table, he is a thoughtful, kind and committed resident of Lafayette -- and an exemplary father -- who is fully dedicated to supporting the future of our incredible community.

Please join me in voting for Rob Sturm for Lafayette School Board.

Cameron Burks Lafayette

### Orinda School Board

#### Weiner, Hoxie for OUSD

Dear Editor,

I am writing to recommend both Hillary Weiner and Cara Hoxie for OUSD school board. I know each of them personally and "professionally" through serving together on the EFO Executive Board. We're lucky that these two competent women have stepped forward to offer their skills to help ensure the continued excellence of Orinda K-8 schools.

Hillary is the only candidate who has students in the district and will lend this perspective along with her experience holding executive level

positions on both the Parents' Club and EFO boards. Cara's three-year leadership as co-president of EFO, her proven ability to work with all types of groups and stakeholders and knowledge of this community where she grew up and raised her children are also invaluable assets.

It takes decisiveness, diplomacy and collaboration to get things done on the Orinda school board and these women have those qualities in spades.

Wendy Bond Orinda

### Moraga Town Council

#### Korpus Has What it Takes

Dear Editor,

I have served on the Moraga Planning Commission with Kymberleigh Korpus since her appointment several months ago. Since joining the commission I have found her to be thoughtful, attentive to detail, and open to the views of her fellow commissioners. She frequently elevates the quality of both the discussions and decisions. She is always well prepared.

Conflict is to be expected when dealing with some of the complex and contentious issues before us. Each of us brings our own experience and style to the meetings. I believe some of the conflict that has resulted in apparent negative feelings towards Commissioner Korpus is a result of style differences. Her process is lawyerly and methodical. In planning meetings her questions build a structure of facts that moves toward an informed decision of the situation at hand. She often brings to light information that would otherwise not be explored without her persistence.

For the time she has been on the commission, I have found her to be intelligent and analytical; she does thorough research on the topics presented. Her legal training enables her ability to thoroughly analyze the decisions before us. She is aware of the potential loss of our semi-rural look, school over-crowding and increasing traffic congestion due to consequence of growth.

I support Kymberleigh Korpus in her run for Town Council. As a longtime Moragan she is committed to maintaining the quality of life and character of our town, which makes Moraga the special place it is.

I have written the above opinion as a private citizen. Suzanne D'Arcy Moraga

#### Fritzky for Town Council

Dear Editor,

I am a mom active in a BSA Troop #234 in Moraga. I have assisted serving on the parent committee for our troop with town council candidate Jeanette Fritzky when she was the troop's Treasurer. I would like to share with you why I feel that this woman is the person for the position on the Moraga Town Council for this upcoming election.

I was very secure and confident with Jeanette Fritzky when she was our BSA Troop Treasurer. She has the skilled communication that facilitates understanding of financial details with poise. She demonstrated being able to communicate effectively not only to the parents in the troop/parent committee, but to the Scout Master, other scout leaders and to our local scout district. She accounted for our financial budget and assisted with planning, fundraising and cost-cutting where needed.

Many members in our parent committee not only are active in our troop as scout leaders, but have very high level positions of responsibility during their daily professional lives as business and government leaders. They all respected her integrity, consistency and ability to help maintain a balanced budget of the Troop.

These parent members all appreciated Jeanette's impeccable manner in documenting, and reporting with transparency and consistency in a timely manner. When Jeanette suggested needed interventions or changes, the Troop Committee too acted by listening to her. This is where the Jeanette's philosophy for her campaign of "LISTEN. REASON. ACT." stands out to be tried, and true to me.

Jeanette, also dedicated her time and talent to our troop even though her son had accomplished his Rank of Eagle Scout. I trusted her credibility, not only by working with her on a monthly basis for a year. I am also impressed by her educational and professional work history as well.

She has also worked on the Survey For Moraga Residents involving our major shopping area in Moraga, as well as having served on the Moraga Park's & Recreational Committee. I believe Jeanette Fritzky is not only capable but also has the ethical professionalism to become elected to the Moraga Town Council. Cheryl Ku Moraga

#### Wykle, Korpus for Town Council

Dear Editor,

The Town of Moraga is losing its precious semi-rural character and quality of life. The upcoming Town Council election will determine the future of Moraga.

Graig Crossley, commendable as his many years of public service are, cannot be counted on to protect Moraga's scenic corridors, hillsides, ridgelines and vistas from over-development. He fought against MOSO as a former council member, and he has not changed. He is part of Moraga's old guard, which has given all it could and earned the right to retire.

Jeanette Fritzky, though apparently accomplished in her private and professional life, has no experience in Town planning and processes. She has yet to develop a voice of her own, and appears to take guidance and direction from Moraga's old guard.

What is needed now is an infusion of new energy by those who have shown leadership and dedication to Moraga's core values and principles. An ideal candidate would also demand greater governmental transparency and accountability, while encouraging a more openly participatory process.

Kymberleigh Korpus is such a candidate. As my colleague on the Moraga Planning Commission, I have seen her carefully examine facts, listen to and challenge opinions, and actively engage the public. She asks tough questions from all sides of the issues, and gives clear reasons for her decisions. Even though some Planning Commissioners have opposed her candidacy because they object to her willingness to question the merits of others' decisions and to take a stand against the approval of the City Ventures project, they have come to grudgingly respect her due diligence and ability to identify important issues. She has demonstrated the needed experience and leadership, and needs your support to ensure the town adheres to its own policies and procedures, and is held accountable (e.g., Key Performance Indicator metrics).

Roger Wykle will bring his calm, capable, and creative analytical skills to enable the new solid majority in the Town Council to ensure Moraga's bright future.

Thus, as a private citizen, I urge you to vote for Korpus and Wykle for Moraga Town Council.

Ferenc Kovac Moraga

#### Candidate Responds to Criticism

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to Mr.

Immel's letter dated Oct. 19.

Mr. Immel is making his recommendation based on 30-year-old information. Who makes decisions for tomorrow and the future based on 30-year-old information? I hope Moraga does not.

Let me be clear: I am absolutely in favor of preserving and maintaining Moraga's open space and ridge lines. Open space was one of the main reasons my wife and I were drawn to Moraga, as is true for many Moragans.

In terms of the issue from 30 years ago, at the time the Town Council felt that the Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO) would actually limit the council's ability to preserve and protect open space. After the vote to pass MOSO, developers filed suit to overturn the vote of the residents. The town council, including myself, used all of our legal means, then costing tens of thousands of dollars, to successfully defend the MOSO vote in court.

Two items he did not include: First, when mentioning Mulholland Ridge, he missed the briefing I received from the then Planning Director where he said I could not start from "0 units" when considering this development. The end result was several streets capped off with a few houses and over 300 acres of open space from behind Scofield Drive across the Mulholland Ridge to Camino Ricardo.

Second, in 1974, when the town incorporated, the county projected a population over 50,000 for Moraga. The town council, including myself, worked to eliminate the freeways through town that would have supported that population. Instead, the Moraga Country Club has a longterm lease providing open space and adding nine holes for their golf course.

In the past decades, it is clear MOSO is the cornerstone protecting Moraga's open space and ridgelines. Mr. Immel and I may have disagreed on the method, but I did and continue to support preserving Moraga's open space and ridgelines.

Graig Crossley Moraga

#### Out Town, Our Future

Dear Editor:

I ask with great urgency that Moragans vote for Roger Wykle. I keep hearing so many comments about the size and density of projects that are being built now -- e.g., on Moraga Road across from the Rheem shopping center, and on Camino Ricardo (where the homes are now spilling over on the backside of that hill and can be seen from the Moraga shopping center). Don't know about you, but the "story poles" that once were put up relating to these developments NEVER gave me any idea of the true mass of these buildings. And that's only the visual impact. The traffic and other results of the fine folks who move in aren't things that can be reversed. But the MANY future proposed developments are still in our hands right now with this election!

Roger Wykle was one of the few town council members who voted against these projects, who has championed a cautious approach to development, and who has stood firm for the protection of Moraga's remaining open space. Because the town is about to adopt new rules governing hillside and ridgeline development, we absolutely need his voice on the next council to protect what remains of our semi-rural town.

And for those wondering, I believe Korpus and Fritzky also have histories that display thoughtful support for our Town in this way, and will receive my vote.

Karen Chin Moraga

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



# Letters to the Editor ... continued

## Orinda City Council

### Can Orinda Preserve its Semi-rural Character?

Dear Editor,

Be careful what you vote for: semi-rural vs. more congestion. In well-established Orinda, known for its excellent schools and safe environment, a key election battle is surfacing between those supporting local control, semi-rural values, and organic growth versus the big money pro-real estate development interests.

Some residents are concerned that city council candidates, construction executive Darlene Gee, and real estate attorney Inga Miller, who want to hire the Urban Land Institute, to lead the process of evaluating Orinda's downtown, will invariably lead to new massive multi-story condos, increased traffic congestion, and major violations of Orinda's General Plan.

Favoring semi-rural values, adherence to the general plan, code compliant buildings (to 35 feet), and organic growth, are candidates Dr. Bruce London, a retired radiologist, and educator Linda Delehunt.

The outcome is significant, and might be a role model for neighboring cities, as it represents an understanding that population density, overbuilding, and municipal code violations become major impairments to safety and quality of life issues.

Chris Kniel  
Orinda

### Does Gee Represent Developers?

Dear Editor,

Darlene Gee, appointed to the Orinda City Council in July, 2015, states: "None of my campaign contributions are from development interests" (letter to the editor, Lamorinda Weekly, Oct. 19). Ms. Gee is seeking a full four-year term on the Orinda City Council.

A review of Ms. Gee's campaign contributions from July 11 to Sept. 24 reveals that Ms. Gee has indeed received campaign contributions from development interests. Contribution to Ms. Gee's campaign were reported on Sept. 29, 2016, by the Orinda City Clerk's office.

Ms. Gee is a vice president of the HNTB Corporation, a construction and engineering firm. According to HNTB's website, HNTB has done work for BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit).

On Sept. 16, Ms. Gee received \$1,000 from the HNTB Holdings PAC (political action committee) located in Kansas City, Missouri. On Sept. 6, Ms. Gee received a \$200 contribution from Grace Crunican, the general manager of BART and a resident of Alameda.

From her fellow HNTB employees, Ms. Gee received five contributions. Four of the five contributions came from HNTB employees who live outside of Orinda. Here are the names, locations, and dollar amounts donated by these five employees: Anthony Lee (Cranford, NJ, \$99); Dina Potter (Piedmont, CA, \$500); Joshua Englander (Sherman Oaks, CA \$100); Shannon Gaffney (Moraga, CA, \$100); and Darrell Vice (Orinda, CA, \$250).

According to California Form 497 (dated Sept. 21), HNTB donated \$20,000 to support Measure X, which, if enacted by Contra Costa County's voters in November, will increase the county sales tax by one-half percentage point. This means that the sales tax in Orinda will go from 9.0 percent to 9.5 percent. Some Measure X money will go to BART. Ms. Gee supports Measure X.

If Orinda's voters elect Ms. Gee, they will have to decide if Ms. Gee will be representing Orinda's residents or the interests of the HNTB Corporation.

Richard S. Colman

Orinda

### Two Clear Candidates for Orinda Council

Dear Editor,

Owen Murphy (LW, 10/4, Letters) is right. There is indeed a clear choice in the city council election. This election finally gives Orinda voters the opportunity to send a clear mandate to the next city council to move forward with a community discussion on revitalizing our downtown. Do we stick with the status quo, which means ineffective policies that have let our downtown fall into disrepair and disuse, while letting other communities leapfrog us? Or do we launch an important discussion on what it will take to restore downtown to a place of vibrancy, economic activity and pride?

Unfortunately, Mr. Murphy wrongly frames the important choice ahead of us with questions designed to frighten more than enlighten.

He asks which candidates would take a flexible approach to height limits and density in crafting an economically viable downtown plan based on community input. Certainly not Bruce London or Linda Delehunt, his preferred candidates, who seem inflexible on current land use restrictions governing our downtown. Yet these government restrictions have led to crumbling buildings and vacant lots downtown. It's past time for the community to revisit the rules.

He asks, "Who would allow new downtown development to provide fewer on-site parking spaces?" The answer: no one. His support for Bruce London and Linda Delehunt implies that Darlene Gee and Inga Miller would. Wrong.

He asks which candidates "seem oblivious to the potential impact of downtown residential development on school class size, increased traffic, public safety, and an exacerbated downtown parking squeeze?" Again, no one. It is impossible to ignore such impacts in any meaningful dialogue about downtown development. Why does he assume they would? No facts, just fears.

Finally, he states that there are only two candidates "without conflict-of-interest ties to the real estate and development special interests." This baseless smear implies that Gee and Miller have such ties. Wrong.

Mr. Murphy is correct. There is indeed a clear choice in this election. The status quo on downtown isn't working. Make the choice that will improve our quality of life and our property values. Vote for Darlene Gee and Inga Miller. Andy and Carole Amstutz Rudy and Laurie Reich Bob Burt Mike and Ginny Ross Ethan Elkind Bill Waterman Orinda

### Orinda Needs Community Service, Not Lip Service

Dear Editor,

As I look at the track records of the four candidates vying for the two seats to be filled on the Orinda City Council on Nov. 8, I notice a startling difference in the records of actual community service among the candidates.

Dr. Bruce London touts his regular attendance at Orinda City Council, Planning Commission, Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission and Finance Advisory Committee meetings. That's commendable in itself, but has he ever applied to be appointed to actually serve on any of those bodies? There's a huge difference between going to meetings and expressing one's opinion and actually being a member who has to prepare for those meetings, do his or her "homework," actively participate in all meetings, express opinions that may not be popular among dissenting groups, and actually make decisions that affect our community.

Linda Delehunt is a fellow member of a Rotary Club which reflects

her desire to serve her community. But aside from her previous unsuccessful campaigns for various elected offices, I am unaware of her involvement on any local commission, committee or board that works to enhance the quality of life in our community.

On the other hand, Inga Miller served as a member of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission and is a member of the board of Las Trampas, Inc., a local non-profit organization that has served adults with developmental disabilities for nearly 60 years.

Darlene Gee served as a member and chair of Orinda's Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission before she was appointed to the city council last year to complete the term of now-State Senator Steve Glazer.

Orinda needs and deserves city council members who have served their community with their good deeds and hard work, not just their words. Please join me in supporting the two candidates who offer

their records of community service, not lip service. On Nov. 8, vote for Darlene Gee and Inga Miller. Mark Roberts Orinda

### Gee and Miller for Council

Dear Editor,

This fall, Orinda can go forward or we can go back. We can choose to improve our amenities, restore our crumbling roads and build a more vibrant community for our kids and families - or we can go back. We can continue the same directionless course that has given us vacant lots, declining property values and unsafe roads. The choice is clear, the candidates' positions are clear, and that's why I'm supporting Inga Miller and Darlene Gee for city council.

For decades, Orindans have been disappointed as our elected leaders wrung their hands over the basics of governing. Everything from routine maintenance of our city's infrastructure to simple eco-

nomie development policy was neglected. I've heard it argued that preserving Orinda's charm was something that had to be worked at. But sustained blight is not a strategy. Doing nothing is not leadership. And now we're left with more maintenance than we afford, a commercial core that hasn't been updated in decades, and the accompanying drag on our economy and property values.

I appreciate that every candidate says they want to improve downtown, but two of those candidates opposed beginning a serious conversation on the subject at the city council. For me, that disqualifies them on this issue. That says they're not serious about progress - they're committed to the status quo.

Vote for Gee and Miller for city council.

Bergen Kenny  
Orinda



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 Michael Verbrugge,  
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## Celebrating 10 Years of the Crosses

... continued from page A1

Initially disheartened by the fact that the crosses were destroyed, Heaton knew he had to continue. "When I started putting the crosses up and they got ripped down so quickly, I realized how powerful a message it was," he said. Heaton enlisted the help of Bob Hanson and they began to build support among the community for a memorial. Three years after the initial crosses were erected and quickly torn down, Heaton and Hanson were joined by the Mount Diablo Peace and Justice Center, Grandparents for Peace, and the Lamorinda Peace and Justice Group. Together, the volunteers put up 300 crosses on Veterans Day in 2006.

Only a few months later in February 2007, the number had expanded to more than 2,000 crosses on the hillside. "Our goal was to have one cross for every American killed in Iraq, and we quickly found out we couldn't do it. There wasn't enough space and we didn't have enough energy or materials to keep up with the number," said Hanson.

Heaton, who has been tracking the death toll of the war, pointed out that "the most conservative number I can give is (around) 7,000 soldiers have fallen since the war started."

Initially the crosses received

a lot of attention as they were a controversial topic amongst the Lamorinda community members. The Crosses of Lafayette were discussed at multiple city council meetings. Many residents were upset at the crosses. They felt they were disrespectful to the troops, that the crosses were not honoring the fallen but were sending a negative message of defeatism.

"Over the years Veterans have become supportive. They realized the Crosses are a protest against forgetting our soldiers," said Heaton. He added that, "Those who came to the memorial realized it was something for them; to help them cope."

Maintaining the hillside is no easy task. "Every year, we have to weed whack for fire prevention," said Hanson. Heaton, Hanson and other volunteers often head up to the hillside to touch up paint on the crosses. At times there would be 50 volunteers out keeping up the crosses. Heaton added that they are in the process of "re-digging all of the crosses and straightening them out. I'm trying to go through over the next year or two to completely clean it up." Heaton said that he aims to put them in straight rows so that not only are they better organized on the hillside, but it makes weeding and maintenance so much

easier to do with clearly defined rows in between.

Louise and Johnson Clark have since passed, but now their sons Charles and Steve are trustees of the property. According to Heaton, "We are currently having workshops to come up with design ideas for a permanent memorial. We feel that we've made a lot of progress on it, but it's still in the planning stages. We want to solidify our design idea and present it to Charles and Steve."


Since Veterans Day 2006, there has been a demonstration every year at the Crosses of Lafayette. There are also demonstrations every Memorial Day. In fact, San Francisco based singer-songwriter Laura Zucker wrote her song "Memorial Day" about the process and the hillside that is now the Crosses of Lafayette. Besides attracting national media attention, the Crosses of Lafayette have also been recognized internationally. Documentaries have been made in France and Japan (as well as here in the U.S.) about the memorial. A German newspaper even covered the story.

For those interested in making a contribution to support painting, repairs, and weed abatement, they can do so online through the Mount Diablo Peace and Justice Center at www.ourpeacecenter.org.

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# Saint Mary's Students Offer Fresh and Poetic 'Twelfth Night'

By Sophie Braccini



The cast warms up before the final rehearsal of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night."

It is a rarity to be able to see Shakespeare at Saint Mary's College. According to professor and director Daniel Larlham, it might only be the second time ever, the reason being that the text requires such work that it is hard to put it together within the seven weeks given to an SMC production.

But leave it to the bold young director and his passionate students to take up the challenge. With a lot of hard work, much creativity and talent, they are offering a modern and meaningful "Twelfth Night" that will speak to all audiences.

Cal Shakes recently showed with a masterful modern production of "Othello" that transfiguring Shakespeare to the modern era speaks to today's audience, when done by inspired director and cast. It all started for SMC "Twelfth Night" with Larlham's choice of a play that evokes deep emotions. He feels that the central sentiment of the play is a kind of anguished yearning of unrequited love. He also acknowledges that he was always moved by the theme of the separation of the twin brother and sister.

What helped him creating this complex play within a very short period was that in the spring of this year Larlham conducted an acting class that was focused on Shakespeare, where students studied a scene of "Twelfth Night." The professor says that at first the students gave a very formal rendering of the text, but he asked them to imagine that the characters were in a Hollywood hills mansion in the 1950s, and use their own sensibility.

"They thought it was funny at first, but then they were able to bring such powerful life force to it, by thinking of it as closer to themselves," the director recalls.

This inspired Larlham and his

students to set the whole play in a loosely defined golden period of Hollywood, taking inspiration from film director Baz Luhrmann ("Moulin Rouge," "The Great Gatsby") and his irreverent anachronistic take on a period.

Larlham says that he spent a lot of "table work" time with the students so they would define for themselves what the actual meanings of the lines are, so they could make a character choice about it.

Most students who decided to take on this challenge had studied the 17th century playwright in high school, but not necessarily performed him. Angelo Chukwudebe, who plays Duke Orsino, may be one of the most experienced Shakespearean actors; he participated in the English Speaking Union National Shakespeare competition and was one of the finalists.

The students say that they have put a lot of work in developing their characters and memorizing the lines, but feel that the work is well worth it. Amanda Ramos, playing Maria, found so much current relevance in the old text, "the themes of gender and sexuality are very prevalent in the show and very relevant to us today," she says. Her friend Nakia Gibbs, who plays Feste, adds that many TV series are inspired by Shakespeare's work and recalls the 2006 movie "She's the Man" that is a very modern take on "Twelfth Night." She adds that the most fun and interesting part for her as an actress has been to find a way to embody the language with its comical aspects for audiences that might have difficulty understanding the words.

The result is convincing and very pleasurable. Like in the SMC production of Aristophanes' "Lysistrata," some students definitely dominate the performance with

their ease with the language and perfect embodiment of their character. There are also some spectacular moments, such as the shipwreck that actually happens on stage, the fights, the comic moments and the songs that could surprise some. There is enough there to satisfy any Shakespeare amateur, and entice those who could be intimidated by the old language.

The play will open on Thursday, Nov. 3, at 8 p.m. at the LeFevre Theatre, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. It will also run at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 4 and at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5. Tickets can be purchased online at [stmarys-ca.edu/twelfth-night](http://stmarys-ca.edu/twelfth-night), or at the box office, one hour prior to curtain.

Photo Sophie Braccini

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# Breast Cancer Charity Hits the High Notes

By Cathy Tyson



Photo provided

Sandy Preto was inspired to start a Moraga-based charitable organization after a joyous surprise party organized by partner Mark Carlton after her tough two-year battle fighting breast cancer.

She was diagnosed in April of 2011 with Invasive Lobular Carcinoma and had multiple surgeries, plus chemotherapy and radiation along with some nasty complications.

The evening originally started as a dinner to express the couple's heartfelt thanks with her medical team. Preto noticed a band setting up in a corner of the restaurant, but she had no idea that Mark also arranged an expanded party inviting friends, family and the band Luce to celebrate completing her treatment.

That magical night, life affirming and full of hope, led to their founding what is now called Notes4Hope, an educational non-profit to bring people and music together to raise funds and build awareness for a more integrative approach to treating and preventing breast cancer.

It was a challenging, lengthy process setting up the non-profit to promote and produce live shows where 100 percent of the proceeds are donated toward breast cancer research and prevention. Neither Preto nor Carlton had any experience putting on live performances, but together they figured it out and started the very first fundraiser concert in February, 2013 at the Town Hall Theater in Lafayette.

Luckily Tom Luce "was a great supporter from the beginning," explains Preto. That first show featured Luce and Tender Mercies, a band with several members from the Counting Crows. It was a sell-out.

Fast forward more than three and a half years, and Notes4Hope has put on a total of 11 events, from the Round Up in Lafayette to Drakes in Oakland to the Red Devil Lounge in San Francisco to four shows, including their most recent, at the California Shakespeare Theater in Orinda just a couple of weeks ago with headliner Matt Nathanson.

The most recent concert on Oct.

15 sold out even quicker than they anticipated; chalk it up to the fantastic headliner and social media marketing, but unfortunately the weather didn't cooperate, with a record amount of rain that hit right at showtime.

Despite the challenges, the event was a "smashing success," Preto said, due to an army of volunteers, the continuing support of donors and sponsors, and lots of tents to cover all of the equipment on stage, along with the VIP dinner. Most patrons came prepared in full rain gear and umbrellas; trash bags and blankets were provided to those in need.

The highlight came when Carlton proposed to Preto onstage while being serenaded by Tom Luce, of the band Luce, singing "All I've been Waiting For." Incidentally, she said "Yes!"

In addition to the live shows, the couple have also produced two collections of original music called CD4Hope2015 and CD4Hope2016, with all the proceeds benefitting the fight against breast

cancer. Both discs are a collection of unique original songs with a message of optimism and inspiration by a variety of Bay Area artists, including Jackson Rohm, Painbirds and Rob Hotchkiss. The artists own their songs, but they generously allow Notes4Hope to use them, Carlton said. CDs are available for purchase at Allison McCrady Fine Arts in Orinda Theater square as well as at Farmyard Darlings located in the old Hen House building in downtown Lafayette. The CDs are also available online and for download from the website [www.notes4hope.org](http://www.notes4hope.org). "Each song reminds us to be grateful, and aware of the power of our human spirit," sums up Preto and Carlton's message on the interior of CD4Hope2016.

It's clearly a juggling act that Preto, now cancer-free, and Carlton enjoy. When not planning these full scale concerts, both have day jobs, are raising kids and recently moved. They plan to have two or three shows next year, and presumably will have time to organize a wedding.



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# Vibrant Landscapes of Contra Costa County is a Feast for the Eyes

By Kara Navolio



"Cattle Under Tree, Mt. Diablo"

Photos Kara Navolio

The vibrantly depicted landscapes of the late Lundy Siegriest (1925-1985) are on display at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center through Nov. 20.

Siegriest's father, Louis Bassi Siegriest, was a member of the "Society of Six," a group of Bay Area based plein air painters who joined together in 1917 to form an association combining influences from French Impressionism and the American Post-Impressionist Movement. The association, which lasted 15 years, was a unique modernist style which shocked the establishment at the time.

Lundy Siegriest, who grew up always surrounded by art and attended California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, joined with colleagues in 1975 to retrace the traditions of the Society of Six, painting in plein air throughout Contra Costa County. The 24 oil paintings in this exhibit are all from this era, and many feature landscapes around Mt. Diablo.

In "Cattle Under Tree, Mt. Diablo" Siegriest uses thick applica-

tion of paint with luscious greens contrasted with the red-browns of the cows to stimulate the senses. In an untitled piece depicting five cows and a calf, he uses a bold contrast of the thick yellow paint strokes over a blue background indicating a sun-drenched grassy field with the cows shadowed in blue. As William H. Clapp (a member of the original Society of Six) said of the style, "We are not trying to illustrate a thought or write a catalog, but to produce a joy through the use of the eyes." All the paintings in this exhibit use intense color to capture the land and the light.

Siegriest also had a lifelong love of teaching. He taught art in Chicago, Milwaukee, San Francisco, and through Walnut Creek Civic Arts (1961-1985).

This is a rare opportunity to view these works as most of these paintings are from a private collection. The Learning Center is open every Monday from 6 to 9 p.m. and during the many public events in the Community Hall.



"5 cows and a calf"



"Storm clouds"

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# Gold Star Families Star at Town Hall Theatre

By Pippa Fisher



Jolie Vega and Tom Stack

Photo Pippa Fisher

Town Hall Theater will be holding a very special bonus component to the Nov. 5 Midnight Flyer concert as it will be holding a fundraising event on behalf of Gold Star Families — those who have lost family members in military conflicts.

Orinda real estate agent Tom Stack has worked as a volunteer on the board of THT for nine years and has brought in more than 30 rock and roll bands during that time.

“All the shows are benefits for the theater but in this case,” says Stack, “we are extending a hand to a group in need. Years ago, after a flood shut us down for a while, and threatened to shut us permanently, we have recovered, and feel that our current stability allows us to extend a helping hand. We will be fundraising on behalf of the Gold Star Families.”

Stack says he first thought about giving back to these families after he caught sight of his Lafayette neighbor, Yolander (Jolie) Vega, on the show “60 Minutes,” which was running a segment on Gold Star Families. The story made such an impact on him, he decided to find a way to give back using the show at THT that falls right around Veterans’ Day.

Vega lost her son, Senior Airman Jonathan (Jake) Vega Yelner in 2008 when the vehicle he was driv-

ing was struck by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. Jake, as he was known, was 24 years old. He grew up in Lafayette with his brother, attending St. Perpetua School and De La Salle High School.

Vega remembers her son’s senior officer telling her that her son, when asked why he never seemed afraid, replied that his mother is a red-haired Puerto Rican and she is the only one he has ever been scared of! She says that Jake loved being part of the military. “It made a man out of him.”

Vega, now retired, worked for many years for BART. There is a plaque honoring Jake at the Lafayette station, which was placed there by BART’s Facilities Department and paid for by the workers.

Vega remembers that she felt very isolated in the days and weeks after her son’s death. She recalled that people would see her in the grocery store and head off down another aisle rather than have to say something to her. She said, “People don’t know how to handle it. Even in the military, they don’t know what to say.”

And yet, in the first week after she got the awful news, she received a visit from a couple of Blue Star Moms (mothers of members of the armed forces serving overseas). Vega cannot say enough positive

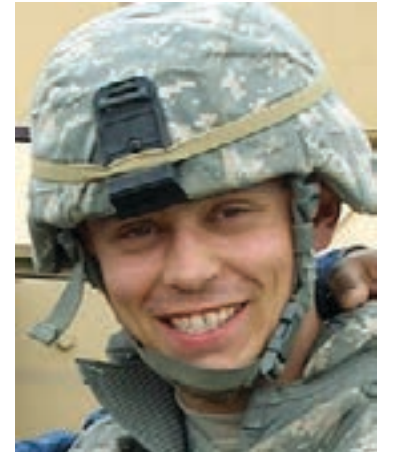
things about the organization. She says they were so supportive, particularly the Danville Chapter 101, including Patty Harris and Michelle Miller. Vega comments, “We (Gold Star Families) are their worst nightmare.” But, she continues, “I couldn’t have done it without them.”

It was a Blue Star Mom, Deb Saunders, who recognized the need for support of Gold Star Families and who started an annual event at the Marines Memorial Club in San Francisco, which was featured on “60 Minutes.” Saunders says, “You can express your sympathy but you cannot empathize with someone unless you’re walking in their shoes and that’s what I knew we had to do; (was) somehow gather these folks together, that they were better equipped in their journey to help one another.” Gold Star families are honored at this event. They talk about and remember their children — their lost ones are always referred to as “children.” As Vega says, “We don’t want our children to be forgotten.”

“We are not meant to be alone,” reflected Stack, as he described how he is hoping to bring the community together for a short while before the Eagles tribute band, Midnight Flyer, takes the stage on Saturday, Nov. 5 for education, awareness-building and fundraising for the Gold Star Families.

Stack, who worked for many years with the Grateful Dead, says, “There are many direct examples in my life, in my experiences, from the likes of Bill Graham, Carlos Santana, Ken Kesey, the Grateful Dead.

... continued on page B7



Jake Vega Yelner Photo provided



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# Swedish Film ‘Ove’ Delights in Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



Image provided

There is a lot to love about this month’s international film shown at the Orinda Theatre, “A Man Called Ove” (En Man Som Etter Ove) from Sweden, a comedy-drama that tells the story of a grumpy old man. It is a very well-made, feel-good movie — with tears and laughter — that paints the subtle portrait of a desperate man finding his humanity again as he learns to see it in others.

As director Hannes Holm puts it, “A Man Called Ove’ is a story about life, and it is recognizable everywhere where life is.”

Rolf Lassgård, who plays the title role, is so grouchy, picky and simple insufferable with a complete straight face that one could believe at first that the movie is just going to be a sad sentimental tale. But it is in fact a very skillful mix of humor with more dramatic turns. Ove is a recent widower who loses his job in the first minutes of the movie. Very quickly, his serial attempts to end his life that constantly get interrupted gets funny. Most of

the interruptions come from a new family moving across the alley from him, a Swedish/Persian couple with two vivacious little girls and a mother who’s quite the opposite to Ove.

But the movie is much more than the tribulations of a set of neighbors that live on different planes. Another very important figure of the movie, Ove’s late wife, emerges by small brush strokes as flashbacks take the spectator into Ove’s past life. A beautiful character in many ways, she brings a softness and strength that balances Ove’s negative desperation.

American viewers will chuckle at the male rivalry and bickering over cars in a small neighborhood. Can a friendship be irreparably broken over the make of a car? Are some Swedes that chauvinistic about their automobile industry? The “car-syndrome” makes for a funny thread all along the movie.

Some societal and cultural phenomena are also touched upon here, adding an interesting aspect to the movie. Since his early years Ove has been the victim of what he calls “men in white shirts,” the people who represent the power and the rules that sometimes infringe deeply on individual rights. Ove was never a passive victim; he fought hard, but always alone. And it is when he understands the power of community and is able to reach out, that he will get his best victory.

Ultimately the powerful stature of Lassgård-Ove dominates the movie. The actor is a stage artist who played Brecht and Shakespeare. His finely nuanced portrayal of Ove makes the movie all the more believable and endearing.

The movie is based on the New-York best selling book “A Man Called Ove” by Fredrik Backman. It is the Swedish selection for this year’s foreign language Oscar race, and it is one of the best-rated films on the internet site Rotten Tomatoes. It was released last year in Sweden where it was a blockbuster. The showing at the Orinda Theater for a week starting Nov. 4 is a Contra Costa premiere. Go to [Lamorindatheatres.com](http://Lamorindatheatres.com) for show time and tickets.



# 'Paper Airplane Guy' Soars Through Unique STEAM Demo at LL&LC

By Cathy Dausman



John Collins prepares his paper airplanes for flight. Photo Cathy Dausman



Photo Cathy Dausman

Imagine sitting in a lecture and actually being encouraged to fly paper airplanes.

That's what happened during John Collins' recent Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math-

ematics (STEAM) presentation at Lafayette Library and Learning Center. When it comes to paper airplanes, Collins, a.k.a. the Paper Airplane Guy, folds a dose of origami and a healthy swoosh of aero-

dynamics into every paper airplane design and presentation. The graceful arc of his gliders contrasted with his rapid-fire delivery on just how to fold the perfect plane.

He didn't waste precious time building the planes — he gets them flying. "He came in an hour ahead of the presentation to test the room's air conditioning for drafts," said LLLC youth services librarian Dena Hollowood, who marveled at Collins' ability to coax a fist-sized paper glider to fly completely around the room by holding a book inches beneath its wings.

It was difficult to tell just who had more fun at the demo — the school-aged children who couldn't wait to fly their sometimes unfinished folded planes, or the fleet of parents determined to follow the directions and master the art of folding better and faster.

Four years ago Collins tapped former Cal football player Joe Ayooob for his throwing arm; Ayooob helped Collins set a Guinness world record for distance throwing (226 feet, 10 inches) on a paper airplane Collins designed.

Collins says he'll offer a \$1,000 reward to anyone who breaks his record using his airplane design. Naturally, the presentation ended in a flurry of paper airplanes — the first volley released by Collins and second by the audience, big and little, who launched their planes in a friendly all-out aeronautical dog-fight.

Aviation fans who missed Collins' presentation can still learn about the magic of paper airplane design by going online to [www.thepaperairplane.com/](http://www.thepaperairplane.com/). For more STEAM events at LLLC, visit [www.lafayette.lib.org/program-category/science-technology/](http://www.lafayette.lib.org/program-category/science-technology/).

## In Memory

### Edward Robert Smith

Edward Robert "Ted" Smith, formerly of Orinda, passed away after a long illness on Sept. 25 at his home in Nevada City.

He was born October 25, 1937, in Oakland, California, the only child of Edward Raymond and Audrey Ella Lee Smith, and spent his early years in San Leandro. His family then moved to Santa Rosa where he graduated from high school and junior college. In 1960 he received a BS degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Colorado and started his manufacturing career at Republic Steel in Cleveland, Ohio. Wanting to return to California, he took a job with Bethlehem Steel at its Pinole plant in 1966. This facility became Marwais Pinole Point Steel where Ted retired as general manager in 1987.

As the son of a Brown Shoe sales representative, Ted often spent summers with his parents driving through the small towns of Northern California and Nevada. These car trips fostered his love of traveling on country back roads. Throughout his life, enjoying the journey was always his goal rather than arriving at a destination.

Following his retirement, Ted pursued diverse

interests including travel abroad, California history and water issues. He volunteered with Friends of the San Francisco Estuary for over 25 years, serving for a time as president. He was an avid reader of several newspapers, his latest book selection, the Economist and the Atlantic Monthly.

Ted will be dearly missed and long remembered for his gentle spirit, dry sense of humor, love of intellectual debate, scientific curiosity, maintenance of statistics, keen interest in economics and non-judgmental attitude.

He is survived by his wife Susan Wiesner, son Edward Mark Smith and his wife Anne, daughter Kirsten Towne Smith, grandsons Edward Raymond Smith and Robert Alexander Smith, and former wife and mother of his children Winifred Clegg Smith.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Santa Rosa High School Foundation (P.O. Box 11006, Santa Rosa, CA 95406), Friends of the San Francisco Estuary (P.O. Box 791, Oakland, CA 94604) or the East Bay Regional Park Foundation (P.O. Box 21074, Crestmont Station, Oakland, CA 94620).

## In Memory

### Dwight Thomas Swobe

Dwight Thomas Swobe, 73, of Berkeley, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Sept. 30 after a long battle with cancer.

Dwight was born in Berkeley on September 19, 1943, to Thomas Wallace Swobe and Ardath Busby Swobe. He graduated from Oakland Technical High School and earned a Bachelor degree in business administration from UC Berkeley. Known for his strong work ethic and gregarious personality, Dwight became a highly successful senior representative of Grubb & Ellis, commercial real estate division. He specialized in industrial real estate and received many awards for his outstanding performance.

In 1970, he moved his young family to Lafayette, where he spent much of his adult life devoted to providing a good life for his children. Dwight loved to sing and play the trumpet. He was quite proud of the jazz band he created, the East Bay Bear Cats, which played

together for many years. He was a loyal fan of the Cal Bears. Dwight also loved golf and loved to sail. He once sailed down the coast of California with his sons. Dwight Swobe was a successful, talented, brave, kind, and loving man.

He is survived by Gloria Gee, his loving companion of 21 years, and by his four sons and five grandchildren: Gordon Swobe; Scott Swobe and his wife Keri and their children Tyler, Breanna, and Caydon; Jason Swobe and his devoted girlfriend Timie; Mitchell Swobe and his wife Darby and their children Dylan and Colin; by his sister Connie Got and her husband Randy and their children; and by the son of his late sister Ardie Lynn Swobe.

A memorial will be held at 1 p.m. at Sunset View Cemetery in El Cerrito on Saturday, Nov. 26. For more information, please go to [www.sunsetviewcemetery.com](http://www.sunsetviewcemetery.com).

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## Help Make Cinch Bags for Needy Men and Women

Submitted by Maram Bata



Photo provided

Twelve women of the Interfaith Women Circle 2, as part of Neighbor to Neighbor initiative of the Contra Costa Interfaith Council, wanted to do a small positive thing to offset some of the negative aspects in the world around them. So they decided to make purses for women without homes.

The women brought 12 items and they assembled them into purses and handed them off to women without homes in the streets to let them know they cared.

Then some of the women advertised at their work and on Nextdoor.com, and they received generous donations that filled 90 purses, which they gave to Trinity Center and women without homes living in Oakland.

They were inspired by the overwhelming positive response from the community and the generous donations. From the input from the shelters they found out that there is a need for men bags too and women do not prefer purses so they decided light draw string (cinch) bags will be great for both this year. The women also learned that the preferred word is not homeless, it is person without a home or person in transition, to give hope it is just a phase in their life.

The women will be making the cinch bags from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6 at the Walnut Creek Islamic Center, 2449 Buena Vista Ave., Walnut Creek. The cinch bags will be distributed to men and women without homes throughout Contra Costa and Alameda Counties.

The Interfaith Women Circle 2 is asking to spread the word to employers, friends and faith communities.

### How to Help:

Bring your donated items (and a friend!) and join the fun in assembling cinch bags.

OR drop the items at 1 Kenmore Ct, Orinda or at Coldwell Banker, 5 Moraga Way, Orinda.

Items to Donate: Cinch bags, tooth brushes and toothpaste, hand/boot warmers, panchos, deodorant, travel-size lotion, sunscreen, disposable razors and shaving cream, flash lights and batteries, gloves, socks, warm hats and scarves, tee-shirts, feminine sanitary products, wipes/hand sanitizer (travel size), uplifting notes, soap, shampoo (travel size), nutritional bars, nuts, raisins, gum, leftover Halloween candy, Band-aids, lipstick/lip balm.

## Moms go Viral – Sort of — With Karpool Karaoke for Hillary

Submitted by Mimi Bommarito



Photo provided

The Karpool Karaoke for Hillary gang.

One look at this Carpool Karaoke for Hillary video tells you two things: 1. This is not done by professionals, and 2. These women are having fun.

The two versions of the "Karpool Karaoke" video were posted on Facebook after the second presidential debate on Sunday, Oct. 9, and the positive response has been overwhelming. As of today, the two versions have a combined 25,000 hits, which is not all that much by Facebook standards, but still significant.

"We just couldn't NOT do this," said writer Mimi Bommarito of Orinda. She and fellow collaborator Leslie Darwin O'Brien (driver's seat, next to Mimi) have written and

performed humorous Meadow Moms' Skit Nights for the last eight years, much to their offspring's mortification, at Meadow Swim and Tennis Club, during OMPA spirit week. "This is an election where we just can't keep quiet and hope everything will work out for the best," she added.

Other Orindans in for the joy ride are (front seat, passenger side) Melissa Matoesian Taylor, (back seat, left to right) Betsy Shandalov, Nicole Radlow (who was also part of Leslie and Mimi's infamous "Jiggle Butt Rock" holiday video on YouTube) and Julia Stenzel.

For more information, contact Mimi Bommarito at 925-818-7068.

## Lafayette Rotary Club is Giving Back

Submitted by Matt Pease

The Lafayette Rotary Club celebrated its support for school music and performing arts programs in the Lafayette and Oakland areas with the proceeds from its 22nd annual Concert at the Res.

Participating schools in this year's concert included Acalanes High School, Stanley Intermediate, Bentley, and Oakland's Westlake Middle School.

Also participating were the Rossmoor Big Band featuring musicians age 14 to 92, the Lamorinda Theatre Academy, Dominant 7 Jazz ensemble and the Town Hall Troupe.

The Lafayette Rotary supports local school bands and performing arts organizations and provides a venue for them to perform on the beautiful Lafayette Reservoir stage.

Proceeds and donations from individuals and local businesses for the event are used to support these school music and performing arts programs. The concerts are free to the community and are produced with the volun-

teer efforts of many of the Lafayette Rotary Club members.

"We have been delighted to support these programs for many years and we have seen how the Concert at the Res program has become such an important event for these programs and an enjoyable experience for the Lamorinda communities" said Rotarian Dick Holt, who conceived of such a concert to be held at the Lafayette Reservoir 23 years ago and has been assisted in this annual production by his fellow Rotarians.

"The goal of Rotary is Service above Self and the Concert at the Res and the community stage are great examples of the impact Rotary can make in the community" said Norma Evans, president of the Lafayette Rotary Club. The Lafayette Rotary Club meets weekly at Oakwood Athletic Club from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. on Thursdays and first-time visitors are invited to join for lunch. For more information contact Lafayette Rotary at info@rotarylafayette.org.

## Lions and Leos Help See the Good

Submitted by Robert Murtagh



From left, Ray Cassabonne, Moraga Lions Club President; Brigitte Marinier, Vice president Campolindo Leo Club; Carl Langhorst, Lions in Sight Coordinator; Morgan Scaln, President, Campolindo Leo Club; Lion Bob Murtagh, Leo Club Advisor. Photo provided

On Oct. 16, Moraga Lions and Campolindo Leo's met at the Station 42 firehouse to sort and clean approximately 2,500 donated used eyeglasses. This is the 12th year that the two Moraga services clubs have undertaken this important mission of Lions International.

Once cleaned and sorted the eyeglasses will be sent to the next process of determining the prescription. After that, they are

ready for distribution to the needy in developing countries. The Lions Clubs in Northern California hope to have a shipment of 50,000 used eyeglasses ready for shipment to El Salvador in March.

Eyeglass collection sites in Moraga are located at 5A Storage, Hacienda de las Flores, and Mechanic's Bank (Safeway). To learn more about Lions and Leo's, contact Bob Murtagh, 925 283 1841.

## Teens Take a Visit to Mad City Money

Submitted by Jocelyn Coolbaugh



Lamorinda and Walnut Creek Teens learn about money the fun way. Photo provided

The Acalanes Area and Walnut Creek chapters of National Charity League, Inc. recently sponsored an event called Mad City Money. They partnered with Travis Credit Union to teach basic skills of personal finance to teens in a fun, safe and hands-on simulation.

Each participant was given a career, monthly salary and family situation. They learned about credit scores, how to write and balance a checkbook, with the goal of being able to balance a monthly budget of life essentials. The "catch" was as they visited these life essential booths, such as food, clothing, transportation, travel and mall purchases, volunteers were trying to up-sell them things— just like adults have to face every day with ads, salespeople and promotions.

In the end, when some teens were asked what they learned, the consensus was "live within your means." We could all learn from that!

## Orinda Veterans Remember Okinawa

Submitted by Tom Gardner



From left, veterans Bill Cooper and Bob Maynard will be raising money for veterans organizations this year. Photo provided

The imminent release of the film "Hacksaw Ridge" will portray the 1945 Battle of Okinawa unlike any movie since World War II. A pair of longtime Orindans remember it very well as they witnessed it as teenagers.

Former Marine Bob Maynard was drafted in 1943 and served as a radio crew chief. Bill Cooper, a decades-long Scoutmaster of BSA Troop 237, was drafted into the Army in 1943. He served as a Combat Infantryman in several major Pacific battles, including being on the next ridge over from Hacksaw

Ridge during that battle. For the past seven years, they have been raising funds for local veteran's charities as part of the VFW Buddy Poppy effort.

In honor of Veterans Day, they'll occupy a corner of the Bank of America building in Orinda Village for an effort benefiting Lamorinda VFW Post 8063, from 9 a.m. until noon, on Thursday Nov. 3 and Friday, Nov. 4. Proceeds benefit the Palo Alto Polytrauma Clinic, the Concord Vet Center, and many other veteran's charities.



From left: Bob Athayde, Randy Porter, Ken Berman, Dick Holt, Judy Haxo, Ginny Wehrmeister, Rena Wilson, Maurice Levich and Dennis Garrison. Photo Andy Scheck



# Award-winning Local Poet, Playwright and Screenwriter to Perform at SMC

By A.K. Carroll



Chinaka Hodge

Photo provided

When Chinaka Hodge was a freshman at Berkeley High, it's unlikely that the young writer imagined she would one day be featured as a notable alumnus. Yet today her face is plastered on one of the bright blue utility boxes outside the school, with a simple tribute that states: Chinaka Hodge, class of 2002, started writing and performing poems as an awkward, pimply BHS freshman, and art-making saved her life. She is a playwright, poet and performer. She shares the box with Lonely Island and Joshua Redman, fellow alums and BHS notables.

It was that box that first drew the attention of Rosemary Graham, professor of English and creative writing at Saint Mary's College of California. When Hodge's first book, "Dated Emcees," launched this past spring, she was a featured guest on KQED. Graham heard the program and from that point on, she was determined to get Hodge as a speaker at Saint Mary's.

Thursday, Nov. 10, her hope will be realized as Hodge will come to Saint Mary's for a special public performance and speaking engagement. The event is sponsored by a broad coalition of programs within school of liberal arts and is open to the public. It will take place in the Le Fevre Theater starting at 7:30 pm. Hodge will kick off the evening with selections from "Dated: Emcees" and will finish with a time for Q&A.

It isn't just Hodge's local roots and artistic talent that make her such a prime voice to feature at the college—she received the Phelan Literary Award for emerging Bay Area talent, was a Sundance Feature Film lab Fellow for her script "700th&Int'l," was Artist in Residence at The Headlands Center for the Arts and has been featured twice on HBO's "Def Poetry" — but also her passion for youth and literary arts education.

"Helping young people find their voices is her educational mission," said Graham.

Hodge herself began writing as a very young child. "My father was an educator and had a bunch of rules about what could happen when we got home from school," said Hodge. One of those rules involved Hodge and her siblings writing alongside their father.

"I started with short stories and quickly realized that poems are shorter, so I started writing poems," said Hodge. That was at age six.

By the time Hodge got to high school, writing was second nature. As a freshman at Berkeley High she was an early participant in Youth Speaks/The Living Word Project, a leading literary arts non-profit that was only just starting out. Hodge's participation came at a teacher rec-

ommendation.

"They asked us all to free write and I free wrote something," said Hodge. "They asked if I wanted to share and my hand shot up. I was the first person to go to the front of the classroom. I shared my poem and I've been hooked ever since."

At the time, Youth Speaks was the only place in the country that was sponsoring poetry slams for someone of Hodge's age. "I just fell right in with those folks," said Hodge. "Intensive writing workshops after school, slams, open mics, bridging literature and poetry — sort of all that was my jive in high school."

Hodge's passion for working with words and with youth have been constants in her life. After graduating from Berkeley High, she went on to finish a degree at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study in New York with a focus on creative writing, non-profit strategy and hip hop, and a goal of gaining tools she could bring back to Youth Speaks and other nonprofits in the Bay Area.

"I took a full gamut of the offerings available to me, but I've ap-

plied almost all of it," said Hodge. "Even jewelry making."

Hodge has worked with Youth Speaks/The Living Word Project for over 15 years, and has served as Program Director and Associate Artistic Director, as well as working directly with Youth Speaks' core population as a teaching artist and poet mentor.

"Now I'd say I'm more of a consultant," said Hodge. "I work with them on a couple of initiatives, always from a loving place. I love to engage with young people, it's my favorite aspect."

Hodge also writes plays for youth that range in subject matter and genre.

"I write a bunch of children's theater," said Hodge. "Some of my favorite stories or fairytales have made it into the plays, but I also write what is salient to the moment, so there's mentions of Black Lives Matter and conversations about equitable playing fields. I'd like to think that no subject matter is too far out of my reach. That's my job as a writer — to make all subject matter feel closer to the reader."

Hodge will offer a public performance at Saint Mary's Le Fevre Theatre from 7:30-8:30 pm on Thursday, Nov.10. The event is sponsored by the English Department, the Roy E. and Patricia Disney Forum, the Communication Department, Catholic Institute for Lasalian Social Action (CILSA), Intercultural Center, Theatre Program, World Languages and Cultures, MFA in Creative Writing, Women's Resource Center, and the Committee on Inclusive Excellence.



Photo A.K. Carroll



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## Gold Star Families Star at Town Hall Theatre

... continued from page B4

These people taught us by thought, word and deed how to be one in service to others. They brought the ability to directly affect the cause, to jump right in, because the moment always passes. Were you a participant in the moment, or simply a bystander? Did you elevate the cause or did you let it pass? This is your life, it is not a dress rehearsal."

He continues, "We have the platform, we have the know-how, and as one of the mainstays of the

community we feel it is our duty to acknowledge and honor Jake, his family, and the other Gold Star Families affected by this loss. We want them to know we care, and we want to bring our supportive music fan base in to help us show that."

Those interested in being part of this special community event can get tickets at the Town Hall Theater website www.townhalltheatre.com. Doors will open at 6:30p.m. for the event which begins at 7:30p.m., Sat. Nov. 5. Blue Star Moms will

be in attendance and Gold Star Families will be honored in a moving and heartwarming tribute, he says. Vega will speak and there will be a short presentation.

"We will create a very special little community within the walls of Town Hall on Nov. 5," says Stack, "with healing energy and the power of love, coupled with some very beautiful music. We will sing together. I happen to think we need more of that, everywhere, right now."





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## Not to be missed

### ART

**Valley Art Gallery announces their new show Portfolio 16F.** Fall means color, and their new fall collection features 300 new works of art as colorful as fall in the Diablo Valley. From abstracts to landscapes to watercolors, the new collection includes works from the best East Bay artists, for sale or rent. The show will continue through Nov. 12. 1661 Botelho Dr # 110, Walnut Creek, www.valley-artgallery.org.

**The Bedford Gallery brings together the best of the Bay Area** crafters and artisans for the ninth annual Bg Craft Fest Nov. 5 and 6, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. This curated festival is a celebration of handmade gifts, featuring an array of unique items from jewelry to home goods. This year includes a new feature – hands-on workshops in block printing on fabric, hand lettering, and making seasonal wreaths and festive felt garlands. www.bedfordgallery.org

**Saint Mary's College Museum of Art presents Social Justice, It Happens to One It Happens To All,** showcasing 43 artists on the themes of social justice that examines timely subject matter being debated during this election year. These artworks can say what words cannot and are the catalyst to empower social change. Through Dec. 11. www.stmarys-ca.edu/saintmarys-college-museum-of-art.

**The 10th annual Artisan Faire will be held from 4 to 7:30 p.m.** in Orinda on Nov. 3 at the Orinda Country Club. Meet talented local artists, displaying and selling their distinctive work in jewelry, ceramics, painting, glass, fiber art, clothing, woodwork and more. Also featured will be culinary products, cosmetics, bath and body items as well as Orinda's Sanvitalia Home and Garden Shop, Orinda Books, and several local authors. Come for a festive evening and enjoy free wine and tequila tasting.

**Moraga Art Gallery's new exhibit Beauty Near and Far** features oil landscapes by Walnut Creek artist Kerima Swain, whose vibrant colors and sun-dappled landscapes transport viewers to sites around the world, from Saint Mary's College and the Golden Gate to the Greek isle of Hydra and beyond. Also featured is a boldly-hued collection of pit and saggar-fired ceramics by guest artist Lesley Jensen. The show, which includes a wide variety of work by the gallery's 15 member artists and several guest artists, runs through Jan. 7. For more information, visit www.moragaartgallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.

### MUSIC

**The fourth annual Teen Battle of the Bands** will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5 at the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library & Learning Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. The five chosen bands will have 10-15 minutes to perform their set.

**Begin your holidays in style as Diablo Ballet presents** the opening program of its 2016-2017 season with "A Swingin' Holiday and More," which performs Nov. 11 to 13 at the Del Valle Theatre, 1963 Tice Valley Blvd. in Walnut Creek. Following each performance, ticket holders are invited to meet and mingle with the costumed dancers at a post-performance reception. Tickets are \$27-47. Call (925) 943-SHOW (7469) or visit www.lesherartscenter.org or www.diabloballet.org.

**Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble, directed by Dr. Anne K. Hege,** celebrates its 25th anniversary by presenting "Voci Playlist," a selection of favorite repertoire chosen by Voci singers, past directors and accompanists. The concert will be

at 4 p.m. on Nov. 20 at St. Perpetua Catholic Church, 3454 Hamlin Road, Lafayette. Tickets: \$25 suggested donation at the door, \$20 advance, \$15 students, FREE for children between 6 and 12. Available at the door or online at www.vocisings.org  
Information: (510) 531-8714.

**Handel's Messiah remains the most well-known oratorio** ever written and will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 3 at the Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church and 4 p.m. on Dec. 4 at the First Presbyterian Church of Oakland. Cantare's Chorale and Ensemble will join with outstanding soloists and full orchestra to present this masterwork. Experience the beauty and majesty that has allowed it to remain as popular today as it was 275 years ago. Tickets: \$40 General and \$35 Senior. For groups of 8 or more, tickets are just \$30 per person. Purchase tickets online at www.cantareconvivo.org or call (510) 836-0789.

### THEATER/DANCE

**DVC Drama opens its 2016-17 season with the smash musical hit "Hairspray."** The show runs through Nov. 6. Shows are at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or go to the website at www.dvcdrama.net. DVC Drama is located at 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill, with free parking for all performances.

**Acalanes High School Drama Dons presents D.W. Gregory's "Radium Girls."** Filled with radiant paint, corporate intrigue and Madame Curie, it is based on the true story of the employees of the U.S. Radium Corporation and the landmark case that would influence change for workers' rights. The show is at 7 p.m. Nov. 2 through 5 at Acalanes High School's Little Theater, 1200 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lafayette. Tickets: AHSPerformingArts.org.

**Role Players Ensemble presents Woody Allen's cold war era comedy "Don't Drink the Water,"** through Nov. 12 at the Village Theatre, 233 Front St., Danville. Tickets: \$20-28, available online at www.RolePlayersEnsemble.com; at Danville Community Center, 420 Front St, Danville; or by calling (925) 314-3400.

**Kaleidoscope, a shared showcase of dance** choreographed, performed and produced by the undergraduate and graduate students of the Saint Mary's College dance program. will be presented at 8 p.m. Thursday Nov. 17 and Friday, Nov. 18 as well as 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19 at LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. The performance features diverse new works exploring themes of identity, gender expression, morality, social constructs and community. General Admission tickets are \$5 –available at box office prior to the show or online at www.stmarys-ca.edu/kaleidoscope-dance-performance.

### LECTURE & LITERATURE

**Saint Mary's College of California will be hosting** an event at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 10 in LeFevre Theatre (on the Saint Mary's Campus). Award winning, poet, playwright, screenwriter, and educator Chinaka Hodge is coming to Saint Mary's College for a special public performance. (See story page B7)

### KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

**Lamorinda Moms' 19th Annual Preschool Fair** is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 10 at Oakwood Athletic Club, Lafayette. Gather preschool information from over 40 local preschools at one time, in one place. For more information go to www.lamorindamoms.org/activities/preschool\_fair.

### OTHER

**Burton Valley Elementary PTA is hosting their annual Blood & Bone Marrow Drive** from 8:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., Friday Nov. 4, 561 Merriewood Dr, Lafayette. To schedule your appointment or for more information visit red-crossblood.org

**Lafayette Juniors 23rd Annual Rummage Sale** is from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5. Special Early Bird Entrance fee \$5 per adult from 7 a.m.–8 a.m. Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. Pre-loved designer clothes, baby and kid clothes, toys, children's gear, furniture, household goods and much more. Visit www.lafayettejuniors.org.

**The Orinda Association (OA) will host a community forum on Public Safety** from 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday Nov. 9, in the Orinda Library Auditorium located at 26 Orinda Way. Orinda Police Chief Mark Nagel will present an update on crime prevention in the City and will speak about ways citizens can increase their personal safety. Citizens with related questions can email them in advance to the Orinda Association office (oa@orindaassociation.org) and they will be forwarded to the speakers in advance.

**Join the Lamorinda Democratic Club at 7 p.m.** on Nov. 10 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center to celebrate the hard work, victories of candidates and issues, and the end of the election. Post-election analysis will be provided by Alex Evans and Rebecca Barrett. Refreshments will be served. \$5.00 donation requested for non-members.

**The American Association of University Women** have Catharine B. Baker as their keynote speaker at 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 15 in the Orinda Community Church Hall, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Assemblywoman Baker will discuss how the AAUW Fund impacts the lives of women and girls throughout the world through education, research, advocacy and philanthropy. You'll also be able to enjoy Marketplace, your once-a-year chance to see handcrafted creations by local members and get an early start on holiday shopping. oml-ca.aauw.net.

**"Many Faces of Lung Cancer" is an educational event** focusing on the unique issues of lung cancer patients from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Nov. 17 in the Lafayette Library, Community Room. Join an engaging panel of medical experts as they cover the most current information regarding screening recommendations, genomic testing, immunotherapy, targeted therapy, radiation therapy and surgical techniques. Q & A session to follow presentation. RSVP by calling (925) 677-5041 x272.

**The 37th Annual Community Thanksgiving Breakfast** will be held from 7 to 8:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 18 at Lafayette United Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Rd. in Lafayette. Dick Callahan, keynote speaker, will present "Are You enjoying your Journey?" Catered breakfast provided by Lantern Catering. Music provided by Harpist Wendy Tamis. Reservations can be made by calling the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce at (925) 284-7404 or by online at www.lafayettechamber.org. Cost is \$20 per person.

... continued on next page

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



**MOVIE REVIEW**

*Film Clips*

**Stand Up Comedy Comes to Orinda**

By Derek Zemrak



Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) and Sienna (Felicity Jones) run for their lives through Boboli Gardens in Columbia Pictures' "Inferno." © 2016 CTMG, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Jeff Richards

Lamorinda Theatres will be having a live stand-up comedy series beginning at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 17. Walnut Creek native and "Saturday Night Live" alumni Jeff Richards will headline the first show. Richards is best known for being a cast member of both "SNL" and "Mad TV." He was the first individual to be a regular on both comedy shows.

In addition to his famous "Drunk Girl" character, Richards has a vast repertoire of impressions, including Kevin Spacey, Dustin Hoffman and Bill O'Reilly. He has appeared on "Late Night with Conan O'Brian" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live" and he recently appeared on Netflix's "Real Rob" with Rob Schneider, VH1's "Hit The Floor" and "Aqua Teen Hunger Force."

Richards was born in Walnut Creek and attended Las Lomas High School where he created and hosted his own public access sketch comedy show called Hanson Live. Find out more about Richards and his amazing career at [www.tastyjeff.com](http://www.tastyjeff.com)

The comedy evening will feature three lo-

cal Bay Area comic favorites: Suzy Vincent, Ira Summer and Griffin Daley. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the Orinda Theatre box office or online at [www.lamorindatheatres.com](http://www.lamorindatheatres.com).

The next comedy show at Orinda will be Jan. 19 – Elect to Laugh: 2016 with Will Durst. Yes, the day before the 2017 Inauguration, legendary comedian and political satirist Will Durst will be performing this brand new hysterical one-man show at the historic Orinda Theatre.

**'Inferno' Now Burining at the Orinda Theatre**

Tom Hanks reprises the role of Robert Langdon, the world-famous seismologist. In "Inferno" he wakes up in a hospital in Italy, with amnesia and teams up with Dr. Sienna Brook (Oscar nominee Felicity Jones from "The Theory of Everything") to follow a trail of clues across Europe that are tied to Dante, the great medieval poet. Along the way they learn a virus could be released that would wipe out half the world's population.

"Inferno" is the third movie based on the novels by thriller fiction author Dan Brown. The first movie was "The Da Vinci Code" (2006) followed by "Angels & Demons" (2009). All three movies have been directed by two-time Oscar recipient Ron Howard ("A Beautiful Mind"). Howard takes the audience on a stunning adventure throughout Europe that results in an entertaining, thrilling journey. Inferno is a movie that will make you think as you struggle to determine the missing pieces of the puzzle.

The film is rated PG-13 and has a total running time (TRT) of 2 hours and one minute.

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11 am - 7 pm

Saturday, Nov. 12  
9 am - 5pm

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NOVEMBER 12 - 2:00 & 8:00 PM

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Lauren Jonas, Artistic Director

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Information: 925.943.1775 / [diabloballet.org](http://diabloballet.org)

**Service Clubs Announcements**



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

November 4

**SHARK TANK in Lafayette!?**

November 11

**Annual 4-Way Speech Contest**

Winning Trailer naming contest at Lafayette Art & Wine... "Teardrop Inn"... Close seconds were "Roadhouse" and "Sunset Chaser". Lottery ticket prizes were dutifully distributed.

**Lafayette Rotary Club**

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

**November 3:**  
**Tom Leatherman** of the National Park Service, The National Parks in CCC, part of the 100 anniversary of The National Parks

**November 10:**  
**Dylan Bondy** will be speaking on Ugly Produce...Why we should utilize imperfect produce.

[www.rotarylafayette.org](http://www.rotarylafayette.org)  
[www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca-197392963631366](https://www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca-197392963631366)

**Not to be missed**

**OTHER ... continued**

**Jazz, Swing, Dance, Sing** — the first gala event for Let the Children Live! Join us from 7 to 10 p.m. on Saturday Nov. 19 at Hacienda de las Flores for delectable wine, appetizers and desserts. Entertainment by Bentley High School Jazz Band and Arthur Murray dancers. Special presentation by Fr. Peter Walters. The proceeds raised from this event go to serve children who are displaced by the drug trade and live in fear and poverty in Medellin, Colombia. Admission is free but an RSVP to [mscheving@yahoo.com](mailto:mscheving@yahoo.com) is required.

For the 19th year, **Bobbie and Tom Preston** will be holding the Cycle Recycle, collecting repairable bikes to be refurbished and given to charitable groups to distribute at Christmas. New and/or used bikes and trikes — in working order or repairable, or useable bike parts, may be delivered to the side driveway of the Preston's home at 1307 Larch Avenue in Moraga throughout the month of November only. No skateboards or plastic bikes please; no need to call beforehand, but for more information contact Bobbie or Tom Preston at (925) 376-8474.

**SENIORS**

**"Building Your Own Safety Net."** Do you want to "age in place"? Will you need long term care? What is aging in place and what is long-term care? Who pays for it

**Not to be missed**

**GARDEN**

**Lafayette Garden Club** is excited to present "You Can Garden for Life." Our presenter is Toni Garonne, gardener and educator. Toni educates gardeners on how to modify their gardens, adapt their tools, and rethink how and when they garden, enabling them to comfortably and safely garden for life, without pain, and with joy. The meeting will be held at the Lafayette Veteran's Building from 9:45 a.m. to noon on Nov. 10. 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Visitors are welcome! Please email Carolyn Poetzsch [cpoetzsch@gmail.com](mailto:cpoetzsch@gmail.com).

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club's** monthly meeting will be at 10 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 14 in the Camellia Room at Heather Farm located at 1540 Marchbanks Road, Walnut Creek. Hollie Homegrown owns a small organic family farm in Moraga where she grows herbs, vegetables and edible flowers. Business: 10 a.m., Social 10:30-11 a.m., Program 11 a.m.

**The Moraga Garden Club** monthly meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 17, at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Guest speaker will be Holly Forbes, curator of the UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens. The topic of her discussion will be "Plant Conservation Projects at Botanical Gardens." Interested parties are welcome to attend the 9:30 a.m. social hour

**Not to be missed**

and 10 a.m. meeting, as well as the presentation by Holly Forbes following the meeting.

**Montelindo Garden Club Meeting** will be at 9 a.m. on Friday Nov. 18, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Everyone welcome. Pre-

sentation: Sunset Western Garden Collection.

**Please submit events to:**  
[calendar@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:calendar@lamorindaweekly.com)

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Thoughtful Food

A Rich Spice Cake for a Feisty Election Party

By Susie Iventosch



Election Night Spice Cake.

Photo Susie Iventosch

This spice cake is just perfect for crisp autumn days as well as spicy (and tense) election parties! Actually, I'd never made a cake for election night, but someone tipped me off that it might be a fun idea. So, I took an old family recipe that my great aunt Clara used to make, and added apples, raisins and lots of extra spice for

a cornucopia of flavors.

If you plan to make it for a holiday gathering instead of election night, and I would not blame you; for that and given this year's fascinating election, you might want to double the recipe and make it a two-layer cake. It will feed twice as many people and would be attractive perched upon

a festive cake plate.

Should you decide to make it for the election and you don't have black in your food coloring repertoire, just mix blue and lots of red and a dash of green, then more red, and eventually you will come up with the black color for the letters. (That's how I did it!)

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.



Oatmeal Apple Spice Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

Cake (Makes one 8-inch round cake. Double recipe for a two-layer cake)

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup quick oats
1 cube butter, softened to room temp
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup boiling water
1 medium egg
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 tsp. nutmeg
1/4 tsp. cardamom
1/2 tsp. pumpkin spice
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
Pinch of salt
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 cup milk
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 Fuji or Honeycrisp apple, peeled, cored and cut into small pieces

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease or spray an 8-inch cake pan, and line bottom with parchment paper fit to bottom of pan. In a large mixing bowl combine oatmeal, butter and raisins. Pour boiling water over all and mix well. Cool slightly. Add eggs, brown sugar, granulated sugar, spices and vanilla. Stir to mix well. Stir in milk and then add flour, baking powder and baking soda. Stir to blend. Finally, fold in apples and turn cake batter out into prepared cake pan. Bake 25-30 minutes, or until center is done. Remove from oven and cool completely. When cooled, turn out onto serving plate and frost with cream cheese frosting. If doubling, be sure to frost in between cake layers.

Cream Cheese Frosting

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cube butter, softened to room temperature
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1-2 tsp. milk (use as needed)
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. Calvados or Pommeau de Normancy (apple brandy)
Food Coloring as needed for your occasion.

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl beat softened butter and cream cheese together with an electric mixer. Slowly add first two cups of powdered sugar and beat until thoroughly mixed. Add milk, vanilla and Calvados and beat well. Add additional powdered sugar and milk alternately until desired frosting consistency.

You can find most of the recipes published in the Lamorinda Weekly on our website. Click Food tab. www.lamorindaweekly.com/html2/food1.html

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Mother-Daughter Duo Make Tracks at Acalanes High

By John Miller



Windy Margerum

Photo Gint Federas

For coach Joy Upshaw and her daughter, Windy Margerum, the upcoming track season at Acalanes High School promises to be the fulfillment of a momentous run for the talented pair.

Windy, who enters her senior season at the Lafayette school, already holds the 100-meter hurdle record and is on the school's leader board in the long jump (17-feet, 5-inches), triple jump (33-feet, 10 1/2-inches) and both hurdle races.

Upshaw, a champion athlete in her own right, set records in the hurdles and sprints while a student at Acalanes ('79) and continues to excel in the USA Masters track and field events. Her most notable recent achievement is setting the Women's 55-59 age group record for the 60-meter hurdles this past spring during the USA Indoor Masters National Championship. In 2012, she was inducted into the Masters Track Hall of Fame.

Upshaw points out that her youngest daughter has seen and learned from countless sources: "She's been to a lot of elite practices as a young girl and watched many high performance athletes, and has traveled to both Helsinki and Beijing to watch her aunt (Grace Upshaw) in the World Championships and Olympics."

In fact, the story includes much more than a mother-daughter relationship on the track.

In addition to Joy's sister Grace (Acalanes '93) being a world-class long jumper, their father Monte Upshaw broke Jesse Owens national high school long jump record in 1954 (25-feet, 4 1/4-inches) and went on to Cal where he set a world record in a relay race, but an injured knee kept him out of the long jump.

Joy's other siblings include a brother Chip, who still is on the leader board at Acalanes ('81), and a sister Merry (Acalanes '91) who holds three records at Stanley Middle School. Their mother, Carol, was known for being the fastest sixth grader in her class in Fresno, but lack of track and field opportunities during that time steered her to swim team and aquacades.

The athletic pedigree is even richer for Upshaw's two daughters. Their father is Ken Margerum, a two-time consensus All-American receiver and Hall of Famer at Stanford and a former pro football player with Super Bowl Champion Chicago Bears in 1985.

Joy's oldest daughter, Sunny Margerum, earned a scholarship to Cal after a distinguished track and field career at Gunn High in Palo Alto, setting 300m and 100m hurdle records and was a top long jumper in the CCS.

Younger daughter Windy is much more than just a track fanat-

ic. She is active in many pursuits at Acalanes and in the city of Lafayette. Like her mother before her, she is involved in dance as well, while also playing principle cello in the school's orchestra. Windy is the head chair of the Lafayette Youth Commission — recently helping to run the city's Halloween program — and is the artistic director of the local Shakespeare for Kids program, which Joy's mother has run for the last 30 years.

Both Sunny and Windy assist with the Jack Rabbits Track Club, an organization founded by Coach Upshaw to develop young track enthusiasts around the Bay Area. They meet on Mondays in the East Bay. One group gathers at Glorietta Elementary after school, with two other groups meeting at 5 and 6 p.m. at Acalanes.

Asked how her daughters got the names Sunny and Windy, their mother just laughed and said, "I suppose it might have had something to do with a couple of songs in the Sixties. I just liked the names!"

In another nod to the season running in full circles, Upshaw is pleased to be reunited with long-time Campolindo coach Scott Brady-Smith. "In the summer of 1977, my brother and I went to the Cal Track Camp and Scott was one of the terrific coaches there. That next season, Acalanes was looking for a track coach and we really liked Scott from camp and recommended him; before we knew it he was our new Acalanes coach!" said Upshaw. "I'm excited to coach with Scott at Acalanes again, especially for Windy's senior year."

Coach Upshaw traveled to Perth, Australia to represent TEAM USA in the World Masters Track & Field Championships through Nov. 7. She will be racing in the 300m hurdles, 80m hurdles, long jump and relays.

Windy, meanwhile, is looking forward to a successful season after doing well in the league last year. She is now pondering her college choices. "I haven't decided just yet. There's big interest in Cal, but I've also looked at Arizona and Davis," she said. "I'm keeping it open, so far, and excited for this track season!"

For those who would like to follow Joy's accomplishments in Perth, go to [www.perth2016.com](http://www.perth2016.com). For information about the Jack Rabbits Track Club, contact [www.jackrabbitstrack.com](http://www.jackrabbitstrack.com).

## Campolindo Girls Volleyball Team Claims Diablo Athletic League Crown

By Karl Buscheck



Janelle Gong

Photo Gint Federas

With an unblemished 10-0 record in league play, the Campolindo girls' volleyball team won the inaugural DAL title.

Head coach John Vuong credited the Cougars cast of veterans for powering the squad to the top spot in the standings.

"The seniors have played the leadership role. Sabrina Smith is one of them. Janelle Gong and then Jamie Brown and Emily VanKoll," Vuong said of the

quartet of captains. "Those are the core seniors that really lead the team to where we are today."

Now the postseason and a slate of unfamiliar opponents await, as the Cougars will be playing in the NCS Division II bracket for the first time.

"It's win or go home," Vuong said. "So we have to make sure we are sharp and stay healthy throughout the postseason."

Campolindo closed out the league portion of the schedule by beating Miramonte, 3-0, in Orinda on Oct. 27. The Mats ended DAL action with a 7-3 record after winning seven of their final nine matches.

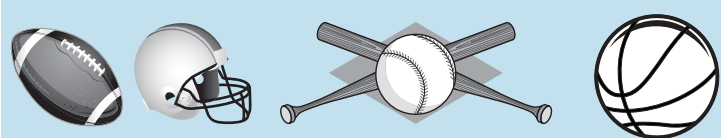
"Our team has a lot of fight in them," said head coach Lisa Bachtold, whose team was captained by a trio of seniors in Caroline Schafer, Blake Sharp and Layne Estes.

"We have been down a few times in matches and we find a way to win. We do not give up very easily and that has been the difference between a win and a loss a few times this year."

Miramonte and Acalanes (6-4 in DAL) will both take part in the NCS Division III playoffs. As is the case with the Mats, the Dons have leaned on their most experienced players to set the tone.

"Seniors Parker Jones, Melissa Elliott, Devin Grobeck and Alex Matson have come to practices and games to improve on their individual and team play," said head coach Ernie Rodriguez. "They have been great examples to the program in their leadership and work ethic."

## Youth Sports Registration



### Lamorinda Rugby Football Club



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## Campo Junior Varsity Girls Win Three Volleyball Tournaments

Submitted by May Lo



Back row, from left, Lily Storrs, Elizabeth Canon, Nina Naffziger, Lauren Kline, Emily Barlow, Madeleine Singh, Kelly Ruane, Sarah Carrasco. Front row, from left, coach Scott Tay, Jillian Yick, Bianca Chao, Cami Ingersoll, Arielle Allen, Dalilah Wiseman, Grace Huber (not in photo)

Campolindo's Junior Varsity volleyball was crowned tournament champions at the Sept. 24 Dougherty Valley JV Tournament, the Oct. 1 Campolindo JV Invitational and the Oct. 8 San Ramon Valley JV Tournament.

Campolindo's Junior Varsity volleyball was crowned tournament champions at the Sept. 24 Dougherty Valley JV Tournament, the Oct. 1 Campolindo JV Invitational and the Oct. 8 San Ramon Valley JV Tournament.

To date, Campo JV is undefeated in all league games.

Campo JV dominated and swept all three

## Joaquin Moraga Eighth Grade Volleyball Claims Championship

Submitted by Baldwin Lee



Front row, from left, Jacqueline Artiaga, Brianna Lee, Molly Mitchell, Natalie Brouhard. Back row, from left, Kate Deninger, Eric Standing, Nicole Kennedy, Laura Studebaker, Olivia Knutson, Julia Ortega, Justine Ellery, Erin Thomas, Debbie Standing, Scott Standing.

Photo Baldwin Lee

Riding the wave of an undefeated league season, the Joaquin Moraga eighth grade volleyball (8A) team won the week-long championship, after a hard-fought final match with Stanley on Oct. 27.

Brianna Lee was named the Tournament

MVP, and joining her on the All-Tournament Team were JM outside hitter Molly Mitchell and JM middle blocker Erin Thomas. The Marauders were led by head coach Scott Standing and assistant coaches Debbie and Eric Standing.

## St. Perpetua Girls Finish Third

Submitted by Jon Zuber



The sixth-grade St. P. third-place winners.

Photo provided

The sixth-grade girls American St. Perpetua Basketball Team began the new season with a third place finish in their open-

ing tournament. The girls displayed a tenacious press defense and some good passing and shooting on their way to a great finish.

## Orindan Wins Mount Diablo Challenge

Submitted by Morris Burch



Fraser Burch

Photo provided

Cyclist Fraser Burch won the Mount Diablo Challenge on Sunday, Sept. 25. This tough family-friendly 11.2-mile timed bike ride, starting at Athenian School in Danville and climbing up Southgate Road 3,249 feet

to the summit of Mount Diablo, gives all proceeds to Save Mount Diablo's land conservation efforts to preserve, defend and restore the natural lands and wildlife.

Submit stories to [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

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# Local Football Squads Ready to Close Out League Season as NCS Awaits

By Karl Buscheck



Vince Mossotti



Photos Gint Federas Robby Rowell

Undefeated since the middle of September, Campolindo is playing its best football of the fall as the league season reaches its final week.

Head coach Kevin Macy pointed to the team's fourth-quarter comeback against Miramonte on Oct. 14 as the turning point for the Cougars, who have navigated a flood of injuries.

"We could have just imploded right there," Macy admitted, as he recalled the 37-25 win. "With the weight that we've been carrying all year long, that was one of the points in the season where it would just make sense if we finally felt the weight of the year and just sort of crumbled under it."

"So, for us to be able to pull off a victory under those conditions, I think it may have been one of the bigger Miramonte victories we've had," Macy added.

After topping Acalanes 42-7 at home on Oct. 28, Campolindo (7-2 overall, 4-0 in league) has won seven of eight games, as just one DAL matchup remains when the team visits Clayton Valley on Nov. 4.

For the Cougars, senior quarterback Jacob Westphal has been the steadying force, airing out touchdowns to a stable of pass catchers. Senior Vince Mossotti leads the team in receptions, yards

and touchdowns, but Westphal has also relied heavily on junior John Torchio and senior Kannah Cruickshank. Then there's senior Matthew Rinquist.

"He's the smallest kid on the team," Macy said. "But he just seems to be one of those reliable kids that's just going to make the play that you need (and) spark the team."

While the Cougars have been bumped into the NCS Division II bracket – a result of the team's success in recent postseasons – Miramonte will be taking part in Division III playoffs. Both divisions begin the opening rounds of play on Nov. 11 and 12.

The Mats began the season 5-0 before dropping the first two games of the league season to Clayton Valley on back-to-back Fridays in the beginning of October. Head coach Jack Schram believes the early-league turbulence will ultimately benefit the Mats.

"We see where we made mistakes," said Schram, whose Mats own a 7-2 record (2-2 in DAL). "If we can get better, then we'll have a good chance to make a good run in the Division III playoffs. And some of that is because we play good teams like that in league."

Senior quarterback Tim Tague has been the star for the Mats,

throwing 30 touchdowns in nine games. For Tague, 11 of those touchdowns have been on connections with senior Nick Foster. Schram praised his offensive line for giving the signal-caller the time required to find all those open receivers.

"The line's done extremely well," Schram said. "Tim's scrambled a few times, but really as far as just getting out and not getting sacked, our line has done an exceptional job all year to protect Tim."

After edging Concord 42-34 at home on Oct. 28, the Mats close out the league schedule by making a trip to Acalanes on Nov. 4.

"This will be the most fun for not only me, but also all the kids," said Acalanes head coach Floyd Burnsed.

The Dons, who have posted an 4-5 record (1-3 in league) during Burnsed's first year in charge, lost the first of their back-to-back rivalry games against Campolindo on Oct. 28.

"I think the kids are doing well," Burnsed said. "We put in a new program this year and all new systems. The kids are adapting really well and I think we're playing pretty well."

No Dons have stood out more than junior quarterback Robby Rowell and senior linebacker Ster-



Nick Foster

ling Butler. "(Robbie's) been a steady leader all year and on defense Sterling has just been really steady for us and a very good leader for us," Burnsed said.

Like the Mats, the Dons are

set to participate in the NCS Division III postseason. They'll find out where that journey begins following the seeding meeting on Nov. 6.

"I think we will be in postseason," Burnsed said. "It's just a matter of where our seed would be."

## Acalanes and Miramonte Golf Teams Advance to NCS Championship

By Karl Buscheck



Photos Gint Federas

Tim Scott – the head coach of the Acalanes girls golf team – remembers the exact moment when he broke the news to his team that they were headed to the Division I NCS Championship.

"You should have seen the smile and the twinkle in their eye when I told them at our practice that I had applied for an at-large berth and we received one," Scott said, recalling the scene at the team's practice on the Rossmoor Golf Course.

The Dons, who went 3-5 in league play, made it to NCS – hosted at Chardonnay Golf Club in Napa on Oct. 31 – thanks in part to their third-place finish at the DAL Tournament.

Senior Emily Attiyeh won the league championship at Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburg on Oct. 17, shooting an even-par 72.

"All the girls on our team totally understand how good Emily is and they love her dearly," Scott said. "And she's a great team captain."

Attiyeh was one of two Dons who would have qualified for the NCS tournament as an individual. The other was Avalon Schenone – the team's future star.

"I wouldn't be a bit surprised if she – being a (junior) next year – would be the leader of our team," Scott said. "We've got several good sophomore players who she's best friends with and she's just going to sort of take over Emily's role."

Miramonte also earned an at-large berth for the NCS postseason after placing second in the DAL Tournament. Senior Tori James tied for second place at Delta View, while sophomore Gracie Guidotti finished in a tie for ninth.

"We were delighted to receive an at-large berth in the NCS Division I Girls Golf Championship, although we were not surprised by it," co-coach Bob Riddell explained after the team went 6-2 in the DAL – good for second in the standings.

The senior tandem of James and Franny Caronna both earned first-team all-league honors, while junior Tiffany Shinn played her way onto the second team. Riddell also offered praise for the Mats group of young rising golfers.

"Guidotti joined the team late in the year, due to a volleyball injury, but contributed mightily down the stretch," Riddell said. "And finally, our strong freshman class was lead by Katie Ingrey, Kaydee Tu and Kate Nelson."

Campolindo placed fourth at the DAL Tournament and two team

members – seniors Valerie Rockwell and Haleigh Goett – placed high enough in the field to advance to the Division II NCS Championship.

That tournament, which was played at Rooster Run Golf Course in Petaluma on Oct. 24, served as a individual qualifier for the Division I tournament the following week.

"They're both seniors and they're both second team DAL all-league selections based on how they did over the course of the season," head coach Gary O'Neill said of the duo, whose season ended at Rooster Run. "So, it was a very successful year from their perspective."

O'Neill also singled out senior Paris Thomas as one of the key contributors on a Cougars team that posted a 2-6 record in league action.

"One of our seniors this year that had a real breakthrough in terms of our scoring – matching her athletic ability – was Paris Thomas," O'Neill said. "She did very well in the DAL tournament and broke 100, which is not particularly easy under tournament conditions."

"She went out on a real high note."

While the seniors are graduating from the squad, the Campolindo team maintains an optimistic outlook for 2017 and beyond thanks to an influx of young talent this fall.

"More importantly we had five freshmen who joined our team this year and they had a significant amount of match experience, which will bode well for future years," O'Neill said.



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Sora O'Doherty



# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 18 Wednesday, November 2, 2016



November Gardening Guide

...read on page D9

## Montelindo Garden Club Enjoys the Bounty of our 'Founding Gardeners'

By Kara Navolio



Author Andrea Wulf signs book for club member Susan Dalcamo

Photo Kara Navolio

The Montelindo Garden Club hosted five-time author Andrea Wulf on Oct. 21 for a discussion of her 2011 book "Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature and the Shaping of the American Nation." The book, a winner of the American Horticulture Society Book Award, is a flawlessly researched book about the gardens and farms of George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and the interconnection between these men's love of nature and their political lives. In 2011 it reached 32 on the New York Times Best Seller List for Non-Fiction.

As Wulf says, "All four of these men believed that agriculture was the basis of the American economy and important for the country's independence from Europe." While all four were avid gardeners themselves and combined the useful with the beautiful at their estates, it was James Madison who was America's first environmentalist. Readers will likely be surprised to learn that American environmentalism has its roots in a speech Madison delivered in 1818 in which he condemns Americans for the destruction of the environment and deforestation.

... continued on page D4



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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	14	\$601,000	\$3,250,000
MORAGA	7	\$410,000	\$1,311,500
ORINDA	7	\$1,430,000	\$2,875,000

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

- 859 Acalanes Road, \$1,380,000, 3 Bdrms, 2495 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 10-6-16;  
Previous Sale: \$960,000, 12-30-11
- 17 Almaden Court, \$965,000, 3 Bdrms, 1690 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 10-7-16;  
Previous Sale: \$48,000, 07-12-72
- 3075 Camino Diablo #3, \$601,000, 2 Bdrms, 1253 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 9-27-16;  
Previous Sale: \$329,500, 01-20-10
- 320 Denise Lane, \$1,080,000, 4 Bdrms, 2319 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 10-4-16;  
Previous Sale: \$599,500, 06-20-01
- 1674 Foothill Park Circle, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2102 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 9-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$540,000, 09-21-00
- 1661 Glen Oak Court, \$859,000, 4 Bdrms, 2000 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 9-27-16
- 3111 Gloria Terrace, \$905,000, 4 Bdrms, 2390 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 9-27-16
- 521 McBride Drive, \$1,325,000, 4 Bdrms, 2017 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-7-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,225,000, 08-12-16
- 1003 Pine Lane, \$1,405,000, 4 Bdrms, 2516 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-4-16;  
Previous Sale: \$897,500, 05-21-03
- 3148 Sandalwood Court, \$1,870,000, 5 Bdrms, 3172 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-4-16
- 3369 South Lucille Lane, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 1518 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 10-7-16;  
Previous Sale: \$960,000, 09-28-05
- 3302 Stage Coach Drive, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 2961 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 9-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,220,000, 01-05-07
- 1049 Upper Happy Valley Road #B, \$3,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 4278 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-12-16
- 507 Winchester Court, \$1,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 3489 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 10-4-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,670,000, 08-14-07

### MORAGA

- 111 Ascot Court #A, \$410,000, 2 Bdrms, 1106 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 9-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$355,000, 03-14-14
- 368 Deerfield Drive, \$1,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2201 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 10-3-16;  
Previous Sale: \$554,000, 06-15-99
- 65 Miramonte Drive, \$570,000, 2 Bdrms, 1248 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-12-16
- 8 Ravenhill Lane, \$1,311,500, 5 Bdrms, 2385 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 9-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,267,000, 04-25-07
- 11 Ross Drive, \$1,205,000, 3 Bdrms, 1755 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 10-7-16;  
Previous Sale: \$955,000, 11-01-05
- 349 Tharp Drive, \$1,311,000, 4 Bdrms, 2470 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 9-28-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 05-30-13
- 116 Via Joaquin, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 2117 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 9-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$620,000, 12-10-14

### ORINDA

- 407 Camino Sobrante, \$2,875,000, 6 Bdrms, 5091 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 9-29-16
- 128 Diablo View Drive, \$1,769,000, 4 Bdrms, 4579 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-4-16;  
Previous Sale: \$922,500, 07-19-11
- 77 Oak Road, \$1,430,000, 4 Bdrms, 2480 SqFt, 2003 YrBlt, 10-6-16;  
Previous Sale: \$210,000, 05-04-99
- 91 Orchard Road, \$2,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 3355 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-4-16;  
Previous Sale: \$825,000, 07-28-00
- 12 Richard Court, \$1,450,000, 4 Bdrms, 2415 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 9-29-16
- 109 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$1,615,000, 4 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-12-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,000,000, 08-31-10
- 630 Tahos Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 3286 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 9-28-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 10-11-13



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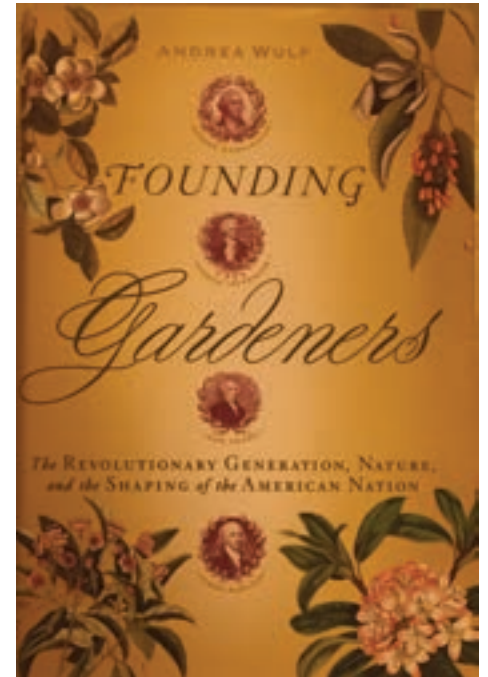
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Wulf's book, as well as her newly published "Invention of Nature," are available at Orinda Books.

The Montelindo Garden Club, whose mission is to support the love of gardening and nature by providing practical information about plants and to support civic gardening and conservation programs, meets on the third Friday of the month from September to May at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Orinda. Meetings start at 9 a.m. and are open to visitors.

"We are open to new members and welcome all who are interested," said club President Joan Reid. The club has 115 members, many from the Lamorinda area, but also from as far as Oakland and San Ramon.

The club often features guest speakers such as Wulf, hosts plant sales, garden tours, and participates in civic beautification. It's a place to learn more about gardening and nature topics as well as enjoy social activities. For more information, visit their website: [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).



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**Other Local Garden Clubs:**

Lafayette Garden Club  
Meets Second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m.  
Veteran's Memorial Bldg., Lafayette  
[www.lafayettegardenclub.com](http://www.lafayettegardenclub.com)

Moraga Garden Club  
Meets third Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m.  
Holy Trinity Cultural Center, Moraga  
[www.moragacitizensnetwork.org](http://www.moragacitizensnetwork.org)

Orinda Garden Club  
Meets third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m.  
Orinda Country Club  
[www.orindagc.org](http://www.orindagc.org)





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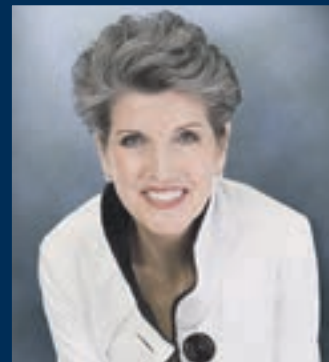
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## Feng Shui

# Bringing the Elements Inside This Season

By Michele Duffy



In my last column, I gave an overview of the Five Elements: Wood, Earth, Water, Fire and Metal, and the role they play in our lives and homes. Now we look at how each can balance out the other.

When we carefully overlay the Feng Shui Bagua map over our spaces based on the Front Entrance of the home and look into the home, we can figure out that Wealth/Abundance area rules far left Bagua area from the front entrance and Relationships rule the area to the far right.

So, for example, when a Lafayette client wanted to activate the Wealth area we discovered it was her master bedroom. She chose a lovely soft pale lavender for her walls to activate the wood element and to create a very zen feel for her bedroom, plus juicy romantic red satin pillows and a sumptuous gold bedspread. The overall design included a comfy nurturing area rug, a pair of bedside tables and 100-watt lamps, and a purple orchid to activate the wood element as well as romance. We can also incorporate the Water Element that creates Wood and minimize the Metal

Element, which controls Wood, for a thorough balance.

The intention was to create an abundantly nourishing, restful, calm, cozy and romantic retreat that addressed the actual function of the room (bedrooms are for sleeping and sensuality) as well as also activating the specific Wealth (Wood) area of the Bagua.

The actual application of each elemental "CURE" is very personalized based on each individual, the layout of the home, and the goal is to integrate the Five Elements of Feng Shui with the specific goals of each person so the desired results are achieved.

The 5 Feng Shui Elements (Chinese Elements)

In Feng Shui we also must have a working knowledge of the the "Controlling" or "Overcoming" cycle of the Five Elements, in the likely event we need to balance, calm and adjust what already exists in your home. Often, when we find imbalances we make the appropriate adjustments carefully and skillfully apply the Five Elements.

When we analyze an environment, we also apply the "Overcoming" or "Destructive" cycle of the Five Elements, since what we find may be out of balance and the easiest way to restore balance is application of the Five Elements. To understand the relationship of the controlling cycle, we must look more closely at the origin of the Five Element theory in China where the responsibility of disciplining the children rested with the grandparents. The metaphor of the controlling cycle describes the relationship of a grandmother disciplining a grandchild.

### Destructive Feng Shui Cycles

- Wood consumes earth (plants take nutrients)
- Earth dams water (earth stops water from flowing)
- Water extinguishes fire (water will kill fire)
- Fire melts metal (metal will melt and change form)
- Metal cuts wood (axes, etc.)

### A Review of The Cycles

Promoting	Controlling
wood promotes fire	wood controls earth
fire promotes earth	earth controls water
earth promotes metal	water controls fire
metal promotes water	fire controls metal
water promotes wood	metal controls wood

For example, an Orinda client had a large swimming pool (water element) in the Fame (Fire) area of the yard

(back middle). If you refer to the Destructive cycle, you will see that that Water extinguishes Fire and so the placement of a more permanent structure such as a pool, can be balanced out by introducing more fire element, but also Wood Element which weakens Water and produces or creates more Fire.

Fall is ruled by the Metal elements which is closely associated with the harvest and when we reap what we planted in the spring. The colors change brilliantly all around us, and the sky is at its bluest against the awesome leaves. The air is cooler and drier; and there seems to be more clarity of vision, both externally as well as spiritually. Autumn reminds us that flexibility and adaptability are crucial for staying healthy and balanced during the winter months ahead. During this time you will want to prepare for the challenges of winter by completing unfinished projects, clearing away clutter and debris, setting extra food and fuel aside, and making sure that you are physically and emotionally prepared for the cold, dark months to come.

How do we integrate and activate the Metal Element of Fall in our homes? The freshness, clarity and strong cooling energy of the Metal element can be expressed in colors white and gray, a variety of metallic finishes, in round shapes, as well as numerous decor items made from metal, of course.

... continued on next page

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

The Bagua Map: Front Door





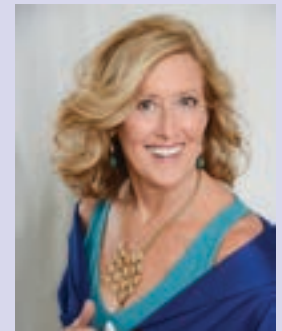
First, make sure that your home isn't already too metal and perhaps cold and unwelcoming. We can integrate and place symbols of the fall harvest, like pumpkins and gourds, at our front door or dining rooms. In the middle right area of our home we can also add the freshness of more white and metallic sculpture or decorative mirrors. Also, warm up your home with lots of Earth Element (Earth creates Metal) so think cozy tangerine, cappuccino or golden throws, extra blankets ready for the beds, and pillows and other accessories in seasonal, earthy colors.

Again, much of the desired results and balance can be adjusted easily and most completely with the Five Elements theory, and we can also apply this for the entire home and also room by

room. Each of the Five Elements should ideally be present in all rooms and spaces, otherwise there is an imbalance created. These spaces can feel weak, lethargic, uneasy and draining. Instead of home feeling healthy and calm and supportive, it might be creating a sense of anxiety, stress and unease. Even the colors we choose might inadvertently weaken the overall Feng Shui of the places that are meant to restore and nourish us the most.

All of this is easily remedied by easy, inexpensive and accessible Feng Shui Five Elements "adjustments" and when the elemental balance is achieved, we truly can experience "SPACE AS MEDICINE." for spaces that feel as good as they look.

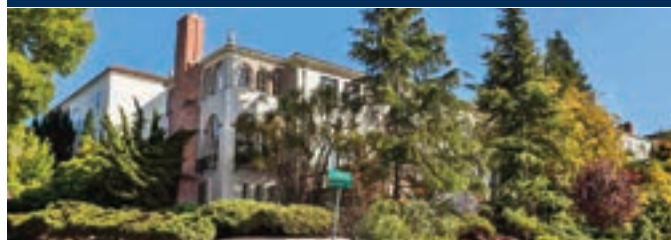
Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To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



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## November Gardening Guide

# Color Me Happy

By Cynthia Brian

*"I feel like a warm, red autumn!" — Marilyn Monroe*



A wall fountain is festooned with pumpkins and gourds to celebrate the season.

Photos Cynthia Brian

My favorite part of a November autumn is looking out from my bedroom balcony to the kaleidoscope of colors dotting the landscape in the valley. Trees are cloaked in hues of magenta, sienna, umber, gold, russet, umber, purple, red, pumpkin and a variety of greens. Wherever I walk or drive, the picturesque autumn foliage of northern California rivals the forests of the Eastern seaboard. We are indeed fortu-

nate to live in a climate that harks four seasons.

November of this year brings us an election as well as Thanksgiving. Since politics is not my favorite subject, I prefer to focus on what needs to be done in our November garden before Turkey Day. Autumn is the best time to plant because the soil is still warm and the rains are imminent. To find trees bursting with colorful leaves, visit your local nursery. Japanese Maple, pistache, liquid amber, crape myrtle and many fruit trees put on quite a spectacular show this time of year. Buy them now and plant them where they will grow, thrive and enhance your landscape.

### Information on Grass Seed and the Rain

When it rained this past week, I ran outside to plant seeds of my 100-year-old-plus heirloom hollyhock seeds as well as sunflower seeds. The drizzly weather also posed the most auspicious moment to reseed my lawn with Pearl's Premium lawn seed and fertilize with an organic cover. My new grass is already sprouting.

Several emails have arrived asking for more information

about my experience with Pearl's Premium. I'm not paid to talk or write about this product. (Although I probably should be on the payroll because I'm so passionate about this seed.) Being a believer in one's right to have a lawn for enjoyment, I've been on a mission to find the grass seed that will remain green while using less water. With my first summer of using Pearl's Premium behind me, I offer you my personal experimental results.

1. Grass remained somewhat green with brown and bare spots where the irrigation missed the mark.
2. Pearl's Premium definitely choked out the majority of weeds.
3. I watered twice a week in 12-minute segments per station using 34 percent less water over the previous year.
4. The lawn was mowed once a week and grass clippings were left on the lawn at least twice per month to add nutrients.
5. Although not a lush green in the summer, the grass did not die.
6. With just two rainy days, the lawn has emerged as emerald. I still have a lawn!

... continued on page D11

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## Cynthia Brian's November Gardening Guide

- **TIME** to fall back! Set your clocks back one hour on Sunday, Nov. 6.
- **HEAL** by looking at nature. For over 32 years since the journal Science published the study by behavioral scientist Roger Ulrich, we know that just viewing trees and the outdoors enhances wellness and speeds healing.
- **GATHER** guavas that have fallen to make a jam or other guava treat.
- **SOW** these vegetable seeds for a bountiful early winter harvest: lettuce, Asian greens spinach, arugula, chard, chicory, kale, radish, cabbage, beets and cress.
- **FERTILIZE** your lawns with an organic mixture and reseed during the rains. Cover the grass with mulch or screens to keep the birds from eating the seeds.
- **SPREAD** seeds of hollyhock along fence lines or at the back of your garden as hollyhock can grow to 12 feet or more.
- **HELP** the birds settle in for the upcoming winter by cleaning nesting boxes and providing plenty of seed to their feeders.
- **DECORATE** your waterfall, fountain, or front door with a variety of odd-shaped pumpkins and gourds.
- **COLLECT** acorns, leaves, and nuts to add to your festive kitchen or dining room table fall tableau of squash, gourds, and pumpkins.
- **COLOR** your world by planting bushes that boast fall and winter berries including cotoneaster, holly, and pyracantha. (Pyracantha plants have sharp thorns. Plant in low traffic areas. Pyracantha don't have berries, but pomes.)
- **MULCH** by shredding the raked leaves from the deciduous trees adding grass clippings, dried plants stems, and trimmings all which provide water conservation, better drainage, and nutrients to the soil.
- **PLANT** your spring blooming bulbs now including daffodils, crocus, freesia, ranunculus, hyacinths, Dutch Iris, tulips, and other favorites. You'll be able to continue planting bulbs through January. Mark the location with plant tags or wooden paint sticks.



Remarkable intricacy in a close up look at Liquid Amber leaves.

- **BUY** trees with fall color at your local nursery or garden center including Crape Myrtle, Pistache, Liquid Amber and Japanese Maple.
- **COVER** patio furniture and move potted frost tender plants under an overhang or bring indoors.
- **ENJOY** the warmth and the beauty of this annual autumn fashion extravaganza.
- **CAPTURE** the moments with your smartphone to compare your garden to next years show. It's amazing how much our landscapes change.
- **VOTE** on Nov. 8. One person does make a difference.

Color me happy!  
Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!

**DONATE** to Be the Star You Are!® charity as it ships books to the most devastated areas in Hurricane Matthew's path in North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia. Go to [www.BetheStarYouAre.org](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org) and click on Operation Hurricane Matthew Disaster Relief.



Fallen green guavas to be gathered for a jam.



Time to scatter the heirloom hollyhock seeds.



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Think of the tree you just purchased as a lifetime investment. How well your tree, and investment, grows depends on the type of tree and location you select for planting, the care you provide when the tree is planted, and follow-up care the tree receives after planting.

The ideal time to plant trees and shrubs is during the dormant season-in the fall after their leaves drop or early spring before bud breaks. Weather conditions are cool and allow plants to establish roots in the new location. The proper handling during planting is essential to ensure a healthy future for new trees and shrubs.

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## Color Me Happy ... continued from page 8

As noted, I am reseeding my lawns with the expectation that next spring and summer will have even better results as the instructions on the Pearl's Premium label do indicate that it can take a year for proper establishment. According to Jackson Madnick, the founder of the company, Pearl's Premium is not sold at retail establishments here in our area so you will need to purchase online at [www.PearlsPremium.com](http://www.PearlsPremium.com). He is currently installing seven acres of his grass in Palm Desert. The seed is drought tolerant. As promised, for all of you Lamorinda lawn lovers, I will continue to update you on my experiences. For now, I am happy with my green!



View of the colorful autumn landscape from Cynthia's bedroom balcony



Cynthia Brian in the fall vineyards post harvest.

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## ORINDA



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### 31 Parkway Court

Incredible Location! This 1797 sq. ft. 4bd/3ba charmer sits at the end of a cul-de-sac on a large .56 acre lot. Updated throughout, open floor plan, walk to Glorietta Elementary!

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## ORINDA



New Listing

**139 La Cuesta Road** Fabulous 5 bed, 3 bath, 2622 sq. ft., custom home nestled on prime close-in cul de sac in prestigious Orinda Country Club neighborhood. Spacious, beautifully maintained home. Lovely setting with breathtaking views. **\$1,389,000**

## ORINDA



Pending

**114 Hillcrest Drive** Glorietta neighborhood stylish Craftsman 4bd/3ba all rebuilt to perfection in 2008. Beaut. design highest quality, great room w/gourmet kitchen, Anderson doors, views, level lawns. Great schools. **\$1,495,000**

## ORINDA



**220 Camino Sobrante** Special location on the lake. Classic, wood crafted 4bd/4ba home has great use of space on two levels, ideal for comfortable living & entertaining. Bonus sports court. Alluring setting of beauty & privacy. **\$1,695,000**

## ORINDA



**147 Camino Don Miguel** Set on private, lush .32ac overlooking 4th fairway of OCC. 3bd/2.5ba w/apx. 3223sqft, hdwd flrs, main flr master ste, ofc/den, sun porch. Near top-rated schools, Orinda Village & commute. Views! **\$1,850,000**

## ORINDA



**5 Oak Arbor Road** Prime Oak Arbor living at its best! Traditional European spectacular home w/quality features in/outside w/grand-scale rooms of exceptional space, light + access outdoors. Gorgeous setting! **\$2,695,000**

## ORINDA



New Price

**105 Crane Terrace** Exceptional 4.87 acre gated estate traditional of incredible appeal on alluring knoll, private setting of pano views. Custom craftsmanship. Lovely grounds w/lawns, gardens, mature trees. **\$2,950,000**

## ORINDA



**160 Camino Don Miguel** Spectacular Spanish Mediterranean 5bd/5.5ba 5851sqft home overlooks the 4th hole of OCC. Rebuilt from ground up in 1996. Resort quality pool & spa, gardens & views. **\$4,795,000**

## MORAGA



New Listing

**820 Country Club Drive** Sought after single level, end unit on cul-de-sac. Nicely updated throughout. Walk to town, trails, etc. Enjoy MCC amenities: golf, swim, tennis, club house. Top schools! **\$725,000**

## MORAGA



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## MORAGA



**76 Lynwood Place** Desirable Corliss neighborhood. 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home with sparkling pool. Close to schools, shopping and trails. **\$1,695,000**

## MORAGA



**9 Shannon Court** Sanders Ranch estate property over 1.5 acres, 4966 sq. ft., Chef's kitchen, hardwood, new carpet, fresh paint, pool, ideal indoor/outdoor living spaces. **\$3,125,000**

## LAFAYETTE



Pending

**905 Acalanes Road** Located in Hidden Valley, this 4bd/2.5ba home has it all. Close to Hwy 24 & downtown Lafayette & Reservoir. Updated kitchen, dining rm & high ceiling family rm. Large master suite, remodeled baths. **\$1,249,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**3 Dollis Park Road** Large 4bd/3.5ba, 4090 sq. ft. home w/ideal functional floor plan. Lovely kitchen/ family rm + bonus rec. rm. Luxurious master suite. Great guest bedroom w/bath is ideal for separation of space. **\$1,489,000**



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