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The fallen eucalyptus tree damaged multiple cars and covered the parking lot in front of La Finestra Restaurant in Lafayette.

Photo Gint Federas

Falling trees threaten Lamorinda residents

By John T. Miller

A spate of falling trees in Lamorinda over the past month caused extensive damage and raised concern over future harm from overgrown trees.

A eucalyptus fell on Lafayette Circle, damaging several cars in the La Finestra parking lot and blocking the roadway, while a Valley Oak toppled at the corner of Burton and Lucas Drives, causing extensive damage to one of

the homes on a corner lot.

Mike Moran, Director of Public Works for the City of Lafayette, expressed relief that no one was killed. “The issue of falling trees is keeping me up nights,” he said.

The popular perception is that the combination of five years of prolonged drought, along with the recent above-average rainfall, led to the trees’ demise. However, many

other factors contribute to the danger posed by falling trees.

“Many of the homes in Lafayette were built 60-70 years ago,” said Moran. “The trees were there before and are no longer in the best conditions to grow. Many are now near sidewalks or roadways and, like animal species, have lost their habitat.”

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AUHSD to implement new block schedule for schools

By Sora O’Doherty

If you are noticing less rush in the Lamorinda rush hour this week, it might be due to the one-week trial of the new block schedule at all four high schools in the Acalanes Union High School District. The block schedule, which will be brought into all AUHSD high schools next fall, is being given a test drive from Feb. 6 through Feb. 10.

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, students will not begin class until 8:35 a.m. This will give them an opportunity for a little extra sleep, which had been shown to be beneficial to adolescents. Their teachers, however, will still be hard at work from 7:30 a.m., using the time for both professional development and collaborative work. And an extra bonus may be rush hour traffic relief for everyone.

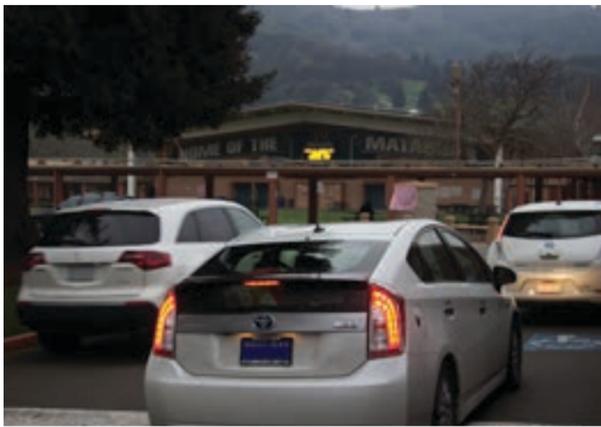
The main impetus for the change in schedule is California’s new standards, which, according to Miramonte Principal Julie Parks, really lend themselves into deeper dives into curriculum. This new reality in learning makes it necessary to shift instructional practices. The block schedule, which features longer class periods three days per week, incorporate more technical and project-based learning.

“Project-based learning,” Parks explained, is catch phrase for different ways of assessing student learning. A project allows students to combine different instructional areas, and assessments are not multiple choice. Longer instructional blocks enable the schools to do this more effectively.

The schools have been working towards implementation of the block schedule for a long time. All last year literally hundreds of hours were spent in preparation, including visiting schools with different types of block schedules. Here is what AUHSD block schedule will be like:

Each Monday will be “anchor day.” Starting at 8:35 a.m. and ending at 3:05 p.m., students will have all their seven classes, each for 45 minutes.

Tuesdays and Thursdays are “block days,” with students having



The Miramonte parking lot at rush hour. Photo Sora O’Doherty

90-minute blocks of their first, second, fifth and sixth periods. The passing periods in between classes are being lengthened from five to 10 minutes. Block days start at 8 a.m.

Wednesdays and Fridays are “academy days.” Starting at 8:35 a.m., students will have their third, fourth, and seventh period block classes, plus a 55-minute “academy period” embedded in mid-morning. This time is envisioned as a flexible time when students will have some choices, perhaps some extra help or intervention for students who may be struggling, or additional enrichment for those who require more of a challenge. Other students will be able to avail of some time to get their work done, collaborate with others or meet with teachers.

During this pilot week there will not be full implementation of academy days.

District Attorney drops duct tape case

By Sophie Braccini

The Contra Costa County District Attorney decided at the end of January not to file charges in the case that opposed a Moraga family against a Los Perales teacher, Millie Tang, and the Moraga School District.

The story started last year when a family alleged that Tang had put duct tape on their son’s mouth during class. (See our article in the Jan. 25 issue: www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1024/Moraga-Parents-Rally-to-Defend-Accused-Los-Perales-Teacher.html).

Since the publication of the article more families have reached out to Lamorinda Weekly in support of the teacher. Meanwhile, the MSD confirmed that a civil lawsuit has been filed against it by “John Doe’s” family. Parents have repeatedly asked that the district defend the teacher and not settle with the family.

MSD Superintendent Bruce Burns would not comment at this time and the district’s lawyer was not available to answer questions. “John Doe’s” lawyer has not returned calls for comment.

Civic News A1-A12	Life in Lamorinda B1-B8	Sports C1-C4	Our Homes D1-D16
Orinda tries to fast-track sinkhole repairs – page A6.	Artist Deborah Rhee’s ‘Tiny Talisman’ are springing up in Lamorinda – page B1.	Local boys soccer teams hopes to net NCS berths – page C1.	Tips on loving your bedroom this Valentine’s Day – page D1.
Fire Districts A8	How MOFD responds to new housing – page A8.		



Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
District Office Board Room
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:
www.lafayettechamber.org



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Jan. 8 - Jan. 21

Alarms	82
911 Calls (incl hang-ups)	45
Noise complaints	4
Traffic stops	149
Suspicious Circumstances	12
Suspicious Subjects	20
Suspicious Vehicles	14
Welfare Check	21
Patrol Request	13
Abandoned Vehicle	
3600 Block Chestnut St.	
1600 Block Reliez Valley Rd.	
Reliez Valley Rd./Silver Dell Rd.	
Circle Creek Dr./Circle Creek Ln.	
Moon Ct./Crescent Dr.	
1000 Block Circle Creek Dr.	
Auto Burglary	
1000 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.	
10 Block Ruth Ct.	
900 Block S Thompson Rd.	
50 Block Lafayette Cr.	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
Beat Info	
Eb Sr 24 At Pleasant Hill Rd.	
Wb Sr 24 Eo Acalanes Rd.	
4100 Block Canyon Rd.	
St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr.	
Pleasant Hill Rd./Reliez Valley Rd.	
Burton Dr./Murray Ln.	
3900 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
Wb Sr 24 At Acalanes Rd.	
Civil Disturbance	
3500 Block Wilkinson Ln.	
Civil Problem	
Unk Add On Mildred Ln.	
3900 Block Leroy Way	
3900 Block Los Arabis Dr.	
600 Block N Silverado Dr.	
Commercial Burglary	
3100 Block Camino Diablo	
Dui Misd	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Fire/Ems Response Info	
3000 Block Rohrer Dr.	
Forgery	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Found Property	
Police Department	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Mt Diablo Blvd./Golden Gate Way	
Mt Diablo Ct./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Fraud Credit Card	
3500 Block Via Los Colorados	
Fraud False Pretenses	
3300 Block N Lucille Ln.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
1100 Block Camino Vallecito	
Grand Theft	
4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3400 Block Black Hawk Rd.	
3500 Block Springhill Rd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Mt Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.	
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Lafayette State of the City: Constantly moving forward

By Nick Marnell



Mayor Mike Anderson Photo Andy Scheck

In his state of the city address at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year Award dinner, Lafayette Mayor Mike Anderson spent little time patting the city on the back for what it has accomplished. Instead, he outlined what Lafayette can do better in 2017.

"The city is in very good shape," the mayor told the audience Jan. 26 at the Lafayette Park Hotel. "Sales and property taxes came

in higher than projected at 11 percent over budget, and our reserves are at 60 percent of our annual budget." Lafayette reported 2015-16 fiscal year general fund revenue of \$15.5 million with expenses of \$10.9 million.

Anderson then outlined areas of focus for the coming year, including traffic and parking, below-market housing opportunities and how to keep downtown Lafayette as one of the most popular spots in the region.

"With more and more people moving into the city, how will they get around?" Anderson asked. Projects like the Downtown Congestion Study and a parking ordinance review are nearly completed and should help folks deal with that issue, and the mayor said that more signage is on the way to show available in-town parking.

Anderson pointed to the KD Home Town Center III development as offering some of the units that retail for \$700,000 at a below-market rate of \$300,000, and he directed the city to make people aware of the opportunity to get on a lottery list for those homes. The city will also review its notification proce-

dures. "The developer is sending prospective clients to the city, and the city is sending prospects to the developer," Anderson said at the Jan. 23 city council meeting. "We need to get this figured out."

The mayor noted how packed the restaurants are in town and urged people to work together to keep the city looking good. "Even something like adding a flower pot in a window," he said.

But Anderson saved his most eloquent words for the winner of the Business Person of the Year Award, Brenda Oum, owner of Papillon Gourmet Coffee and Tea in La Fiestra Square. Oum spent her childhood during the brutal Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, survived the horrors and atrocities and immigrated to the United States in 1987.

"In this particular year, it's great that we are honoring an immigrant to our country who has proved to all of us that this is the place where, if you have the drive, interest and desire, you can be a real success," Anderson said.

Plans for improved dog park unleashed at Lafayette's Deer Hill development

By Nick Marnell

Not only humans are debating the merits of a passive or active city park but canines may soon face the same quandary over a proposed park of their own.

Part of the development plan for the Homes at Deer Hill project in eastern Lafayette includes construction of a dog park with limited amenities. But by using funds accumulated through its recycle program, the city proposed adding educational signage, picnic tables, benches, play structures and even recycled art to bump up the park from the bare bones facility currently on the books.

"You've been saving for a dog park for many years and you didn't know it," Parks, Trails and Recreation Director Jonathan Katanayagi told the city council Jan. 23.

The money will come from an account created by the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, a joint powers authority also known as RecycleSmart, from revenue generated by the sale of recyclable material collected from Lafayette residents. RecycleSmart wholesales the items to various vendors and the city gets a cut of the proceeds.



A sample of dog park recyclable artwork. No fire hydrant art allowed. Photos courtesy Lafayette Parks, Trails and Recreation department

"We can use the money for these types of projects or to defer rate increases, which we've done," said Mayor Mike Anderson, a RecycleSmart board member. The account holds roughly \$1.3 million, and the dog park improvements are expected to cost \$450,000.

Gates and Associates, a San Ramon-based landscape architect, together with CCCSWA and the city, will design what will be known as the RecycleSmart Dog Park. The materials used will be made out of as much recycled material as possible, and

the educational signage will promote recycling. Compliance with the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act needs to be worked into the final project recommendation, which the city staff will bring back to the council.

"The money's there. It's not going anywhere," Anderson said, as time to complete the park is not of the essence.

The city will upgrade the dog park only if the Homes at Deer Hill development happens, but the project remains under litigation.

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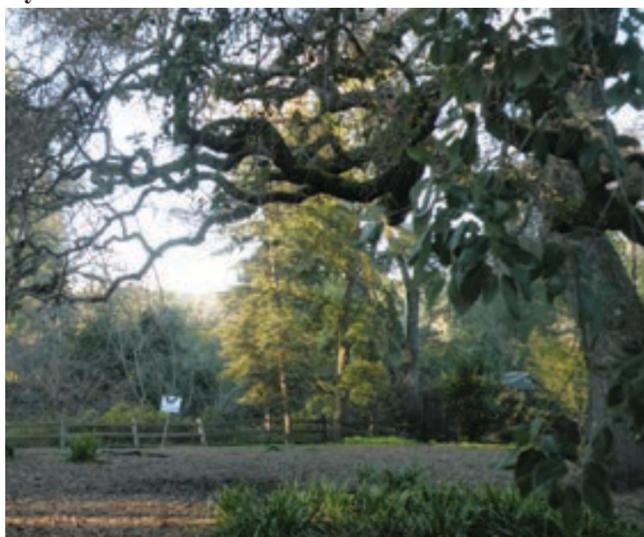
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Council: Still no decision on Leigh Creekside Park

By Nick Marnell



Leigh Creekside Park

Photo John T. Miller

A decision that some suggested would require the city council to channel the wisdom of Solomon may now force Lafayette lawmakers to exhibit the patience of Job.

With residents packed into the community meeting hall, the crowd spilling out the rear exit door and having dug in for a long night of public comment, Lafayette city attorney Mala Subramanian recommended that the city council postpone action on the Leigh Creekside Park agenda item, a hearing to amend the park master plan to allow play structures to be added to the facility.

Late correspondence to the city questioned the amount of noise generated by kids playing in the park once the city added the play structures. "There are things about the noise ordinance that we'd like to address in more detail," Subramanian told the council at the Jan. 23 meeting. "We want the documents to be as strong as possible for you."

Those documents include a study that indicates the environmental impacts of the park project will be less than significant with proposed mitigations, such as hourly limits on construction noise and the use of heavy equipment.

Council member Cameron Burks did not hide his displeasure with the continuance recommendation, questioning just how long these last-minute comments can keep pouring in, in effect delaying things yet again. "Can we draw a line in the sand? When do we say, enough?" Burks asked. Unfortunately the risk of another delay is always there, the city attorney said.

But since so many guests came to the meeting to speak on the park project, the council voted unanimously to hold the public comment portion of the hearing, with the understanding that the council would

vote on nothing else about Leigh Creekside Park that evening.

More than 40 speakers took to the dais, and nearly all of them pitched for a passive or active use of the park. The passives, who outpolled the actives by more than 2 to 1, generally sought to preserve the park in its natural state, while the actives, claiming that most of their supporters were at home that night with their kids, preferred the city add the play structures for use by children.

"Please keep Leigh Creekside Park as it is. Do not destroy the only quiet space in downtown Lafayette," wrote Tony Lyons, countered by Kelsey Mesrou. "Our children are quickly aging out of the park and we live within walking distance — I would have loved to have this four years ago!" she said.

"If this park goes active any peacefulness and reflection will be gone," submitted Melanie Peterson-Katz, rebuffed by Joel Flory, and many others, using these exact words: "The play elements are natural-looking, low-maintenance, tied to Lafayette's history and are placed so as not to block interior views."

Many speakers focused on kids and how much more important they are than nature, and that there is no playground to take the children in the area. Others complained that the park needed no play structures and asked how the city could afford the \$550,000 for the proposed park improvements. The city expects to fund the project through park fees.

Three hours later, the speakers having concluded and the room much emptier, the council closed out the item. But the controversy, another version of the development versus preservation argument that plays out often in Lamorinda, will resume at the Feb. 27 council meeting.

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	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
Total Homes Sold	30	28	46	37	43	29
Avg. Days on Market	16	16	17	18	18	35
Sold Over Asking Price	16	22	33	21	24	11
Sold Under Asking Price	8	4	9	13	17	16
Sold at Asking Price	6	2	4	3	2	2
Avg. Sales Price	\$1,032,940	\$1,079,000	\$1,243,187	\$1,280,000	\$1,601,111	\$1,548,000
Avg. Sales Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$575	\$604	\$525	\$570	\$498	\$525

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Sardines Insalata: calamata olives, green beans, potato, feta cheese, balsamic olive oil9
Niman Flat Iron Steak: potato gratin, green beans, chimichurri sauce18
Fresh Seafood Cioppino: in a rich tomato-basil sauce, parmesan, garlic toast..19
Roasted Scallops: spinach, salciccia sugo19
Roasted Wild Salmon: white wine, capers, braised greens, and potato gratin..17
Veal Scallopini: mushrooms, garlic, marsala wine17

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Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m.

Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.

Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m.

Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Moraga School District

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 7 p.m.

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Library

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



Jan. 17 to Jan. 31

Alarms:

- 1/18 Rheem Blvd
- 1/19 Moraga Way
- 1/19 Paseo Bernal
- 1/24 location not listed
- 1/24 Center Street
- 1/25 location not listed
- 1/27 Del Monte Way
- 1/27 location not listed
- 1/28 Kent Court

1/17 Larceny

A female fitness buff lost the contents of her ladies' room locker at a local gym. Exercising an ounce of prevention, she provided police a description of a likely subject seen lurking earlier. Concord police had already recovered some stolen items.

1/19 Traffic Accident

Reports say a 97-year-old female driver was involved in a "solo vehicle collision with a tree with unknown injuries" at Moraga Road near Rheem Boulevard. The report says the woman had just left a gas station. MOFD treated the driver at the scene for a cut finger. City workers may have been called later to treat the tree for... a broken limb?

1/21 City Ordinance

A young Moraga resident was enjoying a loud and unruly party with 25 to 30 others while celebrating her 21st birthday. What a surprise. After police advised her of the town's Loud Party Ordinance she send everyone home (bummer). And they all slept happily ever after...

1/22 DUI

Suspicious vehicle on Fernwood Drive: check. Police involvement: check. Driver attempting to flee the scene after collision with an innocently parked vehicle: check. Sobriety test performed: check. DUI: of course. The driver was processed, cited and released.

1/23 Domestic dispute

Police responded to reports of an out-of-town husband and wife fighting in their car near Moraga Liquors. No battery charges were filed, and both parties agreed to separate for the night.

1/24 Larceny

Police who stopped two females for speeding learned they had also stolen \$500 worth of infant formula from Safeway. The milk filchers were arrested, cited and released. A passenger was not so lucky — he/

Moraga to consider Gun Violence Prevention ordinances

By Sophie Braccini

During its 2017 goal setting session, the Moraga Town Council decided to consider ordinances aimed at protecting the population from gun violence.

A group of Moraga residents have asked that two local laws be considered: One to enforce safe storage of firearms, and one to prohibit firearm home dealers to be located near schools or in residential neighborhoods.

It took community organizing and political lobbying for Allison Anderman to get this topic on the agenda of the town council for discussion, and initial skepticism was not going to stop her. A mother of two young children living in Moraga, Anderman is a lawyer working with the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, a nonprofit that was formed in the wake of the 1993 101 California St. shooting in San Francisco. Anderman explains that she and her followers are not trying to stop people from owning guns, a right protected by the Second Amendment to the U.S. constitu-

tion, but to propose local ordinances that enforce responsible ownership of guns in order to prevent tragedy. She said that 100 jurisdictions have implemented such local ordinances, including Tiburon, Palm Springs, San Francisco and Oakland. Lafayette that was one of the pioneers of such an ordinance over 20 years ago.

Moraga Police Chief Jon King indicated that in his opinion state laws were sufficient and that his concern was that a local ordinance would not be enforceable. He confirmed that there was a registered gun dealer in a Moraga home, but that to his knowledge that person was repairing and not selling weapons. Anderman later commented that she had been surprised to see that someone near a school operated such a business. To King's comment that more education would be more efficient than new ordinances, she cited mandatory seat belts had to become law in order to make a difference for people's safety.

Anderman had talked to can-

didates for the council at the end of 2016 and had been advised to garner as much community support as possible and propose the topic at the goal setting session on Jan. 26. She presented her case, now backed up by 110 Moraga supporters, explaining that she and the Law Center would advise the town for free. Several people also talked in favor of the passage of ordinances, including Doris Chen, who was raised in Moraga and recalled the 1991 tragedy when one of her younger classmates, a 13-year-old boy, was accidentally killed by one of his friends who wanted to show him a gun his father owned, and that had not been safely stored.

Anderman also produced statistics showing that the passage of such local laws prevents teen suicides and accidental deaths by firearms.

Anne Grodin was Lafayette's mayor in 1993-94 when gun sale regulation was approved. She remembers the emotional context at the time. The discussion took place in the months that followed the 101

California St. shooting. A gun shop had opened where Trader Joe's is now located, with a huge stuffed bear in the windows, attracting kids that were coming to the nearby Baskin Robbins. Grodin remembers a young Lafayette mother who was among the victims of the 101 California shooting.

"Her husband came to meetings with their infant in a backpack," remembers Grodin, "It was a tumultuous time and our residents wanted protection."

Lafayette now requires a land-use permit reviewed by the planning commission to be authorized to sell firearms. The city also created zoning areas where gun sales are permitted and not permitted.

Council members did not agree to put the passage of the two ordinances as a goal in 2017, but to make its consideration one of the priorities, looking at what Lafayette passed in order to save staff time.

The goals and priorities will be discussed at the Feb. 8 council meeting.

Moraga Town Council meets to determine '17 goals

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga Town Council's annual goal setting exercise was more creative this year than ever, opening new conversations about both topics and methodology, but did not lead to the gelling of a list. The process is resuming at an upcoming council meeting and may take more than one sitting.

Mayor Teresa Onoda opened the discussion on Jan. 26 with her goals for the year. She presented a list of four objectives:

- 1) Complete the sinkhole repairs at the crossing near Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard, restoring retail activity and traffic flow back to normal.
- 2) Have development in Moraga reflect the sentiment of the town's residents, including improvements to the three-step planned development process; seeking town council approval and implementation rules governing development on hillsides and ridgelines; and ensuring disciplined application of the town's design guidelines.
- 3) Stimulate and attract retail activity in Moraga by improving the permitting process for Moraga businesses and work with the chamber of commerce to make shopping in Moraga a pleasurable activity.
- 4) Complete successful negotiation of labor agreements with all employee bargaining units.

Prior to the mayor's presentation, town manager Bob Priebe listed last year's goals, indicating

which ones had been achieved and which ones were still in process. The installation of security cameras, for example, has been delayed because the sinkhole has brought strain to the town's finances. Other goals such as the zoning of the Moraga Center Specific Plan are still in process.

Vice mayor Roger Wykle and council member Dave Trotter both asked that last year's unfinished business make it to the official list, in addition to the mayor's four goals. Trotter insisted that securing federal reimbursement for the sinkhole repair should be on the list. Wykle said he would want to see an ongoing work list with all the previously approved goals.

Councilmember Kymberleigh Korpus said that she had a list of some 20 objectives of her own, but that she was aware and respectful of staff's workload. One of them would be the establishment of a long-term vision and financial plan, including all infrastructure maintenance needs.

Several residents added their own requests, including protection



Mayor Teresa Onoda holds one of many speaker cards and listened to a resident during the public comment session. Photo Andy Schreck

against gun violence (see article above), the town support of the Community Conversation process that was started recently in Moraga and is endorsed by Saint Mary's College, the review of the Moraga climate action plan, and the town's support of Moraga Community Foundation's plans to make sure the Rheem Theater stays open.

The council members also debated the methodology used to es-

tablish a goal list. Council member Jeanette Fritzky proposed to work on the prioritization, while Korpus asked what metrics be used to measure the level of success in reaching goals.

Each council member was asked to send their list to town manager Priebe and his staff is compiling a list for discussion. A final decision will be made at a subsequent town council meeting.

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she was arrested for an outstanding warrant and taken to county jail. The milk was returned to its rightful store owner, presumably before its expiration date.

1/26 Larceny

A Moraga resident notified police of the theft of four passports and one birth certificates from a locked mailbox. Does someone want badly to move to Canada?

1/26 Suspicious Circumstances

A Saint Mary's College worker reported three suspicious phone calls saying the SMC men's basketball team needed to make baskets or people would be hurt. Moraga police responded and checked the area. They found no problems and the game ended peacefully. Net zero, you might say.

1/20 Residential Burglary:

missing property not detailed

1/20 Vehicle larceny:

black bag stolen

1/27 ID Theft:

Phone report taken.

1/27 Bench warrants

Driving on suspended license (3 counts); possession of stolen property

1/29 Missing person

A father reported his teenage daughter ran away; she has a history of doing so.



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EBMUD put on the spot for failure to address landslide on Augusta Drive

By Sophie Braccini



The hillside that failed along Moraga Creek a year ago is still tarped.

Moraga pedestrians used to be treated to a nice walk along Moraga Creek up to the crossing of the Lafayette-Moraga trail and Canyon Road. Nowadays when one ventures on the Canyon Bridge, the access to the trail is closed, and has been since January of 2016.

All that has been done is tarping the hill on the southern side of the trail, that same hill that failed

last March and forced a family of five to vacate their home and relocate. The end of their ordeal being nowhere in sight, friends and neighbors have rallied around them and are now demanding that the town take action.

“A family has been red-tagged out of their house for a year and EBMUD has not done anything for a whole year,” said Steve Garrett

who came to the Jan. 25 Moraga Town Council meeting along with 20 other people in support of the Moraga family.

In March the Alford's noticed that a portion of their deck was leaning. After inspecting the ground behind their property they noted cracks in the EBMUD ground that started to affect the home's foundations. They moved out.

Some neighbors on Augusta Drive are also affected with irregular water delivery and loss of the use of their backyards.

At the time the problem started EBMUD indicated that it had inspected the area but that the soil was so saturated that nothing could be done until it dried out. But the only visible difference today over what was a year ago is the tarp that covers the entire hill.

Friends of the Alford's told the town council that they had attended EBMUD meetings and talked during public comments but that all they got were polite nods. They forcefully demanded that the town council take action and keep them informed of their progress.

... continued on page A11

Photo Sophie Braccini

Summer Camp Expo

Saturday, 3/18, 11-2 pm

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Moraga seeking Citizen of the Year nominations

Submitted by Claire Roth

Do you have a person in mind for the Town of Moraga to honor as 2017 Citizen of the Year?

Criteria are as follows:

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

Please email your nomination to nominations@lamorindaweekly.com or send it to Moraga Citizen of the Year nominations, Lamorinda Weekly, PO Box 6133, Moraga CA 94556. The deadline for submitting nominations is Monday, March 6.

A celebration dinner will be held on Saturday, April 22 at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College to honor the winner. The 2017 Moraga Citizen of the Year Award is co-sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Saint Mary's College of California, the Lamorinda Weekly and the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley.

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TIP OF THE WEEK:
Super Bowl Sunday marks the unofficial beginning of a new real estate season, so here we go! As we have heard, mortgage interest rates are expected to increase a couple of times this year, so the sooner buyers can buy, the happier they will be. If you are thinking of selling your home this year, please contact us to help you determine the best time to list and most effective improvements to make, in order to get top dollar for your home!!

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Planning Commission

TBA
Room#7 of the Community Center,
28 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2017, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
City Hall, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda

School Board Meetings

Orinda Unified School District
Monday, Feb. 13, 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



Jan 15 to Jan. 21

- Alarms** 22
- Noise complaints** 2
- 911 Calls (includes hang-ups)** 1
- Traffic stops** 28
- Suspicious Circumstances** 2
- Suspicious Subjects** 7
- Suspicious Vehicles** 5
- Abandoned vehicle**
60 block Brookwood Dr. (2)
- Disturbance**
Donald/Hall Drives
- DUI**
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
- Drunk in Public**
Nations
- Harass**
100 block Bates Blvd.
10 block Dos Posos
- Hit & Run**
Camino Pablo/Hwy 24
- Litter**
Camino Sobrante/Orinda Way
- Missing Adult**
10 block Park Lane Dr.
Bear Ridge Rd./Tappan Ln.
- Ordinance Violation**
Underhill Rd./Camino Encinas
- Police/Fire/ EMS**
Orinda Theater
- Reckless Driving**
Rheem Blvd/Glorietta Blvd. (2)
- Theft, ID**
20 block Sleepy Hollow Ln. (2)
100 block Meadow View Rd.
- Theft, Petty**
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- Trespass**
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Long delays for emergency vehicles up the pressure for speedy sinkhole repair on Miner Road

By Sora O'Doherty



Sinkhole reveals broken culvert that requires a new large diameter pipe to contain major EBMUD water main, PG&E gas pipes, and Contra Costa County Sanitary District sewer pipes. Photo Gint Federas

Orinda raced to get sinkhole repairs underway as the unusual closure of Miner Road is adding 20 minutes to the response time for emergency vehicles, including to Sleepy Hollow Elementary School.

City staff has been putting in long hours, including nights and weekends working with potential contractors and government agencies to move forward. One hurdle the city had to clear was convincing the California Regional Water Quality Control Board that their alternate proposal was unworkable and would have added over \$400,000 and months of delay.

At a special meeting on Jan. 31, the city council authorized City Manager Janet Keeter to enter into a construction contract with Bay Cities, adding a 20 percent contingency budget. Bay Cities came in with the lowest bid at \$1,471,717, and nearly the earliest completion date of March 2. Since the city was able to resolve differences with the

RWQCB and pull an emergency permit to begin the work, Bay Cities plans to work two 10-12 hour shifts daily during the peak period of work, weather permitting.

Orinda considered five proposals before accepting Bay Cities' bid. The proposals ranged from similar in time and cost to nearly double the cost and up to 100 working days. Orinda has previously had a good experience working with Bay Cities on the North Lane Storm Water Mitigation Project in 2015, according to council member Amy Worth.

The council had words of high praise for the efforts of the city staff, including Keeter, City Attorney Osa Wolff and especially Public Works Director Larry Theis, who was accepting proposals and vetting them over the weekend after the sinkhole appeared while working around the clock trying to smooth permitting issues. State Senator Steve Glazer, Congressman Mark De-

Saulnier and Assembly member Catharine Baker interceded on the city's behalf, and the council expressed its appreciation.

Having investigated several construction options, the city selected an elliptical 10-foot wide corrugated 12-gauge metal pipe for the culvert, which is flattened somewhat to allow for sewage pipes to pass over it, but provides the same flow-through as a 9-foot round diameter pipe, estimated to be sufficient for a 100-year storm. Sewer work is estimated to require \$21,000. The RWQCB had advocated for a bigger culvert of the same width as the current 14-foot-wide channel banks, but the city opposed this plan, which might have required further geotechnical studies, expensive pile footings, and perhaps a completely different pipe material. This would have caused extensive delays in an emergency situation. To address RWQCB's concerns, the city agreed to reduce the limits of rock slope protection, to bury the rock under

channel substrate, and provide riparian plantings along the bank.

The council also discussed the question of reimbursement for the sinkhole repair. Theis explained that the Federal Highway Administration can reimburse 100 percent of repairs considered emergency opening (EO) but usually only reimburses permanent restoration (PR) at a rate of 88.5 percent, leaving 11.4 percent of the cost to the local authority. Also, improvements, known as "betterments" are generally not reimbursable.

However, Orinda believes that its unique situation should qualify its repairs as EO rather than PR because doing a temporary fix has been determined to provide no benefit but great additional costs. Theis explained to the FHWA and the California Department of Transportation that a permanent repair is necessary now owing to existing site constraints and the lack of any cost effective temporary repair options to reestablish two lanes of traffic. Also, the city believes that widening the pipe in the culvert should not be considered a betterment because it is a necessary safety feature.

Also discussed were traffic calming measures to be put in place quickly, such as lane delineators, and the need for cars to refrain from passing school busses stopped with flashing lights. The city is working with the Orinda Country Club and with neighbors affected by the sinkhole on aesthetic considerations, and is also making riparian habitat and plantings a priority. Theis promised property owners that the city will bring back different options for architectural treatments to the concrete headwalls to maintain the current aesthetics and will obtain both parties agreement to the type of treatment before installation.

... continued on page A9

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Orinda sets up Downtown Development subcommittee

By Sora O'Doherty

With no regularly scheduled meetings, the newly formed Downtown Development subcommittee will meet on an "as needed" basis for the purpose of providing assistance to city staff as they move into the project.

The subcommittee, which is modeled after the earlier Wilder subcommittee, will consist of newest council member Inga Miller, who will liaison with Creeks of Orinda and the Orinda Association, and Mayor Eve Phillips. It won't be the first time Miller and Phillips have been on the same team: the two ran track together at Miramonte High School.

The subcommittee will be on hand to help staff as they begin the process of formulating questions and working with the two organizations the city council has enlisted to

work on downtown development: the Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel and Mainstreet America.

In other council activity, the council decided that the full city council will interview four recruiting firms to select one to find the city's next city manager. They were scheduled to conduct the interviews Feb. 7.

Acting to narrow a list prepared by staff, the council selected three staff favorites and one more: Avery & Associates, Bob Murray & Associates, Peckham & McKenney and Ralph Anderson & Associates. The council requested that the person who will be in charge of the recruitment be present for each 15 minute interview. The council expects to spend in the neighborhood of \$22,500 to \$28,000 on the search for a new city manager.

Wet weather doesn't dampen the spirits of young marchers on Inauguration weekend

By Sora O'Doherty



Children get ready to march.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

The Kid's Inauguration Day Response and March went off without a hitch in Orinda on Sunday, Jan. 22, despite bucketing rain.

The event began in the early afternoon, when over 50 children and parents gathered at the Orinda Community Church to prepare for the march by creating colorful shirts and signs and to write letters to new President Donald Trump offering

him a view of their hopes for the future. The letters will be submitted as part of an initiative by the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance project. Other activities included making beaded safety pins and posting their hopes and concerns on the board.

After spending some time at the church, the group reassembled on the steps of the Orinda Community

Hall. By this time it was raining very heavily. Undeterred, under a fleet of bright umbrellas, the group cheerfully marched to Theatre Square, around it, and returned to the starting point.

The event was organized by parent Nicole Reader with the help of an advisory board of children, including her son, 10-year old Isaac Reader-Taatjes. Isaac and his friends Sammy Ishikawa and Casey Scheiner are fifth-grade students at Del Rey Elementary School.

Ishikawa said, "Although we disagree with some of Donald Trump's points, this is not a negative event." Scheiner added, "We don't want to criticize but to support." Things of concern to the three include immigration, diversity, equal rights, education and global warming.

Reader said that she found that her children felt very upset and powerless following the 2016 presidential election, that things that were important to them were now no longer important to the world.

... continued on page A11

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors
Wednesday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber room 107,
Administration Building,
651 Pine St., Martinez
For meeting times and agendas,
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

Development heating up for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District

By Nick Marnell

Fire Marshal Kathy Leonard runs the Moraga-Orinda Fire District inspection division and business is booming. "The growth is nice, but..." she said, and as she dug through her drawers of files and maps and pulled out two 4-inch thick environmental review documents for evidence, her nonverbal follow-up was clear: Leonard is very busy.

"The projects can take years start to finish," Leonard said, and since people want to build now, after a lull during the Great Recession, at least a dozen developments reside on the books in the district approval process. She found time between her plan reviews and building inspections to outline the challenges the district faces with some of these new developments.



Some new developments in Lamorinda had streets widened to accommodate engines.

Photo Andy Scheck

Summerhill Homes' Bellavista project on Rheem Boulevard is on hold until the road dries out. Nothing more has been done there beyond installation of a temporary water supply the district approved for two model homes. "We also required clear access through the detour to be able to take care of emergencies, like worker injuries and incidents at the other homes," Leonard said, which illustrates the main reason for the ordinances and the fire code: public safety, including that of the firefighters.

In a large development like Wilder in Orinda, there must be at least one point for emergency vehicle access. "We have to have a way to get in, the gate must be locked and the road paved. The road may also be used for an evacuation," Leonard said. She described a proposed building near the Wilder subdivision that offered no rear access for a fire engine. The project was denied. "Firefighter safety is a huge piece of this job," she said.

Access presented problems for two other Orinda developments. The road into J and J Ranch did not meet a fire code requirement that calls for easy access to vegetation behind the homes, but the neighborhood did not want to make any of the necessary improvements. "We demand a reasonable degree of fire safety, and the developer fi-

nally agreed to bring the road up to code," Leonard said.

The eight-lot subdivision at the end of Lavenida Lane required extensive work as the steep road at the top of the driveways initially left no room for a turnaround, and fire equipment cannot back down a hill. MOFD also added a fire hydrant at the top of the driveway and had to increase the size of the water main to allow a higher flow because the project lies in a Cal Fire-recommended Very High Fire Severity Zone.

An increased turning radius to accommodate a fire engine was also required of the developer of Via Moraga across from the Rheem Shopping Center, as the 18-unit complex features very narrow roadways.

"We try to be fair with the developers, but they are putting up a project in our district. They have to abide by our ordinances and our fire code," Leonard said.

Sometimes geography makes things difficult. Palos Colorados lies at the Moraga-Lafayette border, at one of the farthest points in the district from a fire station. The development will feature homes up to 5,000 square feet and lots of open space, which will require extensive vegetation management. "People want to enjoy the open space, but open space can burn,"

Leonard said.

Because the 71 homes in the proposed Indian Valley subdivision lie in a straight line along a ridge near the Valle Vista staging area, not only is egress unsafe but there is no space for engine turnaround and only a single emergency vehicle access point. "The driveways will be extremely steep, and the road to Canyon is winding, dangerous and not stable," Leonard said. That project remains far from completion.

In the case of the Camino Ricardo subdivision in Moraga, the district insisted that the homeowners' association agree to maintain the vegetation in the common areas, which include a pedestrian bridge to Commons Park, to adhere to the fire code.

Not every situation with a developer is a confrontation, Leonard said. "Most of them are pretty savvy," she said. "We keep each other on our toes." She specifically mentioned Brooks Street, one of the original Wilder developments, as very easy to work with.

But the bottom line for the district is safety, and is non-negotiable. "These developments will be here long after I'm gone," Leonard said. "I will not sign a final building permit until our work is done."

"We're not doing this on a whim."

MOFD, ConFire chiefs update new Lamorinda lawmakers on concerns

By Nick Marnell

The fire chiefs from the two local Lamorinda fire districts warned of their operational concerns and shared their goals with newly installed council members from each Lamorinda municipality at an orientation session held at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.



From left, MOFD's Stephen Healy, and ConFire's Lewis Broschard and Jeff Carman.

Photo Nick Marnell

First and foremost, the chiefs emphasized that dropped boundaries exist between the two districts, meaning that regardless in what city an emergency occurs, the closest fire engine or ambulance will respond to the call, no matter what.

"That is not always the case," said Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Chief Jeff Carman, who noted that at his prior fire agency in the city of Roseville, such a relationship did not exist.

Both districts have rebuilt fire stations in the works. "We're waiting on the weather," said Moraga-Orinda Fire District Chief Stephen Healy, who estimated the reopening of Fire Station 43 in north Orinda for sometime this fall.

ConFire is waiting on the city. The district submitted its application to rebuild western Lafayette Fire Station 16 in September, received a thumbs-up from the Planning Commission in December and awaits a decision from the Design Review Commission Feb. 27. "We have a ways to go," said Deputy Chief Lewis Broschard, who expects that the district will bid out the project by early summer.

But the biggest concern, shared by both fire agencies, is how to protect areas like Happy Valley

and north Orinda from a disastrous wildfire. "We hear it time and time again," Carman said. "It's like the Oakland hills, on the dry side of the mountain. It's a recipe for disaster."

Because the topography is challenging there, as are the roads, ConFire has teamed with the county Sheriff's Department to use its helicopter to help with fire suppression. "In those hills, if we're off by just a little bit in our response, it's not like we can go around to the next block. It would be maybe a five minute drive," Carman said.

Healy explained that heavy rains beget concerns about more foliage that can act as fuels, and he described grasses in north Orinda that grew up to 11 feet high last year. "That is what late spring rains can do," he said.

The chief also advised the council members that MOFD's Dennis Rein, the Lamorinda emergency preparedness coordinator, promotes joint interagency efforts with respect to disaster preparedness.

Council members Ivor Samson and Cameron Burks of Lafayette, Kymberleigh Korpus of Moraga and Darlene Gee of Orinda attended the Jan. 31 orientation session, organized and conducted by Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk.

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Moragan organizes protest against ban



Farzi Mostatabi, second from left, organized the protest in Lafayette.

Photo Nick Marnell

President Trump's Jan. 27 executive order keeping refugees from entering the country for 120 days and immigrants from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia out for three months prompted one Moragan to action.

"I care about the U.S.A. I came here for my daughters to have a

great future," said Farzi Mostatabi, who organized a daily protest at the corner of Mount Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road to call attention to what she called "a nation that is no longer united."

"I want to give Trump a chance, but every time I hear him talk it gets darker and darker," said Mostatabi,

undaunted by the raindrops and a Lafayette sky that got darker and darker. "This is a land of opportunity, but not so much anymore," she said.

A federal judge issued a temporary restraining order against the ban and the stay was still in place at press time. — N. Marnell

Letters to the Editor

Enjoyed background on park
Dear Editor,
I am reaching out to say how much I enjoyed seeing Mr. Miller's article in the Jan. 25 issue about the community gathering at Leigh Creekside Park.

I found his description of the history of the park's creation very meaningful. And with all the strong opinions about the park's future, Mr. Miller kept the tone of the article respectful to all parties. I have at times thought the community needs a mediator to solve the debate. Someone may have to concede on this issue, but finding positive regard for one another during a disagreement is worth it.

The article was a helpful read. We'll be staying tuned! Many thanks.

Angela Ristow
Lafayette

Let Leigh Creekside Park Be
Dear Editor,
I want to thank John T. Miller for his even handed article on the Future of Leigh Creekside Park. As an original donor to the Park, I strongly feel this open space provides plenty of room for our young children to play and experience nature, our teenagers to find solace and peace from the

pressures of society, our elderly to find a quiet interlude with friends, and our creek animals to find relief from the ever circling confines of development. Please let it be.

Jean Lawther
Lafayette

Residents Enjoyed Afternoon in Leigh Creekside Park
Dear Editor,

I would like to thank John T. Miller for his article, "City Council to Decide Future of Leigh Creekside Park," which appeared in the Jan. 25, 2017 issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. The community event hosted by the Coalition to Save Leigh Creekside Park was a delightful afternoon, demonstrating how the park can be enjoyed by a multitude of people without the addition of play structures. Up to 100 people of all ages attended, including young children, Girl Scouts, middle school-aged kids, adults and senior citizens. Thank you also to the Leigh Creekside Park "Let it Be!" group for such a lovely afternoon in Lafayette's only completely natural, open space park!

Karen Ward
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 for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Orinda

Sinkhole repair on Miner Road

... continued from page A6

Council members Darlene Gee and Dean Orr continue to recuse themselves from the sinkhole discussion because both are regular members of the Orinda Country Club, although neither is on the board, and the club may be affected by the work.

Two members of the public addressed the special meeting. Bob Burt suggested that the city argue that the entire repair should

be reimbursable at 100 percent as EO, owing to the emergency nature of the repairs. Dan De Bruschere suggested that the council go ahead without permits, but Attorney Wolff advised against that, although the council took De Bruschere's advice regarding speed seriously and Mayor Eve Phillips explained that the city is moving forward as quickly as possible.

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Lafayette showcases its many wedding vendors with a unique 'Bridal Crawl'

By Paula King



Wedding cakes will be on display during the 'Bridal Crawl!'

Photos Courtesy of SusieCakes

The winter months leading up to Valentine's Day are when 75 percent of couples get engaged, so wedding season is just around the corner and brides are making big decisions this time of year.

The Lafayette Bridal Social scheduled for Feb. 12 is aimed at narrowing down those overwhelming options for the modern bride. Lace & Bustle Bridal owner Victoria Hansen envisions the unique event as a "bridal crawl," which is like a pub crawl except it features cocktails, expert tips, freebies and local vendors for gowns, beauty, photography, planning, jewelry, cakes and venues.

"It is extremely overwhelming for today's bride. It is like night and day from when I was a bride six years ago," said Hansen of the Pinterest overload on social media. "The options are just endless for brides and it could be a bit much."

As a kickoff to wedding planning, Hansen will guide future brides through helpful dress tips with live models. Some of the latest trends in bridal fashion are lots of texture, laces, appliques and separates to create a custom look, but Hansen noted that her boutique is mostly modern classic.

"What we carry here is very timeless," she said of her Lafayette shop. "Some brides are drawn to a certain trend. That is okay, if that is their style. You want to wear what you are going to love and what you feel beautiful in that day."

For the social, Hansen has teamed up with event planning duo and sisters, Leslie Yrueta and Linda Lathrop of Linen and Lilac Design. According to

Yrueta, not only are today's brides overwhelmed by choices, they are also not enjoying an intimate and personalized experience at typical bridal fairs.

"If you go to large bridal shows, there are booth after booth of people trying to sell their services. The main objective is to show them what these vendors can provide," she said. "We want to give them little tips and tricks of the trade and make them feel empowered and excited about their big day."

According to Yrueta, they also want to showcase what Lamorinda has to offer in terms of services, vendors and goods for weddings. For example, Linen and Lilac only plan about 10 weddings each year because they strive to get to know each couple and weave personalities and passions into the nuptials.

"We are such a close-knit and tight community and people are so supportive of small businesses in Lamorinda," Yrueta said. "There are so many options locally for brides."

Instead of the trade show ambiance of typical bridal fairs held in hotels, the Lafayette Bridal Social is aiming to pamper brides with waxing demonstrations at Wax A Peel and makeup and hair tutorials from DryStyle Lounge. As the brides tour the merchants' spaces, they will be sipping on cocktails and sampling hors d'oeuvres.

Other vendors include Parker's Crazy Cookies, Paper Monkey Press, Jessica Kay Photography, Ma Petite Maison Cake Design, Bowerbird Atelier, The Dailey Method, Itty Bitty Bakeshop, Esmerelda Franco Photography, The Claremont Club + Spa A Fairmount Hotel, Susie Cakes, Apila Design, The Bare Bride, J. Hilburn, Wish Boutique, Icewater Jewelry and Wine Thieves.

"We have been working at organizing this event and putting together an intimate and interactive bridal experience for our brides," said Hansen.

The Lafayette Bridal Social will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12, starting at Lace & Bustle Bridal, 3569 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Tickets are \$28. For more details, check out www.lafayettebridalsocial.com or call 925-298-4100.

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

Damage closes McCaulou's in Moraga



Photo Andy Schreck

The McCaulou's department store in Moraga closed temporarily as of Thursday Feb. 2 because of rain damage. Store owner David McCaulou said that before reopening, the store will be remodeled and the roof repaired. McCaulou added that the rain will have to stop before work starts on the roof and that it will take several months before the store reopens. Windows display and lights should stay on during the closure.

The retail chain owner promises all will be done as soon as possible. The roof repair will be carried out in cooperation with the property owner. "Then what we will need in Moraga is more shoppers," says the businessman, who wants to see some development in the town. — Sophie Braccini

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Lafayette, Millie's Kitchen will miss its founder as Millie Harris dies at 91

By Cathy Dausman



Millie's Kitchen, a Lafayette fixture.

Photo Andy Scheck

The old-fashioned street sign on Oak Hill Road reads "Millie's Kitchen." The sign was designed and contributed by a San Francisco policeman who was a restaurant patron. While the sign and the name remain, Millie Harris, original chef and owner of Millie's Kitchen in Lafayette, died Jan. 29 at age 91.

Harris opened the kitchen in June 1975, said current owner Eva Clement. Clement worked at the restaurant for 14 years, telling Harris, "When you're ready to sell, I'll buy." In 1989 Harris told Clement "I'm ready," and retired to Gualala,

California, where she had property. She continued working, this time as a volunteer for the local food bank.

"She made sure that there were candy canes, cracker jacks, cookies, and something sweet for the children in every food bank distribution," wrote Paul Batchelder on a Lafayette Facebook page.

If children were important to Harris, she and her restaurant were equally important to Lamorinda residents. Sue Callister of Lafayette started eating at Millie's in high school, and continued to patronize the restaurant later in life,

often biking there to eat with her children. Callister called Harris "a wonderful lady" and thinks Harris was once a VIP at a Campolindo High School's homecoming parade. She's seen Millie's Kitchen coffee mugs as far away as Perth, Australia, where a former East Bay resident relocated.

Lamorinda resident Nancy Mooers Brown has eaten at Millie's since high school. "I've enjoyed introducing my husband and our kids to Millie's," Brown said. She says her children also consider the restaurant their favorite Lafayette breakfast spot. "My go-to favorite has always been Millie's coffee cake," she said.

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce executive director Jay Lifson has been a regular at Millie's for 30 years. "During the Art & Wine Festival we have our pre-event meetings at 5 a.m. there each year," he said.

Graveside services are open to the public; they will be held at 12 p.m. Feb. 8 at Queen of Heaven Cemetery, 1965 Reliez Valley Road in Lafayette. At Harris' request there will be no funeral. As she told Clement, she wanted "no hoopla." She is survived by family in Wisconsin.

Moraga

EBMUD put on the spot for failure to address landslide

... continued from page A5

It so happens that at the Jan. 11 council meeting council member Dave Trotter had asked that the topic of the trail be put on the agenda of a future meeting. He had asked that both EBMUD, who owns the land, and East Bay Regional Park District that manages the trail be invited to provide a report on what is going on with the landslide, and present their plan to restore the trail and protect the uphill neighbors.

"Leaving it just tarped is not an option," the council member had said. Vice mayor Roger Wykle had proposed during that same meeting that town staff make a formal written request to the water agency, adding that if EBMUD would not answer, "We will go stand on their desk!"

Town manager Bob Priebe said the agency refused to answer any questions because of pending litigation.

After the public outcry on Jan. 25 staff restated the impossibility they had had to get an answer from the utility, and the council members

reaffirmed their determination to get a result. "It takes a village and we are on your team," said Mayor Teresa Onoda after she was able to restore order following the first raucous incident of her short career as mayor. Worked-up by months of frustration and the inability to get a straight answer, some residents lost patience when they understood that the council could not discuss an item that was not on the agenda.

Since the group of residents had come to talk during public comment, the council could not discuss actions other than what had already been decided at the Jan. 11 meeting. One Moragan proposed that the topic be a permanent agenda item. Rather, the mayor asked that a draft letter be put on the agenda for the Feb. 8 meeting, and that the topic be continued if necessary. The council will also discuss if more can be done. The town manager proposed to look into the franchise agreement with EBMUD and see if the town could have any type of leverage over the agency.

Orinda

Rain Fails to dampen spirits of young marchers

... continued from page A7

She thought, "how terrible to be a kid, you can't even vote," and tried to conceive of a tangible action for them to demonstrate the things they care about. It was, she thought, important not to be abstract, but to be supportive, standing up, in an action-based way.

They did a post-election march right before the candlelight vigil on Nov. 18, attended by about 100. She had several meetings with groups of children to plan the inaugural event. The idea was to convert concern and to flip it into hope. For example, concern about

war became hope for peace, and the children can think about how to make their hopes happen.

However, not everyone agreed with Reader. When the inaugural event was publicized on the private social media site Nextdoor, it evinced a stream of very negative opinions.

Reader said she had seen the comments, but, she said she felt it was a parent's right and responsibility to teach our values to their children. "We talk," she said, "and children draw their own opinions."

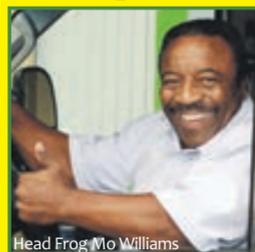
Some of the letters written by the children:

"Dear President Trump, I think you should help the environment by not building stuff in the wild. I also think you should be kind to poor, homeless and immigrant people. The country is meant to be for everyone. You shouldn't drive people such as homeless people, out of the U.S.A. Please do not pollute in habitats. From Ryan Lo"

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"Dear White House I suggest, that you try to get people to treat others nicely. Sincerely, Mia"

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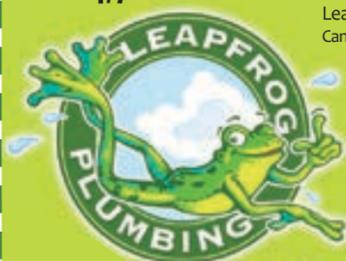
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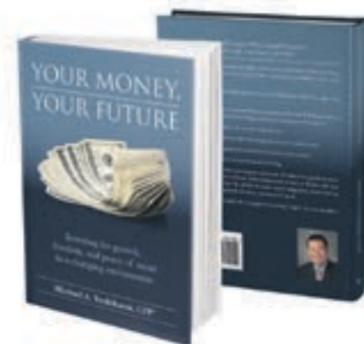


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Giving Dreams an Address

Falling trees

... continued from page A1



This tree fell onto St. Andrews Drive near Moraga Way in Moraga

Photos Gint Federas



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The massive trunk of the fallen eucalyptus tree



The remains of a Jeep Wrangler car crushed by the eucalyptus tree was parked in front of La Finestra Restaurant



Many power lines are in danger to be damaged by falling trees like this one on Reliez Valley Road.

Danger of Falling Trees —What to Look For:

- Uncorrected Leans: The upright growth of the tree has been compromised. This could happen for a variety of reasons (shade constraints, trauma, etc.). To check if a tree is leaning more, drive two screws into different levels of tree and check with a digitalized level. Measure again periodically to see if there is increased angle.
Fungi: Various fungi can cause damage to the tree's trunk. Most commonly, Armillaria, sometimes called the oak root fungus, can infect the roots. Because of this, detection is difficult unless characteristic mushrooms are produced around the base of the tree or symptoms become obvious in the crown or on the lower stem.
Generally, the foliage thins and discolors, turns yellow, then brown; branches die back; and shoot and foliar growth are reduced.
On large, lightly infected or vigorous trees, crown symptoms develop over a number of years until the trees die. Conifers, particularly Douglas fir and western larch, frequently produce a larger-than-normal crop of cones, known as stress cones, shortly before they die.
On most conifers, the infected portions of the lower stems are somewhat enlarged and exude large amounts of resin. Infected portions of the roots frequently become heavily encrusted with resin, soil and fungal tissue. Other fungi can include brown rot and shelf conks, which resemble seashells protruding from the trunk.
Drought stress: Symptoms are often the same as fungal damage, but without the presence of fungi.
Buried trunk: The trunk resembles a buried telephone pole. This can be the result of overmulching or excessive watering. Digging around the base may reveal root damage.
Root restriction: Factors such as nearby concrete, foundations, retaining walls, pathways, etc., may limit root extension. Girdling roots may be found wrapping around the base of the tree.
Excessive pruning: Improper or excessive pruning can compromise a tree and lead to failure. Over-thinning the interior of the tree (called lions-tailing), unbalances the crown causing future growth toward the ends of remaining branches. This shifts the center of gravity higher where wind speed is greater. Branches may break more easily in storms or under their own weight.
Multiple trunks: Trees with more than one dominate trunk can have a tendency to split, causing major portions of the tree to fall.
Vine growth: Vines can cause structural problems. Added weight can be trapped against the trunk leading to fungal and bacterial diseases and structural decay at the base of the tree.
Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service; Urban Tree Foundation; The Britton Fund; Midwestern Trees; John Traverso, Arborist

Saranap resident John Traverso, owner of Traverso Tree Service and a certified arborist, estimated that the oak tree that fell was an estimated 250 years old and suffered from the street being moved 10 feet closer. In addition, he added, all water going down a crack in the gutter went beneath the tree. Roots had been damaged beneath the upper layer and rotted out. "From the surface, no one could have seen the damage to the oak, but the eucalyptus was a different matter," said Moran. "It was clearly overgrown and prime for a fall."

Public Works Director Edric Kwan of Moraga says that the town has been pretty lucky so far, but there was a big tree that fell on Augusta Drive near the Country Club.

"Homeowners should be aware that they are responsible for the trees around their property," warned Kwan. "Public Works will remove a tree that is blocking a roadway, but the property owner will have to pay for that service." He added that the homeowner's insurance usually covers the cost.

Precautions for Homeowners

Moran also cautions that property owners are responsible for the maintenance of trees adjacent to their property (ie. sidewalk trees). "Many of the older and big-

ger eucalyptus and pine trees have problems and are already on the way out," said Moran. "The eucalyptus have shallow foundations and should be pruned regularly, while many pine trees have been decimated by bark beetles."

One large problem with existing trees is too much landscape irrigation. Direct water on tree trunks, growing lawn around trees and over mulching can all compromise a tree. Traverso recommends keeping water at least 10 feet away from the trunk.

Traverso estimates it may take up to three to five years for problems to decrease from the past drought. "One good winter may actually contribute to further failures. Early storms brought down

the weaker and smaller trees, while worse storms are bringing down bigger ones."

Traverso also mentioned a large problem for tree owners: summer (or sudden) limb drop in warmer weather. "Throw in 100-degree heat and a drop in the weather at night and it can cause a defect in the branch to break and fall."

Traverso and Moran both suggest that if homeowners have any doubt about the condition of their trees they should consult a qualified arborist for an evaluation. Most companies would evaluate and submit a bid for free. People can also check the www.treesaregood.com website for a qualified tree risk assessor from the International Society of Arboriculture.



An artistic treasure hunt ‘R-evol-ution’

By Cathy Dausman



Deborah Rhee works on her "tiny talismans."

Photo Cathy Dausman

Deborah Rhee admits to recently "feeling stuck" artistically. The Lafayette abstract painter (www.deborahrhee.com/blog/the-beat-goes-on-now-hanging-at-jennifer-perlmutter-gallery) had noted the apprehensive mood of many of her fellow Californians following November's national election and decided to do something about it.

Enter her "Tiny Talismans" art card-cum gift project, something she describes as a "silly little thing." Yet it seems there is magic in Rhee's free talismans, from their creative process, to their surreptitious placement around the area to their eventual discovery by delighted Lamorindans.

With Valentine's Day right around the corner, there couldn't be a more appropriate time for people to discover one of her Revolution project art cards. Rhee said she even discovered the word love hiding, albeit backwards, within the

word revolution.

Just slightly larger than a conventional business card, each talisman is an oil and glaze abstract done on canvas card stock and signed and numbered on the reverse. The first round of cards were enclosed in envelopes and hidden at eye level. Fearing the item might be ignored, she switched to translucent, beribboned net bags with "a gift for you" tag enclosed.

"Just the idea of leaving a Tiny Talisman for someone to randomly find seems to put a smile on people's faces," Rhee writes on her blog.

"Actually going out and leaving them around town had my friend and I grinning all afternoon. We felt like kids in on a secret," Rhee said. "The joy of giving is a boundary breaker. It's one heart to another," seeming to emphasize the Valentine's Day vibe. "Art has an energy gifted to the person taking in the art," she explains. The first batch

she painted in blues and greens, for their calming effect. Rhee designed the second batch in rainbow colors, for inclusion.

Rhee started her project the second week of January; her goal is to distribute 200 Tiny Talismans locally, but the project could have a much larger impact. A teacher in Australia (Rhee is Australian) discovered her Facebook page (http://tinyurl.com/gozh6qc) and has her class developing something similar. There is also a printer in Dallas, Texas, who wants to mass-produce her talisman artwork, but Rhee isn't interested. "This isn't a Pokémon Go find," she assured, "it is art; a one-on-one connection." Rhee hopes her small, random acts of kindness make it a good day for each recipient. "I'm just little Deb in my garage (studio)," she insists. "My magic is my painting."

Moraga man is Grammy nominee once again

By Cathy Dausman



Alan Ferber

Photo Christopher Drukker

Musical lightning strikes twice, as Moraga native Alan Ferber earned his second Grammy nomination, this time for Best Instrumental Composition for "Flow."

To say Ferber plays saxophone is a bit like saying Duke Ellington or Louis Armstrong were musically inclined. Lamorinda Weekly caught up with Ferber via email while he was on the road with saxophonist John Ellis appearing at the St Barts Music Festival. Between performances he enjoyed "some much needed time to rest and recover from a busy year."

Ferber is on the faculty at NYU's jazz studies program, teaches privately and runs two ensembles, and has also been a steady presence at the Lafayette Summer Music Jazz Workshop. He admits having "un-

fortunately" given up playing in live Broadway orchestras: "Between my teaching, composing, gig schedule, and family commitments, my plate is too full," he says.

Family may have been the reason "Flow" came about. Ferber used a Chamber Music America grant for new jazz works to compose an hour-long piece called "Roots & Transitions" (Sunnyside Records) during the first year of his young son's life.

"My experience as a new father informed the shape of this piece," he says. The work features solos by Ferber on trombone and solo trading between Scott Wendholt on trumpet and Nate Radley on guitar. There's still more family involved as well – Ferber's brother Mark plays drums, as he did on Ferber's 2014 Grammy-nominated album

"March Sublime" (also Sunnyside Records). "A lot of my music is written with Mark in mind so I see him as somewhat of a producer as well, even though he may not know that," Ferber said. While Ferber's earlier Grammy nomination (www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0723/pdf/All-That's-Jazz-Moraga-man-earns-a-Grammy-nomination.pdf) made use of a 17-piece big band, "Roots & Transitions" features his nine-piece Alan Ferber Nonet. It is the group's fourth album since their formation in 2004.

Ferber says he has become more involved with the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences since he was first nominated. "The Grammys have been beneficial to me," he said, "and I would really like to see other emerging artists benefit as well."

The 2017 Grammy awards program airs at 8 p.m. Feb. 12 on the CBS network. Ferber's family will accompany him, dressed to the nines, or as Ferber might say, to the Nonet. "My wife Jody and I are even in process of shopping for a tux for our 3-year-old," he says.



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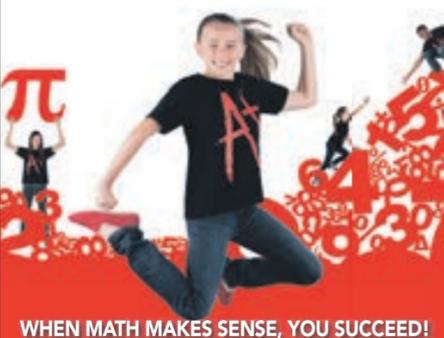
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A new chapter for Orinda yoga instructor

By Kara Navolio



Teaching youngsters the joy of yoga is a major sentiment in Dana Dowell's new book.

Photos Dana Dowell



As a yoga instructor and practitioner of the exercise that combines meditation and movement for overall health, Dana Dowell wanted to share the yoga philosophy with children. She sees yoga as a way to help children, to give back to the community, and this is her motivation for writing her first children's book "Yoga Girl" (Lulu Publishing, Dec. 2016).

The book, which is illustrated by Kevin Coffey of San Francisco, is intended for children ages 5-10 and shows how yoga can give people of all ages more confidence, more physical fitness, more peacefulness, and bring people together. "My goal is to help girls, empower girls. Everyone can do yoga regardless of age, body type or size. Yoga can help kids feel better and perform better, both physically and mentally," says Dowell, an Orinda resident who also grew up in Orinda and attended Miramonte High School.

Dowell's mother has been practicing yoga for over 40 years, raising her and her siblings as a single mom by teaching yoga before it was popular. In her 80s now, she's still teaching at the Orinda Community Center and Hacienda de las Flores in Moraga and is an inspiration to Dowell.

The "Yoga Girl" story, which is somewhat autobiographical, also touches on themes of friendship and bullying and dealing with overscheduling. As a mom of three sons, Dowell sees overscheduling of kids as a big problem in today's race to get kids into the best colleges. Kids don't have enough down time and time to reflect. In the story, Riley, the main character, must make some choices about her time commitments. Yoga also serves as a way to help Riley center herself during stressful and busy times.

This focus on mindfulness and meditation is not new to Dowell. In addition to her teaching of yoga and practicing it since she was 8 years old, she and her mother started an online retail store called The Green Buddha in 2008. It was a way for her to stay focused on the things she was grateful for and to help others

do the same during a difficult patch in her life, as her marriage was dissolving and the whole country was falling on difficult financial times. Products sold on the website www.thegreenbuddha.net support a life with an attitude of gratitude.

Dowell's past career as an actress is an asset in her new career as independent author as she has to promote herself as she promotes her book. Dowell has been reading her book at local schools and at Orinda Books last month. The readings include the teaching of several yoga poses. She is presenting the book to Girl Scout troops and donating "Mom & Me Yoga" classes to all of Lafayette's Elementary School fundraising

at Studio E in Moraga on Monday mornings and is happy to sell the book directly to interested buyers for a discounted price. She can be reached at danadowell@me.com.

The book can also be found at Orinda Books, Barnes & Noble, Amazon or on her website: www.mpwbooks.com. It will soon be available, along with Yoga Girl t-shirts and leggings for girls and Yoga Girl t-shirts for women, on thegreenbuddha.net website as well.

"Writing and publishing this book was one of the hardest things I've ever done. It was on my bucket list, and it's been worth all the hard work," says Dowell.



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YOUR SMILE IS EVERYTHING

East Bay Donation Station connects volunteers with those in need of help

By Diane Claytor



Leah Riggins, Founder of East Bay Donation Station social media site.

Photo Diane Claytor

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Moraga's Leah Riggins is doing what she can to help Lamorindans "make a life."

Several months ago, Riggins, a stay-at-home mom with a 6-year-old son and 3-year old daughter, created the East Bay Donation Station (EBDS), a Facebook group dedicated to matching nonprofit organizations in need of items with people happily willing to donate to those groups. "I kept seeing people on local social media sites asking for donations for various groups," Riggins explained. "I started thinking that instead of people asking for things here and there and maybe feeling badly about always making these requests, why not start a group where individuals who have items to donate could hang out and watch for messages to come through saying we need certain things. Does anyone have them. It just seemed so easy to start such a group," Riggins continued. And so she did.

Riggins, originally from Texas, always thought of herself as philanthropic. Armed with a law degree from Boston College Law School, Riggins' goal was to pursue public interest law, "basically getting paid very little and helping people that need help and knowing that you're making a difference in the world," she said. She wanted to help people solve their own problems by giving them the legal tools they'd need. Then she started having a family, moved to the Bay Area and decided to stay home for now. Creating the EBDS site was a natural. Riggins said, "I can do most of the work behind the scenes. It's easy to get on the phone or computer, send and respond to emails, make connections."

Riggins acknowledges that she is simply the conduit for charitable giving (think Match.com meets non-profits), connecting people and organizations. "Lamorinda is a very generous community," she said, and there are residents that work for nonprofit groups and others that volunteer. Over the years, Riggins has learned about the many needy groups throughout the area, knowing what they need and will (and won't) take and can now easily connect donors to them. Have some men's clothing to give away? She knows who will take them. Furniture, books, toys? Riggins can help find them a new home. And if she isn't sure, no doubt one of the other 260 EBDS members will have a suggestion.

The core membership of

EBDS is from Lamorinda, but there are also members from Walnut Creek, Concord and other outlying areas. It's a closed group, meaning that Riggins must approve all requests to join. "The only criteria," she says, "are geographical location and an understanding that this is a 'give group' rather than a group for scoring freebies."

Over the holidays, Riggins connected with Bobbie Preston, who heads the local No One Left Behind chapter. This organization is dedicated to helping Afghan refugees settle into their new East Bay homes. When starting EBDS, Riggins said, "My image was not just answering someone's question about where to donate their pots and pans, but matching those pots and pans with someone that needed them." With Preston's help, Riggins posted a list of items these new residents needed so donors could determine what they had to offer and know where their donation was going. "Many people prefer knowing that their donation is going directly and quickly to someone specific," Riggins noted.

Complementing Riggins' efforts is another local philanthropic mom – and executive director of Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation – Maya Smith, who is developing a written list of local nonprofits and their ongoing needs. "I believe we can each leverage some combination of our time, treasure and talent to alleviate suffering and encourage the flourishing of others," Smith says, asking EBDS members to add organization names and needs to the list. "I started thinking about how I could make a difference in my own community and get my family, as well as others, involved," Smith says, and that's the genesis of this list. "We are surrounded by a lot of need and I thought this could be an organic, community-driven way to become more aware of those needs."

In the short time she has been administering the EBDS site, Riggins has been quite impressed with the generosity of the Lamorinda community. "We had a need for diapers and actually had members go out to purchase boxes of them. These weren't extras they had lying around but new boxes purchased specifically to fill this need," Riggins exclaimed. "They spent \$30-40. And then they got their neighbors to buy diapers and asked their friends to do the same. They did this for people they don't know and will never meet," she continued. "It's incredibly heartwarming."

Campo Freshman a Fresh Face on NYC Fashion Runway

By Cathy Dausman



Photo provided

While many of Angelina Louie's peers wore heels to their middle school promotion, she chose Converse sneakers.

Angelina is still two years away from her high school prom and is not yet allowed to wear makeup, so why is she heading to a New York City fashion event? Perhaps because her parents urge her to try new things, she said. Angelina will be one of four "regular girls" on

the runway during the (online dress company) PromGirl fashion show Feb. 13 at The Art Beam in New York City's Chelsea neighborhood.

Angelina's mother Raquel Louie said she was surprised her daughter would consider applying for the event but hopes this will teach her that she can have fun in fashion as a natural beauty.

"It's not about the makeup," rather, "it's about the experience," her mother said.

Angelina herself admits she was "very surprised" when she learned in early January that she had been accepted, especially given her age (she's 14). She feels the event will help her build confidence. The teen's first love is singing; something she said she's done practically since she learned to talk. A choir member at school since sixth grade, Louie sings first so-

prano this year in the Campolindo High School Chorale choir.

She branched out to acting three years ago, getting involved with Walnut Creek's Young REP Theatre summer workshops. Angelina is currently rehearsing as a cast member of her high school's spring musical, "Beauty and the Beast," where she plays a plate and a villain.

The visit to New York City will be their first mother/daughter event, and the pair is looking forward to seeing the sights of Times Square and attending a Broadway musical.

"If you want something, look for opportunities," Angelina said, adding "remember to have fun." It doesn't hurt to know that after she models, Louie gets to keep her dress. It will look great with sneakers.

MBA Opening Day Parade Scheduled for Feb. 25

Submitted by Lauren Fritch



Play Ball! It's that time of year again, as the Moraga Baseball Association Opening Day Parade will usher in the 2017 season with over 200 players and

coaches, vintage cars, Moraga Fire and Police representatives, Campolindo Cheerleaders, Boys Scout Color Guard and hundreds of spectators.

The parade takes place at 9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 25 on Camino Pablo Road in Moraga. The parade runs from Camino Pablo Elementary School to Rimer Drive.

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Assisteens show elementary kids how to make a difference

Submitted by Betty Miller



An Assisteens volunteer paints the face of a youngster at a recent Assisteens party. Photo provided Orinda, Emily Forkas.

Since 1977, Assisteens, an auxiliary of Assistance League of Diablo Valley, has encouraged teens to volunteer by raising funds that benefit children and seniors in Contra Costa County. Over the years, Assisteens has expanded its membership to include both girls and boys, as well as high school and middle school students. Meeting students from other local schools, these energetic game changers have developed skills in leadership, organization and community service while having fun.

Assisteens from Lafayette include Brooke Clark, Lisa Erenstein, Meher George, Shreekar Pandey, Shrida Pandey and Greg Stenger. Moraga Assisteens include Ana Bernardo, Grace Burnite, Elle D'Iorio, Janet Guo, Devon Lau, Ellen White. And from

At a recent regular meeting, Assisteens Auxiliary Liaison Linda Benetar specified that Assisteens activities include hosting two parties, one with gifts from Santa and a springtime event, corresponding with homebound seniors and delivering a gift basket to each of them in the spring, as well as supplying snack packs for receiving center emergency kits. Additionally, Assisteens commit to working at the Assistance League Way Side Inn Thrift Shop, the chapter's primary fundraiser located in Lafayette, and supporting chapter programs throughout the year.

To learn more about Assisteens, please visit this website: diablovalley.assistanceleague.org.

Orinda musicians share instruments with Cuban kids

Submitted by Leslie Darwin



Terry Miller with the Children of Clave Del Sol, a guitar orchestra in Havana.

Orinda residents Terry Miller and Leslie Darwin O'Brien recently returned from Cuba where they performed at The Havana Jazz Festival.

Miller is an internationally acclaimed bass player and producer. O'Brien is a singer who performs in San Francisco and is known for her kid caroling at various Lamorinda music camps. This is the third time for Miller to visit Cuba this year. He is the founder of Terry's Kids, a nonprofit foundation whose mission is "a better world through music."

"This trip we were able to take guitar strings to Clave del Sol, a children's guitar orchestra in one of the poorer sections of Havana," Miller explains. The strings were presented to the kids by Julio Reyes, a well-known classical guitarist and conductor at Holy Names

University in Oakland. Reyes and O'Brien serve on the board of Terry's Kids.

"I am so moved by what Terry does. It is incredible to see the kids in Cuba doing music with the players from the USA. It truly is a language without words," O'Brien says.

Miller also took nine suitcases of instruments, costumes and clothes to La Colmenita, a children's theatre troupe in Havana.

O'Brien explains, "The trips are magical. Terry is well-connected in the American music industry, so he hires top-notch musicians to accompany art patrons on the trips: There's music at every meal, mostly with American and Cuban musicians playing together."

If you want to learn more about Terry's Kids, visit tmkids.org.



From left, Terry Miller, founder of Terry's Kids, with Leslie Darwin O'Brien and Julio Reyes, Terry's Kids board members. Photos provided

In Memory

Robert (Bob) Campbell

December 2, 1928 – January 23, 2017

Resident of Rossmoor



Loving husband of Georgianna Campbell (deceased), beloved kindergarten teacher at Del Ray Elementary School in Orinda. Loving father of Heather Woodward (Sam), Matt Campbell (Amy), and Beth Fitzgerald (Kevin). Loving grandfather of Hadley Woodward, Colin Campbell, and Kilian and Rory Fitzgerald. Dear brother of Jack Campbell (deceased).

Bob was raised in San Francisco. He graduated from Lowell High ('46) and the University of California, Berkeley ('50), where he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity. Received MA from San Francisco State University in Biological Science.

In the summer of 1952 Bob was the Director of the Student Section at the California Academy of Science. His first teaching job was in 1952 at Anly Union High School in Sebastopol, where he taught Physics and General Science and coached tennis. From 1953 to 1956 he taught at James Denman Junior High School in San Francisco.

In 1956 Bob moved to Moraga to teach at Miramonte High School in Orinda, where he was the first Biology and Chemistry teacher and the Science Department Chair. Subsequent roles over the next twenty-six years included counselor, assistant principal, Leadership (Student Government) teacher, and tennis, swimming, and cross-country coach. Bob raised his family in Moraga, and his children all attended Miramonte. In 1982 he transferred to Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek where he taught Biology, Chemistry, and Leadership for nine more years.

Bob's professional accomplishments include his role as one of nine high school chemistry teachers in the United States chosen to contribute to CHEM STUDY, a new approach to teaching high school chemistry that revolutionized traditional pedagogy. In 1980 he received the California Coaches Association High School Girls' Cross-Country Coach of the Year award. The American Chemical Society named Bob the Outstanding East Bay High School Chemistry Teacher in 1991, the same year he retired from teaching. Los Lomas dedicated their 1991 Yearbook to Bob.

In addition to his passion for teaching and coaching, Bob loved Natural History. In the summer of 1954 he was a State Park Ranger Naturalist at Big Basin State Park and in 1961 a Planetarium Lecturer at Diablo Valley College. In the summer of 1967 he led a field trip "Natural History of the Sierra Nevada" for St. Mary's College Extension. During school breaks Bob led backpack trips for teenagers in the Sierra Nevada, Grand Canyon, and Death Valley. He had a deep and abiding love for John Muir, and his fondest memories included introducing groups of up to twenty teenagers to "inner resources they never realized they had" on the John Muir Trail. He made this 216-mile trip from Yosemite to Mr. Whitney twelve times.

A devoted runner, Bob co-founded the Orinda Road Runners Club. His marathons included the 1974 Boston Marathon, which he ran in 3:15. He was a longtime member of Forma Gym (the former Walnut Creek Sports and Fitness Club).

Bob was a strong supporter of the charitable organization FACE (Family Aid to Catholic Education) and dedicated to St. Monica's Muffin Man Program, delivering food to Oakland dispensaries.

A funeral mass will be held at St. Monica's Catholic Church, 1001 Camino Pablo in Moraga on Friday, February 10, at 10:30 am. A reception will immediately follow in the Peace Room at St. Monica's. Interment will be at 2:30 pm at Queen of Heaven Cemetery, 1965 Reliez Valley Rd, Lafayette. In place of flowers the family ask that donations be made to FACE online at <http://www.oakdiocese.org/giving>.

In Memory

Warren L. Engstrom

April 22, 1925 - January 23, 2017

Warren Engstrom a longtime resident of Moraga passed away peacefully on Jan. 23 in Redding, California. A native of Oakland, he was a World War II combat veteran and a graduate of UC Berkeley. A former financial planner, he was active in the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club, Moraga SIRS, the OrindaHiking Club and was past president of the Moraga Historical Society and the Veterans Hospital Christmas Committee. Warren also constructed dozens of bluebird houses around the Moraga area and fledged over two thousand bluebirds.

He was the loving husband of Shirley, who preceded him in death in 2012. He is survived by two sons, a daughter, and two grandchildren. Any donations may be made to a charity of choice.

In Memory

Renee Zeidan



Renee Zeidan, co-owner of Nerd4Rent/Lamorinda Technology, and longtime Lafayette resident, passed away Dec. 31, 2016.

Renee was the beloved wife of Edward Zeidan, mother of three children and grandmother of three.

Renee was a gentle, loving person, who lived for her family, and loved to care for and support them in every way. Renee was a volunteer at the schools, and at St. Perpetua Church, in Lafayette.

There will be a celebration of life from 3-5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial, 3780 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. If you're planning to attend, please RSVP to edward@lamorindatechnology.com

In lieu of flowers, anyone who wishes, is encouraged to donate, in memory of Renee Zeidan, to The American Cancer Society, or John Muir Medical Center Oncology Department in Walnut Creek, California, 94598.

Town Hall's 'Angels in America' wins Best Director, Best Actor awards

Submitted by Linda Drucker



Jeff Draper performs a monologue from Angels at the Shellies award ceremony. Photo provided

Town Hall Theatre of Lafayette was honored with two Shellie Awards for its 2016 production of Tony Kushner's cutting-edge drama "Angels in America: Perestroika." Town Hall's former artistic director Joel Roster received the Best Director award for his role in directing the Angels in America production and Jeffrey Draper received the Best Actor award for his role as the leading actor in the epic drama.

"Perestroika" is the second part of Tony Kushner's epic Pulitzer-winning masterpiece about the unfolding of the AIDS epidemic in America. In 2016, Town Hall previously won four Shellie awards for its production of the first part of the Angels series: "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches."

In accepting his award, Roster noted the unusual nature of the "Angels in America" production, which required a large ensemble cast of actors to commit to remain together for two separate productions over the course of two seasons. "I want to thank everyone associated with Town Hall Theatre, which was my artistic home for 14 years, for making this possible," he said.

In accepting his award, Draper commended Town Hall's achievement of producing such an ambi-

tious work in a community theater. "It takes a lot of guts to put on an epic production in a tiny theater with a tiny budget," said Draper. He added that the "Angels" series was proof of the fact that "you can challenge your audience" and still create successful local theater.

"I'm thrilled that Town Hall was recognized with two such important awards — Best Director and Best Actor," said the President of Town Hall's Board Lauren Rosi. "I'm excited about the next two shows in our 2016-2017 season which continue with Town Hall's tradition of excellence."

The awards were bestowed at a lavish black-tie ceremony at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek on the evening of Saturday, Jan. 14. The ceremony was attended by numerous local government dignitaries including Lafayette Mayor Mike Anderson, along with the mayors of Walnut Creek, Concord, Brentwood, and the vice mayor of Clayton. The awards ceremony was a glitzy affair with men in tuxedos and women in full-length gowns and was followed by a sumptuous wine and dessert reception for the honorees.

One of the highlights of the evening occurred when the various theater companies performed scenes from their nominated productions.

In addition to Draper's reprise of a monologue from his role in Angels, a company of 10 Town Hall actors and singers, led by Managing Director Dennis Markham, performed the song "There You Are," from Town Hall's production of the musical "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" in September 2015.

In addition to the two awards won by Town Hall, Walnut Creek actress Lynda Divito — who just joined the Town Hall Board of Directors — was honored as Best Actress in a Musical award for her role as Rose in Contra Costa Musical Theatre's production of "Gypsy."

Patterned after the Tony awards, the Shellies have honored outstanding achievement in the performing arts for the last 38 years in Contra Costa County. Town Hall, which has continuously operated as a theater for 73 years, proudly displays many of the Shellies it has won over the years in a showcase in the theater's lobby at 3535 School Street in Lafayette.

Town Hall's next production "Smokey Joe's Café," a musical revue featuring the songs of Jerry Stoller and Mike Lieber, begins previews March 2 and opens March 4. Tickets, which cost \$25 to \$32, can be purchased online at www.townhalltheatre.com or by calling the box office at (925) 283-1557.

Pacific Chamber Orchestra presents its latest concert, Winter Gems

By Sophie Braccini



Maestro Lawrence Kohl with L.A. Composer Christopher Caliendo. Photo Provided

The Pacific Chamber Orchestra is inviting all true fans of musical discovery to a voyage through space, time and form for its winter concert.

As Maestro Lawrence Kohl explains it, Global Gem is a chance at traveling to different countries — Russia, Austria, Italy, Latin America and United States — and at different times from the 18th century to very contemporary music. The program has also been composed as a way to experience very different approaches to musical composition: music creation through form, or through personal expression of feelings and reflections.

"The term 'global' refers to two perspectives presented side by side in this concert," says Kohl, "music by form — where music is built on a formal structure, and Mozart's beloved Eine Kleine Nachtmusik in that category. The other perspective is music looked through a personal lens, and Shostakovich's String Quartet #8 where the form evolves out of the composer's personal reflection provides that second angle."

When the personal inspiration is leading the composition, Kohl says that the listener is going on a journey and entering in the musician's universe, as opposed to looking from the outside to a beautiful work of art, what classical music exemplifies. He adds that for the Shostakovich's mid-20th century piece, people are looking at a psychological piece and the listener is actually entering the musician's psyche. When it was created that quartet was dedicated "to the victims of fascism and the war," and it is believed to be one of the composer's most personal statement at a time that was very difficult for him. Kohl calls the Quartet #8 a fascinating piece.

The quartet will be followed by a Tango suite with works by Argentinian Astor Piazzolla and Jeremy Cohen, a Bay Area violinist and composer. Kohl says that the tango is marked by its rhythm, not by form, and that it is also an expression of the composer's psyche. Cohen wrote Tango Toscana during a trip to the Tuscany region of Italy. He said that the beauty and seren-

ity of the Italian countryside surely inspired this Tango, and that he also wanted to incorporate tango techniques he had acquired during his nearly two years playing with an all Argentine Tango band in "Forever Tango" in the mid-1990s.

The concert will conclude with the Movement Symphony for Strings (a world premiere) by Los Angeles composer Christopher Caliendo. Kohl says that Caliendo's music is very expressive like a tango, and uses a classical structure, fusing both perspectives.

The southern California composer met with Kohl when he was doing his doctoral work there. Kohl's orchestra has premiered half a dozen of his pieces. Caliendo is also a film and prime time TV composer and he will be present at the Lafayette's concert. "We will have a reception after the concert where people can meet the composer and the musicians," said Kohl.

Global Gems will be presented at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center on Saturday, Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m. More information and tickets at www.pacificchamberorchestra.org.

Lynn's Top Five

After the November election, filling time while waiting for Godot

By Lynn Ballou

Many of us are joined together holding our collective breath, waiting to see what exactly comes out of Washington over the next months, how those actions will frame our own planning, and what we'll do next. It's tempting to just sit by and wait --- you know, fritter the time away while waiting for Godot. That would be a shame though because there is so much we can each do that's meaningful and local and doesn't depend on Washington. Let's explore a few ideas as they pertain to your long term financial planning needs and goals.

1) Support the charitable organizations that matter most to you: No matter your political affiliation, I think all sides of the aisle can agree that now more than ever it's time to roll up our sleeves and support the causes we treasure. Whether you have time or money, even pennies or half hours can be profound. If we learned nothing else this past November, it's the importance of even just one person doing just one thing.

2) Financial literacy for families: When they run out of money in Washington because of overspending, do they just print more? Well we can't. We need to teach our children that money doesn't just come out of an ATM for no reason. Set aside even a few hours weekly to teach our children some basic financial skills such as: budgeting, how to open a bank account and save money, how to balance a check book, how to plan for future and larger expenses, how to read bank and even investment statements. It's not possible to start too young. A 2-year-old can buy an apple, hand a dollar or two to a vendor, receive change and put that in a piggy bank. Teach your older children about career choices and earning power. These future adults need our time now to become fiscally savvy future citizens and leaders, maybe even in Sacramento and Washington.

3) Understand your tax return: Whether or not you prepare your own tax returns and complete

the forms, you should understand what's on them. Work with your advisor or research and read on your own. Either way, that knowledge can help you craft a more intelligent and well managed fiscal life and guide you toward making better financial decisions. As new tax laws are created, you'll be ahead of the curve and have the ability to plan appropriate tax moves.

4) Is it time for a career change? An uncertain political and fiscal environment can be a nerve wracking time to decide to toss it all to the wind and change course. However, it's a great time to start looking into other opportunities and what you might find more rewarding. Set up informational interviews with those in careers you feel you might prefer. Look into the education and experience you'll need to have in place. Think about the financial reserves needed to make change financially viable. Discuss the possible risks and rewards with your family and listen to their input. Work with your

team of advisors for objective clarity before you make final decisions.

5) Read your property and casualty insurance policies and schedule a phone or in-house check up with your agent(s): It's tempting to toss the annual paperwork that our property and casualty insurance companies send us in a drawer with barely a glance. We're busy and the pages upon pages are overwhelming. So, call your agent! Or send an email and ask them for a review. My favorite questions to ask are: What's changed since last year that I should know about; what would you do differently than I am if our situations were the same; and what have other clients with situations similar to mine experienced in the event of a claim? While building financial security, take time to check out these key components of your fiscal foundation.

Best motto for today's world? Be a curious, proactive citizen and don't become paralyzed by the current uncertainty in the air. Even if big ideas in your life (such as

whether or not to sell a large property) might be on hold awaiting possible tax law changes, there is still so much you can tend to. Time may be our most precious commodity and you don't want to waste a single drop of yours.



Lynn Ballou is a Certified Financial Planner. The review, assessment, and/or opinions expressed in this column are limited to and in association with general financial planning subjects. They are intended to introduce 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.

Submit stories to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare
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Sunday 10am Worship and Faith Formation for all ages

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and Serve the World

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

ART

The City of Lafayette Public Art Committee welcomes its latest art exhibit featuring the Bay Area Studio Artists. The exhibit is on display in the Library Gallery adjacent to the Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center through Feb. 13. www.bayareastudioartists.com.

Come to the Orinda Library for a fun, relaxed evening as patrons reconnect with the creative spirit at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8. Local artist Felicia Morris will speak about exploring artistic expression as a way to move with greater awareness and love through life's challenges.

A Valentine to Myself —Music and Guided Reflection with Leslie Darwin O'Brien and Julia Shepard Stenzel. Identical one-hour programs at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 7 p.m. on Feb. 13 at Lily Dong Photography, 3506-D Mount Diablo Boulevard. www.lilydongphotography.com <http://tinyurl.com/h38m63s>. Free registration (suggested donation \$20).

"Sow. Harvest. Share" Anniversary Group Exhibit. The Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery is celebrating three fabulous years in Lafayette! In honor of the anniversary the gallery will showcase a selection of work from the artists we have collaborated with over the last three years. Also on view will be mixed media paintings by Jennifer Perlmutter, who will extend her work space into the gallery. The exhibit will run through March 4, with an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 9.

MUSIC

Temple Isaiah's annual Dessert Concert is at 4 p.m. on Feb. 12 at 945 Risa Road in Lafayette. This year the Ensemble will present popular songs from the 20th century, including "A House Is Not a Home," "That Old Black Magic," "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," "It Had To Be You," "Mona Lisa," "Isn't It Romantic," "I've Got the World on a String," "This Will Be an Everlasting Love," and several others. A silent auction opens at 3:30 p.m. Also enjoy desserts, wine and a raffle. Tickets: \$35 and can be purchased at www.cantareconvivo.org, or by calling (510) 836-0789.

Gold Coast Chamber Players concert: "Threads" at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 5 in the Lafayette Library Community Hall. Music for piano, strings and voice by women composers. Tickets and information: www.gcplayers.org.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Author Talk with Dean Karnazes at 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 10 in the Lafayette Library & Learning Center Community Hall. Ultra-marathoner Dean Karnazes will discuss his new book "The Road to Sparta: Weaving the History of the World's First Marathon" with his own Greek ancestry and his experience running this monumental route. Tinyurl.com/DSSKarnazes

The Value of Community & Choice as we Grow Older, a live-streamed event hosted by Beacon Village in Boston and locally by Lamorinda Village features best-selling author of "Being Mortal," Dr. Atul Gawande at 2 p.m. on Feb. 13 at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church at 49 Knox Drive. For more information or to register (seats limited) call (925) 253-2300 or RSVP@LamorindaVillage.org.

Natalie Baszile, author of the debut novel, "Queen Sugar," which is being adapted for TV by writer/director, Ava DuVernay of "Selma" fame, and co-produced by Oprah Winfrey for OWN, Winfrey's cable network, will be doing a reading for the Saint Mary's Creative Writing Reading Series from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 15 at the

college's Hagerty Lounge located inside De La Salle Hall, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, in Moraga. Questions: (925) 631-4762.

Humanities West Fireside Chat at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 21 in the Orinda Library. Join George Hammond of Humanities West for a fireside chat at the Orinda Library exploring "The Vikings: Raiders, Traders, Neighbors." More information about Humanities West and other events at www.humanities-west.net.

Contra Costa Tale Spinners meets at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 23 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Join this lively group to tell or listen. This is storytelling for adults with a featured teller every month. This month's featured teller is Kiran Rana.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Make Valentines and Care Packages for Local Firefighters from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12 at the Orinda Community Church Fellowship Hall. For a heartfelt event right before Valentine's Day, Mindful Littles is partnering with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District for a mindful community service project to give back to the incredible firefighters who protect our local community. During our event, parents and their littles will get to learn from MOFD firefighters and tour a fire engine, participate in mindfulness and compassion activities, and put together valentines & care packages to give to MOFD. For more details or to register for our event, please visit: www.eventbrite.com/e/valentines-care-packages-for-our-local-firefighters-tickets-31494113742.

Lamorinda Arts Council will host its 14th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition from Feb. 28 to March 20 at the Orinda Library Art Gallery. This annual exhibition provides the community a wonderful opportunity to view a wide range of creative, original work by local students and recognizes the region's dedicated high school art teachers. Entries for the High School Visual Arts Competition will be accepted from Feb. 1 through 24. The competition is open to ninth through 12th grade students living in or attending public or private high schools in Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga. The competition is also open to all students who attend the Acalanes Union High School District schools, including Acalanes, Campolindo, Las Lomas, and Miramonte High Schools, regardless of residence. The registration form as well as the full details of the competition can be found at www.lamorindaarts.org/vac.

The Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center is sponsoring a Bookmark Contest and invites all Lafayette students grades K-8 to enter their original art work. The entry forms will be available beginning Feb. 17 at the Lafayette Library main desk, the Friends Corner Book Shop and at school libraries in the Lafayette School District and St. Perpetua School. The entry deadline is Friday, March 10. For more information please contact Kay Pekrul: kae865@hotmail.com.

CRAB FEEDS

The Soroptimist Crab Feed is at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 11 at the Lafayette Community Center. Includes all-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad, bread & dessert. Tickets are \$55. For tickets or more info call 925.283.2279.

Mt. Diablo Center's 42nd Annual Crab Feed at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 25 at the Pleasant Hill Senior Center 233 Gregory Lane. Tickets are \$65 and are available at www.mdccrabfeed.eventbrite.com.

OTHER

Enjoy Valentine delights at Community Concern for Cats' adoption event from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and

Sunday, Feb. 11 and 12. Meet some purrfect partners who will love you unconditionally, and taste Valentine treats. We have lowered our adoption fees this weekend only. Locations are Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

Winnie Jasper and Jerry Chamberlain will be starting a beginning bridge class from 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday nights starting Feb. 15. This card game is great to keep your mind active and expand your social contacts. Also, if you are looking for an activity which you and your spouse can participate together for years to come then this may be a wonderful option. Fees are \$20 per person plus any text books as needed. If interested please contact Winnie at 376-1125 or winnie@wjasper.com

Tutus and brews meet up at Ballet & Brews from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 15 at The Cooperage in Lafayette (32 Lafayette Circle). Join the Lafayette Young Professionals and Diablo Ballet to mix, mingle, and network. Meet some of Diablo Ballet's dancers and snap a picture in our "selfie station" with ballet props. Admission is free, with The Copperage donating a portion of food and drink sales to support Diablo Ballet youth outreach efforts. www.diabloballet.org/events.

Middle East Children's Alliance presents the U.S. Premiere of "Jerusalem, We Are Here" from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 23 at Berkeley City College, 2050 Center Street, Berkeley. This interactive documentary brings Palestinians back into the Jerusalem neighborhoods from which they were expelled in 1948. Wheelchair accessible. Cost: \$10-\$100 sliding scale. For more info visit www.mecaforpeace.org/events/berkeley-ca-us-premiere-interactive-documentary-jerusalem-we-are-here or call (510) 548-0542 or email meca@mecaforpeace.org.

"Evil Cyborg Sea Monsters" a multimedia stand-up comedy show about superheroes, sci-fi and monsters from comedian and cartoonist Mike Capozzola at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 25 at the New Rheem Theatre. PG-14. Tickets: \$10. www.lamorindatheatres.com.

Moraga Baseball Association's Opening Day Parade is at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Feb 25 along Camino Pablo Road in Moraga. The parade route runs from Camino Pablo Elementary School to Rimer Drive. The community is invited to enjoy coffee and hot chocolate, view vintage cars, the Moraga Fire and Police departments and cheer on the players.

"How to Raise Chickens Sustainably" from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Feb. 19 and March 5. Papa John will again offer workshops on how to raise your own chickens. Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction, which is unique in offering no odor and no cleaning. Free workshop, Reservations are required - jhkiefer@comcast.net. Directions provided upon registration.

Join the Lamorinda Democratic Club for an expert panel discussion on the issues of healthcare in California at 7 p.m. on Feb. 9 at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Expert Panelists include: William Dow, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, UC Berkeley School of Public Health, Elizabeth Gibboney, CEO of the Partnership Healthplan of California, which coordinates healthcare for over 500,000 Medi-Cal recipients in Northern California, and Dr. Jeremy Fisher, Director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at John Muir Medical Center. For additional information, please visit www.ldclub.org

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Please...



...thanks

MOVIE REVIEW

Film Clips

'Lion' roars at the Orinda Theatre

By Derek Zemrak



Dev Patel deserves his Academy Award nomination for "Lion." Photo provided

"Lion" may be the most overlooked movie of 2016. It recently received six Oscar Nominations, including Best Picture but not many people have seen this amazing film. "Lion" is a long-shot at winning the Oscar for Best Picture but I would say it is the front-runner to win Best Cinematography. The opening scenes draw you into this true story and set the emotional roller coaster ride.

A 5-year-old boy, Saroo gets lost on a train in India and then travels miles across India away from his family. The young child lives alone and survives on the streets of Kolkata. Saroo is fortunate to be adopted by an Australian couple and they provide him a loving home. Twenty-five years later, through the use of Google Earth, Saroo uses the few memories he possesses to search for his lost family. Can contemporary technology and countless determination allow him to achieve his goal and reunite with his birth family?

Dev Patel (Saroo) and Nicole Kidman (Sue Brierley, his adopted mother) both deserve their Best Supporting Actor nominations. You will recognize Patel from the 2008 Oscar-winning

film, "Slumdog Millionaire," which won eight Oscars in 2008. Patel's performance is as solid as Kidman's but in this year's Best Supporting Actor and Actress categories they have some tough competition with Viola Davis ("Fences") and Mahershala Ali ("Moonlight"), who are the front-runners.

Don't miss "Lion" on the big screen at the Orinda Theatre. The cinematography is spectacular and is only beautifully enhanced by the movie theater experience. The film has a TRT (Total Running Time) of 1 hour and 58 minutes and is rated PG-13, for thematic material and some sensuality.

Other Oscar nominated films currently at the Lamorinda Theatres are "LA LA Land" (14 nominations) and "Moonlight" (eight nominations) at the Orinda Theatre and "Hidden Figures" (three nominations), Jackie (three nominations) and "Manchester By The Sea" (six nominations) at the Rheem. So there are many opportunities to enjoy the numerous films hoping for Oscar gold on Sunday, February 26, right in our great Lamorinda community.

Service Clubs Announcements

LAMORINDA SUNRISE Rotary
Friends, Fun, Service Above Self!

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

February 10	February 17
Dan Borenstein, Political Columnist, East Bay Times	Super Bowl Commercials with Ad Exec Ted Klauber

Forget Valentine's Day at your own peril!

Lafayette Rotary Club

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

February 9: 4 Way Speech Contest	February 15: Annual Feb 5 Meeting Roosmoor at 11:30am
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No Meeting on February 16th!

www.rotarylafayette.org
www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca-197392963631366

www.Lamorindaweekly.com
Most Frequently Viewed Stories
From Our Last Issue:



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- How Do Colleges Evaluate Applicants?
- Orinda Sinkhole Fix To Take Weeks
- City Council to Decide Future of Leigh Creekside Park
- Orinda's Travelling Epicurean
- MOFD Board OKs Major Apparatus Purchase
- Outrage over Waiver of Lafayette Development Fee
- Plans Move Forward on Canyon Bridge Replacement
- The Waterman House: A Mid-century Piece of Family History
- Deer Hill Roundabout Defeats Traffic Signal 3-2

If you wish to view any of the stories above go to www.lamorindaweekly.com and click the link below the story.

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Not to be missed

SENIORS

Discovering Opera: Kevin Puts' "Silent Night" is presented by Bradford Wade from 1:30 to 3 p.m. on Feb. 9 at the Lafayette Library, Arts & Science Room. Lecturer Bradford Wade will give a guided tour of "Silent Night," with a description of the plot interspersed with musical examples. This lecture is given in conjunction with Opera San José's production of "Silent Night," Feb. 11-26. Members Free, Non-Members \$10

Come to the Lafayette Library at 1 p.m. every Friday for a variety of activities, games, film screenings, and presentations. Meet someone new or catch up with an old friend over a cup of tea. Check with library staff or the online calendar (www.tinyurl.com/lafcalendar) for this week's activity and meeting room. For more info, contact Chris Gray at (925) 385-2288 / cgray@ccclib.org.

The Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County will hold its February meeting from 7 to 9 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 13 in the Concord I Room at John Muir Medical Center - Concord Campus, 2540 East Street, Concord. The speakers will be: Janet Patterson, Ph.D., CCC-SLP Chief, Audiology & Speech-Language Service at the Veteran's Administration, Martinez along with Kevin Dalziel, Research Associate. They will be discussing "Aphasic Comprehension: Conflict Resolution and Short Term Memory." For further information about the Stroke Support Group, contact Ann Dzuna at (925) 376-6218. Meetings are free and open to the public.

Words of Wisdom Discussion Group Led by Craig Janke from 10:30 to noon on the third Tuesday monthly in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Share your opinions with us in a freewheeling exchange of ideas: from current events to philosophy to the inspirational.

There may be agreement or there may be different opinions -- it's all in the spirit of learning, sharing, enrichment and good humor. Fee per meeting: Members: Free, Non-members: \$10

Cooking for One or Two: Breakfast & Brunch with Jaime Rios, Byron Park Executive Chef from 2 to 4 p.m. on March 29 at Byron Park, 1700 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. As we all know, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. In this demonstration-style class, Chef Jaime will help you find new inspiration with recipes that will transform your breakfast and brunch routine. Space is limited; these classes fill up quickly. RSVP to Lafayette Senior Services by Wednesday, March 22: Seniors@LoveLafayette.org or 284-5050.

GARDEN

Lafayette Garden Club General Meeting is from 9:45 a.m. to noon on Feb. 9 at the Lafayette Veteran's Building located at 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. The speaker will be Bruce Rodgers, the "orchid whisperer" who will speak about the many charms of orchids and how to grow them. Bruce has been growing, hybridizing, and decorating with orchids for over 30 years and offers a wide range of orchid growing and decorating services. His books will be available. Visitors are welcome! Please email Carolyn Poetzsch cpoetzsch@gmail.com

The Walnut Creek Garden Club monthly meetings are held at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., Walnut Creek. The Feb.13 program is "Designing Beautiful, Edible Gardens" with Mike Irvine, lead gardener and project director of Homestead Design Collection, who designed Test Gardens for Sunset Magazine. 10:30-11 a.m. social, program 11 a.m. to noon. All are invited to attend and consider becoming a member.

The Moraga Garden Club's monthly meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb.16 at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Guest speaker will be Laurie Callaway, of Laurie Callaway Garden Design. Her topic will be, "Secrets of a Four Season Garden." Interested parties are welcome to attend the 9:30 a.m. social hour, the 10 a.m. meeting, as well as the presentation by Laurie Callaway, immediately following the meeting.

The Montelindo Garden Club meets at 9 a.m. Friday Feb. 17 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, in Orinda. Everyone is welcome. Presentation: Plant Hunting at the "Edge of the World" with William McNamara, Executive Director of Quarryhill Botanical Garden of Glen Ellen, California, and plant hunter extraordinaire, who has been instrumental in building this botanical garden, which "Advances the Conservation, Study and Cultivation of the Flora of Asia."

Come to the Kokedama String Garden Workshop from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 25 at Orchard Nursery in Lafayette. String gardens are the latest trend for displaying houseplants. Also called Kokedama, string gardens wrap a plant's root system in moss and string, creating a piece of living art. In this hands-on, make-and-take class, you'll learn wrapping techniques, as well as how to care for your string garden. Cost: \$40 class fee includes all supplies needed. Reservations: Call (925) 284-4474 and make your reservation today.

Please submit events to:
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

Thoughtful Food

Sweet treats for your Valentine's Day favorites

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

This is a fun variation on the usual Rice Krispies treats with a Valentine's flair and a delicious brown-butter taste. It seems that we have been on a brown-butter kick lately at our house, but it is amazing how delicious it is and how many applications it has from sweet to savory – desserts, pastas, meats and veggies.

I was searching online for anything "brown butter" and discovered a great little Bon Appetit article by Lily Freedman from February 4, 2016, (link below). She discusses the three kinds of brown butter we should know how to make, from golden-brown, to brown-brown to nearly blackened-brown and the typical uses for each. She likes the

darkest butter for sweets, and the brown-brown for pastas and fish, while the golden-brown she uses with salads or vegetable dishes.

This is great information to have, because it seems that each time I brown butter, it turns out slightly different. Of course, this will also be affected by the water content of the butter and the temperature of the burner. Last fall, I made a big layered wedding cake for a friend, using brown butter in place of regular butter. After browning the butter, I simply chilled the butter back to solid form, and then

once it was solid and cold, I followed the normal process of bringing the butter to room temperature before creaming it with the sugar to make the batter. The flavor was delightful and the texture was as perfectly normal as any yellow cake I've made with regular butter.

Remember to use a pan with a light colored bottom, so that you are clearly able to see just how brown your butter is getting, and don't venture far from the stove while you're browning it, or very quickly you'll have the fourth kind ... burned butter!

3 Kinds of Brown Butter You Should Know How to Make by Lily Freedman for Bon Appetit www.bonappetit.com/test-kitchen/ingredients/article/how-to-brown-butter

Brown-butter, Chocolate-dipped Rice Krispies Hearts

(Makes 14-16 three-inch hearts)

INGREDIENTS

- ½ stick of butter (4 Tbsp.)
- 5 cups Rice Krispies, or other crispy rice cereal
- 1 bag of mini marshmallows (10.5 oz.)
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted (I used Trader Joe's Dark Chocolate)
- Valentine's decorations (I used icing decorations by Wilton)

DIRECTIONS

Spray or butter a 9 x 13 baking dish. Place Rice Krispies in a large bowl and set aside. In a medium-sized saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat, and once melted, continue to cook for about 5 minutes or so, until butter is browned. There will be brown milk solids forming at the bottom of the pan as the water evaporates from the butter. Some people like to strain these out, but I love the taste, and use them in my dishes. Add marshmallows and continue to cook, stirring often, until the marshmallows are completely melted. Pour mixture over Rice Krispies in bowl and stir until completely integrated. Turn mixture out into the prepared pan and smooth out with a spatula. Allow to set up for about 30 minutes to an hour. Using a heart-shaped cookie cutter, 3 inches across and about 1-inch deep, cut as many hearts as possible from the pan. When you are out of room, gather the remaining Rice Krispies treats together and form into one large shape. Continue to cut as many more hearts as possible. Melt chocolate in a small saucepan and dip tops of Rice Krispies treats into the chocolate, covering the entire top. It's okay if some drips down the sides! Immediately place heart decorations on top of chocolate and allow to cool completely, until chocolate is hardened. Store in an airtight container until ready to serve.

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.



CORRECTION

In the Jan. 25 issue of the Lamorinda Weekly, Dave Kravis' name was misspelled in the Thoughtful Food column. We regret the error.

Marching for Women's Rights

Last issue, the Lamorinda Weekly issued a call to readers to submit photos from the presidential inauguration and women's marches that occurred the weekend of Jan. 20-21. We didn't receive any inauguration photos, but here is a sampling of some of the photos we received from the women's marches in Washington D.C., Oakland and Walnut Creek. — Peggy Spear



Billie Cummings of Moraga in Walnut Creek.



Many locals, and their children, attended the march in Oakland. In the pictures at left are Jen Mckenzie and Anneliese McKenzie (JM sixth grade), Adrienne Spence and Jake Spencer (CP fifth grade) and Kim Habas, Sadie Habas (eighth grade, JM).



Peggy Hall and Linda Deschambault of Moraga in WC.



From left: Nicole Radlow, Linda Watts and Maggie Reeves, all from Orinda, in Washington D.C.



Stefanie Galizia from Moraga is third from the left, above, and first on the left in the photo at right.



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Acalanes boys soccer angling for top spot in league

By Karl Buscheck



Tom Higgins

With the Diablo Athletic League slate rapidly drawing to a close and the North Coast Section postseason approaching, the Acalanes boys soccer team is in the mix to claim first place in the league standings.

"The boys have been performing well all season and as the competition has improved, so has the team," said head coach Paul Curtis. "In the past several matches, the senior class members have really stepped up their performance. It's exciting for everyone to see them rising to the challenge."

After smashing Berean Christina 6-0 in Walnut Creek on Feb. 3, the Dons pushed their record to 14-2-3 overall and 7-1 in DAL. With just one loss in their last nine games, the senior-laden Dons are peaking at just the right moment.

"Drew Wondolowski and Mark Von Hacht the senior co-captains have done a really great job this season," said Curtis, who also praised the impact of seniors Tom Higgins, Gabe Singer, Nixon Murgia, Brody Quinn, Payson Newman and Bryan Bamford.

"(The captains) have the boys training and performing well to-

gether; working hard and having a lot of fun," Curtis added.

The title contenders have also received season-long contributions from underclassman like juniors Alex Topping, Luke Denham and Oliver Feigin and sophomore Chris Rogers.

Before turning their attention to the playoffs, the Dons will pay a visit to Orinda to cap off the regular season with a game against the Mats on Feb. 10.

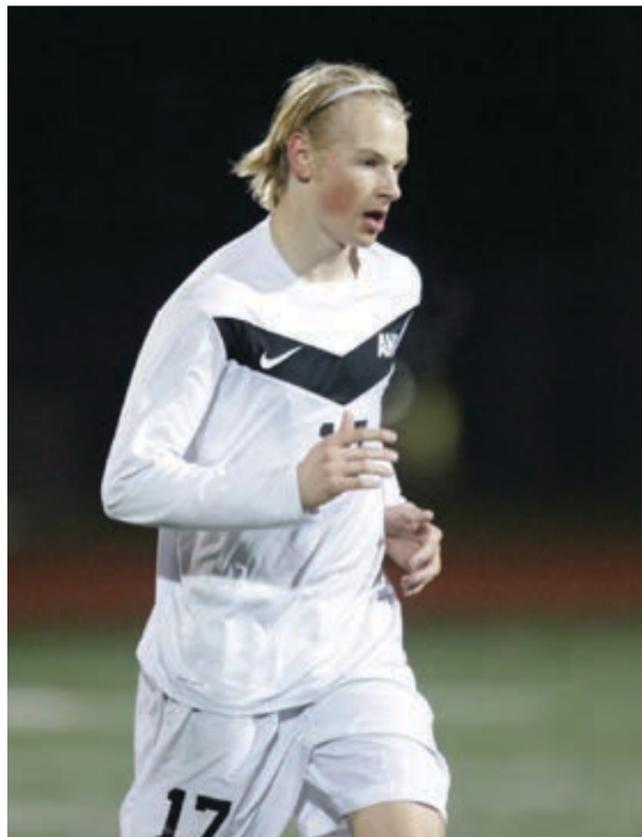
"This is a very talented group of players who excel on the field and in the classroom. Juggling their heavy academic load, personal lives and soccer team commitments takes a tremendous amount of effort and focus. Their ability to manage this rather well is one of the significant reasons for their success."

With an 8-8-2 record overall and a 4-3-1 record in DAL, the Mats are also in the chase for an NCS berth. Over the past month, Miramonte has found itself in a rough patch dropping four of five games, including a 3-1 defeat to Campolindo in Moraga. The win brought the Cougars record to 9-9-3 overall and 2-4-2 in league.

"The rivalry game with Miramonte is always a game to look forward to," head coach Shane Carney said in the run-up to the matchup.

The Mats had made a habit of dominating the Cougars in the early 2000s, but Campolindo has "flipped the script" in recent years, as Carney pointed out.

"When we meet, you can throw records and expectations out the window," Carney added. "It usually just comes down to who wants



Drew Wondolowski

it more."

For a team whose roster is heavy on young players, the Cougars have relied on a pair of the squad's veteran contributors.

"(Senior) Rupert Dusauzay has been our most dangerous attacking player and is one of the leading goal scorers in the Bay Area this season," Carney said. "(Junior) Seppi Ortman moved from the midfield to the backline midseason, which gave us some defensive sta-

bility we were missing early on."

Against the Mats, Dusauzay struck two goals and Ortman added the third. Now, the rising Cougars will look to make a late run to grab an NCS spot.

"More than half of our team is underclassmen, which is an extreme rarity at a varsity sport," Carney said. "So we're hopeful our youth has gained enough experience to find some late season success."



Campolindo soccer team

ESPN College GameDay coming to Moraga



ESPN College GameDay comes to Moraga for the Saint Mary's Gonzaga game Feb. 11. From left, hosts Rece Davis, Jay Williams, Seth Greenberg and Jay Bilas. Photo provided

The Saint Mary's Gaels will have a chance to escape from the shadow of their archrival before a national television audience as ESPN's College GameDay will make its first ever trip to McKee Pavilion Feb. 11 for the Saint Mary's-Gonzaga West Coast Conference men's basketball showdown. The game airs at 5:15 p.m. with the GameDay evening edition leading into the primetime telecast.

For those unfamiliar with College GameDay, the pregame program usually draws out hundreds of fans and often a celebrity guest.

No. 18 Saint Mary's routed University of San Diego 71-27 on Feb. 4 to improve to 21-2, 11-2

in the WCC while Gonzaga easily handled Santa Clara the same day, and will likely bring its No. 1 ranking to Moraga for the marquee matchup with the Gaels. The Bulldogs (24-0, 12-0) defeated Saint Mary's 79-56 in Spokane in January.

According to ESPN, each of last three teams hosting College GameDay for the first time won the game that day: Texas A&M, Wichita State and Southern Methodist.

GameDay is hosted by Rece Davis, with Dan Shulman calling the game along with Jay Bilas and reporter Maria Taylor. — Nick Marnell

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Campo girls' soccer making strong push as NCS approaches

By Karl Buscheck



From left: Mia Grillo (14) and Devon Ortman (42)

As the Campolindo girls' soccer team embarks upon the final week of the Diablo Athletic League schedule, head coach Ernesto Silva is telling his squad to follow a simple philosophy.

"To buy what I am selling," Silva said when asked what the Cougars need to do to reach their North Coast Section goals. "In high school, we all have a very small window to make our teams gel and play as one, once we are all on the same page, the results will come."

Sitting at 10-6-1 overall and 5-3 in league, the Cougars have won five of six, most recently blanking Acalanes, 2-0, at home on Feb. 3.

"I feel we are making great progress and the team is starting to adapt to the system of play that I believe best suits our abilities," Silva said.

With just one league game left – a road trip to Walnut Creek to face Las Lomas on Feb. 10 – Campolindo has called on two leaders with greatly differing styles.

"Freshman Devon Ortman has been a great addition to our back line, she is my voice inside the field and communicates very well, she keeps everyone on their toes," Silva explained. "Senior Lindsey Easter has quietly lead by example.

Her great attitude and work rate motivates everyone around her to try harder."

Acalanes, who was on the wrong end of the shutout against the Cougars, have navigated an up-and-down season, marred by injuries.

"It's been hard to adapt to the situation because it would be nice to have a consistent formation in order to compete," head coach Anthony Rascon said. "But, we're just adapting. Trying to take it game-by-game."

Owners of a 5-7-2 record overall (2-4-2 in league), the Dons know they will need a strong end to the DAL schedule if they're going to secure an NCS berth.

"We just want to make it into the party and we know that we have the team to go deep," Rascon said. "And we don't care who we're playing in NCS because we know that we have a powerful team and that we can go far."

The Dons are led by senior captain and defensive midfielder Callie Ericksen who is the team's anchor. Then there's Emily Smith, an emerging college prospect.

"You can't take the ball away from her," Rascon said of the junior. "Her vision, her touch – it's

on another level. She's a promising player and I think she can go very far and get recruited by a good college."

Acalanes ends the DAL portion of the schedule with a visit to Orinda to take on the Mats on Feb. 10.

"Those are the type of games we look forward to," Rascon said. "We were fortunate enough to beat them at their stadium, 4-1. Hopefully we repeat something similar or better and we're just going to try to have the most intensity, be very aggressive, put away our opportunities and have a clean sheet."

Miramonte is captained by a trio of seniors in Morgan Johnson, Mia Grillo and Samantha Devecchi. The Mats recently snapped a three-game losing streak, topping Alhambra 1-0 on Feb. 3 in Martinez. Grillo hit the lone goal in the contest after she was set up by Devecchi.

"Grillo can play any position," head coach Barry McQuain said. "But mostly, we like her up front and she is our target for all the corner kicks and set plays. (Against Alhambra), she scored on a diving head first play that should be on anyone's highlights video."

The Mats, who have posted an



Callie Ericksen

8-7-2 record overall and a 3-5 mark in league action, will also be looking to snag a postseason spot with a sound end to the season.

"Despite the injuries, we've got a chance to qualify for the NCS tournament and that is our goal," McQuain said. "Our opponents

in the next few games probably have the same goal, and probably only one of us will make it. But as long as our girls play the best they can for each game, they should be proud of their performance even if the final score isn't in our favor."



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DAL title 'up for grabs' as boys' hoops season draws to close

By Karl Buscheck



Chris Wright



Nick Foster



Jesse Marlow

Photos Gint Federas

Even as Campolindo sits in a tie for first place in the Diablo Athletic League with a 5-1 record in league and an 15-7 mark overall, the Cougars can't be bothered to look ahead to the North Coast Section postseason looming at the end of the month.

"Our league is really tough," explained Cougars boys' basketball head coach Steven Dyer. "So every game is a battle and we still have (three) league games left and then the postseason we're hoping to get a high seed and a lot of home games. That's the hope. But we have a lot of business that we have to take care of before that."

The key for the Cougars has been the club's remarkable consistency, as the squad has yet to string together back-to-back losses.

"We have good chemistry on the team," Dyer said. "All the guys like playing together which helps."

Chris Wright, Tom Caprio and Quinn Cuddihy are the team's three senior captains, while a whole array of Cougars has chipped in on the floor.

"In terms of oncourt production, Wright, (junior) Will Cummins and (freshman) Hunter Clarke are kind of our three leading scorers," Dyer said, adding that Clarke is also the top rebounder and junior point guard Trevin Kroichick paces the team in assists and steals.

On Feb. 3, the Cougars edged past Miramonte, 48-46, in Orinda. The Mats are led by Wayne Hunter who had roughly a month to prepare for his first season as the head

coach of the varsity squad. Originally, Hunter had been brought in to pilot the junior varsity program.

"I think so far, we've had a pretty successful (year)," said Hunter, whose team sits at 3-3 in DAL play and 13-9 overall. "You look at the record and the record may not say the season has been successful, but I think with all the moving parts and the late start that I got off to - getting the job in October - I think the boys responded well."

Hunter landed the top post after the former varsity head coach resigned shortly before the season, and now, less than two weeks from the NCS seeding, the Mats are within striking distance of a post-season spot.

"To be honest, our league is up for grabs," Hunter said. "We have

a tough league with a lot of competitive teams. This league, these teams have history with one another given how close in distance these schools are. They've grown up together. I think that alone intensifies our league. That's what drives our league."

As the Mats battle their DAL neighbors like the Cougars and the Dons, seniors Charlie Hocking and Nick Foster have emerged as two of the team's most indispensable players. Hocking is the captain and a three-year varsity contributor, while Foster is the squad's jack-of-all-trades.

"He's a 5-foot-11 do-everything type of guy that everyone knows he's that guy who's going to give 110 percent every practice, every game - regardless of if he gets

the accolades in the box score," Hunter said.

Hunter also pointed to sophomore Miles Beaubelle, who's emerged as one of the Mats youthful leaders who commands the respect of his more established teammates.

"I think his game speaks volumes and he works really hard," Hunter said. "He's worked all summer and all fall to have the success he's having so far."

Like Harvey, Acalanes head coach Sol Henik is in the midst of his debut season on the bench with the program.

"The transition to coaching at Acalanes has been great," Henik said. "The players have worked extremely hard and we have definitely (performed). We're in the hunt to win the DAL."

After losing to Las Lomas, 69-49, on Feb. 3 on the road, the Dons have three games left in DAL play, including a matchup on Feb. 10 at Campolindo - the co-leaders.

The coach described securing the DAL title as the team's short-term objective, explaining that captains Jesse Marlow and Aidan McNamara will play a crucial part in achieving that goal

"Those two players are having a tremendous year in keeping everyone together and really making this offense click," Henik said Marlow who is a senior and McNamara who is a junior.

After 16 combined wins in past two seasons, the Dons are well on way to NCS berth, holding a 13-9 record and a 3-3 mark in DAL.

"It's an exciting time for Acalanes because they have not enjoyed a lot of success in recent years," Henik said.

State Champions Honored by Moraga Town Council

Submitted by Red Smith



Campolindo High School's magical run to the 2016 State Football Championship officially ended last month with a proclamation by the Moraga Town Council that Wednesday, Jan. 25, was "Campolindo Varsity Football Team Day" in honor of the team's Championship Game victory on Dec. 16, 2016.

Head Coach Kevin Macy was joined by assistant coaches, players and parents, and he received the award on behalf of the Campolindo community at the town offices at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Council.

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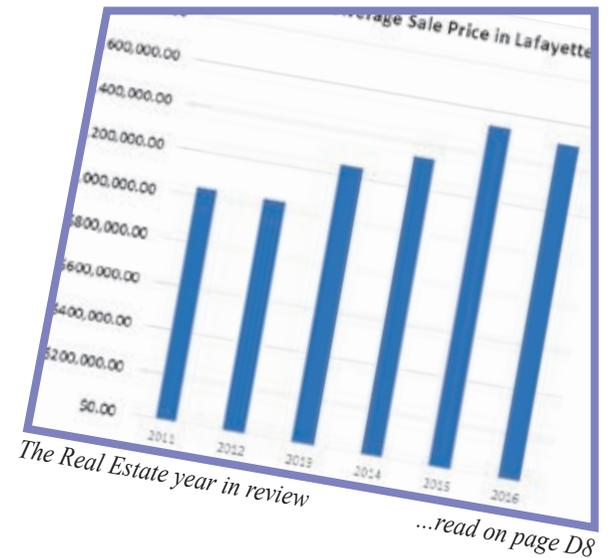


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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 25 Wednesday, February 8, 2017



Give your bedroom some love this Valentine's Day

By Paula King



Isabelle Hechinger and Julia Neyshloss decorate a bed at Misto Lino Lafayette

Photo Andy Scheck

Although a third of our lives are spent in our bedrooms and they often become our sanctuary, local designers say that bedrooms often lack depth, warmth and consistency. With Valentine's Day on the horizon, it is an ideal time to focus more attention on where we rest, retreat and share romantic moments.

Kathleen Burke of Lafayette's Kathleen Burke Design said that consistency is key in bedroom furnishings and that starts with careful choices for furniture and color. She noted that appealing design takes restraint and not every piece that you love will work in your bedroom.

"We work with our clients to make careful choices, so everything in their bedroom is absolutely necessary and it all works together," she said. "Staying with a cohesive color scheme is essential to keep a bedroom in harmony."

A new coat of paint can make a huge impact to a room that needs a fresh change and new color mixing technology allows modern paint colors to have more depth.

... continued on page D4



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MORAGA	6	\$316,000	\$1,460,000
ORINDA	3	\$1,125,000	\$1,300,000

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

- 1003 Carol Lane, \$667,500, 5 Bdrms, 1785 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 1-4-17;
Previous Sale: \$667,500, 10-31-14
- 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #24, \$640,000, 2 Bdrms, 1697 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 1-13-17;
Previous Sale: \$546,000, 06-26-14
- 3316 North Lucille Lane, \$1,149,000, 4 Bdrms, 1655 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 1-6-17;
Previous Sale: \$840,000, 05-04-16
- 1424 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,449,000, 4 Bdrms, 2519 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 1-12-17;
Previous Sale: \$404,000, 02-18-97
- 65 Silverwood Drive, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 3055 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 1-10-17;
Previous Sale: \$250,000, 08-18-15

MORAGA

- 2083 Ascot Drive #131, \$500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 1-10-17;
Previous Sale: \$123,500, 11-12-86
- 591 Augusta Drive, \$316,000, 4 Bdrms, 2945 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 1-11-17
- 670 Augusta Drive, \$862,500, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 1-11-17;
Previous Sale: \$372,000, 10-08-93
- 1463 Camino Peral, \$620,000, 2 Bdrms, 1159 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 1-13-17;
Previous Sale: \$529,500, 04-08-14
- 756 Country Club Drive, \$765,000, 2 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 1-4-17;
Previous Sale: \$715,000, 06-27-08
- 463 Fernwood Drive, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 2443 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 1-9-17;
Previous Sale: \$1,115,000, 06-24-10
- 2 Paseo Linares, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 4048 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 1-6-17;
Previous Sale: \$540,000, 09-18-87
- 15 Thune Avenue, \$1,020,000, 3 Bdrms, 1521 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 1-13-17

ORINDA

- 122 El Toyonal, \$1,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2871 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 1-11-17;
Previous Sale: \$925,000, 10-06-15
- 19 Glorietta Court, \$1,275,000, 3 Bdrms, 1516 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 1-5-17;
Previous Sale: \$905,000, 06-06-16
- 21 Moraga Via, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3195 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 1-10-17

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Give your bedroom some love this Valentine's Day

... continued from page D1



Futon bed at Sugi Fine Bedding and Gifts in Lafayette

This year's popular color is slated to be green with a continued emphasis on grays and neutral tones to promote calmness, according to Burke.

"The bedroom is a place to retreat, rejuvenate, be intimate, and ultimately sleep. Colors that inspire these activities are appropriate," she said.

Some pop of bright colors can be used for daring accents within bedding, rugs and furniture but make sure all of the colors used suit you and your home, Burke noted.

"While trends come and go, the function of the bedroom will generally stay the same, so the colors, textures, and patterns should support those functions," Burke said. "At the end of the day, you have to live with it, so you better love it."

In these cold winter months, warmth can be added to the bedroom using ambient lighting, cozy seating areas, fireplaces and lamps or wall sconces that encourage bedside reading. In the bed, thick throws and soft pillows and blankets are ideal for keeping us warm and fostering cuddly moments.

"All of these things can create moods that soothe

and encourage the slowing down we need to do in our bedrooms," Burke said. "Soft textures in fabrics, rugs and materials create warmth through the senses. Curtains are another great way to add softness and create a transition between the outdoors and the warmth of the inside."

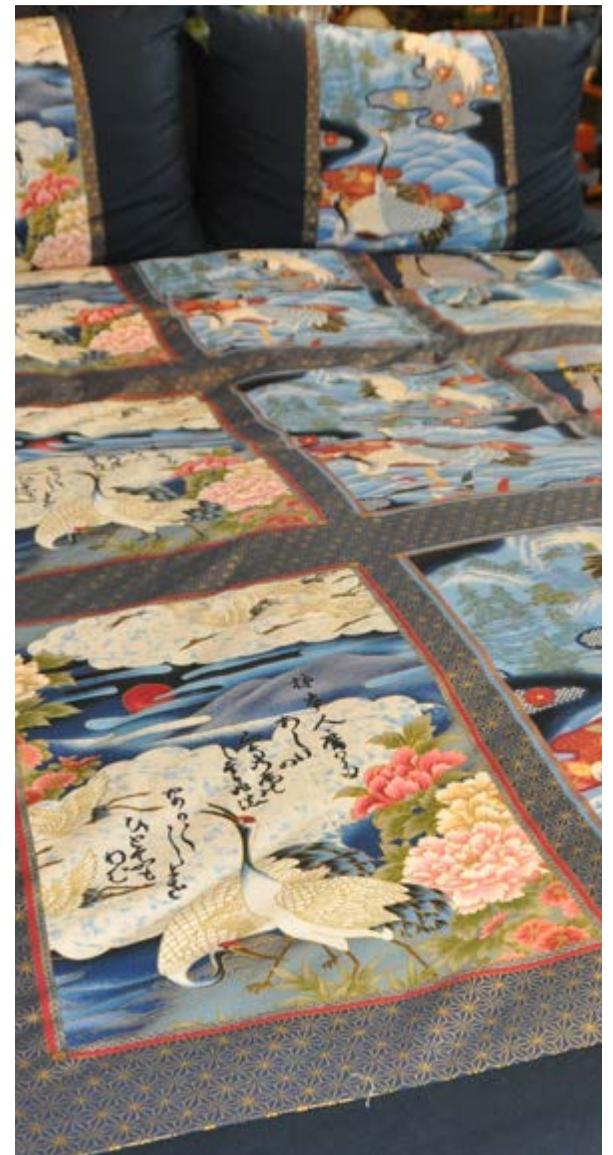
As brand manager for Misto Lino linens store in Lafayette, Lisa Cecconi recommends down comforters, flannel sheets and a hot water bottle to create warmth in the bed. In addition to single colors, Cecconi said that bold patterns and ethnic prints are big on quilts this season.

"What we put on our beds should be a combination of personal style, what makes us comfortable, and investing in the highest quality linens possible. It really makes a true difference in the quality of your sleep," she said.

For Valentine's Day luxury, Cecconi suggests silk pillowcases in romantic colors like rose. Pillows are a versatile way to quickly alter the look of the bedroom and Cecconi likes shams or decorative pillows for a finished look and layers with multiple textures.

"You can put a coverlet over the top sheet. Then add a duvet cover and fold it back toward the foot of the bed for a wonderful, lofty look," Cecconi said. Something that is often forgotten in bedroom design is the downplay of TV and media devices, according to Burke. For a quiet and calming bedroom, make those items less of a focus.

"Too much stimulation in the bedroom can affect our ability to sleep, which affects overall health," she said.



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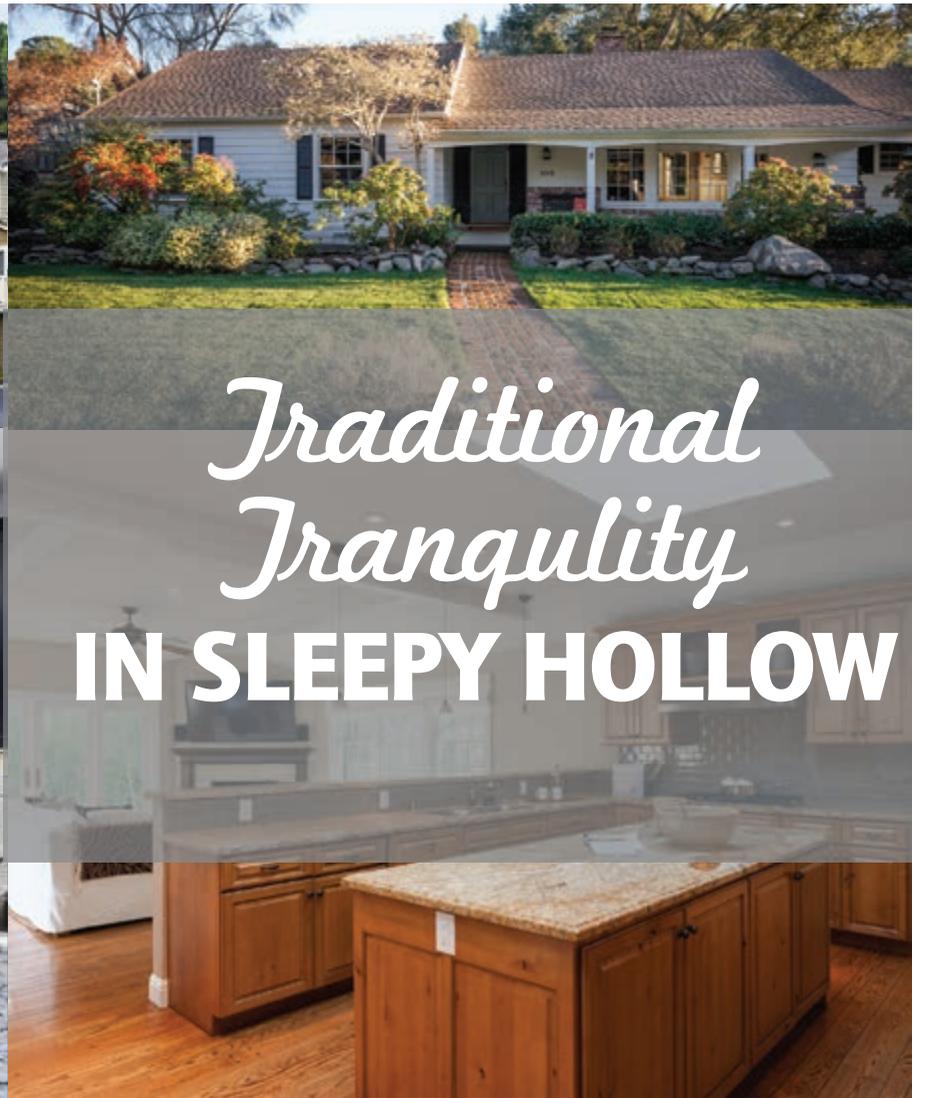
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The Real Estate year in review

By Conrad Bassett

2016 was another extremely strong year for sellers of residential real estate in Lamorinda. Sales volume was down due to a lack of supply and prices moderated a little in Lafayette and Moraga, but not in Orinda, where the average continued to climb.

Homes stayed on the market for a similar limited time like a year ago and prices stayed high as supply remained quite low throughout the year.

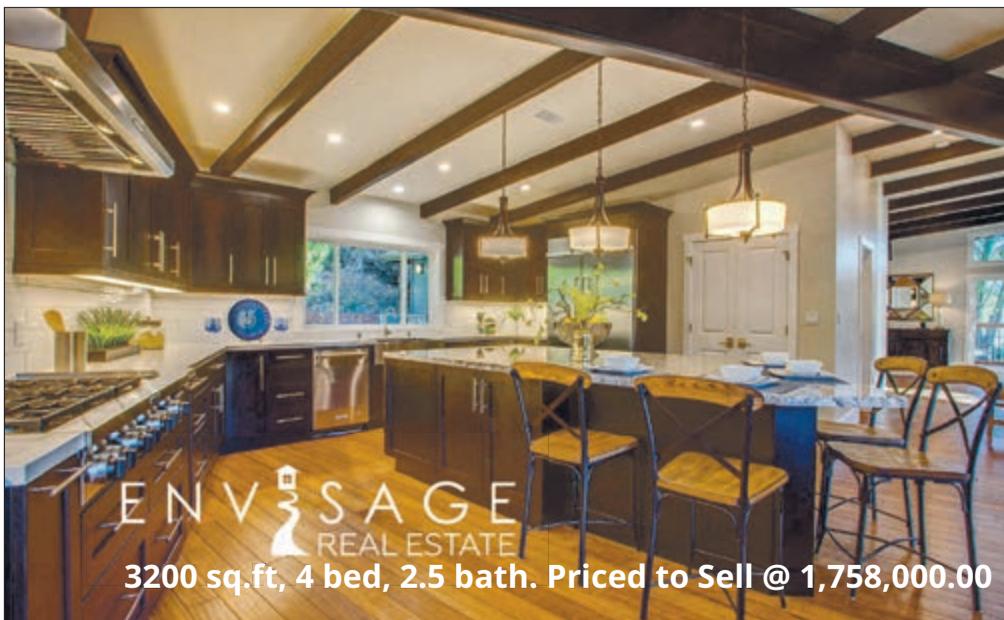
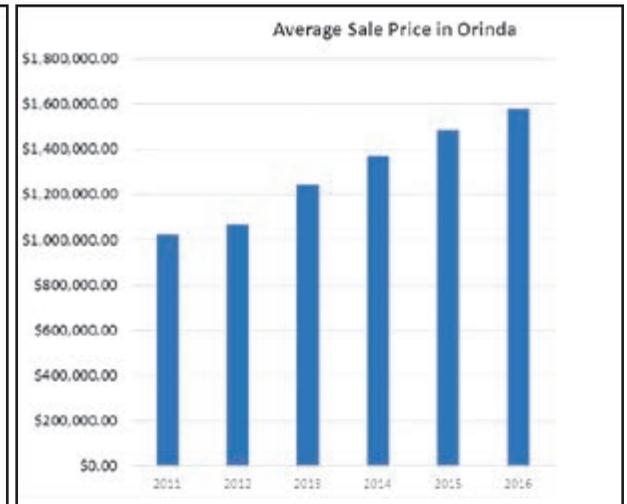
Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported for closings Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2016, 263 single family homes closed in Lafayette versus 338 in 2015. There were 302 in 2014, 314 in 2013, 302 in 2012 and 245 in 2011. For the 263 reported closings, sales prices ranged

from \$635,000 to \$3,700,000 and the average time on market was 28 days, almost the same as 24 days in 2015. The average sale price was \$1,506,811, down slightly from the \$1,531,604 in 2015 but still up from \$1,339,303 in 2014, \$1,248,532 in 2013, \$1,042,921 in 2012 and \$1,040,014 in 2011. The average sales price was 101.5 percent of the final list price. There was only one short sale reported in the MLS for the year in Lafayette as well as two foreclosures sold on the MLS.

In Moraga there were 108 single family closings down from 135 in 2015. There were 150 in 2014, 136 in 2013, 150 in 2012 and 124 in 2011. Prices ranged from \$685,000 to \$2,254,000. The average sale price was \$1,272,179. This

was a slight drop from the 2015 average of \$1,290,804. It was \$1,205,576 in 2014 and \$1,147,207 in 2013. In 2012, it was \$991,469 and in 2011 it was \$894,768. The number of days on market in 2015 was 26, up from 17 in 2015 and 2014 when it was 21. The average home sold for 101.6 percent of its last list price.

In Orinda the number of single-family closings was 229, down from 256 in 2015 and 276 in 2014. There were 262 in 2013, 219 in 2012 and 164 in 2011. The reported sales ranged in price from \$750,000 to \$4,650,000 with an average price of \$1,577,727. In 2015 it was \$1,481,443. In 2014 it was \$1,370,088. In 2013 it was \$1,240,158 and in 2012 it was \$1,068,303. ... continued on page D10



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Call me today with any real estate questions or for a complimentary home valuation. I'm happy to help!



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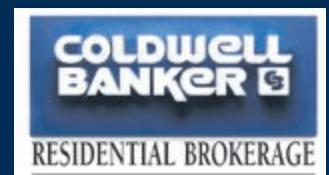
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The Real Estate year in review ... continued from page D8

The average was \$1,021,751 in 2011. The average market time was 23 days, about the same as a year ago when it was 26. The average sales price was an average of just under 102 percent the final list price for the reported sales. There were no short sales or REO (bank owned) sales in Orinda in 2016.

There was one reported sale in the MLS in Canyon in 2016 but none in 2014 or 2015.

On an average price per square foot basis for reported sales in 2016, Lafayette homes sold for \$589.47 essentially the same as in 2015 when it was \$585.87 and an increase from 2014 when it was \$546.87. In 2016, Moraga homes sold for \$558.02 per square foot, an increase from the \$532.90 in 2015. In Orinda last year it was \$594.37 which was up from \$560.79 in 2015 and continuing the trend that started in 2012. It was \$520.77 in 2014 and \$489.85 in 2013 and \$422.68 in 2012.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had 16 closings in both 2016 and in 2015. As new developments of condominiums and townhomes are being developed in Lafayette, some new construction sales will not go through the MLS. The actual sales if the new homes are included would increase the total. Prices ranged in 2016 from \$525,000 to \$2 million. Moraga had 79 closed units staying consistent with 81 in 2015 and 86 in 2014. Sales ranged from \$305,000 to \$1.1 million. This includes attached homes in Moraga Country Club. Orinda had four closings while they had seven in 2015. They sold from \$319,000 for a one bedroom on Brookwood to \$1,466,500 in Orindawoods.

It should always be noted that there are also a few direct sales that do not go through the MLS and they are not reported here. These include some foreclosures that were sold at the courthouse as well as some sales between private individuals.

As of Jan. 9, there were 24 dwellings under contract per the MLS in the three communities combined, with asking prices of \$514,500 to \$5 million. It should be pointed out that there are no "Potential Short Sales" that are currently pending and no REOs. Prices have continued to rise over the last few years and more owners now have equity in their homes and have not had to go the short-sale process or faced foreclosures.

A comparison of year-end inventory in the three communities combined shows 45 homes on the market. A year ago there were only 34 homes on the market. Typically the biggest inventory is in the spring and early summer, however this current number may point to another year with a combination of qualified buyers vying for a continued limited supply. The current asking prices range from \$399,000 to \$4,999,000 in the three communities combined.

In Lamorinda in 2016, 82 homes sold for more than \$2,000,000. In 2015, 102 homes sold for \$2,000,000 or more. In 2014, 81 homes sold for \$2,000,000 or more.

Interest rates have remained historically low although there has been some increase the last several weeks but they are still very attractive to those with down payments of at least 20 percent. Corporations continue to expand and contract and also to relocate families. The minimal amount of single family new construction has helped keep supply and demand within a better balance than a lot of other neighboring communities. The east bay and closer to San Francisco communities like Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda as well as Piedmont and several neighborhoods in Oakland and Berkeley continue to benefit from their proximity to San Francisco where prices remain very high. The East Bay is a "bargain."

The trend that began in 2011 continues today are the situations in the three communities where the seller received multiple offers and homes sold for above the list price. This, when coupled with an extremely low supply and a willingness by sellers to be realistic in their pricing should continue to fuel a strong market in 2017.

Conrad Bassett is a CRP, GMS-T.



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Digging Deep

Something to crow about!

By Cynthia Brian

“I raised chickens because I love that feeling of being in the country and living from the soil” — Eartha Kitt



Camellias blooming and getting ready to drop.

Photos Cynthia Brian

With 2017 being the Year of the Rooster, I am excited to share my gratitude to the poultry that graced my life.

Chanticleer may be the reason I am where I am today. When I was 8 years old I announced to my parents that I wanted to be able to go to college. Since my grandparents had barely finished sixth to eighth grades and my parents had high school diplomas, I would be the first person in my family to strive for a university degree. It was decided that the only way this dream would be possible is if I financed it myself. My brilliant idea was to raise chickens, sell the eggs, and enter competitions at fairs to earn the cash.

My first clutch of chickens yielded nine pullets and three cockerels. My favorite rooster was Chanticleer, a beautiful Rhode Island Red, who followed me every-

where. A great deal of time was spent with my brood of 12 as I began my farm fresh egg business through my membership in the 4-H Club. When fair season rolled around, I entered Chanticleer and my hens in the appropriate categories including showmanship. Chanticleer and I won blue ribbons and were named Grand Champions in every competition at every event, including the California State Fair. At fairs outside the county where I resided it was necessary to enter Chanticleer in “open division,” meaning I wasn’t competing against other children or 4-H-er’s but was competing with professional breeders and adult hobbyists. Chanticleer still won Grand Champion and soon I was being heralded as a “California Champion Rooster Raiser” and “The Chicken Lady.” (Of course when I was a teenager I wasn’t enamored with those titles, but today I cherish the honors.) Throughout my teens I raised hundreds of hens and several roosters, but Chanticleer remained the king of the roost, a media star and a winning companion.

Weeds and grass were fed to the barnyard animals as well as scraps from our table. The hens scratched, ate worms and fertilized the yard. The manure from the chicken coop was shoveled into a pile to age for three years before it was mixed into the flowerbeds. (Chicken manure is “hot” and will burn your plants if it is not seasoned.) Everything was recycled in the perfect circle of organic living. Eggs were gathered twice a day and delivered to customers twice a week. I saved every penny and documented every expense.

Chanticleer lived a very long, happy life and I will always be grateful for his friendship, his beautiful stature, and his profitable department. By the time I was 18 I had indeed earned enough dollars from my poultry project, farm labor jobs and scholarships to pay my college tuition at both UCLA and UC Berkeley. And that is something to crow about!

Celebrate the Year of the Rooster. Gung Hay Fat Choy!



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Lafayette | 123 Homes Sold
Moraga | 81 Homes Sold

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- And don't forget a storage place to keep files after taxes!

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for February fun

TRAIN a climbing rose up an arch, arbor, obelisk, or wall to enjoy the strong fragrances of myrrh, tea, and fruit. For 15 percent off David Austin Roses use coupon code ULA before Feb. 24 at www.davidaustinroses.com.

PICK up all camellias that fall to the ground to eliminate disease to the mother plant.

CLEAN outdoor garden drains. When water flooded my patio it was because five gallons of mud was clogging two drains. The good news... lots of earthworms.

CUT a few branches from willows to experience the opening buds.

WATCH out for woodpeckers damaging your buildings.

BRING cymbidium orchids indoors to enjoy months of beautiful blooms.

PRUNE grapevines while the canes are dormant and brittle.

PROTECT citrus trees from freezing. If your trees are too large, pick the fruit before a freeze threatens.

PLACE a bouquet of blooms by your bedside for a better night's sleep.

PLANT your favorite summer blooming bulbs including pollinator magnets like dinner plate dahlias.

CROW at the clouds and scratch in the dirt. It's the year of the red fire chicken.

HIKE a trail that meanders through our beautiful creeks.

LAST chance to get your roses and vines pruned. My pruning is finally completed.

AGE your chicken manure before adding it to the garden. To tickle your imagination, Eartha Kitt raised her chickens in Beverly Hills!

EMAIL me when you need a consultation.

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



The branches of this budding creek willow look like cotton balls on sticks.



The last freeze damaged this orange tree.



A flowing creek and babbling brook are great places to hike or meditate.



An arrangement of roses, camellia, star thistle and heather is cheerful and uplifting.



"Chicken Lady" Cynthia Brian with a prized rooster, but not the famous Chanticleer.

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Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is a New York Times best selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3.

Tune into Cynthia's Radio show at www.StarStyleRadio.net

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109 Van Ripper Lane Beautifully updated home in the heart of Sleepy Hollow. Gourmet kitchen/great room, refinished hardwood floors, gorgeous master suite. Large flat lot with newer landscaping, patio & grill. Excellent schools. **Call for Price**

ORINDA



New Listing

105 Crane Terrace Very private setting w/off-the-chart panoramic views! Fabulous 4.87ac gated estate, New England style traditional w/ richly designed spaces of custom craftsmanship. Lovely grounds w/lawns, gardens, mature trees. **\$2,950,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

2133 Donald Drive #7 Desirable & affordable Moraga Manor 2bd/1.5ba, 1,224 sf condo w/priv. patio, dual sided frplc & dining rm. Complex has pool, laundry & dedicated parking. Ideally located for shopping, award winning schools. **\$419,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

820 Country Club Drive Sought after single level, end unit. Nicely updated throughout. Great location for walking to town, farmer's market. Satellite pool nearby. Enjoy club membership & amenities. Golf, swim, & tennis. **\$725,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

806 Augusta Drive Detached Single Level Plan 11 features 3bd/2ba, 1842 sq. ft., new kitchen, new roof, updated baths, hardwood floors, recessed lighting and fresh paint. **\$1,195,000**

MORAGA



Coming Soon

48 Sullivan Drive Move-in ready single story rancher with eat-in chefs kitchen, hardwood floors, 3 beds, 2 baths & amazing views. Built in firepit & BBQ on .55 acres close to award winning Los Perales Elementary. **Call for Price**

MORAGA



Coming Soon

1063 Del Rio Way End of cul de sac, 5bd/2.5ba, 2820 sqft fully remodeled 2 story traditional beauty with hand scraped distressed hw floors, Anderson windows & prof. landscaped yard on .25ac. Move in ready, top schools! **Call for Price**

MORAGA



New Listing

1100 Country Club Drive Views, Views, Views! Spacious single level, 3 bed, 2 baths, updated kitchen, hardwood floors, fresh paint and more. **\$1,395,000**

MORAGA



122 Danefield Place Spacious & updated 5+ bedroom, 3 bathroom home in 'close-in' Moraga. Gorgeous views, updated kitchen & baths, new floors, fresh paint, dual pane windows & new roof! **\$1,450,000**

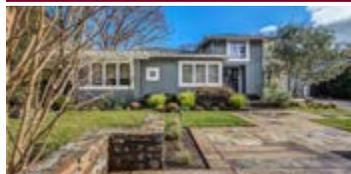
LAFAYETTE



Coming Soon

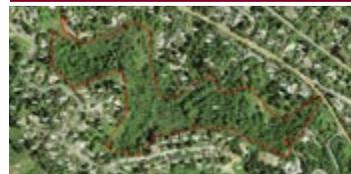
569 Silverado Drive Dream Location! Charming ranch style home on level .23 acre in the heart of Burton Valley. 3bd/2ba, apx. 1694 sqft. Living room w/vaulted ceiling & frplc. Family room w/gas frplc & open to kitchen. **\$1,155,000**

LAFAYETTE



860 Broadmoor Court Lafayette Trail cul-de-sac location! This 5bd/3.5ba custom home w/3435 sqft offers comfortable spaces for family living. Patios, stone fireplace & grassy lawn ideally close to trail, schools & town. **\$2,398,000**

LAFAYETTE



3333 Hamlin Road Super opportunity on almost 20 acres. One of the last big parcels of land in Lafayette to develop. Truly a rare find of magnificent allure of beauty & close-in trail are appeal. **\$2,500,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

1204 Glen Road Stunning new construction by SpringHill Homes boasts 4225 sf of exceptional open living spaces & beautifully landscaped level backyard on 2.06 acres with views in sought after Happy Valley Glen. **\$3,650,000**

PLEASANT HILL



New Listing

118 Tranquility Lane Beautiful new construction home off Price Lane - 1st home available! Residing on .18ac with 4bd/3.5ba, chef's kitchen, great room, formal dining/ living, beautiful finishes. Ideal location for commute, shops, parks. NO HOA. **\$1,250,000**

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

1908 Golden Rain #2 New Rossmoor Beauty! Updated and expanded 1325 square foot 2 bedroom, 2 bath Yosemite model. Level-in, light and bright end unit! **\$475,000**

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

215 Grover Lane Top location in desirable South Walnut Creek! Spacious 4bd/2ba rancher featuring 1928sf & situated on a .44 acre lot w/privacy near end of cul-de-sac. Vaulted ceilings, kitchen/ family combo. **\$849,000**



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