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From left, Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda, District II Supervisor Candace Andersen, EBMUD Ward 3 Board Member Marguerite Young, EBMUD General Manager Alexander R. Coate, EBMUD Director of Water and Natural Resources Richard Sykes and Executive Director of the John Muir Land Trust Lynus Eukel honor the Carr Ranch preservation. Photo Andy Schreck

EBMUD Celebrates Carr Ranch watershed acquisition

With a backdrop of rolling green hills, local dignitaries, EBMUD officials and representatives of the John Muir Land Trust officially celebrated the preservation of Carr Ranch, the large expanse of land just beyond Rancho Laguna Park.

The 604 acres owned by the Carr Ranch for 103 years is not just going to be used for pristine hikes, but as a valuable watershed for Lamorinda residents. "Delivering high quality drinking water to our customers relies on EBMUD's commitment carefully managing our watershed lands," said Richard Sykes, director of Natural Resources

for EBMUD. He said his staff worked for more than eight years to create a first-ever conservation bank on EBMUD land in Pinole, which provided the funding to purchase the Carr Ranch land. He thanked the John Muir Land Trust for the "historic solution" that permanently preserves a total of 1,000 acres of watershed land.

With the Orinda water plant currently shut down for maintenance, much of Lamorinda's drinking water is coming from that watershed.

Acquiring Carr Ranch in June was a huge accomplishment for the JMLT. For almost 100 years, the 600 acres of

rolling hills and spectacular views on unincorporated land at the southern border of Moraga, including grazing land, ponds, creeks and woods and views that extend to the San Francisco Bay, has been managed by the Carr family. After years of discussion, the family made the decision to enter into a contractual relationship with the JMLT, a non-profit organization that manages expanses of open space in perpetuity throughout Contra Costa County.

The preserve should be open to the public next fall. —Peggy Spear

Advertising

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Brazilian beach volleyball comes to Moraga Commons

By John T. Miller



Josie Cole Photo John T. Miller

A large dose of Rio de Janeiro arrived in the Lamorinda area recently when Fabio Ribeiro moved here to establish a Brazilian beach volleyball club. The club is called Carioca, which literally translates to "born in Rio."

"It's appropriate," he says, "since Rio hosted the first six beach championship main events back in the 80s." Ribeiro was also born in Rio, and grew up playing on the beaches there.

Although volleyball was his first love, the lanky 6-foot, 9-inch three-sport athlete — he also played basketball and swam — took a detour in order to be able to come to the United States.

"There was very little college opportunity for volleyball back then, so I accepted a scholarship to play basketball at the University of Hawaii," said Ribeiro. "I then played 10 years of pro ball in Europe." ... continued on page A14

LAC honors young local artists

By Kara Navolio



Happy winners at the 14th annual High School Visual Arts Competition: Henry Braff (Bentley Upper School), Nicole Edwards (Acalanes), Charlotte Ensley (Acalanes), April Lindblad (Campolindo), Zoe Venable (Miramonte). Photo Kara Navolio

The energy and excitement was palpable as close to 300 student artists and their families awaited the announcement of this year's winners of the High School Visual Arts Competition hosted by the Lamorinda Arts Council.

The event, on March 8, was the 14th annual

celebration of local young artists from eight area high schools, including the four high schools in the Acalanes Union High School District and four private schools in the Lamorinda community. ... continued on page A12

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Moraga chooses its Citizen of the Year – page A4.

Fire Districts A8

Lafayette to lose respected ConFire voice – page A8.

Budd Mackenzie urges people to "Get off the Couch" – page B1.



Campo girls are headed to State finals – page C2.



Colorful trees are blooming throughout Lamorinda – page D1.





Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, March 27, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, April 3, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, March 27, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, April 19, 7 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, April 19, 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 Feb. 26 - March 11

Alarms	69
911 Calls (incl hang-ups)	20
Noise complaints	8
Traffic stops	182
Suspicious Circumstances	22
Suspicious Subjects	31
Suspicious Vehicles	39
Welfare Check	2
Reckless Driving	16
Auto Burglary	
3200 Block Marlene Dr.	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
300 Block Hermosa Ct.	
3100 Block Camino Colorados	
3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
Upper Happy Valley Rd./ El Nido Ranch Rd.	
Civil Problem	
3500 Block Walnut St.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Civil Standby	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Commercial Burglary	
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Computer Fraud	
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Disturbing The Peace	
Deer Hill Rd./1st St.	
3400 Block School St.	
Drunk In Public	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
Dui Misd	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.	
Fire/ems Response Info	
3300 Block Sweet Dr.	
3300 Block S Lucille Ln.	
1200 Block Redwood Ln.	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Found Property	
Police Department	
10 Block Tanglewood Pl.	
Police Department	
4100 Block Hidden Valley Rd.	
Deer Hill Rd./Happy Valley Rd.	
Fraud False Pretenses	
700 Block Los Palos Dr.	
Hailed By Citizen	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Brown Av	
70 Block Station	
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Police Department	
Harassment	
Stanley Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.	
20 Block Meek Pl.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
70 Block Lafayette Cr.	
3300 Block Springhill Rd.	
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.	
Identity Theft	
1000 Block Serrano Ct.	
4000 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
Litter	
3000 Block Rohrer Dr.	
Loitering	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
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Public art is coming soon to a roundabout near you

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette continues to beautify its city with art. The city's public art committee recently reviewed proposals for the latest piece, to be installed on the new Pleasant Hill Road/Olympic Boulevard roundabout and has narrowed the choice from four down to two.

The two potential installations can be seen on the city website and residents can review the proposals which are on display in the Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Homework Room until March 27. Public comments are invited through the website.

It is a contest between a 16-foot sculpture, made of eight corten-steel connected dodecahedrons atop a five-foot pedestal by artist David Mudgett from Walnut Creek titled "Resolve," and "Chameleon" a 17-foot colorful, welded steel structure with four elements – a flowerpot, tree, chameleon and dragonfly by Oakland artist Gale Wagner.

In November 2016 the city council approved funding for the

project to the tune of \$125,000. The Public Art Committee will meet on April 12 and will then take their recommendation to the Lafayette City Council meeting on May 8.



"Chameleon" is one of the proposed designs for public art at the Pleasant Hill Road roundabout. Image provided

Timing is everything for Pleasant Hill Road corridor traffic signals

By Pippa Fisher

Traffic should continue to ease a bit on the southern section of a heavily traveled thoroughfare in Lafayette during commute hours.

Local lawmakers gave the go-ahead to continue the revised traffic signal timing on Pleasant Hill Road by a unanimous 4-0 vote, with Lafayette City Council Member Ivor Samson absent at the city council meeting on March 13.

The council heard from City Engineer Tony Coe, who presented the results of the recent analysis by TJKM Consultants, which reviewed the signal timing plans that have been in place over the past three months as a temporary trial.



Traffic on Pleasant Hill Road. Photo Pippa Fisher

... continued on page A3

Lost Property	St Marys Rd./S. Lucille Ln.
Misc Burglary	20 Block Cosso Ct.
Missing Adult	900 Block S Thompson Rd.
Neighbor Dispute	400 Block Frederika Ave.
Petty Theft	1000 Block 2nd St. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. 3100 Block Cordova Wy 3100 Block Rohrer Dr. 3900 Block Leroy Way 30 Block Meek Pl. 1100 Block Loveland Dr. (2) 1000 Block Woodbury St 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Petty Theft Bicycle	3400 Block School St.
Petty Theft From Vehicle	Police Department
Phone Harass	600 Block Huntleigh Dr. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Promiscuous Shooting	1300 Block Block Reliez Valley Rd.
Public Assembly Check	3800 Block Happy Valley Rd. 1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. 3300 Block Springhill Rd.
Public Nuisance	3400 Block Monroe Av Monroe Ave./Moraga Blvd. Stanley Blvd./Quandt Rd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 800 Block Upland Dr. Hope Ln./St. Marys Rd.
Residential Burglary	500 Block Hunsaker Canyon Rd. 3100 Block Cordova Way 3400 Block Goyak Dr.
Shoplift	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (4)
Trespass	500 Block St Marys Rd.
Trespass with Vehicle	3400 Block Black Hawk Rd. (2)
Unwanted Guest	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Bank Of America 1000 Block Aileen St.
Vandalism	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 900 Block Moraga Rd. 3100 Block Lucas Dr.
Vehicle Theft	900 Block Hough Ave. 1000 Block Laurel Dr.
Verbal Dispute	1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 1000 Block 2nd St.

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New Sufi Sanctuary opens in Saranap area

By John T. Miller



From left, Ira Deitrick, Project Manager Bob Carpenter and Murshida Carol Weyland Conner. Photo provided

After four years of planning and debate and nearly five years of construction, Sufism Reoriented, located in the Saranap area, inaugurated its new sanctuary with a series of events over the last few weekends.

The formal ribbon cutting took place at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb 24, which corresponded to the exact time in India when the group's spiritual leader and founder, Meher Baba, was born.

Their current leader, or Murshida, Dr. Carol Weyland Conner, unveiled a pair of plaques outside the sanctuary and led approximately 350 members inside. In her inaugural address, Murshida Conner stressed the deeper meanings of the sanctuary: "My primary aim was to create a beautiful building as an expression of our worship. In all spiritual traditions, design of a sanctuary strives to give outward material form to the still, sacred space at the center of the human heart."

On Saturday, the self-described nondenominational group celebrated the design, construction and operation of the new sanctuary and honored all those who helped build it. The afternoon presentation focused on one of the groups more important precepts, "Mastery in Servitude." Meher Baba taught that true mastery of life comes through devoting one's life completely to the service of God's world. The program highlighted four of the main ways that the group gives back to the community:

The Meher Schools in Lafayette, created by Murshida Duce in 1975, has provided nonsectarian education to thousands of children.

White Pony Express was created by Murshida Conner to redistribute the abundant surplus of material wealth in Contra Costa County to those in need. The food rescue program picks up close to 5,000 pounds of surplus food every day and delivers it free to those who feed the hungry.

The Free General Store and its mobile boutique has given away 255,000 articles of new or like-new clothing and 92,000 children's books, games, and toys to people in neighborhoods of need.

The renowned Francis in the Schools program was started by Murshida Conner to serve urban neighborhoods of poverty, neglect and abuse. Volunteers create an Umbrian Renaissance Faire for the children and treat them to an afternoon of fun and respect. To date, 12,000 children have attended the programs.

One of the most moving events occurred Saturday, when all the people who worked on the building, along with their families, were invited and honored. Later they saw a 10-minute video presentation of their work. Many of the construction workers were visibly moved by their recognition. One worker who helped with the waterproofing of the underground facilities said, "I've never before been thanked by anyone for the work I've done."

... continued on page A9

Pleasant Hill Road Corridor

... continued from page A2

The Pleasant Hill Road corridor — the area running from the north at the Lafayette border as far as the 680 intersection to the south — has long been a problem for motorists during the morning commute hours.

The city heard concerns and answered questions from residents last year at a packed outreach meeting at Acalanes High School. A major concern was the traffic on Reliez Valley Road and the difficulty turning onto Pleasant Hill Road at peak times.

The revised signals from the side streets, which run the green light now for the maximum allowed time regardless of traffic, has the effect of "metering" the traffic further up Pleasant Hill Road, which in turn allows better management of traffic further south. It also eases access onto Pleasant Hill Road for drivers turning right from Reliez Valley Road.

Coe said that they have studied the diversion rate — those cars choosing to use Reliez Valley Road from Withers Avenue fur-

ther north in order to cut through — and have found an insignificant increase of 4 percent. However the study recommends continued monitoring of the situation.

The council had questions for Coe, particularly regarding how to discourage drivers from using Reliez Valley Road as an alternative route and raised the possibility of engaging with the traffic navigation app Waze to ensure out of town traffic traveling through is not being automatically recommended to use this route.

The four members of council present voted to adopt the staff recommendation and asked for quarterly reports from staff.

The council passed a second motion to have the city staff come back with an outline of additional measures that could be implemented if necessary to divert traffic from Reliez Valley Road, to look further into Waze, to study the implications of extending the right hand turn lane towards Deer Hill Road and to look at the left turn onto Stanley Boulevard.

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Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, March 22, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, April 3, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, March 27, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Moraga School District
Thursday, April 13, 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



Feb 21- March 7

Alarms

Feb 25 location n/a
Feb 26 (2) location n/a
Feb 27 100 block Fernwood
Feb 27 100 block Brookline
Feb 27 1700 block Spyglass Ln.
March 2 (2) location n/a
March 4 location n/a
March 6 location n/a

ID Theft

Feb 23 Bloomingdales, Macy's, fraud tax ID
Feb 24 tax fraud attempt

Fraud

Feb 24 Three fraudulent checks; same person; same amount

Feb 27 Fraud

Six fraudulent charges totaling more than \$900 were made to a company in India on one victim's charge card.

Feb 27 Hit & Run, no injuries

A driver nicked the door of a parked U-Haul; U-Haul user pursued on foot. Driver said she was unaware she hit the U-Haul, but police presence encouraged her to exchange information with U-Haul user. Police cleared the scene. No one stayed to help load/unload the U-Haul.

Feb 27 Larceny

A yellow road bike was shifted from Saint Mary's College to who knows where despite its being chained to a pole on campus grounds. The owner engaged police but no witnesses or leads were found.

Feb 27 Larceny

Bike parts were stolen...twice from a carport, on this date and four days earlier.

Feb 28 Found property

Police discovered an abandoned, unidentifiable bike in their parking lot, and took it in until the owner could be found. Think they could loan it to the bike theft victim?

Feb 28 Forgery

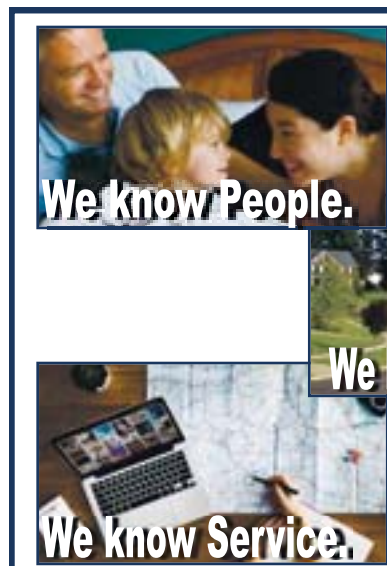
Suspicious activity reported in the form of two counterfeit checks.

March 1 Unlicensed

Unlicensed...no thrill, for the driver of a 2004 Honda who hadn't registered said car since 2012. He received a citation (not the Chevy kind) for that and for being unlicensed. His car was towed; the former driver will need to heel and toe it himself for a bit.

March 1 Miscellaneous

Near miss, or near hit? Either way,



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Volunteers take on the restoration of Mulholland Ridge

By Sophie Braccini

For several years now former Moraga Mayor and Town Council member Lynda Deschambault has taken on the cleanup of the Mulholland Ridge open space area from invasive plants with groups of volunteers.

What started as a one- or two-person effort is now a group project involving local adults and students who enjoy contributing their time to the community. From the town's perspective, Mulholland needs to serve as a defensive fire space between Moraga and Orinda, and the mandatory nature of the official plans for the future of the open space preserve is unclear.

Deschambault has been a champion for open space since she ran for council in 2004. She says that Mulholland is the reason why she put an offer on a house in Moraga: It's a hike in her backyard.

When she was on the council, the town conducted an environmental study of the park and received a

Mulholland Habitat Preservation and Restoration Plan. She remembers that the environmental report was approved, but it is not clear if the town voted to accept the restoration plan that includes removal of nonnative plants and restoration of natural habitat in the 250-acre open space area along Donald Drive. Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram is not sure either about the mandatory nature of the plan.

For Ingram, the first priority up there is fire safety. Last year the town received a grant from Diablo FireSafe Council; the first year the money was used to clear up the eucalyptus grove behind the Hacienda de las Flores, and this year the director is electing to widen the fire buffer between Moraga and Orinda by having weeds cut on each side of the road that runs along the ridge, including coyote brush. He adds that a biologist is working with the town so nesting sites would not be disturbed.

Deschambault's priority is different: She wants invasive plants such as thistles and French brooms to be removed while natives, such as coyote brush, should be preserved as they serve the natural cycles. She says that the restoration plan that was defined in 2007 with expert Moraga volunteers such as Malcolm Sproul and Gail DeLala list the plants and animal species present on this natural piece of property and recommend that nothing else but plant restoration be done there.

Moraga Town Council Mem-



Volunteers pulling brooms at Mulholland Ridge in Moraga. Photo provided by Jeanette Fritzky is one of the volunteers helping Deschambault and explains that it takes training to identify the different plants. She adds that it's better to leave the cleanup to trained volunteers.

Ingram adds that volunteer support is crucial in Moraga and that there are more projects residents can help with. They can contact Moraga Parks and Recreation Department at (925) 376-2520 if they want to get involved.

the pedestrians were okay, although they reported nearly being struck by a vehicle while they were in a crosswalk. Driver said at first he didn't see the two, but did stop before the crosswalk. Walkers may have been cross.

March 1 Other

A lesson in right and wrong for responsible parties at Joaquin Moraga school accused of texting threats to another. Police attended a meeting and backed up the school officials' emphasis on zero tolerance for threats.

March 2 Fraud

Police received a two alarm report of \$5,000 of unauthorized use on a Moraga-Orinda Fire District credit card. That card was hosed...er, cancelled.

March 2 Vandal

Mirror, mirror on the ground - will this vandal soon be found? Driver's side-view mirror smashed, but it didn't seem the car got crashed. Video cameras turned up nada except the culprit's own bravada.

March 2 Vandal

This time damage to a Dodge Dart; a rock through a window is just without heart.

March 3 Outside assist

We break in with this news: a joint effort by Moraga and Lafayette police resulted in the arrest of a subject wanted for questioning in several residential burglaries in Lafayette. LPD stole some of the accused's time by making an arrest.

March 4 Larceny

Attention TJ Maxx shoppers: taking it "to the max" does not include taking things from the Maxx. Store loss prevention bagged the thoughtless shoplifter; police issued a citation for petty theft (it was \$43.97).

March 4 Ordinance violation

Loud and unruly with intent to commit partying. Thirty guests cleared out after police warned the residents about such un-Moraga-like behavior.

March 7 Traffic incident

Semi trailer made a semi-turn and damaged road barricades placed at Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard. Police assisted with traffic control until Public Works replaced the damaged parts.

March 7 Miscellaneous

This bullet just in: Moraga resident surrendered unwanted gun to PD.

A leading local philanthropist is chosen as Moraga's Citizen of the Year

By Sophie Braccini

The choice of Barbara (Bobbie) Preston as Moraga's Citizen of the Year is that of a woman who simply says yes to every opportunity she sees of making the life better for others.

Preston has started several nonprofit groups in and around Moraga because she did not want to wait around for someone else to do what had to be done. Preston is unassuming, never brags about her achievements, and always beams with positive energy. She urges everyone to make these small gestures that do not require much, but make a difference for the community and the world. Like so many who give a lot of themselves, she says that giving brings much more in return.

Preston started her nonprofit career in Moraga in 1986 when she decided to start the Mount Diablo chapter of "Habitat for Humanity." At the time there was no Habitat home in the East Bay and she started recruiting people to build homes in Pittsburg. She said that it is how she learned to start nonprofits with a group of volunteers since Habitat chapters are autonomous. She was in full swing of her medical career at the time, she had recently lost her second husband to cancer, and was raising a daughter.

... continued on page A13



Bobbie Preston in her garden.

Photo Sophie Braccini

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Merchants near Rheem sinkhole 'celebrate' first anniversary

By Sophie Braccini



From left, Town Manager Robert Priebe and Edric Kwan (both in a tie) came to the anniversary organized by Ravi Singh (with his back to the camera). Photo Sophie Braccini

It was with irony that merchants at the Rheem Valley Shopping Center gathered on March 13 to "celebrate" the first anniversary of Moraga's infamous sinkhole. In fact, the event was even featured on NPR on March 18.

The event was a way to publicly vent their frustration over traffic disruptions caused by the large hole, with seemingly no steps to correct the situation being taken. They say that the impact on their businesses has been serious as disruption lingers.

Two seniors from Campolindo High School had decorated the fence with balloons and

streamers, while Ravi Singh at Rheem Valley Automotive and his wife had ordered a cake at Safeway that shows the pavement and thumbs down as the decorative items. They offered pieces to Campolindo High School students passing by, to other merchants, town staff and members of the press that had come to cover the event. "I have not personally suffered too much of the perturbed traffic because most of my clients come with an appointment," said the repair shop owner, "but many others have seen a slump in their average income and people explain to them that they just avoid the area

and would rather go shop somewhere else."

It was a year ago during a rainstorm that a large metal culvert that carries the Laguna Creek under the intersection at Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road collapsed, creating a massive sinkhole that swallowed the crossing light and dangerously ruptured several utility lines, including a PG&E gas line. A merchant back on site for the anniversary "party" reminisced how the air smelled of gas and that everyone was so lucky no major fires erupted at the time.

Town staff on site, including Town Manager Robert Priebe and Public Works Director Edric Kwan, informed the group that nothing has happened since last July when they heard that the town had been declared eligible to receive federal funding.

Kwan explained that the eligibility gave the town the right to go through the lengthy process of getting every aspect of its plans approved by the federal agency before it can go to bid. He said that his team has been ready to bid the repairs with contractors for months, but that the town is at the mercy of the Federal Highway Administration's approval process that is happening through the California Department of Transportation. Starting work without proper authorizations would jeopardize the town's ability to be reimbursed for the \$3.3 million of reserve money it will spend to repair the hole.

... continued on page A9

Skeletal remains found on Moraga hillside

Moraga and Lafayette police recovered skeletal human remains on a secluded hillside near the Moraga/Lafayette border on Friday, March 17.

Police say the remains appear to have been in the area for some time but foul play is not suspected. A hiker discovered the bones near a seasonal creek and alerted Moraga police. The hiker returned to the area with police and assisted them in locating the remains.

The area is only accessible on foot or by four-wheel drive. Search and rescue personnel and crime scene technicians recovered the remains and thoroughly searched the area.

"Today was about documenting the scene and removing the remains," said Lt. Brian South, of the Moraga Police Department. South said the remains will be transferred to the Contra Costa County Coroner's Bureau for further investigation. Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact South at 925-888-7052 or via Dispatch at 925-284-5010. — Cathy Dausman

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, April 11, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Planning Commission

Tuesday, March 28, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Finance Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 22, 6 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
Orinda Library

School Board Meetings

Orinda Union School District
Monday, April 17, 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



Feb. 26 to March 4

Alarms	60
Noise complaints	6
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	3
Traffic stops	90
Suspicious Circumstances	3
Suspicious Subjects	10
Suspicious Vehicles	13
Animal cruelty	
BevMo	

Burglary, Auto

10 block Camino Sobrante
40 block Haciendas Rd.

Burglary, Residential

10 block Jewel Ct.
80 block Evergreen Dr.
400 block El Toyonal

Burglary, Commercial

details n/a

Civil

10 block Woodcrest Dr (2)
100 block El Toyonal (2)
500 block Miner Rd.
Reported to police
700 block Miner Rd.

Death, non-criminal

10 block Chelton Ct.

Disturbance

Valley View Dr./Don Gabriel
Lavenida/Donna Maria Way (3)
Wilder/Gateway
60 block Brookwood Rd.

Dispute

500 block Moraga Way

DUI

Oak Hill Rd./Mt Diablo Blvd.
San Pablo Creek/Miner Rd.

ID Theft

80 block Muth Dr.
Reported to police

Injury Accident

Moraga Way/Coral Dr.

Missing adult

10 block Theatre Square

Police/Fire/ EMS

500 block Moraga Way
10 block Crown Ct
BevMo

Public Nuisance

60 block Lombardy Ln.
Eastwood/Coral Dr.

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Miner Road sinkhole repair to begin as property owners and city come to right-of-entry agreement

By Sora O'Doherty

Two months after Orinda suffered a serious sinkhole, the city has obtained a right-of-entry from the property owner adjacent to the sinkhole to perform repair work.

The property owners object to any suggestion that they were responsible for any delay. Darryl and Jena Rains say they only received drawings on Friday, March 10, submitted them to their engineer over the weekend, and approved the plans on Monday, March 13. The Rains agreed with the proposed box culvert; they maintain that the pipe culvert proposed by the city would not have met California Department of Transportation standards.

The Rains said they were upset by some negative comments, but have also received sympathy, and even flowers, from neighbors. It has not been easy for them. The full basement and the ground floor of their home were flooded with creek



This damaged pipe underscores the severity of the sinkhole.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

100 block Camino Pablo
10 block Harran Cr.

30 block Las Cascadas
10 block El Caminito
Moraga Way/Bryant Way
Amber Valley Dr./Dalewood
Camino del Cielo/El Toyonal
20 block Alta Vista

Reckless Driving

Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd (2)
El Toyonal/Vallecito
Camino Pablo/El Toyonal
500 block Miner Rd
Moraga Way/Overhill Rd
Hwy 24/Camino Pablo
Valley View/Moraga Way
Los Amigos/Camino Pablo

Shoplift

BevMo
Safeway
CVS

Theft, Petty

40 block Haciendas Rd.

Theft, Grand

500 block Miner Rd.
200 block La Espiral

Trespass

Wilder/Dairy Creek Rd.

Unauthorized possession

Hwy 24/St Stephens Dr.

Vandalism

10 block El Camino Moraga
40 block Pomello Pl.

Violation Custody order

Glorietta Elementary
300 block Glorietta

Warrant Service/Arrest/Advise

Hwy 24/Camino Pablo
St Stephens/El Nido Ranch Rd.

water and sewage from the broken sewer pipes. Repairs to the home, where they have lived for 25 years, include removal of all hardwood floors and much of the sheetrock, the removal of sludge left by the flood, and the loss of furniture and personal possessions, including two cars.

On March 14, the city held a community meeting at Sleepy Hollow School, in the area most affected by the sinkhole, to address neighbors' concerns. The city attributed the delay in sinkhole repair to the weather and to negotiations with the property owners. "Negotiating rights-of-entry with the adjoining property owners allowed the city to proceed with the project as soon as possible, without jeopardizing reimbursement from federal and state agencies," the city said in a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions handed out at the meeting.

Orinda Senior Engineer Jason Chen spoke about alternative traffic routes and signage and striping changes on Camino Sobrante. Fire Chief Stephen Healy of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District addressed the effects of Miner Road closure on response times. While he stated that the sinkhole was causing delays of approximately 10 minutes, some residents disagreed with Healy, stating that delays are often longer.

Orinda Police Chief Mark Nagel spoke about crime statistics, home security, including lighting and alarms, and the effects of the closure of Miner Road on response times. Nagel presented statistics showing that crime has been steadily declining in Orinda from 103 reported cases in the Sleepy Hollow and Orinda Woods areas in 2012, to 36 in 2016, with eight cases thus far in 2017. He urged residents to view the Orinda Safety Video (<http://lamorindacert.org/Orinda-safety-video/>) and to keep their property secured, noting that that morning eight cars had been burglarized in Orinda, and all had been unlocked.

Many residents complained about difficulties navigating the detours, frequently blocked by construction trucks. They offered suggestions, such as shuttles for BART commuters and/or for contractors and workers, or designating a specific truck route. Residents wondered if the city would avail of the opportunity to underground utilities during the work on Miner Road, but Public Works Director Larry Thisis replied that that was not authorized.

Thisis explained that while potholes would be fixed, Camino Sobrante is part of the 2017 schedule of repaving, while Miner Road is scheduled for 2018. Speakers asked what increased costs were caused by the delay and how much they could be attributed to "one holdout" property owner. Orinda Mayor Eve Phillips responded that a big consideration in the repair process was the prospect of receiving reimbursement, which was facilitated by coming to an agreement with the property owner, and said she was very glad that they were able to reach agreement.

Others wanted to know if the Rains were paid for the right-of-entry, and were told no, but that there will be an easement appraisal and offer process. Commenters asked for access to the 1999 settlement with the same property owners following a prior flood. City Attorney Osa Wolff stated that the document is public and will be made available. After the meeting Wolff released two documents, indicating the Rains had settled their claims for damages from the 1997 flood for \$185,000 and no attorney costs. A comment that delay caused by the property owner increased the costs was applauded by many. One

speaker said the rusted-out culvert should have been repaired, thereby avoiding the sinkhole. Another asked the city to begin condemnation proceedings on the damaged properties. Council Member Inga Miller assured the residents that the city council members do drive the affected roads. She stressed the importance of federal funding because if the city has to pay to the repairs to the sinkhole, the money would be diverted from other discretionary spending for things like police and public works. This reassured people that the city is spending more to get the work done faster.

Although the Rains were not present at the meeting, they were represented by attorney Andrew Sabey. He said that as a result of the action of the property owners, there is now a more robust repair plan. He pointed out that when the property owners purchased the property in 1992 it was not in a flood zone. The 1997 flood was a shock to the property owners, and resulted in their property being then reclassified as flood zone. "Nobody likes the government to take property," he said, and if Orinda had done so it would have resulted in a court case. He complimented the city on doing a good job getting to the point of agreement with the property owners on a design that will meet Caltrans standards for rebar and concrete and will be adequate for what is considered a "100-year storm."

As the meeting concluded, the city attorney, responding to questions, said that the Rains have filed two claims. While the negotiation for the right-of-entry to the site has been concluded, the remaining issues include damage claims, compensation for construction easements and permanent maintenance easements.

Fixing the sinkhole

Orinda Director of Public Works Larry Thisis said that in regards to sinkhole repair, the design now calls for a reinforced concrete box culvert 16 feet wide by seven feet high, with three 24-inch diameter high flow pipes installed between the top of the culvert and the bottom of the roadway to handle potential flood waters.

Work outside the channel will begin immediately. The city needs to reapply for an emergency permit from the Army Corps of Engineers to set up a temporary dam and divert the creek around the worksite, as the current permit has expired. The permit will likely take a week or two to be issued. Once the creek has been diverted, the construction of the new culvert will take about two months, barring any unforeseen conditions or significant adverse weather.

The box culvert and headwalls will be constructed by placing steel rebar within wood forms and filling the forms with high early strength concrete. Above the culvert and behind the headwalls will be backfilled and compacted; utility lines and the three overflow pipes will be placed as the backfill rises. The two top feet of the backfill will contain base rock and hot mix asphalt for the restored pavement surface. The dam will then be removed and the city will proceed with planting vegetation and placing a decorative cultured stone treatment on the face of the walls for aesthetics.

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Year of the Czechs in Orinda Dinner and Dvorak is delicious fun

By Sora O'Doherty



Attendees enjoy the Dvorak opera.

Photos Sora O'Doherty

As part of the continuing Year of the Czechs in Orinda, the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation hosted a screening of Antonin Dvorak's opera, "Rusalka" and offered a dinner of Czech cuisine at the Orinda Community Center on Mar 12.

Last month the Metropolitan Opera in New York produced the piece, and the New York Times raved, "the Metropolitan Op-

era's new production of Dvorak's 'Rusalka' may be the unlikeliest hit of the season, a staging that takes opera's answer to 'The Little Mermaid' fairytale and turns it into an almost shockingly dark, sexy drama." Both the 1989 Disney film and the Dvorak work are based on the work of Hans Christian Anderson. "Rusalka" premiered in 1901 in Prague.

The food for the 40 guests was

provided by D.J.'s Bistro in Concord, the Contra Costa hangout for Eastern European cuisine. Diners enjoyed a three-course meal with salad, a choice of roast pork or beef goulash with Czech dumplings, and large slices of apple strudel with cream for dessert. Fortunately owner Jerry Sedivy provided to-go boxes as the portions were large. And for those who missed the event, the restaurateur was kind enough to share his goulash recipe with our readers. (See recipe at right.)

This event will also contribute to the funding for the next visiting student who will come from Tabor, Orinda's Czech sister city, to study at Miramonte High School in the fall. Already, Marek Vybral has been chosen. Marek, whose favorite subjects are geography and history, is an avid athlete who swims, skis, cycles and hikes. He is also fond of languages, and looks forward to learning about the way of life in Orinda and getting involved with Orinda's big Czech Festival in the fall.

Czech Goulash

(serves 4)

Recipe courtesy of DJ's Bistro, 1825 Sutter St. Concord.

- 2 medium to large onions, finely chopped
- 2 lbs. beef round steak cut into 16 medium cubes
- 3 oz. bacon, chopped
- 6-8 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3-4 oz. sweet Hungarian paprika
- Scant tablespoon cayenne pepper
- 1 ½ Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- Water



Put the chopped onions and the chopped bacon into a large skillet and let cook until the onions are very brown. Add the beef cubes and let simmer 10 minutes. Add water to cover and let boil until the meat is very tender, about 35-40 minutes. Add the chopped garlic, the paprika and the cayenne and let boil another 5-10 minutes.

Mix the flour with a little water really well and slowly add to the stew to thicken. Simmer another 5 minutes.

Serve with dumplings, boiled potatoes or any pasta.

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire

District Board of Directors
Wednesday, April 19, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors

Tuesday, April 11, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber room 107,
Administration Building,
651 Pine St., Martinez
For meeting times and agendas,
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

MOFD unrestricted general fund deficit soars to \$60 million

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District board unanimously approved revised financial reports from 2105 and 2016 at its March 15 district meeting, the MOFD financial reporting ad hoc committee having recommended a write off of \$23 million for an incorrectly recorded prepaid item on the district balance sheet. But one director was furious that the committee failed to provide its information to the rest of the board members prior to the district meeting.

The district purchased a \$28 million pension obligation bond in 2005 to pay down its unfunded pension liability, and recorded the amount as a prepaid item on its balance sheet. Accounting rules changed in 2015 and no longer

should the district have recorded that figure as a prepaid item. After research and evidence collected by the ad hoc committee, comprising directors John Jex and Craig Jorgens, and a conference call that included a senior staff member of the Governmental Standards Accounting Board, the district staff revised the financial reports, writing off the \$23 million balance of the bond and increasing the district's unrestricted general fund deficit to more than \$60 million.

Jex, a retired Deloitte audit partner, later put into perspective the complexity of the accounting involved. "I cannot remember, in my 35 years as an auditor, ever going to the Financial Accounting Standards Board with a question," he said.

Though he did not disagree with its findings, Director Steve Anderson chastised the committee for not including other board members in the loop prior to the district meeting. "The ad hoc committee does not serve the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee serves the whole board," he said. Anderson demanded that if another director requests information of an ad hoc committee, it should supply the information, regardless of the inconvenience it might cause.

Anderson was not finished. "I was extremely perturbed when I discovered that a member of my division called me and told me all of the information," he said.

Jorgens did not consider that communication to be seditious.

"It's not a Brown Act violation to communicate to an outsider as long as that person is not acting as an agent of a board member," he said, referring to legislation that regulates how public meetings are conducted.

MOFD outside counsel John Bakker said that ad hoc committee meetings may be held privately but a third director cannot be present unless the meeting is posted and noticed to the public. The ad hoc committee may provide a purely informational, one-way transmission of its findings to the board without posting a public meeting.

The district voted to terminate its financial reporting ad hoc committee, and created one to search for a new district auditor.

ConFire Station 16: Process defeating progress

By Nick Marnell



Proposed Station 16 in Lafayette.

Photo courtesy ConFire

The Lafayette Design Review Commission approved plans for Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Fire Station 16 in February, and the project next proceeds to the Lafayette Planning and Building department for issuance of a building permit.

"Station 16 is about half the size of a normal fire station for us," Deputy Chief Lewis Broschard told the commission. The rebuilt station will include 2,713 square feet of living quarters for three firefighters plus a 1,100-square-foot apparatus bay.

"The station will look like a

ranch-style home, and will look better than what has resided on that spot for the past 20 years," Broschard said, referring to the mobile structure that sat on the site since 1995.

Broschard explained that because of the small space, the Station 16 apparatus bay can only allow the engines to back in to the garage, though ConFire prefers a drive-in facility. He said that the apparatus bay is more than just a garage but also serves as a storage area for personal protective gear and decontamination equipment.

The district has scheduled meetings with an energy consultant, as the building has to adhere to the Contra Costa County sustainable energy requirements. The fire station must also receive a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating indicating that the station is green-certified.

The ConFire project manager, Kitchell Northern California, has begun the prequalification of building contractors. In the meantime, the district is drafting its construction and design plans to submit to the city building department. Bros-

chard said that since a fire station is an essential services facility, it must not only be strong enough to respond to community needs but also become the focal point for relief efforts in a major disaster, and so the construction and design requirements are far more rigid than for a single-family home.

Lafayette resident Erling Horn, a member of the ConFire advisory fire commission, implored officials to move quickly on the project. "I urge approval posthaste before the county decides to spend its money someplace else," he said.

Lafayette fire commissioner stepping down in June

By Nick Marnell

When Lafayette fire commissioner Bill Granados departs this summer, many of his colleagues say that the loss will be not only for Lafayette and the fire district but for all of Contra Costa County.

Granados was appointed to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Advisory Fire Commission in 2002. "I'm 73. Fifteen years is enough time," he said. A ranch owner, he plans to continue roping cows and branding them after he retires June 30. "I've always been kind of a cowboy," he said. He will help the widow of Bob Chapman, who recommended Granados for the commission, keep her cows in line as well.

With his background in chemical engineering, Granados founded ISSCO, a Lafayette company that tests and certifies backflow prevention devices, equipment that prevents used water from reentering the potable water system. "We're protecting the public water supply. Sort of like smog testing for your car," Granados said. He will also keep his hands in this business.

"He's got boundless energy," said Tom Chapman, Bob's brother and commission chairman, whom, to complete the circle, Granados recruited in 2012. "Bill is the most active of the commissioners. He knows what is going on in almost all of the county activities."

Many seconded those attributes: Granados' energy and his involvement. District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen said that Granados attends nearly every supervisors' and fire board meeting. "He regularly provides us with reliable and helpful insight as we address the many fire and emergency medical issues in the county," she said.

Vince Wells, Local 1230 president, praised Granados as the most active commissioner, always representing the interests of Lafayette. "He advocated for the firefighters and never failed to speak out in our support," Wells said.



Bill Granados and his daughter Lola attend one of his many formal civic events. Photo provided

ConFire Chief Jeff Carman recognized Granados for bringing a level of professionalism to the job and keeping everyone on track when the commission meetings would go awry, which they frequently did until Granados became involved. Granados took his advisory role seriously. "He was at almost every directors meeting letting the supervisors know what he thought of the initiatives the fire district was working on," the chief said.

Carman noted that Granados went beyond just being a fire commissioner for the district, but also tried to create camaraderie among all of the fire commissioners and directors in the county. As president of the Fire Commissioners Association, Granados continues to organize regular meetings of the county fire boards and fire commissioners.

Granados called the hiring of Carman in 2013 the high point of his tenure. As a business executive, Granados could see what ConFire needed in its leadership, and he strongly recommended Carman for the job. "Bill was on one of my interview panels when I applied, so I've always felt a connection with him," Carman said. "He's a class act, and I will always remember him for giving me a chance to be

the fire chief."

The failure of 2012 Measure Q, which would have generated \$16 million annually for ConFire, devastated Granados. "But Carman has kind of erased that," Granados said.

Granados' knowledge and instincts came to bear when he stood out as the lone wolf and predicted, in this newspaper, that in 2013 the ConFire board would not approve Fire Station 46, the joint venture in western Lafayette between ConFire and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. "Two chiefs, with one station? It's not going to work," he said. He was correct. When Carman scuttled the on-again, off-again plans in 2016, the chief said that the different cultures of the two agencies would have never melded properly.

The cowboy leaves the district in a much better position. "Things are in good hands. There's nothing to really get worked up about now," Granados said. On that note, he imparts this message to Lafayette residents. "Have faith in Chief Carman and his chief officers," Granados said. "They know how to run the fire district."

Andersen will accept applications in April and May and will appoint Granados' District 2 successor in June.

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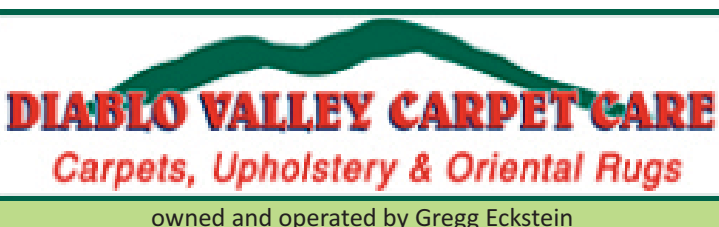
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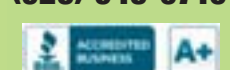
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Lafayette

New Sufi Sanctuary opens in Saranap

... continued from page A3

Duncan Knowles, media liaison for the group, said that the marble workers, who lifted pieces of marble weighing 300 to 500 pounds into place, were really proud of their work. "And they should be," said Knowles.

A tour of the facility followed. With approximately two-thirds of the building underground, the sanctuary includes the Prayer Hall, which can seat all 350 members, a 39-foot tall figurative sculpture, a commercial kitchen, offices, an archive room, dance studio, rehearsal room and video space capable of live-streaming their events to the far corners of the world.

Many representatives from the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County attended the opening festivities.

Still some complaints

The plan to construct the sanctuary caused considerable debate within the Saranap area, and now that it is complete there is still some chirping about it. Residents have complained about the vinyl fence surrounding the property and the large expanse of parking lot. Some don't care for the domes or the plantings they have seen to date.

Sanctuary Project Director Bob Carpenter admits that the fence wasn't their first choice, but the cost of the rock and glass wall they planned became prohibitive. "Our hope is that sometime in the future we'll be able to build the wall the way it was intended."

The original plans also called for a "Grasspave" lawn across the parking area, but the drought and water rationing forced the group to delay that plan. "We did install the Grasspave system," said Carpenter, "so perhaps in the future the water restrictions will be lifted and we can add that lawn."

Regarding the domes, Knowles points out they were not added for outward appearance. "They were installed for the peaceful and exalted feeling people experience inside the sanctuary. Domes create a tranquil, uplifting space beneath them. They've been added to sacred buildings for centuries and can help one's heart awaken for prayer."

Knowles related that the plantings on the outside, especially the trees, may take five years or more to fill in. "They were chosen for how beautiful they'll look when mature. Eventually, the sanctuary will be nestled in a glade of trees, mostly unseen from the street. Murshida Conner's vision is that the area surrounding the sanctuary will become a park with flowered gardens, a place where neighbors and members can come for quiet contemplation."

Rheem sinkhole

... continued from page A5

Priebe gave the example of a recent new requirement that was given to the town to sign a contract with each of the utility agencies involved in the sinkhole, including AT&T, Comcast and PG&E, that they would take care of their own repairs.

Kwan was the city engineer in Richmond when a behemoth sinkhole formed in 2010. He is familiar with the public process and remembers that it took five years in Richmond to complete the repair project and get reimbursement. His projection in Moraga is more optimistic: He expects the approval process to be finalized by May 5; the town council would then approve the bid in June, and construction would take place over the summer. He adds that he also has alternative plans prepared if things do not go according to this timing.

Wendy Scheck, president of the chamber of commerce, said that the merchants at Rheem are indeed frustrated and suffering from the delays, but that the business community acknowledges that town staff is doing the best possible under the circumstances.

Kwan confirmed that the reopening date for the other street segment of Rheem Boulevard between Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road is set at May 1. Kwan also wants to start the repaving of Moraga Road during the coming school spring break.

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT ISO RATING IMPROVES FROM "3" TO "2"



Dear Neighbors,

Every 4 years, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) reviews the fire protection within your community. The ISO is an international provider of statistical, analytical, technical and other information to the insurance industry and to state insurance regulators. Among other things, it provides a numerical rating for communities. A rating classification between 1 and 10 is given. A "1" is the best rating and a "10" is the poorest. Your Fire District (MOFD) was rated as a "3" from 1997 to present.

On April 1, 2017, MOFD's rating will improve from a "3" to a "2".

Presently, only 2.8% of fire departments nation-wide have a rating of "1" or "2". The Fire District encourages you to contact your insurance company before your next policy period because your fire insurance rates may decrease. Often, insurance underwriters will want proof. If this is the case, see the additional information below.

Stephen Healy, Fire Chief
925-258-4599



Important—Please Read!

Effective: April 1, 2017

- Some insurance companies will consider the improved ISO rating beginning with your next policy term (some will not).
- Check your policy's term, contact your insurance agent, and advise them of the change (effective: April 1, 2017).
- If your insurance company wants proof of your new ISO rating, direct them to our website:

www.mofd.org

There are several easily found references to the change under "News", "Announcements", and "About MOFD".

- Your insurance company can also contact ISO directly. They must do this because ISO will not give ratings to property owners; only insurance companies and the Fire Chief.

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Wild Magnolia Blooms in Orinda

By A.K. Carroll



The inside of Wild Magnolia in Orinda.

Photos Travis Setterbo

Restaurant mogul Michael Karp is at it again. After scrapping the tequila passports, unstoppable guac and high-end Mexican entrees of Theater Square's Barbacoa and opening business casual taproom and comfort food eatery The Fourth Bore last fall, Karp has moved a few doors down and taken out six-year resident Table 24. Almost a year to the date since The Fourth Bore renovation, Karp closed his catchall neighborhood restaurant and reopened it as Wild Magnolia.

The name is a tribute to Karp's college days in New Orleans and to the Mardi Gras Indian tribe that plays and records music under the same name. Inspired by the NOLA Wild Magnolias, this low-lit space is meant to contrast The Fourth Bore while honoring an appreciation for music and food. "I'm just sort of celebrating those undertones," said Karp. "To weave that culture into the basis of what we're doing."

The new concept opened Thanksgiving weekend (mere weeks after Table 24 closed), and three months in, still seems to be finding its feet. On entering the building, you get the feeling that the transition is somewhat still in progress. The walls have been stripped down and splashed in deep gray, booths reupholstered and tables clothed in simple white cloths; reclaimed windows provide a soft barrier to what was and remains an open kitchen. But much like a teenager dressing for prom, remnants of the restaurant's former life still linger: reclaimed bleacher seats framing the bar, a screen on the wall, bright red and white tile across the whole of the



Wild Magnolia Salad



Wild Mushroom Risotto and Petit Filet

kitchen. Much of the space remains barren of detailed decor, aside from a spindly white tree that hearkens to Christmas and an impressionist painting of a few bright guitars—the only real suggestion that the restaurant has a musical undertone.

But while Wild Magnolia's overall vibe may still be emerging, the culinary offerings (directed by creative partner Dianna Condon and executed by Chef Sasha Zukanoff from Karp's Oakland Forge) have clearly already spent some time in incubation. Somewhat to my surprise, the menu is almost entirely classic and contemporary American. There are a few hints at Southern inspiration, including a perfectly balanced gumbo and a decadent bread pudding, but by-and-large the fare is typical date night fodder: seared salmon, roasted chicken, a few flatbreads and a bevy of salads. If Wild Magnolia were a woman, she'd almost certainly invite you to girls' night out.

While not terribly exciting, the dishes are excellently executed, all the way down to the crispy thin fries, which I highly suggested soaking in the garlic wine butter sauce that's comes with an order of sizable mussels. Other small plates include marinated olives, sautéed mushrooms, and a cheese and charcuterie board. Not exactly kid food, and intentionally so.

There's a selection of specialty cocktails, which are neither stiff nor terribly impressive, but the beers are well-chosen and the wine list is fair. (If you're going for bubbles, pick the Prosecco over the Veuve.) Salads are fresh, even inventive. The Wild Magnolia, a salad that's more shred-

ded than tossed, is a delicious balance of acidic onion, bitter endive, and sweet candied pecans touched with potent bleu cheese and a balsamic vinaigrette. Entrees are sizable, even sharable, and generously paired, but while the seared wild salmon melded beautifully with a side comprised of fennel butter, mire poix and farro, the wild mushroom risotto and petite filet seemed to share a plate and nothing more. On my visit the filet was unevenly cooked (bloody in the center and dry on the edge), so I passed it to my partner and stole the salmon for myself.

Service was outstanding from start to finish, and the finish was rather lovely as well. A short list of sweets includes a chocolate pot de crème, strawberry apple crumble topped with a generous scoop of gelato, and a bourbon bread pudding (also topped with gelato) that's destined for Instagram fame. Bread pudding is typically my "go to" for leftover baguettes, loaves, and even hot dog buns. I've made many a fine batch, but none as delicious as the one at Wild Magnolia.

Though the concept still wants for a little unity and refinement, there's hope that Wild Magnolia will come into its own given some more time. Plans are in place for regular live music and a Sunday jazz brunch to roll out on the weekend. The walls are ripe for well-chosen artwork, and in the meantime the tables are covered with butcher paper and crayons. I suppose each of us still has a remnant of childhood in there somewhere.

www.wildmagnoliaorinda.com, 2 Theatre Square, Suite #153, Orinda, 925-254-0124.



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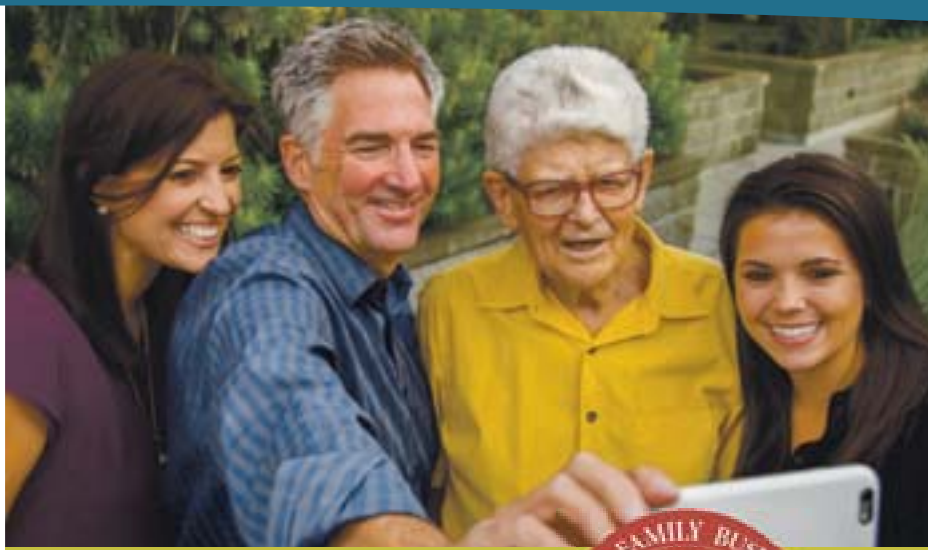
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Letters to the Editor

Why not publish editorials?

Dear Editor,
Having recently gone through a contentious dispute between Lafayette's city council and the property owners on three streets about to be repaved, it occurs to me that your newspaper could have provided an extremely valuable service to our community by editorializing the unfairness of Lafayette's Municipal code, Section 8-123.

Although that opportunity has probably been lost, it is not too late to initiate an editorial page in the Lamorinda Weekly as almost every newspaper worth reading in the United States proudly publishes.

Pippa Fisher did a yeoman's job of covering our dispute in two articles she wrote and I thank her for that but editorializing it and many other contentious issues as they arise would be an exceptionally good service to local journalism and to our community.

I hope you will give serious consideration to my suggestion. In fact, I will go one step further to facilitate it. I volunteer to write your first editorial with the Lamorinda Weekly with the headline, "The Unmitigated Gall of Lafayette's Section 8-123."

My service won't cost a dime and you'll find it enlightening.
John Salley
Lafayette

[Editor's Note: Traditionally the Lamorinda Weekly has elected not to publish editorials nor endorse candidates for office, but we do offer a Public Forum as well as this section for residents to state their opinions on matters of importance to the community.]

Most papers that do publish editorials have their own division, with an editorial manager, who writes the editorials, to avoid conflict of interest between the editor of the paper, who often helps write articles, and an unbiased third-party.

Also, both Pippa Fisher and Nick Marnell covered the sidewalks issue.]

Sanctuary Cities effort is misguided

Dear Editor,
Your March 8 article highlighting the efforts by three young women to have "Lamorinda" designated for sanctuary status is an example of appeal to the heart, and not to the head. Early on, the article mentions that the three women are children of immigrants; while the article does not state this, we can presume that the immigration status of their parents flows from them having gone through the normal legal channels. Thus, the women are not essentially self-advocating, and instead are appealing to the better human instincts in all of us.

However, the article lays out

a case that effectively ignores the laws of the United States. And this is the great failing of the women's effort. Either we are a nation of laws, or we are not. Advocating that laws be ignored is a slippery slope. Perhaps it would be better to advocate for changes in our immigration laws, as opposed to the "nice" concept of a sanctuary city (or area).

I am not an advocate for forceful removal of otherwise law-abiding undocumented individuals. But is your paper an advocate for avoiding our laws?

Bill Fraser
Lafayette

Leigh Creekside Park Welcomes Everyone

Dear Editor,
The recent decision to conduct a focused EIR for Leigh Creekside Park is being framed by playground developers as children vs. nature. Children and nature go together like a hand-in-glove. To pit children against nature is not fair to children or nature, especially future generations.

At the 2/27/17 Lafayette City Council meeting, four children and a young adult advised the council to protect the park from development. In fact, one young man requested we preserve the park into perpetuity for future generations and then declared, "I am the future!" Moreover, noise ordinances for single family residential neighborhoods are tighter than in multi-family or downtown neighborhoods.

As a frequent park user, I can attest to the wonderful sounds of children laughing, playing and running in the park, especially in the spring, summer, and fall. Leigh Creekside Park was founded to preserve nature for future generations. It is the only park of its kind in Lafayette and it welcomes everyone of all ages and abilities. Framing the issue as children vs. nature is illogical, because no one should be forced to choose one over the other. It deepens divides within our community and demonstrates our inability to appreciate the value of greenspace.

Leigh Creekside Park is too small to install an elaborate playground and expect the park to remain a natural oasis. To claim we have a semi-rural character and to strip our neighborhood of this little gem of a natural space along the creek is to say one thing and do another. In the words of Joanie Mitchell, "You don't know what you've got 'till it's gone!"
Deborah Callister
Lafayette

Hoping Moraga can act civilly

Dear Editor,
In response to Doug Home's letter to the editor last edition I wanted to give an alternative perspective on how I see the recent engagement in

several town issues. Doug suggested that current voices at Moraga Town Council meetings were "politically extreme groups." What I witnessed were dozens of local parents, long-time residents and young adults, all who live in our community, speaking passionately about issues that concern them and the people they love.

One parent spoke about her experience firing a loaded gun at a teenager and barely missing hitting her friend; another resident, who has lived here for decades, spoke about his journey from China and the positive impact many immigrants have had on this country; and a third resident spoke about her fears of her young children coming into contact with guns at playdates in Moraga.

While there is much divisiveness in our country right now, my hope is that locally, we can do things differently: Avoiding attacks on individuals and groups and discussing issues and concerns with rigor, compassion and civility.

If people are concerned, as I am, about the town's liability and fiscal impact as it relates to new ordinances that are being proposed, I would love to see people join us for the monthly Community Conversations that are being held at Saint Mary's College. These meetings are explicitly for the purpose of helping people hear each other and think creatively about the many interests and concerns of our residents. We have been fortunate that many town council members and town staff have been present for these meetings. The next meetings take place on Sat., March 25 and Sat. April 29, both from 9:30-11:30 a.m. The expectation is that participants come ready to listen, speak authentically and think creatively. I hope to see you there.

Edy Schwartz
Moraga

Safe gun storage ordinance encouraged

Dear Editor,
As noted in last week's edition, a group of over 230 concerned residents is asking Moraga to consider two commonsense gun violence prevention ordinances. As representatives of that group, we write to explain our concerns and objectives.

Our primary focus is the safety of children in Moraga. Just among our group's Executive Committee, our children have been shown unsecured guns at playdates, and we've known teens who committed suicide with their parents' guns. Some of us lived in Moraga when a JM student was accidentally killed while playing with a gun at a friend's house. Many of our children were in elementary school when a deranged individual used his mother's guns to kill a classroom of 7-year-olds, and six of their educators, in Newtown, Connecticut.

We've asked the town council to adopt an ordinance that would require people to keep their guns safely stored when they're not carrying them. Safe storage, already practiced by responsible gun owners, helps prevent accidental shootings by children, teen suicides, and gun thefts during burglaries. An existing California law that makes it a crime after an adult leaves a loaded gun where a child can access it does not do enough to protect kids from getting guns in the first place, which is why eight communities in California – including San Francisco and Oakland – have passed "safe storage" laws. Only one of these laws was challenged. It was upheld by a federal appellate court as consistent with the Second Amendment.

We've also proposed an ordinance that would require gun dealers who wish to operate in Moraga to sell out of commercial zones, rather than from private homes, so that law enforcement can have greater oversight. Lafayette, Pleasant Hill, the unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County, and 58 other localities in California have these modest requirements.

We elected our town council members to put the safety of its

residents above all else. We believe Moraga can and should follow the lead of the dozens of other California communities that have taken steps to make them as safe as they can be. To join our effort, email safemoraga@gmail.com.

Executive Committee, SAFE MORAGA: Moragans for Gun Safety

- Anne Naffziger
- Dr. Elizabeth Berkes
- Eric and Ana Moon
- Ada Sheng
- David and Allison Anderman
- Doris Chen
- Kiran Malancharuvil
- Moon Chung
- Stephanie Dickerson
- Richard Herd and Meghan Sweetney
- Rebecca Leimbach

Enjoys Moraga Police report

Dear Editor,
Please tell whoever writes the police report for Moraga that he/she is great and I think he/she is so funny and entertaining!
Vicki Featherstun
Moraga

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Moraga's Citizen of the Year

... continued from page A4

She said that it was in the vacuum of her husband's death that she started the Habitat for Humanity chapter. She adds that philanthropy had always been in her blood.

"My mother was the biggest philanthropist I ever knew," remembers Preston, "She was the director of civil defense in Houston, and she was the first female deacon in the Presbyterian church in Texas." Preston remembers the red phone the family had in their kitchen that was her mother's civil defense command center and that she and her sisters were not allowed to touch it. She adds that her father was also very active in the community.

Preston says that she chose the medical field because she found the challenge of solving a mystery very exciting and picked radiology because of the diagnosis power of the technique. She adds that women imaging allowed her to have a lot of patient contacts. She worked at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco where she started a consultative breast service (she later started such centers at John Muir and Kaiser) where the pathologist, the radiologist and the surgeon get together and discuss each patient's best course of action. Preston has now been retired for three and a half years.

The Moraga resident's second charity project was the bicycle-recycle program that has been going on in Moraga for over 20 years. She started it with her new husband, Tom Preston. "I just can't stand when I see usable needed things going to the landfill," she says. The first years they would then take their collection to the Oakland Police Department that had a program to repair and redistribute bicycles. But when the Oakland police stopped the program, Preston had to find something else. She located

the Marsh Creek Detention Facility for nonviolent offenders managed by the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department that has a bicycle repair shop. She also found Trips for Kids in the San Rafael area that takes the bikes. She now asks that people drop their unused bicycles on her driveway in November.

Then one day in 2014 Preston noticed how fire blight was starting to invade the pear trees of the historical orchard next to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. There was no hesitation on her part, something had to be done. She researched the topic and educated herself on how to better address the issue. She reached out to volunteers, procured tools — at a discount or even donated — from local hardware stores and organized strategic pruning sessions several years in a row.

She recently found a scientist who is now collaborating with a Saint Mary's professor who is a friend of Preston's to devise the best way to make these trees strong enough to last another 100 years. "If the trees disappear, the town will have to change its symbol," she says with a smile.

Preston's most demanding and all-compassing philanthropic effort of the last two years has been her involvement with "No One Left behind," a program that promised native Afghans and Iraqi who helped Americans during the military presence there that they would get safe passage for themselves and their family if need be. Starting the local chapter of the group that supports new refugees, Preston organized a phenomenal network of mentors, tutors and donors, a vast majority from Moraga, and a sizeable number from Orinda, Lafayette and Walnut Creek, to help 200 immigrant families get settled and

acclimated in the United States.

Preston says that like the bicycles that keep coming up from Moraga — close to 300 every year — an enormous quantity of furniture and supplies kept coming to her to help the refugees. Locals also gave their time and knowledge as mentors and tutors to support the families.

Preston herself gave her time and energy to the limit of what her body could give and she broke one leg after the other during the furniture transportation operations. It did not stop her at first, but becoming more reasonable, she has now cut back on her responsibilities and is simply in charge of the speaking engagements for the group. She says she is looking forward to having more time to spend in her garden and at the Moraga Garden Farms where she has been a member for six years.

The Moraga resident explains that what she wants today is to share her experience with others and encourage them to do a little something. For example, in front of her house she has installed a small exchange library where people can leave or take a book. She now would want to make it bigger and have a children section. She and her husband spend time painting benches and fences in the parks in Moraga, also another little thing that anyone can do and contributes to the welfare of the community.

Preston will be honored at a dinner supported by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Saint Mary's College of California, the Lamorinda Weekly and the Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club April 22 at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College. Tickets, available to anyone, will be available on the Chamber of Commerce website at moraga-chamber.org.



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Brazilian beach volleyball comes to Moraga

... continued from page A1



Members of the newly formed beach volleyball team, the Moraga Carioca, include, front row, from left, Charlotte Glass and Nicole Van Stralen; Back row, from left, Coach Fabio Ribeiro, Caroline Schafer, Grace Andreea, Kate Goto, Josie Cole and Ainsley Radell. Not pictured is Jacquelyne Ribeiro. Photo John T. Miller

He was all-Western Athletic Conference first team at UH, and won MVP and all-Conference awards while playing for Italy and Greece.

After Europe, he went back to beach volleyball in Hawaii. His daughter Jacquelyne grew up playing the sport and eventually Ribeiro found himself starting a club in Texas after the family moved there. Eventually he coached the Junior National Boys Under-17 team.

Jacqueline, who won a championship with the Junior National Girls team at the age of 16, has accepted a scholarship to play at UC Berkeley once she graduates from her Austin high school. That was enough pull for Ribeiro to come to the Bay Area last September to establish a club here. He is planning to buy a house in Moraga and move

his wife, Sarah, and daughter here.

"The club is growing very fast," said Ribeiro. "I focus on the quality of the training and not a quantity of players."

Ribeiro explained that he takes players almost exclusively on referral and works with small groups of 6-8 players (age 12-18) who want to focus on sand volleyball fulltime or improve their indoor game. Occasionally he may take a player through tryouts, but only if her skills will fit in with the others in the group.

He does caution that it is an expensive sport. "Since there are no tournaments in the Bay Area, players must travel to Southern California, Texas and Florida, among other locales, in addition to either private lessons or joining the club."

Ribeiro hopes to begin hosting tournaments in May.

His Moraga Carioca club is loaded with talent. In addition to Ribeiro's daughter, who flies up often from Austin to practice with the club, Caroline Schafer, a senior at Miramonte, junior Grace Andreea from Foothill High in Pleasanton and sophomore Ainsley Radell of Monte Vista in Danville all plan on playing volleyball at UC Berkeley (although Radell's options are still open). Josie Cole, a senior at Campolindo, will attend UC Irvine, and Kate Goto, a senior at Foothill, is considering playing at Loyola Marymount University.

The team practices four times a week at the Moraga Commons sand volleyball courts.

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Mackenzie urges people to get 'Off the Couch' in new book

By Sophie Braccini



Budd Mackenzie with Afghan boys and girls.

Photo provided

There are experiences that change a person forever, and when Budd Mackenzie launched Trust In Education, that was one of those life-altering decisions.

For 14 years now, Mackenzie has given nearly 100 percent of his time to the project that created schools in Afghanistan, is keeping kids off the streets of Kabul and in schools, and is continuing to build libraries where boys and girls learn and grow.

The Lafayette philanthropist has now published his first book, "Off the Couch - Into the War for Hearts and Minds." As his reality has expanded, he wants to share the joys of giving, and to inspire people to join or start something that will add meaning to their lives.

You can call Mackenzie an idealist. He believes that it is more important to conquer people's hearts and minds than to kill them. He is from a generation that was impacted by the Vietnam War, and when he saw what was happening in Afghanistan, he could not believe that lessons from the 60s had been forgotten. When he read that Greg Mortensen was building schools in Afghanistan he contacted him and offered to raise \$30,000 to build an additional school. Quickly Mackenzie realized that accountability and reporting were not up to his standards, and that is when he decided to take over the building of the school in Lalander, Afghanistan.

The new book tells that whole story, of the dangerous trips, the setbacks, the dealing with tribal leaders, the difficulty to reach women and girls. And yet the "ordinary" man moving into his 60s and now early 70s never stopped.

Over the years Mackenzie became a different person as he traveled regularly to one of the most impoverished countries in the world. When coming back to privileged Bay Area, he found that everyday small talk revealed its vacuity, and it became harder to communicate on the same level with people who have no idea — no real understanding — of what he was talking about.

With his book Mackenzie wants to give his readers a sense of the urgency of the situation in Afghanistan, and make them realize how truly rewarding for them doing something is. "Yes, (what we are doing) is a drop in the bucket, but if everyone takes care of one drop, we can fill the bucket," he says, with his enthusiasm intact.

He also makes a plea in the book to have the U.S. support small nonprofits all over the world that he feels make a better job than some large one at being transparent and verifiable, and bypass corruption. He himself

has once or twice been asked for "gifts" but he never gave in.

Working with and for girls has been one of Mackenzie's most pressing motivation. A feminist by his own words, Mackenzie cannot accept the terrible treatment girls are still suffering in the rural regions of Afghanistan. A recent U.N. report states that violence against women, including child marriage, forcing or prohibiting marriage, forced self-immolation, rape and beating continue to exist and remain to a large extent unpunished. In all his interactions with local leaders, he has been trying to push his agenda of education for girls with enough cultural sensitivity not to be rejected. For him education in homes and with computers is a great way to reach girls and young women.

Being well connected to his Lafayette and Lamorinda communities, Mackenzie has talked to many of the schools at all grade levels. He invented a new way for local children to give: he does not want them to ask their parents for money, but for them to devise a way to make money and then give it to make a difference in another child's life. "Raising money is not about the money," he says. "It's about raising children."

Over the years the mission of TIE has evolved. The new model, the one that he feels is the most sustainable and profitable to the largest possible number of children, is the implementation of community libraries that have computers that children and adults can access anytime and study at their own pace. The first software programs that TIE provides are Khan Academy's math classes that are free to use. TIE is now looking for ESL free classes to be provided to Afghan children.

Another important TIE program is the education sponsorship program that gives \$50 a month to a child so he can go to school instead of working on the streets or at some kind of menial labor to help support their family. TIE supports the same number of girls and boys.

Mackenzie adds that the book is not made to get more supporters for TIE, though he does not refuse it and continually seeks new opportunities to speak to groups and organizations. Instead, he really wants to tell people to "get off their couches" and spend some of their energy for some of those who need so much.

More information about TIE and the book is available at www.trustededucation.org.

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Complex U.S./Iran relationship explored in Saint Mary's exhibit

By A.K. Carroll



Photos from the US/Iran exhibit of the Shaw



Courtesy of the Saint Mary's Art Museum

How is it that art can open up the creative process of a viewer to forge new associations with familiar iconic material?

This is one of the driving questions behind IRAN|USA, an exhibition of video art and prints by artist Peter Freund, professor of art theory & practice and chair of the Saint Mary's College Art Department. An expansion of Freund's solo exhibition, which ran at the Sazmanab Center for Contemporary Art in Tehran, Iran in August 2015, the 10-piece multi-language exhibition will show at the College of Saint Mary's Art Museum through May 28.

It's a timely debut given a recent executive order that bans immigration from six Muslim-majority

countries and places a temporary blanket on refugees, the growing discussion surrounding the issue of "fake news," and the current political climate of the United States in general, though the exhibit as a whole has been some five to six years in the making. Its springtime show is, in many ways, mere coincidence.

"The political situation has itself appropriated and re-contextualized this art of appropriation, most of which was produced before the current shift in political tides," Freund wrote in an early draft of his preface for the show. "I can only welcome this sort of coincidence. For such contingency is no stranger to my artistic process, which relies heavily on associative and dis-associative interventions."

The original exhibition is comprised of five photographic prints and five pieces of video and is divided into two major segments. While the first portion of the exhibition explores the intersection between key moments in the history of the US and the history of Iran, the second part extends to the broader region of the East, what was once called "the Orient," and includes Iran, the Arab World, and parts of Asia.

The seeds for the project were planted when Freund was an undergrad at Berkeley. "I lived and studied in Cairo for a year and began to develop a sense of the Middle East region as a kind of geography of fantasy for United States policy," said Freund. "The Middle East has become a kind of fictionalized geography of what goes by the name 'terrorism.'"

Indeed, the construction of the concept of terrorism and its geopolitical association is one key to understanding Freund's work and the parallels he draws between the 1953 coup d'état in Iran and the fall of McCarthyism in the United States, which occurred at roughly the same time.

"Thematically there's a question of this (historical coincidence) and historical memory," said Freund.

Freund's work utilizes and even relies on historical documents; yet the factual evidence itself is not what he's keen on exploring. While the exhibition includes actual footage, the artist is quick to point out that it's not a documentary, but has been re-edited in an unusual and evocative way.

"What I'm interested in is this sort of fictional layer of it, the mythology of the Middle East as a site of terrorism," said Freund.

In addition to exploring the relationship between visual docu-

mentation and historical memory, Freund also dips into the complications of language. "The problematic relationship between the original language and the subtitle is actually part of the concept of the work," said the artist. English, Farsi, and Mandarin are all used in the exhibition, and other artists have been brought on to help in the execution of an international vision.

"These are my ideas," said Freund. "But I'm working with actors and other artists who are (originally) from Iran and who are very interested in history, as well as people from the Arab world and from China and Hong Kong. What better way is there to combat a stereotype than to seek out collaboration with the people belonging to the stereotype group? So these projects are partly about developing relationships with people from these regions and developing artwork with them."

Another correlation that Freund has spent time studying involves questions of what he calls historical traumatic memory and its relationship to fantasy and enjoyment. "I'm very interested in how these things (traumatic memory and enjoyment) can converge when you're trying to represent and the problem of representing," he said.

Freund most clearly sees this relationship at play in "The End of an Error," a piece of video art that serves as the focal point of the first part of the exhibition. In it, Freund takes a landmark piece of documentary video regarding the end of McCarthyism and refashions it as an Iranian history lesson narrated in Farsi. While there is a sense of enjoyment generated by the historic end of The Red Scare, there is also allusion to the emergence of a new enemy external to the country.

"It will be something very familiar to people visually, but presented in a very unfamiliar way," said Freund.

While the exhibition provides experimental interpretations of historical events, it also leaves space for viewers to bring their own thoughts and develop their own perspectives.

"My interest is really to look at the document and question it as a direct point of access for historical memory," said Freund. "I'm interested in an audience that is open to looking at familiar materials in a different light and being in this sort of reflective space."

The Saint Mary's College Museum of Art, located on Saint Mary's campus, is open Wednesday-Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$5. stmarys-ca.edu/museum.

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Michael Adler

5 biographies of stars of Golden Age of Movies by Swindell republished

By Sophie Braccini



Larry Swindell

Photo Sophie Braccini

Forty-eight years ago, Larry Swindell published his first book, "Spencer Tracy: A Biography," about the legendary Hollywood actor who had starred in some 75 movies from "Captain Courageous" to "Guess Who's Coming To Dinner." Swindell, who was a journalist, editor and drama critic published four more biographies of Hollywood Golden Age's stars, about Carol Lombard —his best seller — Gary Cooper, Charles Boyer, and John Garfield, the one he finds the most profound. These books had been out of print for some 20 years, but a new editor contacted Swindell and now both hardcovers and paperbacks have been printed again. What Swindell considers to be historical pieces are available online and in all good bookstores.

Swindell was teaching on the brand new campus at UC Irvine when it all started. Being an adjunct professor was a second passion of his, his first were always literature and history. When Tracy died Swindell put together for the university a memorial retrospective of his films with a brochure to accompany the film series. A literary agent got hold of the brochure, and called Swindell to ask if he would write a whole biography. Swindell said yes, not really believing that the agent would get a publishing contract for the book. (There was no self-publishing at the time.) But the agent did and Swindell got to work.

Now living in Moraga, Swindell explains that he had met Tracy twice, and it was not necessarily a fond memory. The first time it was as a UCLA student when he proposed to write a memoir on an actor that had been successful both on stage and in movies and suggested Tracy. UCLA got an appointment for Swindell through the Metro Goldwin Mayer studio that had Tracy under contract, but the actor didn't have much time for a student and gave Swindell a hard time when he came for the interview. Swindell ended up writing about someone else. Fifteen years later, he met again with Tracy at a baseball game; the actor remembered him and the interaction was much more cordial.

Every time Swindell wrote about a star, it was after their death. Sometimes he had met them, such as Charles Boyer — whose wife had invited Swindell

for dinner after the publication of Tracy's book where she was featured — but most of the times not. Writing these biographies was really an investigative journalist work, digging as much as possible about the star he was interested in, sometimes in cooperation with the family, and sometimes against it. "Spencer Tracy's widow was opposed to my work," remembers Swindell. When one understands that Tracy never divorced her but lived many years with his movie partner Katharine Hepburn, one might understand the wife's wariness.

Swindell says that he always wrote what he wanted to, but it was not without difficulties. When he wrote his biography of John Garfield, the editor refused version after version of the manuscript. "They wanted dirt," says Swindell. The young actor was known for links with the Communist party and Swindell would not elaborate beyond hard facts. Another editor finally was able to publish the book. Swindell says that his books are not a collection of anecdotes for tabloids, they give a real historical perspective of the area and the industry.

Swindell also had difficulty with his biography of Humphrey Bogart that was refused by the editor. The author candidly explains that his perception is that the man, who was a remarkable actor, was somewhat dull as an individual.

Swindell stopped writing biographies years ago, and has no desire for working on the lives of more recent stars. Instead, he has started to write a history of American movies from 1898 to today, a gigantic task that requires not only the use of his sharp and vast memory, but also the consultation of his large personal library that contains references to all the movies ever made in this country. He says that it will take him a few more years to complete it. He does not have a contract for that behemoth, but he shares it with friends and family as he writes it, and expects that academic movie departments will have an interest.

There is of course a bit of nostalgia in Swindell's love of the movies of the 1930s and 40s. He liked a time when everyone went to the movies, when parents could trust the industry, and whole families could see any

film together. He explains that the studios had strict guidelines about what could and could not be done. For example, an unpunished crime could not be made. However he believes that this frame did not stifle the directors' creativity, that instead it required more inventiveness on their part.

Swindell's phenomenal memory is also put to good use monthly for moviegoers at the Rheem Theater, as he introduces the classic films he proposes to theater manager Derek Zemrak. With period anecdotes in introducing the movies, Swindell transports the spectators back in time, giving them impression that they too were intimate with the Carry Grants, Betty Davises and other John Waynes.

On March 15 viewers will see "The Woman in the Window" with Edward G. Robinson and Joanne Bennett, and on April 19 "The Rainmaker" with Burt Lancaster and Katharine Hepburn. The classic films always play at 2 p.m. the third Wednesday of the month.



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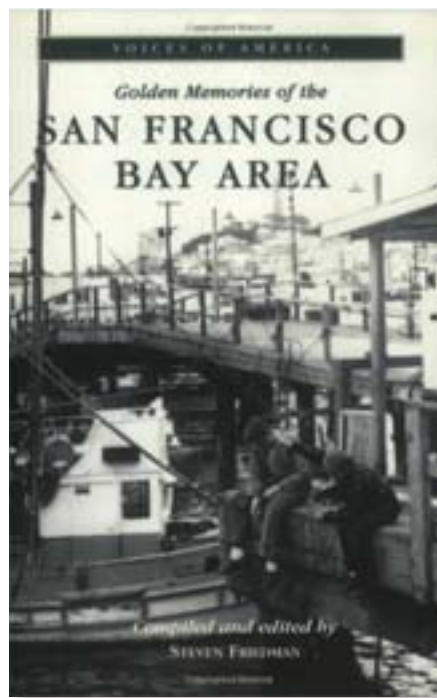
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Troop 204 welcome new Eagles

Submitted by Sara Regan



Front row, from left, Ryan Regan, Trenten Tso, Garrett Vana.; second row, from left, Thomas Edwards, Chase Severson, Joe Kahler; third row, from left, Seppi Ortman, Robby Goldman, Jack Spiering, Matthew Goldie, Luc Davis; back row, from left, John Torchio, Colin Kuiken and Michael Williams.

Lafayette Boy Scout Troop 204 will honor 14 young men who have achieved the Eagle Scout Award, the highest rank in the Boys Scouts of America, at 1 p.m. on March 25 at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. This will be Troop 204's 64th annual Eagle Court of Honor.

To attain Eagle Scout, a Scout must earn his way up the scouting ranks from Tenderfoot to Life Scout. As a Life Scout, he must be active in the troop for at least six months, earn at

least 21 required badges, serve in a leadership position, show "Scout Spirit," and plan, develop and give leadership to others in an approved Eagle service project helpful to any religious institution, school, nonprofit organization or the community. In addition to requirements listed above, each of these Troop 204 Eagle Scouts has attended annual 50-mile backpacking trips, planned and led a trek on the nine-day hiking trip, hiked over 500 miles and actively participated in annual Camporees.

Troop 224 Eagle Scouts Honored

Submitted by Stephanie Coate



Troop 224's new Eagle Scouts. Photo provided

Boy Scout Troop 224 of Lafayette members Dylan Lane, Jason Cornell, and Adam Coate achieved Scouting's highest rank of Eagle Scout and celebrated their Eagle Court of Honor on Sunday, Feb. 26, at the Lafayette Community Center.

Troop 224, which began in May 1953, is a boy-led Boy Scout Troop dedicated to the ideals of the Boy Scouts of America national organization. To achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, the candidate must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges, including 13 Eagle-required badges, demonstrate leadership and scout spirit, and successfully complete an Eagle service project that benefits the community.

Dylan Lane is a senior at Las Lomas

High School in Walnut Creek. For his Eagle project, he worked with Principal Matt Campbell to design and landscape the main courtyard at Las Lomas High School.

Jason Cornell is a senior at Acalanes High School. For Jason's Eagle project, he chose to give back to the Lafayette Nursery where he attended as a young child. He led the design, coordination, and construction of a large portable water basin and carpentry table.

Adam Coate is a junior at Acalanes High School. Adam's Eagle service project consisted of building and installing 150 backpack hooks at Pleasant Hill Middle School.

For information about Troop 224, visit www.troop224lafayette.com.

Project Music Unlimited soars at Campolindo High School

Submitted by Vivek Lashkari and Aman Malhotra



Back row from left: Andrew Torres (grade 10), Leif Carlson (10), Aman Malhotra (Club President, 10), Montreux Maeder (10), Vivek Lashkari (10), Andrew Yoo (Vice President, 10); Front row from left: Adriana Derksen (Vice President, 10), Sam Lum (10), Ryan Yick (10), Alex Mangoba (10), Phu-Quy Ho (9), Mr. Johnny Johnson (Club Advisor, Campolindo Instrumental Music Director) Photo Aman Malhotra

Project Music Unlimited is a group of students from Campolindo High School who work to spread the joy of music beyond our community to children without access to instruments or music programs.

It collects donated instruments that are no longer in use, and give them to organizations and schools, most of whom are part of the West Contra Costa Unified School District. WCCUSD provides services to 48 schools, and only a fraction of them have music programs, which they are in the process of rebuilding.

The project also hopes to provide mini performances at schools to inspire young musicians and to give occasional voluntary music lessons to students who do not have the necessary resources to have their own

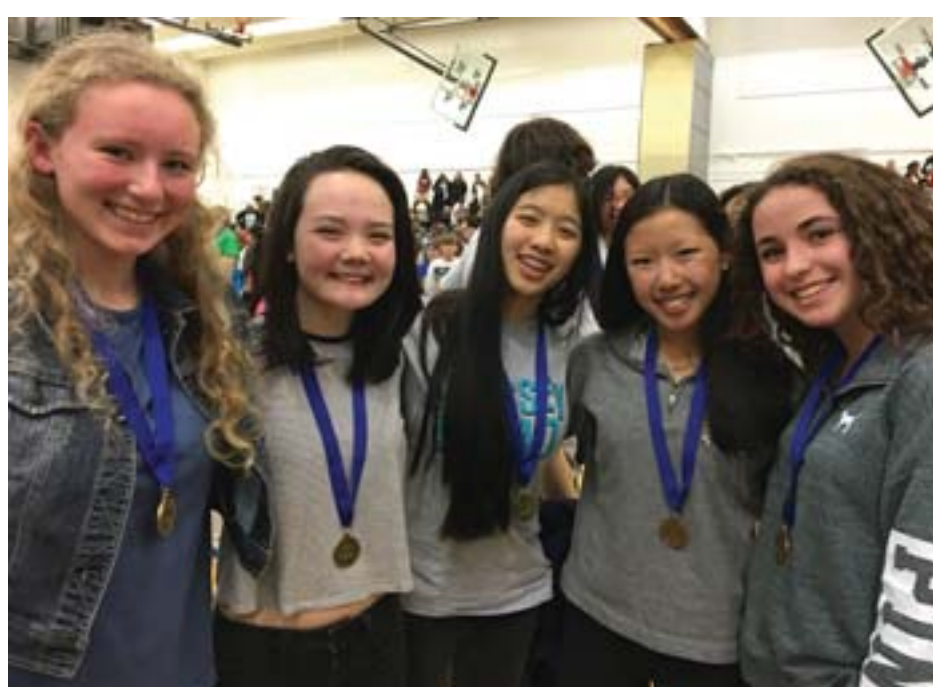
private lessons.

Project Music Unlimited is also working to invite other schools' students to Campolindo music concerts to promote music. In the club's short existence, it has received many instrument donations of all varieties, such as flutes, violins, cellos, drums and saxophones that are already being used by students in WCCUSD schools. The community can help by donating instruments or used recorders to put them to use after elementary school sessions. Recorders can be very useful to get young musicians started before they learn how to play a more advanced instrument.

For more information, visit <http://projectmusicunltd.wixsite.com/campopmuclub>, contact by email at projectmusicunlimited@gmail.com or find them on Facebook.

Lamorinda teams advance in Odyssey of the Mind competitions

Submitted by John Inouye



Division III first-place winners (left to right): Sullivan Jordan (Campo), Sarah Inouye (OSA), Stephanie Wu (CPS), Caroline Kim (Head-Royce), Amy O'Connor (OIS) Photos provided

Many local teams competed in the Odyssey of the Mind Bay Area Regional Tournament at Concord High School on March 4. Four teams from Orinda and two from Moraga are advancing to the State Tournament at Heritage High School in Brentwood on March 25.

A Division III team, sponsored by Orinda Rotary, took first place for their solution to "Ready, Set, Balsa, Build." The problem includes building a balsa wood structure of no more than 15 grams that must hold as much weight as it can. The problem solution must incorporate the structure into a skit.

The team — Sarah Inouye, Sullivan Jordan, Caroline Kim, Amy O'Connor, and Stephanie Wu — have examined this problem with their coach, Michael Kim, for the last five years. "All the team members go to different schools now, so it's great that we still have Odyssey," said Caroline Kim. "We get to see each other a few times per week." The team has advanced to both the State and World Tournaments in past years. "It's nice to win," said Sarah Inouye, "but I've also gotten better at collaborating."

A Division II team from Orinda Intermediate School took first place in a prob-

lem that involved classics and art history. The team — Tom Inouye, Degen Naldoza, Jason Ritchey, Samantha Scott, and Owen Younger — created an original performance about time travelers looking to discover the inspiration for great works of art. Coached by Amy Inouye, the team often went to reuse centers in Berkeley and Oakland to design props and costumes. Tackling other problems in the past, this team has advanced to the State Tournament twice before.

Two Division I teams, both from Orinda elementary schools, are also advancing to State. The Glorietta Blue Team got first place in "Catch Us If You Can," a problem that includes the creation of vehicles. The Del Rey Blue Team came in second place in "Odd-a-Bot," a problem that involves the creation of a robot that learns by watching others.

In addition two teams sponsored by the Moraga Rotary are also advancing to the tournament.

Odyssey of the Mind develops creative problem-solving skills in students from kindergarten through college. Thousands of teams from the U.S. and about 25 other countries participate in the program.



Division II first-place winners (left to right): Tom Inouye, Owen Younger, Jason Ritchey, Degen Naldoza, Samantha Scott, all from Orinda Intermediate School.



Moraga Rotary Division 2 (Intermediate School) team (from left to right): Alex Clare, Sebastian Fojut, Jack Erickson-King, Vishal Lashkari, Ryan Erickson-King, Zac Yu. Photo Holly Erickson-King



Moraga Rotary Division 1 (Elementary School) team (from left to right): Julia Erickson-King, Zoe Seaman, Maddie O'Balte, Catelyn Cereghino, Elise Frippiat. Photo Holly Erickson-King

'Zucchini' is a poignant, real family film

By Sophie Braccini



This month the International Film Showcase offers a Swiss-French film, "My Life as a Zucchini," directed by Claude Barras. It's a beautiful animated movie that engaged the work of over 100 artists. This movie is a delicate and charming tale of resilience, hope and love appropriate for children from 6 years of age and for the adults who have been able to preserve their child's heart.

Zucchini is his name. He really clings to this nickname that was given to him by a mother who was not always kind, because she liked beer a bit too much. But now she's gone, "to heaven," and the little boy with eyes so immense that they take up most of his face, is so desperately alone. The father is long gone, "he liked 'hens' too much" (hen or poule means loose woman in French). A policeman takes him to a small orphanage. This is not a place where kids are abused in any-

way. Quite the opposite. There he will recover, he will reinvent himself, he will learn to trust, to love again, and discover that the people whom you chose and that chose you can share stronger bonds than some families.

Zucchini's reality and that of his friends is grim. They have all ended in the children's home because of personal dramas that the movie does not hide. But it is an animation, so it says sad things with a light poetic touch and never falls into the grim or the frightening. The relationships between the children are shown with humor and tenderness. It shows that life has been tough for them, but they are resilient and they find strength in being a group. It is very rare to see a movie that is so touching and so real, without sugarcoating, yet completely adequate for young viewers.

"My Life as a Zucchini" was

nominated for Best Animated Feature Film at the 2017 Oscars, but lost to "Zootopia." The Swiss-French film is definitely not Disney. It takes children much closer to reality than most American directors would dare. One could argue though that for that reason it also touches more authentic and real emotions. Parents can be reassured that the movie ends well. The movie is now rated a very rare 100 percent positive critic consensus on Rotten Tomatoes.

The film was presented at the Cannes Film Festival last May and Barras gave an interview to the French magazine Telerama about the making of the movie. He explained that it all started 10 years ago for him when he read Gilles Paris' novel "Autobiography of a zucchini." He started drawing the characters, created many different versions, cutting them out and creating groups until he found the winning team of visual characters.

The entire film was made using the technique of "stop motion" where clay puppets are animated one image at a time. The puppets were created with a metal frame, clay for the face and bodies and a multitude of "accessories" such as mouths and limbs that are changed in a darkroom by puppeteers one frame at a time. Barras explained that the puppets are 35 centimeters high (13.8 inches) and are now in museums.

Barras casted the children's voices using non-actor children and had them play the scenario as if for a live performance. From these filmed interactions Barras constructed the final story played by the puppets. The result is stunning and aesthetically very pleasing.

"My Life as a Zucchini" opens on March 24 at the Orinda Theater for a week. More information is available at www.lamorindatheatres.com.



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Campolindo High School Presents 'Beauty and the Beast'

Submitted by Sachi Enochy



The cast of Campolindo's "Beauty and the Beast."

Photo Sachi Enochy

"Be Our Guest!" and step into the magical world of the modern classic, Disney's "Beauty and the Beast," presented by Campolindo High School. Follow the "tale as old as time" as the Beast encounters Belle and races to break the spell and return to his former self with the help of his enchanted

household members.

The show runs through March 26 at the high school, 300 Moraga Road, Moraga. Tickets are on sale up to four hours before each show. Price is \$25. For information on show times and more, visit <http://www.campochoir.com/ticketing/>.

Teen Advisory Board offers students the chance to make a difference

By Namratha Kasalanati

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center has a program for teens called the Teen Advisory Board, or TAB for short. In TAB, students decide on programs that can be put on for the enjoyment of the teenage community. These are relatively small scale programs, and are usually held in the library.

Being part of TAB is very fun, and it is not a huge commitment. We usually discuss books, movies, newspaper articles, music, and other types of media we have read or heard. Some books recommended by the group were "Eragon," by Christopher Paolini, "Special Topics in Calamity Physics," by Marisha Pessl, and "Shoe Dog," by Phil Knight, the creator of Nike.

After making our suggestions, we talk about our next programs. We like to brainstorm in groups and then vote on the best and most possible ideas. Usually we choose two programs per month and an alternate, in case one program does not

seem to be possible.

This school year, we have put on a movie, "Mean Girls," had a Teen Social day, where we played games and met new people, and had a Book Swap. We are planning other programs such as a nature drawing lesson, or an Earth Day program. For the end of the year, we are planning a cosplay contest at ComicFest 2017. Be sure to look out for more TAB programs. They are posted in the Lafayette Library, Stanley Middle School Library, and in other schools and stores around Lafayette. They could even be posted in your classroom.

If you wish to join TAB next school year, you should pick up an application in August or September in the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Our adult supervisor and meeting facilitator is Patrick Brogan, Teen Services Library Assistant. He looks through the applications for qualities like being proactive, leadership, depend-

ability and others. Students in sixth through 12th grades can apply. It is always great to have new minds join our program. It builds leadership and involvement in the community. Plus, it is fun.

Lastly, this is a thought provoking quote by Elie Wiesel: "Mankind must remember that peace is not God's gift to his creatures; peace is our gift to each other." We should remember to be peaceful and kind to each other and consider the consequences of our actions as we are growing up so we can make the world a kinder and more peaceful place.



Namratha Kasalanati is in seventh grade at Stanley Middle School. She likes to write, read, learn about new ideas and participate in cross country and track.

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Not to be missed

ART

"Japanese Aesthetics: An Exploration of Japan's Artistic Sensibilities" will be presented at 1 p.m. on Monday, March 27 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Orinda Library welcomes Yoshi Fukamiya, an Asian Art Museum docent, who will share his understanding of Japanese Aesthetics as illustrated by objects in the museum's Japanese Art collection. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.

The Moraga Art Gallery announces its springtime show, Color and Caprice, an exhibit that spotlights member artist Angelica Samame's eye-catching collection of stylized portraits of sophisticated women — slender and fashionably-clad. The show also features guest artist, Elizabeth Russell, aka Liz R Honeybots, from Forestville, whose ceramics consist of utilitarian platters, mugs, casserole dishes and more. The show runs to June 3, with a free opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 25. Come to meet artists and enjoy live music, light snacks and wine. For more information, visit the gallery's website: www.moragaart-gallery.com, call (925) 376-5407 or email moragaartgallery@gmail.com.

Valley Art Gallery presents their new show ARTERIAL: Your Road to the Best East Bay Artists running from April 1 to May 13. The exhibit takes you through a wide range of motifs, styles, media and prices, representing the best of the best from more than 100 East Bay artists. Plus, there are beautifully crafted, ceramic, wood and glass pieces, and original designer jewelry. There will be a reception from 3 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 1 to mark the opening. For more info visit www.valleyart-gallery.com. It's located in Walnut Creek.

Learn the art of making Pysanky, or Ukrainian Easter Eggs, decorated using a wax-resist and dye method in a three-hour workshop led by local folk art teacher, Evie Michon. Traditionally created during Lent, Pysanky were given as treasured gifts. 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday April 8. Cost is \$20, limited to 20 people. Hosted by Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda. Register: Q1w2tissue@gmail.com

IRAN|USA, an original exhibition organized by the Saint Mary's College Museum of Art, presents a program of compelling video art and prints by artist and faculty member Peter Freund through May 28. The multi-language exhibit re-envision key moments in the politically charged history of the two countries through the lens of an experimental artist. The museum is located on campus, 1928 St. Mary's Road in Moraga and is open from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday; \$5 admission. (See article page B2)

MUSIC

Diablo Ballet will celebrate its 23rd Anniversary with a special one-night only performance at 6:30 p.m. on March 23 at the Leshher Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. The celebration will feature stunning works from the company's 23-year history. Tickets are \$33-\$59. For tickets, call (925) 943-SHOW (7469) or visit www.lesherartscenter.org or www.diabloballet.org.

Experience a lovely musical offering of arias by Verdi, Schubert, Handel and more performed by the much-acclaimed Opera Scouts young artists of San Francisco Opera Guild, 4:30 p.m. Sunday March 26 at Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church in Moraga. Enjoy a buffet supper and wine. Tickets \$45. Reservations through Ana Zimmank of Coldwell Banker, (925) 640-6008; Ana.Zimmank@camoves.com

Enjoy an evening of classical guitar with professional musician Glenn Staller beginning at 6:30 p.m. on March 28 at the Moraga Library. Staller specializes a range of styles from around the world. This hour long concert is generously sponsored by the Friends of the Moraga Library. 1500 St Marys Rd.

Enjoy Shakey Zimmerman with special guest Jennifer Mydland concert from 8 p.m. to midnight on April 1 at Town Hall Theatre Lafayette. Travel through the decades with the songs of Bob Dylan and Neil Young, performed by Zimmerman. www.townhalltheatre.com www.shakeyzimmerman.com.

Check out new music of the 21st century with perhaps a flair of late night Thelonious — all this imaginatively created on stage by pianists. Come enjoy the Piano Composers' concert at 7 p.m. on Friday April 7 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall. This free event is sponsored by the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society (www.ccpas.org) in partnership with the library.

THEATER

Town Hall Theatre Company presents "Smokey Joe's Café," directed by Lauren Rosi through March 25. With music such as "Poison Ivy," "Charlie Brown," "On Broadway," "Stand By Me" and much more. 3535 School Street, Lafayette. (925) 283-1557. Show times and ticket information is available at the box office or online at www.townhalltheatre.com.

Campolindo High School Presents "Beauty and the Beast." Follow the "tale as old as time" as the Beast encounters Belle and races to break the spell and return to his former self with the help of his enchanted household characters. The show will run through March 26 at Campolindo High School, 300 Moraga Road, Moraga. For info on show times and ticket prices, visit www.campochoir.com/ticketing/.

DVC Drama presents "You Can't Take it with You." The show runs through April 2, at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or go to the website at www.dvcdrama.net. DVC Drama is located at 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill, with free parking for all performances.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

"World on the Move," focusing on immigration issues, is the topic chosen by Dr. David Vasquez-Levy, president of the Pacific School of Religion, for his presentation at 1:30 p.m. on April 7 at the First Friday Forum in the Sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments are served at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. This is a free event. For more information contact (925) 283-8722.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Moraga Juniors' annual Spring Egg Hunt will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, March 25 at the Moraga Commons Park located at the corner of Moraga Road and Saint Mary's Road- rain or shine. Admission is \$15 per child ages 1-8. Two egg hunts promptly at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Tickets are available at www.moragajuniors.org.

SPEAK is a program for high school students developed in response to issues they are facing: stress, relationships, partying, sexuality, and mental health. Ninth-12th graders will have a safe space to speak their truth about their experiences and will be equipped with resources and decision making strategies. An adult program offers the opportunity for sharing of concerns and strategies to address these issues. The program runs from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sundays through March 26 at Orinda Community Church, www.speak2016.eventbrite.com or Kelsey: SPEAKlamorinda@gmail.com

Lamorinda Arts Council is hosting its 14th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition through March 30 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. The competi-

tion is open to ninth through 12th-grade students living in or attending public or private high schools in Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga. (See page A1.)

There will be a new SAT Free Practice Test from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 1 in the Orinda Library Garden Room, put on by the Princeton. Get realistic practice and receive personalized score reports and assessments of strengths and weaknesses. Register at www.princetonreview.com or sign up at 510/295-0002.

Calling All Teenage Bands! Register Your Band Now for the second annual Rock Band Showcase at the Lafayette Community Center. The bands will play at 7:30 p.m. on April 14. Register at www.abrighterday.info

The public is invited to take a photo with the Easter Bunny at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 15 in Rheem Valley Shopping Center in the suite between Dover Saddlery & Nation's Giant Hamburgers. There will be Easter Clowns, Easter Fairy, Balloon Art. Use your Rheem Valley Shopping Center receipts totaling \$25 or more go online to www.rheemvalley.net to print out the coupon for a FREE photo session with the Easter Bunny.

The Lamorinda Idol 2016 auditions will be held on May 11-13. Registration is open to all Lamorinda students or residents. Groups can include members outside Lamorinda. Register at www.LamorindaArts.Org April 1 through 30. The Lamorinda Idol program includes workshops, multiple performance opportunities, parties and the Finals at the Orinda Theatre Sunday, Aug. 26.

OTHER

Allie's Pals Cat Rescue presents its Feline Fundraiser from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on March 22 at Mangia Pizzeria at 975, Moraga Rd, Lafayette. www.alliespals.org

ARF presents the 13th annual Business of Saving Lives conference for animal welfare professionals and volunteers from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 25 at ARF in Walnut Creek. This powerhouse conference packs practical information and valuable tools into one full day of learning at an affordable price, to help attendees save more lives. Register now to ensure a spot, tickets are \$45. Continental breakfast and a vegetarian lunch are provided to all attendees. For registration, agenda information and session details, visit www.arflife.org.

March Madness is here! Presenting their Cinderella Team is Community Concern for Cats. See these champion kitties at a weekend adoption event from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 25 and 26, at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information, see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

Gillian Notman, CMC with Eldercare Services presents "Dementia: Understanding Behaviors and Finding Solutions" from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on March 29 at 1808 Tice Valley Blvd. Walnut Creek. Tools on how to have conversations about need when denial is present. Giving you permission to "stretch the truth" for dignity, safety and self-esteem. Understand the different types of dementia. No fee. Advanced registration is required. Call (925) 937-2018 or email Info@EldercareAnswers.com

The Lafayette Community Foundation (LCF) is accepting grant applications from local non-profits for its 2017 grant cycle. LCF invests in programs and projects that promote and enhance the civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of Lafayette and beyond. ALL applications must be received through the online application form- please go to the website at http://www.lafayettecf.org and click on APPLY FOR A GRANT. Please note that the deadline for applying is March 31.

... continued on next page

MOVIE REVIEW

Film Clips

The past returns to haunt in 'The Sense of an Ending'

By Derek Zemrak



Jim Broadbent in "The Sense of an Ending," a film based on the Booker Award-winning novel of the same name by Julian Barnes and to be released by CBS Films and Lionsgate. Photo provided

Looking for something other than a beast at the movies? Check out "The Sense of an Ending" now playing at the Orinda Theatre. The movie is far different from Disney's mega blockbuster, live-action "Beauty and the Beast."

"The Sense of an Ending," from CBS Films, has a true independent film feel and storyline. In fact, director, Ritesh Batra ("The Lunchbox") recently won the "Directors to Watch" Award at the January Palm Springs International Film Festival.

This film deals with a past that returns to haunt the present. This time, Tom Webster, portrayed by the exceptional actor Jim Broadbent ("Gangs of New York," "Moulin Rouge!") lives a quiet life working at a vintage camera store until one day when he receives a knock at the door. The past has returned to face Tom but is he ready to relive his college years with a tragedy he has suppressed since the 1960s? You may also remember Broadbent for the 2013 Opening Night Film, "Le Weekend" at the California Independent Film Festival.

Director Batra does an excellent job taking the audience from present day to the 1960s. The story, which was adapted from the 2011 Booker Award-winning novel by Julian Barnes, is compelling and first time feature film screenwriter Nick Payne delivers a solid script in a complex

story. One line in the movie is "I'm a great believer in time's revenge." This is all that needs to be said.

"The Sense of an Ending" is one of those movies that one should not reveal too much about and let the moviegoer enjoy the experience. It has a PG-13 rating due to adult subject matter, violence, some strong language and sexuality. The TRT (total running time) is one hour and 48 minutes.

Upcoming events at Lamorinda Theatre

1:30 p.m. April 1 — Sci-fi Day #5: See the following classic Sci-fi flicks on the big screen starting with "Tobor the Great" at 1:30 p.m. "The Invisible Boy" follows at 4 p.m. The cult classic "Robot Monster" will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Co-star Pamela Paulson will make her first public appearance in a Q & A hosted by Derek Zemrak.

Admission \$10; All day Pass \$20
 8 p.m. April 13 – Live Comedy at the Orinda Theatre featuring John DiResta: John DiResta is a former New York Transit police officer turned comedian and actor. He is known for his film work in the "Miss Congeniality" films (2000, 2005), "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" (2003) and "15 Minutes" (2001).
 Admission: \$20

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 For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

March 24 John Coleman, President CA Water Agencies, New Water Issues	March 31 Dr. Jackie Steel tells all!
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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.

March 23: Mark Rosen Adventure Club of Rotary	March 30: Carolyn Burnsed her experiences at Sports Center, NBC and KGO
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www.rotarylafayette.org
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WHEN: Wednesday, April 5th
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For more information, contact:
 Regina Englehart @925-876-9076
 or go to: **soroptimist24-680.org**

Not to be missed

Not to be missed

Not to be missed

OTHER ... continued

Jewish Gateways presents Jewish Gateways Passover Celebration for Families with Young Children from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Sunday, April 9 at Easton Hall, 2401 Ridge Road, Berkeley. Celebrate this freedom holiday with Passover songs, stories, a hands-on project and treats. Led by Rabbi Bridget and Isaac Zones. Cost: \$30 per family, plus \$5 per sibling over 5. For more info see <https://www.jewishgateways.org/families> or call (510) 410-0622 or email rabbibridget@jewishgateways.org.

Come celebrate diversity and promote unity at Soul Food Lamorinda from 2 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 9 at the Intercultural Center at St Mary's College. Soul Food Lamorinda is a free Baha'i-inspired program that combines an audio-visual presentation with readings from various faiths, philosophers and leaders, allowing us to reflect on inspiring themes and reminding us of the oneness of humanity. This month's program, "Sense of Time" will explore the precious nature of time — how quickly it passes and how profound it can be when we make the most of it. Free and open to everyone. For more info: www.meetup.com/Soul-Food-Lamorinda/.

Passover Seders at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 10 and 11 at 1671 Newell Ave, Walnut Creek. Featuring: delicious traditional Seder dinner, insights, singing, four cups of wine, and Hand Baked Shmurah Matzah. Second Seder on Tuesday evening conducted in Russian. Adult: \$45, Child: \$30. No one will be turned away for lack of funds. Reservations required. www.jewish-contracosta.com (925) 937-4101.

Lamorinda Arts Council (LAC) will host their 2nd Annual Short-Docs Film Fest at 3 p.m. on May 7 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. This documentary film festival provides local filmmakers an opportunity to create new work as well as showcase it at a community screening. Entries for the Lamorinda

ShortDocs Film Fest will be accepted until April 19. The competition is open to anyone 5 years of age or older who is living, working or attending school in Orinda, Lafayette or Moraga. Film submissions will be judged in one of four categories: elementary school, middle school, high school and adult. To learn more about the Lamorinda ShortDocs Film Fest competition and to enter go to <http://www.lamorindaarts.org/shortdocs>.

Moraga Classic Car Show registration is now open to residents who own classic cars and would like to participate in the ninth annual Moraga Classic Car Show, which takes place from 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. on Saturday May 13, as part of the 2017 Moraga Community Faire. The \$35 registration fee includes an entry ribbon, lunch for two and a commemorative photo. Prizes will be awarded. The registration deadline is May 1, but space is limited to 70 cars, so register early to secure a spot. Register at www.moragachamber.org/faire or, call Gloria at (925) 247-4473.

SENIORS

Introduction to Tai Chi for Better Balance at 1 p.m. on Thursday, March 23 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Orinda Library welcomes Cynthia Black, who will show how to improve your balance through Tai Chi. Trained in Tai Chi for Better Balance, Cynthia is certified in Chair Chi, a form of Tai Chi practiced from a chair. This program is provided by Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services of Contra Costa County.

Learn 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 attendees find new inspiration with recipes that will transform breakfast and brunch routines. Space is limited; these classes fill up quickly. RSVP to La-

fayette Senior Services by Wednesday, March 22. For info, Seniors@LoveLafayette.org or 284-5050.

Anne Randolph Physical Therapy presents the Art of Balance from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on March 22 in the Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center. People worried about falling or are at risk of falling should know about simple ways to improve balance. Learn how to gain increased balance and avoid the risk of falling. Fee per class members: No charge/ Non-Members: \$10

Katie O'Donnell with Eldercare Services presents "The Elephant in the Room" from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on April 5 at 28 Orinda Way. A guide to sensitive conversations that must take place to promote independence and quality of life as we age. She will tackle tough topics including keeping or selling the family home, future health considerations and when it's time to stop driving. No fee. Advanced registration is required. Call (925) 937-2018 or email Info@EldercareAnswers.com

GARDEN

The Lafayette Community Garden and Outdoor Learning Center presents its Historical Houses presentation and tour from 1:30 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 25. Learn of our local valley's history through the chronicles of three old houses from the 1800's: the Old Yellow House in Orinda, Rodgers Ranch in Pleasant Hill, and the John Muir House in Martinez. To register, go to LafayetteCommunityGarden.org/classes-and-events. \$5 donation appreciated.

Author Claire Splan will share tips and tricks you can use to make the most of your hours and still leave time for actually enjoying gardening at the Lafayette Garden Club's next general meeting from 9:45 a.m. to 12 noon on April 6 at the Lafayette Veteran's Building located at 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Claire will show you how to use task-batching, time savers, and a month-by-month approach for more efficient garden-

ing as outlined in her book "Time Management in the Garden." Visitors are welcome! Please email Carolyn Poetzsch cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club's monthly business is at 10 a.m., social time at 10:30 a.m. and program at 11 a.m. at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. The April 10 program is "Meander Through Springtime Blooms in the Ireland and England" by member and photographer Christa Buckingham. You're invited to attend and consider becoming a mem-

ber. Maureen Little: mslittle44@gmail.com (925) 820-1476

Moraga Gardens Farm presents its annual sale of heirloom tomatoes, hybrids, peppers, eggplant, herbs and more in 4-inch pots selected for success in the micro-climates of Lamorinda's home gardens. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays from March 25 to April 15 (closed Easter Sunday). 1290 Moraga Way, Moraga (next to Moraga Fire Station). For information call Claire Curtin 925 299 1353.

Lamorinda Weekly
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Thoughtful Food

This beautiful brioche is shaping up to be a great alternative to regular bread

By Susie Iventosch



This brioche beckons cooks.

We were out for lunch about a month ago and right next door there was a tempting bakery. It was beckoning all during lunch, so after we finished our meal, we dipped into the bakery to see what kinds of goodies they had on hand. The shelves were rather bare, and all they had left were a few loaves of bread and four brioches. Okay then, “We’ll take four brioches, please!” (The “s” is silent, so singular [brioche] and plural [brioches] are pronounced exactly the same.)

Since we were planning on burgers that night, I thought it would be a great idea to use these beautiful brioches as buns, and they were fantastic! It didn’t take long for me to decide that I should try making my own brioches, and have since made four batches.

The dough is really quite easy to make and the baked brioches keep very well in the refrigerator, but the tricky part is shaping them before baking. In most brioche recipes, there is reference to the “tête,” which simply means “head” in French. If you’ve seen traditional brioches, they look like a two-part snowman, with a larger ruffled body and a much smaller round “head.” There are two processes for shaping the brioche like

this, and I have a video link below to show you the two methods. In both cases, you use the side of your hand to divide the dough into two unequal parts, but still connected by a little “neck” or thin piece. Of the two, I prefer the one where you just twist the neck a little bit and rest the head on top, as compared to making a hole in the body and slipping the head through from the bottom. Don’t worry, you’ll see what I mean after watching the video!

Whichever method you choose, they ultimately end up looking pretty much the same. These little treats are delightful and just the perfect size for a breakfast snack or a dinner roll. When toasted, they are absolutely divine with peanut butter and jam. If you should want to use them as burger buns, I would suggest making them a little bit larger, and making only 12 brioches from this batch versus the 16 called for in the recipe.

Have fun and don’t be afraid. You, too, can be a brioche baker!

Here is the link to the “Shaping Brioche” video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_yLixXub-E

Photo Susie Iventosch

Brioche (based on a recipe found at fincooking.com)

(Makes 16 three-inch brioches)

You will need 3-inch diameter brioche tins/molds for this recipe. If you don’t have them, try using a large muffin tin.

INGREDIENTS

18 ounces unbleached all-purpose flour (approximately 3 ¼ cups, but better to weigh it.)
2.5 oz. granulated or light brown sugar (approximately 1/3 cup)
½ oz. active dry yeast (also equals 2 packets, or 4 ½ teaspoons)
1 tsp. salt (.2 ounces)
4 large eggs for dough
1 egg for egg wash plus pinch of salt
4 oz. (1/2 cup) milk
8 oz. (1 cup or 2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into small, ½-inch cubes

DIRECTIONS**Make the dough**

Place flour, sugar, yeast and salt in the bowl of your KitchenAid or mixer. Stir with a spoon, or on slow with the paddle attachment.

Switch to the dough hook and add 4 eggs and milk and start mixing on low speed. Stop occasionally to scrape down sides of the bowl. Continue to mix on medium speed for about 2 to 4 more minutes, or until the dough is firm.

Next, add half of the cubed butter to the mixer. Continue to mix the dough on medium speed until butter begins to incorporate. Stop machine and scrape down sides with a spatula and stir any butter into the dough that is left on the edges. Continue to mix until first half of butter is incorporated. Add remaining butter and continue the process for about 4-8 more minutes or until butter is fully incorporated, scraping sides of bowl as necessary. When the dough is ready, you will hear it slap against the sides of the bowl. Dough may be very soft, but that’s okay. Don’t add extra flour!

Letting the dough rise

Turn dough out onto a very lightly floured surface. Knead it just a few times and form into a ball. (You can do this by bringing all four sides into the center and then flip the dough over so the smooth side is up.) Transfer dough to a greased or sprayed bowl, with the smooth side up. Cover loosely with a damp cloth or plastic wrap and allow to rise in a warm spot in your kitchen, but not in the oven! This should take about 1 hour.

When dough is risen to about double in volume, turn out again onto a lightly floured surface and form it into a large ball, again folding all four sides to the center and then flipping over to keep smooth side of ball on top.

Bench-proofing the dough

At this point, you can decide whether to allow the dough to rise again immediately, or refrigerate overnight, which is said to make even better brioche. If you decide to make them right away, then place dough back in bowl, cover with plastic wrap or a damp towel, and allow to rise to double again. This is the bench-proofing stage, and will take about one hour. If you plan to refrigerate the dough, cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Just remember to take the dough out of the refrigerator and allow to warm and rise for a couple of hours before shaping. This will allow the dough to warm up and to bench proof (second rising),

Shaping the brioche and making the “tête” (French for “head”)

Spray the brioche tins with Pam or other cooking spray. I have 8 brioche tins, so I make this recipe in two batches.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and shape into a nice, smooth ball again. Divide dough into 2 equal parts. Divide each half into 8 equal smaller smooth round balls, for a total of 16 balls. To shape brioche and make the “tête”, use the side of your hand, leading with the long part of the pinky finger cut 1/3 of the way into the ball, but not all the way through. You will have a larger body, with a dangling smaller ball attached by a narrow piece of dough.

Now you can choose either method A or B below: (see video link in article above)

A. Form a hole in the bigger part of the brioche and slip the smaller head up and through the whole. This allows the “tete” to be formed and to remain intact during baking.

B. Or, twist the little neck between the big and small part of the ball and rest the smaller ball in the on top of the center of the bigger part of the ball. Tuck the head down into the body just a little bit.

Carefully, place the brioche, tête squarely on top, into the prepared brioche tins. Cover loosely plastic wrap. Allow to rise (proof) one final time to almost double in size, approximately 1 hour.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375 degrees and make egg wash. Brush the tops of the brioches with the egg wash, being careful not to let the egg drip over the sides and into the brioche pans.

Bake at 375 degrees for about 15-18 minutes, or until brioches are dark golden-brown on tops and sides. Let brioches cool for about 10 minutes on a wire rack before unmolding.

Repeat the shaping, rising and baking process with the second half of the dough, if you have only 8 brioche pans.

I have found that these brioches store very well in an airtight container in the refrigerator for at least a week, and they can be frozen, too. Thaw and warm before serving, if frozen.



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.

Cooking Term of the Week**Bench Proof**

Bench proofing (or bench resting) refers to the intermediate rising where you punch the dough down and allow it to rest between the first rising where the yeast grows and allows the dough to leaven, and the final rising after you’ve shaped the dough and placed it in the pan to rise (proof) before baking. Bench proofing can last anywhere from 10 minutes to a couple of hours, depending upon what you are making.

Advertising

Sandwich generation: stuck in the middle navigating tax benefits for children and parents

March 2017

In 2012, 15 percent of middle-aged adults provided financial support to both an aging parent and a child, according to the Pew Research Center. This is the sandwich generation. They find themselves caring for their parents and children at the same time – and stuck navigating tax breaks for both.

It doesn’t take long for first-time parents to learn about the responsibilities – and the tax benefits – that come with parenthood. For example, just by having and supporting a kid, parents can exempt \$4,050 per child from their taxable income. That dependent exemption would save someone in the 25 percent tax bracket more than \$1,000.

And when taxpayers take care of their aging parents, their new responsibilities may come with similar tax benefits.

Life gets complicated, as the sandwich generation knows, and taxes are no exception. Tax benefits can help taxpayers take care of their parents and children, but the rules can be very complex.

The child and dependent care credit

Parents raising young children may be able to claim the child care credit, which reduces parents’ taxes dollar for dollar for a percentage of qualifying child care expenses while they work or look for work. More than 6.3 million taxpayers claimed this nonrefundable credit in 2014, and with a \$2,100 maximum credit for two eligible children, it can be a valuable way to help offset child care expenses.

But it also could be a way to offset the expenses that come with taking care of one’s aging parents. The credit is actually the child and dependent care credit – and for many in the sandwich generation, that could include one’s own parents.

The sandwich generation may be paying for day care or after-school care for their child and paying a caregiver to come to their home to help take care of their own mother or father. The child and dependent care credit could help them with both expenses.

Taxpayers’ expenses to care for their

own aging parents could qualify for the child and dependent care credit if the parents are physically or mentally incapable of self-care and lived with the taxpayers for more than half the year. Additionally, the taxpayers must be working or looking for work.

The parents do not need to be the taxpayer’s dependents for this credit. They do not need to meet the filing status and income questions to qualify as a dependent, but must otherwise be eligible to be claimed as a dependent.

The IRS has an interactive tool to help taxpayers determine if they can claim the child and dependent care credit, but if the situation is unclear, you should talk to a tax professional.

Medical expense deductions

If taxpayers are covering medical costs for their parents, they may be able to deduct some of those expenses. The requirements can be difficult to meet though: the medical costs must exceed 10

percent of the taxpayer’s adjusted gross income. And for this deduction, the parents must qualify as dependents.

An IRS questionnaire can help taxpayers determine if they can deduct their medical expenses. Taxpayers can also walk through whether or not they can claim their parent as a dependent in a separate questionnaire.

Small changes in your and your parents’ circumstances can have a significant impact on your eligibility for tax benefits related to their care. It’s important not just for taxpayers to know about the tax relief that may be available to them, but to know how they could qualify with some changes.

Pamela Marks is an Enrolled Agent for Block Advisors, a new tax firm specializing in complicated taxes. Pamela has been providing expert tax preparation support for more than 10 years. You can contact her at 925-284-9940 for an appointment or at the office at 3390 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, CA 94549.

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Campo girls' basketball grabs spot in state title game

By Karl Buscheck



Photo Gint Federas

The Campolindo girls' basketball team clinched a berth in the D3 state championship, taking down No. 4 Saint Mary's of Berkeley, 78-56, on March 18 in the CIF Northern regional title game.

In the win on the Cougars' home floor in Moraga, the second-seed got a 46-point, 20-rebound performance from junior Haley Van Dyke. Next on the docket for Campolindo is a trip to the Golden 1 Center in Sacramento on March 24 to face off against No. 1 seed Rosary Academy of Fullerton – MaxPrep's No. 21 team in California.

For the Cougars, who shared DAL National Conference title with the Mats, the win over Saint

Mary's marks the latest high-water point for the team.

"As the season has progressed we have continued to get a lot tougher each week," head coach Art Thoms said. "During these very competitive games we want to win the 50/50 balls. Those are rebounds or balls on the ground that both teams have a chance to secure. We want to win that battle."

The Cougars flew through the opening two rounds of NorCals, cruising past No. 15 Placer and No. 7 San Marin by a combined margin of 44 points. During the run, Thoms has focused on building solidarity within the group – and also making sure the players stop to appreciate their achievements.

"We are in this together," said Thoms. "Stick together during the tough times and enjoy the success not as individuals, but as a team. Also to continue to work hard, but enjoy the memories we are creating."

While the Cougars (27-6, 9-1 in league) were victorious in the DIII NorCal regional finals, Miramonte fell in the DII title matchup. The Mats' 66-65 loss to top-seeded Vanden in Fairfield brings an end to the team's 30-4 season (9-1 in league). The game also marked the fourth year in a row – and the fifth time in six seasons – that the Mats have competed in a NorCal finals.

"Our message does not change," head coach Kelly Sopak

explained before the No. 2 seed Mats lost to Vanden. "One-game winning streak. That is and will always be our mantra. We also talk about fight. Fight to be our best every day. Fight to uphold our system and process and most importantly fight for one another."

After securing the NCS DII crown, the Mats opened up NorCals by throttling No. 15 Whitney, 83-40, in the opening round and dispatching No. 7 Elk Grove and No. 3 Valley Christian in the second round and semifinals, respectively.

In the 69-63 win over Valley Christian on March 14, Clair Steele dropped 34 points, as the junior point guard sank five 3-pointers. Along with senior wing and fellow captain Elle Louie, Steele was the Mats top standout during the post-season push.

Sopak is plenty familiar with the pair of stars, having coached Steele for 11 years and Louie for 10. The duo also helped set the tone for the roster at large.

"Quite simply the players (have led the way)," Sopak said. "Our culture is based on our system and our process. The players have bought in from day one and are now reaping the benefits of their

hard work."

The Dons, who also took part in the DII bracket, exited in the opening round on March 8. Finishing with a 19-11 record overall (6-4 in league), the No. 11 seed Dons fell 70-41 on the road to No. 6 Modesto Christian.

"Overall, we had an amazing season, one to be proud of," head coach Ashley Valenzuela said after piloting the Dons to a NorCal berth in her debut season in Lafayette. "One of our team slogans is 'Leave a Legacy.' I think we succeeded in doing that, our seniors have really left an avenue for continued success of this program."

Before the NorCal loss, the program had advanced to the NCS DII semifinals and earned the No. 3 spot in the standings of the DAL National Conference. Throughout the season, the Dons leaned heavily on their triumvirate of senior stars, consisting of Emma Godfrey, Brooke Panfili and Roni Marroni.

"The key to our success was our ability to overcome adversity," Valenzuela said. "We had a tough season with illness and injuries and despite that we were still able to have a great run deep into playoffs."

Saint Mary's exits Big Dance following 2nd-round loss to Arizona Wildcats

By Karl Buscheck



Jock Landale

Since the fall of 2013, the Saint Mary's Gaels have made a tradition of meeting the Arizona Wildcats for an annual preseason scrimmage.

The men's basketball program squared off with the Pac-12 kingpins for three falls in a row before a scheduling conflict forced the Cats to scratch this season's exhibition. Instead, the teams had to wait until the second round of the NCAA tournament, when Arizona toppled Saint Mary's, 69-60, on March 18 at Vivint Smart Home Arena in Salt Lake City.

"These guys really knew how Saint Mary's was," Arizona head coach Sean Miller told The Associated Press. "In a small way, (the scrimmages) really helped us tonight."

The Saint Mary's loss, which pushed Arizona into the regional semifinals of the Big Dance, denied the Gaels their first trip to the Sweet 16 since 2010 when future NBA champ Matthew Dellavedova was just a freshman and still early

in the process of re-writing the school's record book.

Ending the year with 29-5 record (16-2 West Coast Conference play), the Gaels actually commanded a 30-29 lead at the break and clung to a two-point advantage – 46-44 – nine minutes into the second half.

"I look at this as one of the great wins we've had in the tournament because of the team that we beat," Miller said, per The AP.

Ultimately, Saint Mary's characteristically lights-out long-range shooting – the team had shot 40 percent from distance entering the contest – deserted the squad. While it was Arizona who was ice cold in the first half (1-for-7 on 3-pointers), Saint Mary's managed to hit just five of its 21 triples (24 percent) on the night.

6-foot-11 junior center Jock Landale produced his second double-double in as many tournament games, totaling 19 points and 11 rebounds. Junior forward Calvin Hermanson was second on the

team with 14 points – even as he connected on just two of his nine shots from beyond the arc.

The Gaels advanced to their second-round meeting with their erstwhile scrimmage partner after dispatching the No. 10 seed Virginia Commonwealth, 85-77, on March 16 at Vivint Smart Home Arena.

In the opening-round win, Landale, who paced Saint Mary's in scoring and rebounds throughout the season, went for a team-high 18 points and 13 boards.

On a night when the Gaels shot 64 percent from the field in the opening half, including a 23-6 burst, Hermanson and senior guard Joe Rahon both chipped in 16 points.

After the frenetic start, VCU rallied late, cutting the deficit to six points, 83-77, with 31 seconds left on the clock before the Gaels secured the win.

"They're hard to put away," head coach Randy Bennett told The AP. "We're happy to get this one done."


Photo Tod Fierner

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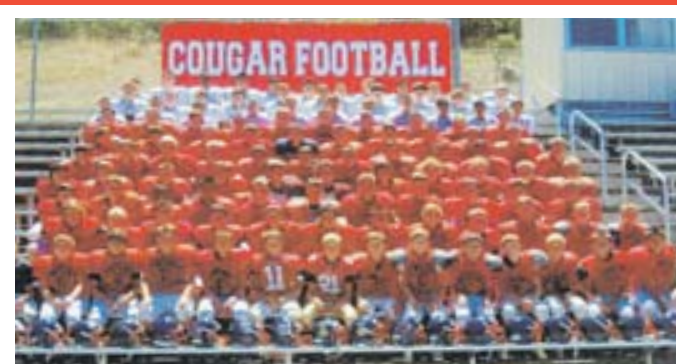
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Campolindo, Miramonte boys' hoops teams bow out of NorCals

By Karl Buscheck



Lev Garcia Photo Gint Federas

Following Campolindo's near upset of the favored Vista del Lago in the second round of the CIF State Boys Regional Championship, the Cougars were left to wonder what could have been.

Playing in Folsom at the home gym of the No. 2 seed Eagles, the seventh-seeded Cougars carried a 57-45 advantage into the final stanza on March 11 before falling in overtime, 70-66. The late loss put Campolindo in an ambivalent state following their NorCal exit.

When asked if the lost opportunity against the highly rated opponent had the Cougars feeling encouraged or extra frustrated, head coach Steven Dyer said, "Prob-

ably some of both.

"It's a game that our guys expected to win and we felt like we played well enough to win it," Dyer added. "But we did not play a great fourth quarter and that kind of led us to not winning that game."

Campolindo finished the year 20-11 overall and 7-3 in league play, which was good for a second-place tie in the Foothill division of the DAL.

"We definitely represented ourselves pretty well going up to a school that was a No. 2 seed and a very good basketball team," Dyer said. "It was probably the tallest team we'd seen all year."

Campolindo advanced to the second round of the competition after handling the No. 10 seed Sanger, 58-53, in Moraga on March 8.

"Ultimately, we look back on it (and think), 'Yeah, we're pretty pleased with how we did, but not satisfied because we feel like we could have won,'" Dyer said.

After the overtime buzzer sounded following the Campolindo's second-round defeat, Dyer gathered his team to thank the veterans and inspire the young Cougars.

"It's tough because this is the last time this team will ever play together," Dyer said. "But mainly I was just thanking the seniors for all contributions this year because they won't be playing with us anymore. Also, I was encouraging the younger guys that there's more (to come) and telling them to remember this feeling and hopefully we can get past this round

in coming years."

Dyer highlighted the play of Lev Garcia – one of the team's departing seniors – junior guard Trevin Kroichick and the other three members of the starting five.

"In terms of impact for the season, (freshman) Hunter Clarke, (senior) Chris Wright and (junior) Will Cummins were, from Day 1 to the end, probably our three most consistent guys throughout the year from a production standpoint."

Clarke is one of two Cougar freshman – along with Carter Mahaney – who promises to be a building block for years. In the loss to Vista del Lago, Clarke and Mahaney were Campolindo's two leading scorers.

"We knew these guys were very talented coming in, and Hunter from Day 1 has really been a high-level player," Dyer said. "And I think Carter, the light kind of turned on about halfway through the season."

"The sky's the limit for those guys as long as they keep working hard," Dyer added. "So I'm really looking forward to their progression in the offseason here heading into their sophomore year."

Like the Cougars, Miramonte played in the Division 3 NorCal postseason, landing the No. 11 seed in the bracket. To cap head coach Wayne Hunter's first season with the program, Miramonte fell in the opening round, 63-57, to six seed Monterey on March 8.

"It was huge for us," Hunter said of the NorCal appearance after only taking over in October. "I talk about the circumstances, the



Charlie Hocking

late start, not being able to build in the spring.

"I thought my boys competed and they gave it their all," Hunter said. "And, obviously, they were just couple of plays short of winning a few more games, but just making it to the playoffs in general, that is a huge accomplishment."

The Mats, (16-13, 5-5), will lose senior captain Charlie Hocking among others, but Hunter believes a culture has been established which will ensure future success.

"I want to highlight my returners," Hunter said. "So I want to highlight (junior wing) Nikhil Shastri and (sophomore point guard) Jayson Fernbacher."

Baseball squads use preseason slate to gear up for league play

By Karl Buscheck

The Miramonte baseball team has never cared much about what outsiders think of the program. Last spring, the Mats landed the No. 12 seed in the NCS Division 2 playoffs only to advance all the way to semifinals where they lost to Acalanes, the eventual champs.

"If you ask me who is going to win NCS, I'll say that I'll tell you the day after," head coach Vince Dell'Aquila joked, as he recalled last spring's run.

"That's kind of always been my mantra with the kids," Dell'Aquila explained. "They're like, 'Oh, we're ranked this we're ranked that.' And I'll say, 'You know what? I'll tell you what the rankings are at the end of the season.'"

This time around, the Mats have been buzzing past the competition in the early going, posting an unblemished 8-0 record in non-league play.

Miramonte boosts a deep pitching staff headlined by senior captains Tim Tague, Casey McGonigle and EJ Hodges. Hodges also spends time in the outfield for the Mats,

who begin DAL Foothill Conference action by paying a visit to Las Lomas on April 18.

"We know we're going to get better as the season goes on," Dell'Aquila said. "That's the way it's always been because we do the right things – give the boys a day off here and there – so when they get into late May they're still loving it. They're still playing hard."

Before league play commences, the Mats will once again match up with Acalanes, a member of the Valley Conference, in Lafayette on March 28.

"It's always fun to play against Miramonte," head coach Justin Santich-Hughes said. "I'm glad we were able to make that happen even though we are now in a league where we don't play each other. Vince's clubs are always well coached and prepared, which is good for our guys to play against because it forces us to have a high level of focus."

The Dons, who went 26-2 overall last season (12-0 in DAL) on the way to NCS and league titles – as well as the No. 15 rank-

ing in the state, per MaxPreps – have been bumped into D1.

"We are the only team (out of all sports) district wide that is competing at that level," Santich-Hughes explained. "With that said our expectations don't change, we set out to win an NCS championship but the road will be extremely difficult."

In the quest for yet another section title, the Dons will lean heavily on a cavalcade of veterans.

"Josh Candau (UC Santa Barbara commit) was an all-state pitcher last year who returns for us and we hope has a great season for us. Seniors Matt Burns, Will Rembac, Ty Ewing and Daniel Kim should lead us offensively while Seniors Matt Vicencio and Kevin McConnell (Utah Valley Commit) will be great compliments to Candau along with Junior Brian Merken."

Like the Dons, the Campolindo Cougars are one of six members of the DAL's Foothill Conference. Campolindo, who entered the week of March 19 with an 3-2 record, is still searching for its identity as a squad.

"The goal right now is figuring ourselves out," explained head coach Max Luckhurst.

After previously overseeing the Cougars' program for 16 years, Luckhurst is back at the helm for the first season of his second stint.

"We're very young and not very experienced," Luckhurst added. "So we're using the early part of the year – and obviously the rain was an issue so we got a late start – but the goals are to get better every day and be able to put ourselves in a position to be able to compete for championship at the end of the year."

The Cougars begin league on April 18 with a trip to Northgate, and in the interim, the team's emerging hitters and pitchers will get the chance to earn at-bats and innings.

"There's a lot of different guys who are getting opportunities to play and trying to figure out roles and who's able to step up in certain positions," Luckhurst said. "By the time we start league, hopefully we're a little bit further along and putting ourselves in a good position to be able to compete after the 24 games."

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Santa Maria 4th grade basketball team wins Diocese championship

Submitted by Stephanie Barmmer



From left: coach Jessica Smith, J. Smith, L. LaVelle, E. Crinks, M. Thorpe, J. Quinn-Ferguson, S. Chinn, G. Dutto, K. Barmmer, A. Ryan, A. Hogan and coach Brian Chinn. Front with pennant B. Smith
Santa Maria's 4th grade American team, the Warriors, clinched the Oakland Diocese Championship title besting an undefeated St. Perpetua team.

Lafayette 5th graders win next level flag football championship

Submitted by Flavia Trento



From left, Will Jones, Aidan Scheg, Marshall Anderson, Patrick Floyd, Calvin Kotarba, Orlando Sanchez, Paulo Trento, Joey Floyd, Walker Smith, Sava Pouridis and Ian Bellanca. In the back sis tudent head coach Erique Ross. Not pictured are Noah Janinda and Jack Park.

Burton Valley Elementary 5th Grade Boise State Broncos won the Next Level Fifth Grade Flag Football Championship. The championship game was played at De La Salle High School on Sunday, March 12.

St. Monica's 4th grade boys are Oakland Diocese Champions

Submitted by Shawn Clancy



Back row from left, coaches Shawn Clancy, Mark Robeson, Eric Van Olst; middle row from left, Kai Van Olst, Max Robeson, Cooper Chang, Anthony Sanguinetti; front row from left, Joe Revelos, Blaise Clancy, Luke Bonardi, Gaetan Avicelli, Gian Maguire

The St. Monica's fourth grade basketball team defeated All Saints 30-29 in the championship game to become the Oakland Diocese American Champions. To reach the final game, the boys defeated St. Bede 34-32 in the semifinals, after receiving a first round bye.

10 California Magic Soccer Players are NCS Champions

Submitted by Greg Davis



Back Row from left, Zach Flagg, Oliver Feigin, Shukoor Haji, Bryan Bamford, Mason Larrick; front row, from left, Luke Denham, Alex Topping.

California Magic boys players were well represented in recent Acalanes High School (Division 2) and Berkeley High School (Division 1). Acalanes High School

Boys Soccer finished the season with an impressive 20-2-4 record and as DAL-Foothill league champions. In NCS post season play, Acalanes won the Division 2 championship game 1-0 in double overtime against a tough Montgomery rival after winning games against Casa Grande, Campolindo and Richmond High Schools. California Magic Players on the Acalanes High School team roster include Bryan Bamford, Luke Denham, Oliver Feigin, Zach Flagg, Shukoor Haji, Mason Larrick and Alex Topping. The other California Magic NCS Champion players from the Berkeley High School squad include Andres Baldwin, Yohannes Kolanji and Jason Vilchez.

St. Perpetua 6th grade is diocese basketball champions

Submitted by Rob Mascheroni



The St. Perpetua sixth grade boys basketball team won the championship for the third consecutive year.

Back row, from left, assistant coach Dave Gannon, assistant coach Hunter Davis, head coach Rob O'Reilly, Shane O'Reilly, Jake Davis, Jack Bayless, Billy Haggerty, Bennett Dodge, Robbie Mascheroni; front row, from left, Dylan Breznikar, Coco Gannon, Theo Stoll, Eli Brett.

Submit stories to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com
(we prefer to receive your original photo file, minimum size: 200 dpi and 1200 pixels wide)

Lamorinda Arsenal 3rd-grade girls win at indoor soccer

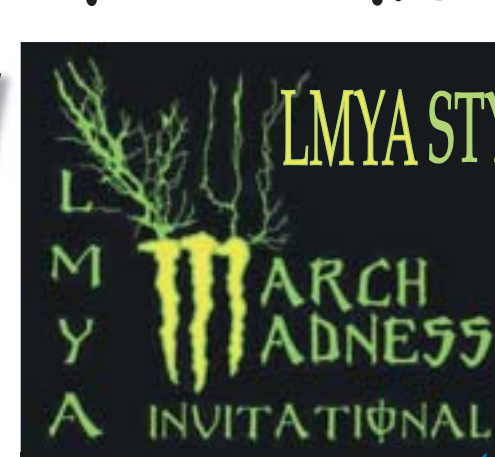
Submitted by Christian Reed



Team Arsenal beat the Shooting Stars 8-6 on Sun., March 12th. Arsenal has won three straight Lamorinda girls indoor soccer championships.

Back Row from left, Addie Wen, Stella Pacheco, Tori Gilbert, coach Christian Reed, Libby Wong, Hannah Lehrman, Wen Hui Alford; front row from left, Violet Ludwig, Caitlin Williams, Maya Reed, Stella McLeod, Riley Coleman (not pictured: Lily Coane)

LMYA Basketball Season Concludes with 2 Tournaments



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Coaches: Scott Whipple, Mike Bullock



Top (L-R) Doug Cardoni, Harvey Wesley, Michael Balmat, Alex Aoki, Front (L-R) Jonathan Su, Saylen Cardoni, Robby Fuimaono, Alex McCormick, Ariel Shehter, Kasey Kazliner, Ted Helvey, Nicholas Baetz

Santiago Sirios

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 11 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 22, 2017



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

...read on page D16

Lamorinda trees are bursting with color

By Diane Claytor



Flowers of a magnificent magnolia tree in a Lafayette back yard

Photo Andy Scheck

Driving or walking around Lamorinda in the weeks leading up to the first full day of spring has felt almost like stepping into a floral shop. The landscape is bursting with colors — the pinks, purples, whites and yellows of flowers blooming and the vivid greenery all around boldly announce that spring has finally arrived, despite

this week's spring showers.

And after the rainy winter we've experienced, it couldn't come soon enough for most of us. But don't wait too long to enjoy all this beauty because, as Ken Murakami of the Moraga Garden Center noted, most of the blooms will be gone before we know it and soon the leaves will be sprouting.

There are many trees producing flowers; many began blooming last month and some may either continue into or start in the coming months. Some of the more popular trees around Lamorinda appear to be non-fruit bearing flowering fruit trees, including flowering plum, cherry, apricot, crab apple and combinations — or hybrids — of these plants. According to Murakami, the time of blooming depends on the variety, although “most will bloom between February and May. Flowering plums bloom earlier than cherries, apricots earlier than plums.”

Murakami assures that it's not too late to plant trees that will flower this spring. And if the blossoms are already gone, planting them this year will produce beautiful flowers next spring. The website, www.fast-growing-trees.com, indicates some other flowering trees that would do well in our area include crape myrtles, mimosas and dogwoods.

And then, of course, there are the magnolias, prized for their beautiful flowers, or, as noted by the San Francisco Botanical Garden, “...the most magnificent flowering woody plants for temperate gardens...” With more than 200 species, magnolias produce fragrant flowers that are white, pink, red, purple or yellow.

These trees, native to Asia and Central and South America, grow very well in our area, said Michelle Krasowski, a Contra Costa County librarian and former docent at the San Francisco Botanical Garden. She reported that the main blooming time for the Asian magnolias is just about over while those from the Americas bloom later in the spring and early summer.

... continued on page D4



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	7	\$680,000	\$2,590,000
MORAGA	4	\$375,000	\$1,300,000
ORINDA	4	\$533,000	\$2,700,000

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

- 3079 Camino Diablo, \$680,000, 2 Bdrms, 1253 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 2-15-17;
Previous Sale: \$430,000, 06-17-08
- 3356 Kincheloe Court, \$2,590,000, 5 Bdrms, 4173 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 2-17-17;
Previous Sale: \$115,000, 05-14-71
- 3478 Monroe Avenue, \$1,475,000, 2 Bdrms, 968 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 2-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$790,000, 10-05-15
- 14 Moss Lane, \$880,000, 2 Bdrms, 1442 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 2-17-17;
Previous Sale: \$500,000, 06-15-11
- 1088 Sierra Vista Way, \$915,000, 4 Bdrms, 1468 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 2-16-17
- 569 Silverado Drive, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 1694 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-23-17;
Previous Sale: \$93,000, - -
- 704 Wee Donegal, \$835,000, 3 Bdrms, 2284 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 2-22-17

MORAGA

- 2067 Ascot Drive #242, \$375,000, 1 Bdrms, 790 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 2-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$110,000, 05-04-00
- 780 Country Club Drive, \$965,000, 4 Bdrms, 2390 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 2-15-17
- 140 Draeger Drive, \$1,110,000, 3 Bdrms, 1782 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 2-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$800,000, 02-20-13
- 1753 Spyglass Lane, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 2828 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 2-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$850,000, 03-29-12

ORINDA

- 55 Ardilla Road, \$2,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 3508 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 2-15-17;
Previous Sale: \$395,000, 09-19-95
- 73 Brookwood Road #36, \$533,000, 2 Bdrms, 882 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 2-16-17;
Previous Sale: \$260,000, 08-22-01
- 257 Orchard Road, \$1,057,000, 2 Bdrms, 1251 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 2-24-17
- 92 Southwood Drive, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3655 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 2-17-17;
Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 05-24-12

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Lamorinda is bursting with color

... continued from page D1



Pat Doughty's magnolia tree

Photo Andy Scheck

One of the most incredible magnolias around has to be the Soulangeana, or tulip magnolia, majestically towering in the backyard of Pat Doughty's Lafayette home. "The tree was large and amazing when I moved in 35 years ago," she said. "It just keeps on getting better." Two weeks ago, it was covered in beautiful and fragrant goblet-shaped pink flowers; by now, the delicate flower petals have faded to white and are covering the ground, replaced by green leaves that will provide shady spots for Doughty to enjoy all summer.

Doughty insists she's not a gardener. "Anything I grow has to thrive on neglect," she said laughingly. She happily has a great arborist, who's "the only one I let touch this tree." Murakami said that young magnolias, like other immature plants, need "pretty religious watering and mulching." But as these trees age, they do become more self-sufficient and are moderately drought tolerant.

For Doughty, who planted two more magnolias so "I'll still have something to enjoy in case anything ever happens to this grand old tree," her magnolia is a way to

celebrate springtime and entertain casually. Every year she invites friends and neighbors over for an informal afternoon to enjoy each other's company and share in the tree's beauty. "Everyone takes home cuttings from the tree so they can make their own floral arrangements," Doughty said. "Everyone typically leaves with a vase of buds, which in a day or two will open in a very dramatic way," allowing for some beautiful and creative floral centerpieces gracing her friends' homes.

... continued on page D6





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Lamorinda is bursting with color

... continued from page D4



While most people won't have the opportunity to delight in the beauty of Doughty's regal magnolia tree, a trip to San Francisco's Botanical Gardens will satisfy anyone's desire to view the tree's magnificence. Krasowski, the former docent, reports that the Gardens, with more than 200 elegant trees and over 40 different species, has the fourth largest collection of magnolias for conservation in the world. "It's the largest collection outside of Asia."

Unfortunately, the time for viewing these incredible plants is almost over. The Gardens' website notes that "the final major wave of Magnificent Magnolia blooms" will only last for another week or two. "It's a fantastic exhibit and I really encourage people to see it before it's all over," Krasowski said. And if you want to stay closer to home, Murakami notes that Oakland's Mosswood Park also has some magnificent old magnolias.



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Feng Shui

Enhance your home's entrance for good fortune

By Michele Duffy



This Moraga residence has strong front entrance Feng Shui with lush greenery and chi-attracting and protective red front doors.

Why is the home's front entrance so, well, front and center in Feng Shui?

Here are some clues to divining the mystery of this all-important area and to critically review, enhance and improve vibrant and nourishing Feng Shui to be attracted to your home. Our external world is full of uncertainty and Feng Shui continues to offer an elegant, nature-infused, time-tested design approach for enhancing what we do have control over: our personal environments.

The front entrance of our homes establish first impressions and the first subliminal messages about you, your home, and the quality of life you live at that home. The repetitive subliminal messages of our front entrances reinforce either an uplifting or draining energy. The design system of Feng Shui stems from the ancient philosophy of the Tao, meaning everything is interconnected, so that naturally, our living spaces especially influence us far more than westerners may realize.


The front entrance is so vitally important in Feng Shui because this is the main portal for the qualities of energy that enter and nourish home. Often called "the mouth of chi" or the "threshold of good fortune," the front entrance is the entry point for the strong, healthy life force chi needed to nurture an entire living space. It's akin to mindfully allowing clean, healthy and nourishing food into our mouths so our whole body benefits. If we eat junk food we also suffer the immediate negative lack of energy plus longterm consequences.

Choose consciously to create a warm, welcoming, well-lit, fragrant, colorful and tidy front entrance to your home. Review your current entrance to note the obvious and subliminal messages you see. Is success, prosperity, and happiness reflected or is there a degree of lack, laziness, draining, sad or neglect? ... continued on page D12

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Feng Shui

Enhance your home's entrance

... continued from page D8

Feng Shui asks us to set a positive intention every time we enter our house so we feel the most welcome in our own homes. Our homes reflect us best when they welcome ourselves, others, new opportunities and positive vibes into our open arms with as grand an entrance as possible. Why? If we personally are first greeted with fragrant trees and flowers, soft flowing water, and perhaps a windchime tinkling gently we immediately feel uplifted and full of ease. Our visitors and opportunities are best treated generously with an experience of harmony, abundance and beauty as they also approach our homes.

Feng Shui asks us to pay more attention to our front entrance, home and property to attract positive results. So what are the subliminal messages of a cluttered front stoop or debris in the front yard or items that ought to be disposed of but are still in plain sight? Clutter stops energy flow and creates blockages, overwhelm, and create stress and feelings of being stuck. Unfinished projects also deplete and drain your energy, things undone weighing heavily upon us so we feel stuck. Look around your front yard and entrance and notice if there are garbage bins, withering plants, overgrown shrubs, cluttered pathways, chipping paint, a rundown roof or abandoned children's toys. Is the front door clearly visible from the front street? Does the front door need a coat of paint, does it stick, is the door frame well maintained so you feel safe with a front door made of glass? Does your front entrance face a T-intersection or a dead end? Is there an electrical tower facing your front door or some other large sharp structure? Is there a tree directly in front of your front door? Do you experience frustration, fatigue and overwhelming feelings before you even open the door of your home? Would your visitors project happy thoughts onto you on the way to ringing your front doorbell?

Since Feng Shui is based on the law of attraction and interconnectivity, what might you attract towards your home if your front entrance is difficult to locate, blocked, messy or chaotic?

As you preview your front yard by gazing upon the front entrance, here's a checklist to help you prioritize and purge the negative to attract auspiciousness to your home and own the front entrance energy flowing towards your home.

- Start with bagging up and disposing any debris in yard;
- Place toys and other items in the garage (organize the garage for needed additional storage);
- Trim back plants that encroach on pathway to door;
- Remove all cactuses;
- Add a fresh coat of red, black or dark green paint for front door;
- Oil stuck joints of creaking doors;
- Repair/replace rusting door jambs;
- Update with fresh house numbers that are clearly visible to all;
- Flank front entrance door with sized-to-scale potted Nandina evergreens or red flowers;
- Ensure you have working and clean front entrance lighting;
- Place a colorful, cheery silk or real seasonal round wreath on your front door;
- Broom cobwebs away from entranceway;
- Add a fresh, new and stylish welcome mat;
- Add a bubbling, to-scale water fountain to right of front door;
- Place a grounding statute for stability in the home;
- Soften straight walkways to front door with colorful potted plants that ease rushing chi;
- Actually use front door daily to continually bring healthy chi into home.

... continued on page D14

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Village Associates is Pleased to Welcome John Nash as their Newest Associate.



Village Associates is pleased to announce that John Nash has joined our firm. John was raised in Orinda and graduated from Miramonte High School. He played water polo at Miramonte and Santa Clara University before completing his masters in Sports Management at USF.

After a stint working in the start-up scene in Silicon Valley, John returned to the Lamorinda area with his wife, Jenna, and obtained his real estate license.

He spent the last year working as a licensed assistant to Tara Rochlin, Molly Smith and Margaret Zucker at Village Associates. If you are looking to buy or sell a home, John brings superior client service as well as extensive local market knowledge to the Lamorinda Area.

John Nash
 Village Associates Real Estate
 925.330.9474
 johnbnash@gmail.com
 CalBRE License # 01995244



Giving Dreams an Address



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 Lauren Holloway | 925.285.1728
99Tappan.com
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 910 Matadera Way | \$2,700,000
 7 Bedrooms, 7 Bathrooms
 Meg McCarthy | 925.813.4640
910Matadera.com
 Web Id: 626PX4, CalBRE #00869336



BLACKHAWK
 3215 Blackhawk Meadow Dr. | \$1,850,000
 3 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms
 Elisa Uribe | 510.919.5741
3215BlackhawkMeadowDrive.com
 Web Id: D8XXSC, CalBRE #01427070



ALAMO
 3138 Oakwood Lane | \$1,699,000
 4 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms
 Lauren Holloway | 925.285.1728
3138OakwoodLane.com
 CalBRE #01393592



DANVILLE
 127 Gatetree Court | \$1,459,000
 5 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrooms
 Norm Stanley | 925.413.9116
 CalBRE #00580952



LAFAYETTE
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 Rachael Hand | 925.372.8080
 Web Id: MZFZG8, CalBRE #01450616



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Feng Shui

Enhance your home's entrance

... continued from page D12



The front entrance is flanked by life force potted plants which mark the entrance at this Lafayette home

Try to tackle a few things on this list each day or each week and be mindful to put a “love my home” intention into your tasks so what’s created is a positive thread you can, from that day forward, weave into the layers of what home means to you. As you create more flow and greater ease be mindful of the profound shifts that abundant healthy energy invites towards your home. As you tidy up just enjoy the process of an intentional orchestration of all that is positive into your home and life and be grateful for all that you have created.

Next month I will give tips on the “heavenly gate” of your home, the next logical place to spruce up, the foyer, and help you create that “wow” moment once inside your home.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you want an extra pair of hands or eyes to energize, uplift, and renew your property or living space.



WEALTH & PROSPERITY "Gratitude" REAR LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues, purple & reds	FAME & REPUTATION "Integrity" REAR MIDDLE <u>Fire</u> Reds	LOVE & MARRIAGE "Receptivity" REAR RIGHT <u>Earth</u> Reds, pinks, & whites
HEALTH & FAMILY "Strength" MIDDLE LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues & Greens	CENTER <u>"Earth"</u> Yellow & earth tones	CREATIVITY & CHILDREN "Joy" MIDDLE RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White & Pastels
KNOWLEDGE & SELF CULTIVATION "Stillness" FRONT LEFT <u>Earth</u> Black, blues & greens	CAREER "Depth" FRONT MIDDLE <u>Water</u> Black & dark tones	HELPFUL PEOPLE & TRAVEL "Synchronicity" FRONT RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White, grey & black

The Bagua Map: Front Door

Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2015 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.



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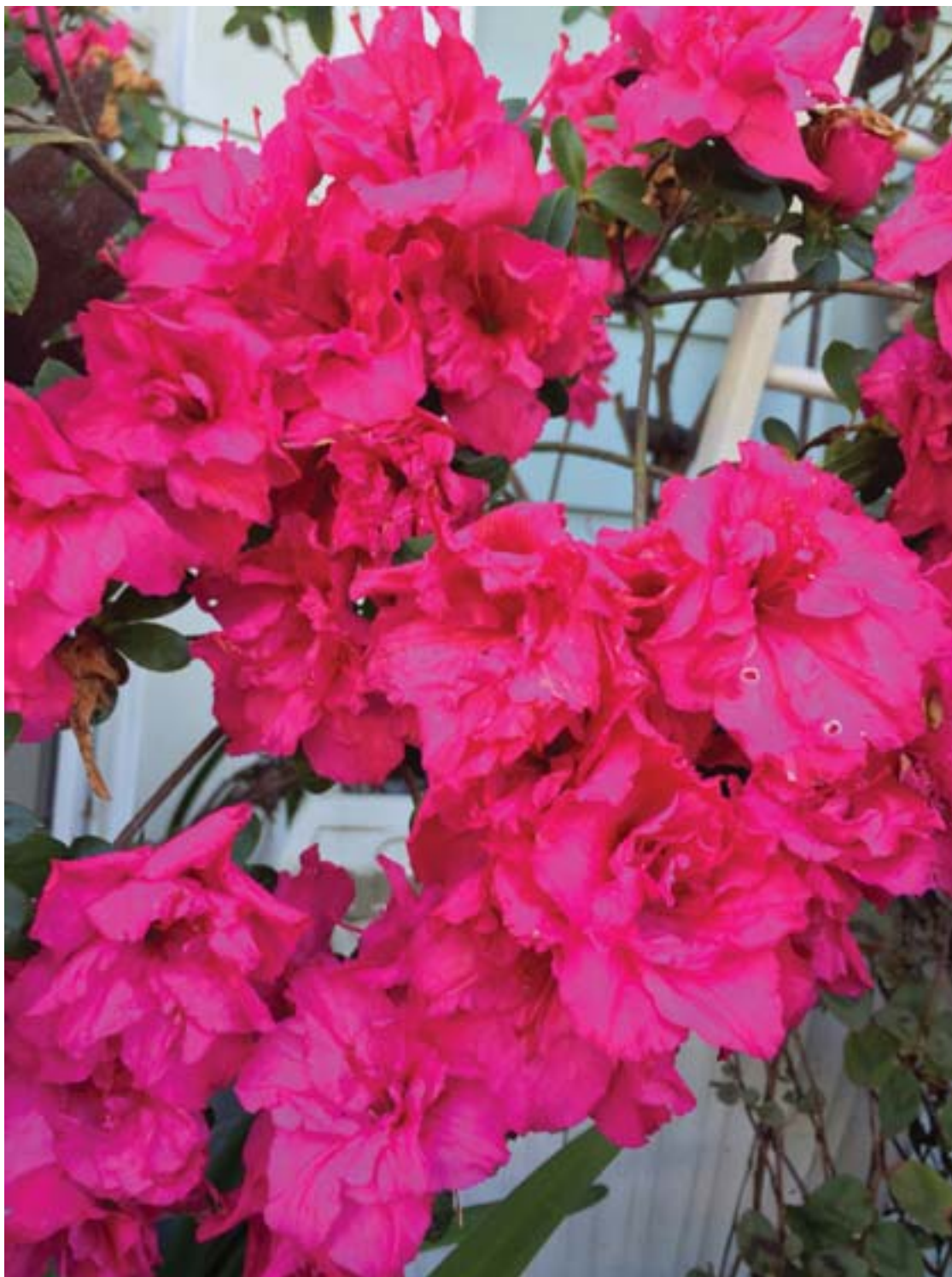


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*Digging Deep***Catch Flower Fever this month**

By Cynthia Brian

“Blossom by blossom the spring begins.” — AC Shinburne

*Fluorescent pink azalea shines.*

It took exactly one full day of warm sunshine a week before the vernal equinox for the garden to spring into action. Everywhere I looked, bulbs, wildflowers, perennials and plants burst into blooms. Muscari, Dutch iris, tulip, bergenia, freesia, hyacinth, lamium, rosemary, honeysuckle, calendula, California poppy, and even my outdoor cymbidium orchids strained for the solar shine. Deciduous trees are budding, leaves unfurling, all of nature is alive with expectation. With the abundance of rain we've enjoyed this winter, our gardens are determined to showcase their brilliance. Wherever you look, beauty awaits.

Spring is by far my favorite season of the year. As I witness landscapes awakening from their long hibernation, I am anxious to get my hands in the dirt. Weeds are abundant, yet they are easy to pull. Spading is excellent exercise burning 179 calories in just 50 minutes of digging. Snails and slugs have begun their migration making it necessary for us to be vigilant. New growth and tender seedlings are their favorite food. Frogs have begun their annual mating calls while the chirping birds are busy building nests. As tempted as we may be, it's still too early to sow vegetable and flower seeds outdoors. It is time, however, to get lawns into shape and prepare the soil for April planting. Allergy sufferers need to be on the alert as pollen is abundant in the air.

We have so much work to do to get ready for the next season. Make a play date with Mother Nature and enjoy fun in the sun soaking up vitamin D.

Spring ahead!

*Yellow cymbidium orchid comes indoors.*

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for March Magic

INSPECT your irrigation system. Mud might be clogging sprinkler heads while grass or lawn may have grown over the sprinklers. Spend time to get your system working properly before the heat begins.

MOW lawns without the bag, "sin bolsa" en espanol. The lawn cuttings are filled with nitrogen and nutrition that will green up your lawn. Don't waste that free fertilizer. If you find that clumps are left behind, rake or blow them into the lawn.

SOW lawn seed now. If you want to add a bit of color that will withstand dogs and kids, isotoma called blue star creeper looks great with its tiny blue flowers. Clover is always green boasting pink or white flowers. For a real conversation piece, create a living rug with a variety of ornamental grasses including ajuga, woolly thyme, pink chintz thyme, creeping speedwell, Irish moss and brass buttons.

GROW red and golden beets for their anti-inflammatory qualities. With only six grams of sugar in the average two-inch diameter bulb, beets lower blood glucose and increase insulin sensitivity. The leaves are delicious sliced, diced, raw, or steamed. Rich in fiber, folate, potassium and vitamins A and C, beets are heart healthy, lowering blood pressure while providing plenty of antioxidants. After boiling, save the water to add to your juice or other veggies.

WASH patio furniture with a solution of water and bleach to remove mildew or mold that has grown over the winter.

CUT a few errant shoots from any budding fruit tree to add to a vase of water. You'll enjoy watching the buds burst to blossoms over several weeks.

PLAN your vegetable garden by creating a map of what you want where. Design in geometric patterns, semi-circles, and circles for whimsy and interest.

CLEAN birdbaths, fountains, bird feeders, and birdhouses to attract songbirds to reside in your garden.

CONTINUE to pick up fallen camellia blossoms until the blooming ends next month. Do not leave the dead blooms on the ground.

ADD a trellis as a focal point in your landscape for climbing blue morning glory, clematis or red runner beans.

FERTILIZE grass, trees, shrubs, and perennials.

BRING inside plants outside for a good soaking and a few hours of morning sunlight. Check for insects and wipe the exterior of the containers as well as any leaves with a damp cloth to remove the dust.

... continued on page D18



Honeybee on rosemary.



A spectacular tulip magnolia tree (Magnolia x soulangean) along a path.

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for March Magic ... continued from page D17



A close up of an unfolding magenta parrot tulip.

ASSIGN kids an area to grow their favorite vegetables. Research indicates that children who garden eat healthier. Tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, radishes, carrots and beans are all easy-to-grow.

PICK snails and slugs off of plants at night by using a flashlight. Beer in saucers attracts snails or bait with organic pellets.

CHECK that you have proper, well-made garden tools. You'll need a wide handle shovel, trowel, knee cushion, hoe, pick and pruning shears in at least two sizes. The right tools make the job simpler and faster.

ORDER the Whole Seed Catalog from Baker Creek if you seek rare heirloom seeds. When you grow your own food, you'll know you are providing your family with non-GMO pesticide, and chemical free nutrition. www.rareseeds.com

PRE-ORDER my forthcoming garden book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener," Book I in the Garden Shorts Series. All pre-orders will receive extra goodies such as heirloom seeds, bookmarks and more. Email me for details, Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com. 25 percent of the proceeds benefit the 501c3 Be the Star You Are! charity. The book is expected to be available in April, just in time for spring planting.



A shocking blue hyacinth pops up under the redwoods.

A Garden in a Box: If you don't think you are much of a gardener, you can always order a preplanned garden from High Country Gardens. Type in your zip code and you'll easily see what will work for you. You'll get instructions, a design map and special plants. Visit www.highcountrygardens.com.

Flowers, Fotos, and Food: Artist and photographer Anne Morrison Rabe's Spring Flowers exhibit begins Thursday, March 23 at home/made Kitchen and Bakery, 337 Rheem Boulevard, in Moraga. Check it out and get inspired.

Win \$50,000 for your Garden: I have been selected as a judge in America's Best Gardener Contest. America's Best Gardener is the premier event for recognizing and celebrating the talents of indoor and outdoor gardeners. Show the world that your thumb is the greenest by showing the world pictures of your garden today. You can win \$50,000 so I encourage you to enter. www.americasbestgardener.com.

WEED, weed, weed, then weed again.

EMAIL me when you need a consultation.

CATCH flower fever. It's contagious and oh, so healthy.

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!





Tiny grape-like muscari fill the garden.



Cynthia Brian

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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.

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ORINDA



New Listing

176 Camino Don Miguel New to market! Magnificent custom built classic traditional 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath home located on the 5th fairway of Orinda Country Club.

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New Listing

572 Dalewood Drive Stunning executive 5bd/4.5ba, apx. 5211sf home in Orinda Downs. High ceilings & hwd flrs; spacious kitchen; large family room & rec/game room opens to deck w/outdoor kitchen & gazebo w/views.

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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.

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LAFAYETTE



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\$2,388,000



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