

Orindans Enroll in AmeriCorps NCCC

Submitted by Heather Dirck

Marco Evert and Lindsey Loeper of Orinda recently began 10-month terms of service in the National Civilian Community Corps, an AmeriCorps program. Loeper, based out of the AmeriCorps NCCC regional campus in Sacramento, and Evert, based out of the regional campus in Denver, are currently serving on their first service projects.

Founded in 1994, AmeriCorps NCCC is a residential national service program that supports disaster relief, the environment, infrastructure improvement, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. Over the past 22 years, over one million Americans have served across the family of AmeriCorps programs. Currently, about 80,000 people serve in AmeriCorps programs nationwide

each year, about 2,000 of whom serve with AmeriCorps NCCC.

Evert and Loeper arrived at their respective regional campuses in early October to begin training. This training, which prepared them for 10 months of full-time service with AmeriCorps NCCC, emphasized teamwork, leadership development, communication, service learning, and certification by the American Red Cross.

As Corps Members, Evert and Loeper will be responsible for completing a series of six- to 12-week-long service projects as part of a 10- to 12-person team. Their first service projects finished on Dec. 16, at which time their teams took a break for the winter holidays and begin a new project in a new location in January.

New Mystery Class Highlights Christie, 'Queen of Crime'

Submitted by Joan Trezek

Wonder why Agatha Christie is called the "Queen of Crime?" She authored 80 crime novels featuring world-renowned detectives like Hercule Poirot and Jane Marple and has been a consistent favorite of readers for over 100 years.

Acalanes Adult Education offers a new mystery class, "Celebrate the Queen of Crime—Christie and Her Favorite Detectives." It began Jan. 18 but organizers are stressing that newcomers are still invited. It runs weekly from 10:30 a.m. to noon through

Feb 22.

Three Christie novels, each one the first to introduce her sleuths Poirot, Marple and Tommy-Tuppence duo, will be featured. Participants read and discuss the works and view video clips that support the novels.

Register at www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted or call the office (925) 280-3980. Senior rate is \$54. Rate for others is \$60. Acalanes Adult Ed is located at 1963 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek.

Lamorinda Law Professionals Needed for Mock Trial

Submitted by Jonathan Lance



Miramonte's award-winning 2016 Mock Trial team.

Photo provided

Lamorinda soon-to-be, practicing, and retired law professionals are needed to provide assistance to their future brethren at the upcoming 36th Annual Contra Costa County High School Mock Trial Program, held in the early evenings throughout the month of February, at the Martinez Court Rooms. Last year, 120 Bay Area practicing and retired attorneys and sworn judges, as well as third-year law students volunteered their time with the Mock Trials.

Coordinated by the Contra Costa County Office of Education, Mock Trial is an academic event provided for high school students. The hands-on educational program was created to help students acquire a working knowledge of the judicial system, develop analytical abilities and communication skills, and gain an understanding of their obligations and responsibilities as participating members of our society. This year's grabbed-from-the-local-and-national-headlines case, the People v. Awbrey, is a trial about human trafficking and false imprisonment. The pretrial issue involves the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, namely protection against illegal search and seizure and against

self-incrimination.

Teams of high school students work with teachers and volunteer coaches to prepare their version of the criminal case, from both the prosecution and defense perspectives. Students assume the roles of trial attorneys, pretrial motion attorneys, witnesses, clerks, bailiffs, artists, and court journalists. Mock Trial judges and attorneys score their performance and provide immediate feedback. Winning teams advance through seven rounds of competition. The county's champion advances to the State finals. This year, there will be 18 Contra Costa County high school Mock Trial teams competing.

Teams from 17 Contra Costa County high schools will be competing, including Acalanes, Campolindo, and the award-winning Miramonte.

Mock Trial will be headquartered at the A.F. Bray Courthouse, 1020 Ward Street, in Martinez. Interested volunteers can learn more by visiting the CCCOE's Mock Trial web page at <http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/supe/events/tforms.htm>, or contacting Jonathan Lance at (925) 942-3429.

In Memory

Gladys Eugenia Siefert

1919-2017



Gladys Eugenia Siefert, née Klingbeil, 97, our beloved mother and friend, passed away early Saturday morning, Jan. 7, at John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek, California. Born Feb. 23, 1919, in Berkeley, California, to Gladys Eugenia Sutton and Ferdinand (Fred) Clifford Klingbeil (an immigrant from the Ukraine via Ellis Island in 1910), she grew up in Berkeley with her two sisters, Viola and Leta.

Gladys graduated from Berkeley High School in 1936 and, in 1942, embarked on a 58 year marriage to Raymond Joseph Siefert, a mechanical engineer. In 1943, the couple welcomed their first child, Susanne Catherine, and moved to Louisiana, Missouri, with

Ray's job where they lived in company housing during WWII. After the war, they returned to Berkeley and Ray gained employment with Skippy Peanut Butter in Alameda. Gladys and Ray were blessed with three more children, Kathleen Anne (born 1946), Charles Raymond (born 1948), and Steven George (born 1957).

In 1967, they built their dream home, Gladys' "tree house," in Sleepy Hollow, a neighborhood in Orinda, California, where she lived for 48 years. When Ray retired, Gladys returned to school and became an antique dealer, joining an antique collective in Lafayette and Walnut Creek. Later, Gladys was a popular volunteer at the Orinda Library for many years.

Gladys was both "one of a kind" and an emblematic member of the "Greatest Generation." She had too many friends to count and will be missed by all. She once told a grandchild, "I'm not smart enough to be depressed," and she never was.

Gladys is survived by her four children: Sue Keller (Jeff), Kath Balamuth (Barry), Chuck Siefert (Martha) and Steve Siefert (Debbie); brother, Richard Klingbeil; sister, Francis Arnold; 6 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband, Ray Siefert; sisters, Viola Stone and Leta Palacin; brother, Frederick Klingbeil; and a grandson, Steven Raymond Siefert.

At her request, there will be no service at this time. A celebration of her life is being planned for the spring. If you would like an invitation, email ksiefert1946@gmail.com. In lieu of flowers, do something Gladys would do and pay it forward with an act of kindness.

Thanks to the staff of John Muir Hospital for taking such good care of her in her final hours. She died with her youngest son rubbing her feet, something she always loved.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Aids in Housing of Families in Transition

Submitted by Tom Black



A quintet representing Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary poses for a photography while delivering goods donated by the club to a domicile in Pleasant Hill. From left, Tom Guyette, Kathe Mitchell, Spike Speicher, Rich Shearer and Ernie Furtado.

Photo Tom Black

Thanks to a helping hand – literally and figuratively – from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, a pair of previously chronically homeless families in Contra Costa County now have roofs over their heads.

These and 18 other such families are beneficiaries of a new initiative by Contra Costa Interfaith Housing. Named Families in Supportive Housing and launched last October, it will continue to place families in transition in subsidized domiciles throughout the county as units and funding become available.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, whose partnership with CCIH dates to 2005, decided last fall to "adopt" two units -- a house in Pleasant Hill and a condo in Concord – by providing member-donated starter furnishings, everything from beds and furniture to an assortment of kitchenware. Donations came from elsewhere in the community as well.

Using their own vehicles, members of the club physically delivered the goods to their destinations and set everything up in advance of occupancy by the incoming families. Club member Tom Guyette, a resident of Lafayette, offered his garage as a makeshift warehouse. As project point-person, he worked closely with Gloria Bertolozzi, CCIH staffer who oversees volunteer and outreach programs.

"Both domiciles are now occupied, and I can tell you how thrilled and grateful the families are to have a place they can call home. We hope that further funding will enable us to expand the program," she said.

A grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Development partially underwrote what has been accomplished so far. Playing a major role since the founding of CCIH in 1991 is Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, which remains an active partner.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary has been involved with CCIH for a dozen years as programming partners at Garden Park Apartments in Pleasant Hill. The apartment complex houses families, likewise previously homeless and facing transition challenges.

The Rotary club's inaugural program, which continues to thrive, was to sponsor a Halloween pumpkin-carving day.

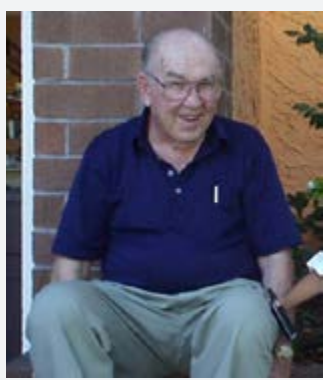
"It has been a huge success," said Brad Davis, architect of the program and CCIH liaison for Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. In addition, the service organization donates Thanksgiving dinners for all resident families and Valentine's Day festivities for kids.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, meets weekly over breakfast, starting at 7:00, at Lafayette Hotel and Spa on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Guests are always welcome.

In Memory

John James McCormick

1919-2016



John James McCormick, 97, died at ManorCare in Walnut Creek on Nov. 25, 2016. The cause was heart failure.

Born Sept. 1, 1919 in Denver, he lived in the Bay Area after being discharged from the Army in 1945. He worked for Chevron for 37 years with a post to Iran during the 1960s and moved to Moraga in 1965 and lived there until retiring in 1986. John was a member of the Moraga Lions, Chevron Retirees Club, and the Moraga Parks and Recreation Foundation, earning a volunteer service award for fundraising for the Moraga Commons Park in 1983. He enjoyed golf, the San Francisco Giants and his two grandsons.

Survivors include daughter Caroline McCormick, and his grandsons Sam and Max Dennoun of Moraga. John was preceded in death by his wife Lola McCormick in 1999.

His family will spread his ashes at sea under the Golden Gate Bridge at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28, aboard The Naiad, berthed at Pier 39.