

# LAMORINDA WEEKLY



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Twins Sadie and Morgan took their father David to the Opening Day of the market after a morning playing Tot Baseball across the street at the Orinda Community Park. Photo Andy Schreck

## Farmers Market Celebrates 20th Anniversary

By Sora O'Doherty

It was no April Fool's Joke when the Orinda Farmers market cut the ribbon on its 20th season of providing fresh food on April 1. The Farmers Market will run until mid-November, with a focus on food and music from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays in front of the Rite Aide store on Orinda Way.

The market's goals for 2016 were to increase customer

attendance and offer some new attractions. According to Staci DeShasier, executive director of Contra Costa County Farmers' Markets, Orinda accomplished that goal with a 10 percent increase in customer attendance. DeShasier was delighted, noting that the increase translates into real dollars for small family farms and also means more residents and visitors are discovering the market and enjoying its offerings.

Enabled by the Orinda Community Center's donation of chairs, the market was able to expand its customer seating area. DeShasier says that when they added top musicians in front of the new seating, it made the market the place to be on Saturday mornings, and now the market has a full lineup of music on tap.

... continued on page A7

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## Rheem Boulevard Opens

By Cathy Dausman



From left: Edric Kwan, Teresa Onoda, Dave Trotter, John Anderson, Kevin Ebrahimi and Bob Priebe Photo A. Schreck

Pedestrian traffic along a length of south Rheem Boulevard yielded to automobiles with the snip of a ribbon March 30 as town officials opened the newly paved roadway to vehicle traffic.

Mayor Teresa Onoda called the roadbed a "slow

moving landslide," which she said had been failing since 1948. Onoda said the \$2.6 million project, which will stabilize the road, took nearly eight months to complete.

... continued on page A8

## How Lamorindans dispose of an unwanted gun

By Cathy Dausman

It was so well tucked away I'd forgotten we even had it. "It" was a breach load, break-action J. Stevens 12 gauge, pre-World War I shotgun in poor working order. It weighed in at over six pounds, had a long iron barrel and walnut grain stock. It belonged to my husband's grandfather.

"It was never in great working order," my husband said, adding "we never fired it to my recollection." It was simply a tool his grandpa used to kill snakes or vermin on his rural property; its value more sentimental than fiscal.

Today there are more reasons (grandchildren, primarily) not to keep a gun, even a disabled one, at our house. But how does someone dispose of one safely? In Lamorinda, you bring it to a police station. "It's a service we've offered for years," said

Moraga Chief of Police Jon King, adding "we're pushing it now."

... continued on page A12



Moraga Police Officer Robert Ortiz is making sure a turned-in gun is empty. Photo Cathy Dausman

### Civic News A1-A12

Debate over "Duct Tape Case" continues – page A4.

### Fire Districts A8

Sinkhole affects MOFD response time in north Orinda – page A8.

### Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Spring into fun and egg-citement with these April events. – page B1.



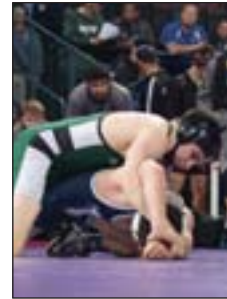
### Camps B5-B8

Check out half-day camps this issue. – Special Section



### Sports C1-C4

Mat's Wright is headed to State Finals – page C2.



### Our Homes D1-D16

Natives garden tour shows our natural beauty – page D1.





**Lafayette**

**Public Meetings**

**City Council**  
Monday, April 10, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Planning Commission**

Monday, April 17, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Design Review**

Monday, April 10, 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

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**BART improvements coming to Lafayette spring 2017**

By Pippa Fisher



Image provided

**PARKING SLOTS**

274 REGULAR
36 ADA
2 STN AGENT
2 MAINT VEHICLE
1 POLICE
42 MOTORCYCLE
4 TAXI
2 BUS
270'-0" KISS AND RIDE

Addressing environmental challenges, BART will be adding trees, improving landscaping, providing a rain garden, better irrigation, LED lighting and permeable pavement.

Houlihan said the project is expected to take about eight months to complete. While there will be no impact to bus services, or to pedestrians and cyclists, parking will be restricted as they close one lot at a time.

Further information and updates can be found on the BART website and on flyers and notice boards at the station.

With plans to address physical, operational and environmental conditions, BART is scheduled to start work this May on site improvements at its Lafayette station. BART Engineering Division Manager Mary Grace Houlihan updated the Lafayette City Council at its March 27 meeting about the reconstruction project.

Houlihan said that the improvements, which include replacing deteriorated paving, providing ad-

ditional parking spots for ADA compliance, and offering better signage, would commence after the current solar panel installation is finished, which has an estimated completion date of mid-April.

BART riders can expect to see an enhanced "Kiss and Ride" area together with improved pedestrian access, more motorcycle parking as well as improvements to the bus zone and two-way drive aisles, which will improve circulation.

**PG&E to remove trees in Lafayette**

By Pippa Fisher



The city of Lafayette has been working to move forward with Pacific Gas & Electric Co. on its Community Pipeline Safety Initiative, which requires the removal of 216 protected trees within the city of Lafayette.

The removal is required under the CPSI to clear areas around pipelines of trees to allow access for first responders and crews, so that tree roots do not damage the pipe and so that the pipe can be properly inspected.

Initially in 2014 PG&E called for the removal of over 1,000 trees, but since then has done further analysis, including an inspection and appraisal of every individual tree by arborist Michael Baefsky of Baefsky & Associates, Environmental Landscape Consulting and Contracting.

... continued on next page

- 1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
- 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Identity Theft**
- 1000 Block Woodbury Laf
- Police Department (2)
- 1800 Block Reliez Valley Rd.
- 10 Block Mountain View Ln.
- Juvenile Disturbance**
- Lafayette Cr./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Lost Property**
- 3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Ordinance Violation**
- 1000 Block Timothy Ln.
- 400 Block Peacock Blvd.
- Patrol Request**
- Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.
- 3300 Block Helen Ln.
- Petty Theft**
- 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 900 Block Moraga Rd.
- 20 Block Crest Rd.
- 1000 Block Carol Ln.
- 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct.
- 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 3400 Block Golden Gate Wy
- 3200 Block Elvia St.
- Petty Theft From Vehicle**
- 3500 Block Wilkinson Ln.
- 3700 Block Mosswood Dr.
- Petty Theft Other**
- 4100 Block Happy Valley Rd.
- Phone Harass**
- 300 Block Shire Oaks Ct.
- Public Assembly Check**
- 3300 Block Springhill Rd.
- Public Nuisance**
- 900 Block 2nd St.
- Dyer Dr./Hampton Rd.
- 100 Block Camellia Ln.
- 3900 Block El Nido Ranch Rd.
- Martino Rd./Springhill Rd.
- Valente Ct./Acalanes Rd.
- Reckless Driving**
- Pleasant Hill Rd./Old Tunnel Rd.
- 3600 Block Deerhill Rd.
- Palo Alto Dr./Cambridge Dr.
- Reliez Station Rd./Glenside Dr. (2)
- St Marys Rd./Glenside Dr.
- Taylor Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
- Lafayette Cr./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Moraga Rd./St. Marys Rd.
- Road Rage**
- Springhill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
- Security Check**
- 700 Block St Marys Rd.
- Shoplift**
- 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
- 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (5)
- Threats**
- 600 Block Moraga Rd.
- 3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Trespass**
- 3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.
- 500 Block Merriewood
- Unwanted Guest**
- 4000 Block Valente Dr.
- Vandalism**
- 10 Block Folin Ln.
- 10 Block Lark Creek Ln.
- 3300 Block Hillside Terrace
- 10 Block Lark Creek Ln.
- 3300 Block Hillside Terrace
- 10 Block Greenvalley Dr.
- 3400 Block School St.
- Vehicle Theft**
- 800 Block Topper Ln.
- 1200 Block Clover Ct.
- Verbal Dispute**
- El Nido Ranch Rd./Upper
- Happy Valley Rd.

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**Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report March 12 - 25**

- Alarms** 86
- 911 Calls (incl hang-ups)** 8
- Noise complaints** 12
- Traffic stops** 161
- Suspicious Circumstances** 18
- Suspicious Subjects** 44
- Suspicious Vehicles** 35
- Abandoned Vehicle**
- Circle Creek Dr./Circle Creek Ln.
- Animal Cruelty**
- Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.
- Assault W/ Deadly Weapon**
- 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Auto Burglary**
- 10 Block White Oak Dr.
- 4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Police Department
- 1000 Block N Thompson Rd.
- 3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 900 Block S Thompson Rd. (2)
- 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 30 Block Lafayette Cr.
- 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Battery**
- 70 Block Lafayette Cr. (2)
- Eb Sr 24 At Brown Ave.
- 3100 Block Old Tunnel Rd.
- Civil Disturbance**
- 1000 Block 2nd St.
- Civil Problem**
- 1000 Block Pine Ln.
- Police Department
- 900 Block Moraga Rd.
- 900 Block S Thompson Rd.
- Counterfeit**
- 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Disturbing The Peace**
- Springhill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
- Dui Misdemeanor**
- 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Acalanes Rd./Glorietta Blvd.
- Fire/ems Response Info**
- 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Forgery**
- 900 Block Hough Ave.
- Found Property**
- 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 1000 Block Aileen St.
- 3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- 600 Block Sweet Ct.
- Olympic Blvd./Reliez Station Rd.
- Fraud Credit Card**
- 10 Block Hidden Valley Rd.
- 10 Block Mountain View Ln.
- Fraud False Pretenses**
- 900 Block Hough Ave.
- 1000 Block Pine Ln.
- Grand Theft**
- 3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.
- H&S Violation**
- 3400 Block School St.
- 3300 Block Betty Ln.
- Hailed By Citizen**
- Bart Lafayette Station
- Hit And Run Misdemeanor**
- 3300 Block Springhill Rd.
- 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Taylor Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.

# Togo's sandwich chain looks to Lafayette for expansion

By Pippa Fisher



Togo's in nearby Pleasant Hill

Togo's sandwiches may soon be available in Lafayette if plans to expand the company within the city take off.

Top Togo management is zeroing in on Lafayette for future growth and hopes to find interest and a suitable location, having identified the city's strong consumer demographics.

Chief Development Officer Todd Peterson says that Lafayette provides a "great consumer market" citing a strong residential base plus offices, shops and a community that could be supplied. He said they had looked at several locations over the past few years.

While Togo's can't be specific on a timeline at this point, the company is focusing its development on a few key California markets, specifically Lafayette.

The franchise chain specializ-

ing in fresh, made-to-order sandwiches that started back in 1971 as a small sandwich shack in the south end of San Jose State campus now has close to 300 locations open or under development. However, the company is careful not to oversaturate any area. Peterson said that although there are Togo's nearby in Pleasant Hill and Concord, Lafayette is a distinctly different trade area.

Peterson points out that many franchisees start as fans and often have little or no background in the restaurant business but are brought through a process and given the tools, training and support to become successful.

He attributes the company's success in part to careful placement and strong brand recognition.

And, he says, "really good sandwiches!"

Photo Pippa Fisher

# PG&E to remove trees in Lafayette

... continued from page A2

This report indicated that within Lafayette, 272 trees on private and public property are deemed to be an unacceptable risk and require removal. Of those, 216 are considered "protected."

Baefsky concludes that the total payback to the city will be \$530,965, with \$56,160 in replanting and \$474,805 in payments.

At the March 27 city council meeting, council members heard from Assistant Planner Megan Canales, who requested the council authorize City Manager Steve Falk to execute the agreement with PG&E and place mitigation payments collected in a restricted reserve fund for future planting of median islands in Lafayette. The likely locations for such median islands would be on the east and west ends of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and on Pleasant Hill Road between the freeway and Deer Hill Road.

Marvin Nushwat of PG&E reassured the council that the pipes in Lafayette are constantly

monitored and that they are safe. He said there are no anomalies and that this is a proactive rather than reactive step. But, he added, "You don't want trees on high pressure gas transmission pipelines."

PG&E has identified trees for removal on EBMUD land, private property, East Bay Regional Parks land and city land. They will provide the city with a site plan and must show authorization from private property owners.

Council Member Mark Mitchell commented on the good work done reducing the number of trees to be removed from over 1,000 to 216. Council Member Cameron Burks pointed out the importance of safety balanced against the semi-rural feel of Lafayette so valued by residents.

The motion passed unanimously, with Mayor Mike Anderson, Burks and Mitchell in favor. Vice Mayor Don Tatzin was absent and Council Member Ivor Samson recused himself.

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## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Wednesday, April 12, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Planning Commission

Monday, April 10, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Design Review

Monday, April 10, 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



### March 7 to 21 Alarms

March 8 location n/a  
March 11 1800 block St. Andrew's Drive  
March 12 1100 block Larch Avenue  
March 14 Bank of America ATM  
March 16 100 block Longfield Place  
March 17 400 block Kingsford Drive  
March 20 location n/a  
March 21 400 block Park Street  
March 21 location n/a

### Burglary

March 21 electronics and jewelry

### Warrant Arrest

March 13 Moraga Road near Corliss.

### March 8 Miscellaneous

We can't hearrrrr you! A Moraga resident failed to return home after an evening job interview, but did warn the cell phone battery was low on juice. Shortly after the police got involved, who should call but the "missing" person, who'd spent the evening in the relative safety...of relatives. No word on the success or failure of the interview, but first paycheck priority might be a spare phone battery.

### March 8 Robbery

Dial "R" for Robbery: someone wanting to buy a new iPhone became a robbery victim by providing the seller with his home address. A second subject showed up, brandishing a gun. The erstwhile-seller grabbed the money and the phone and ran off with the accomplice, probably making it difficult to call for help.

### March 9 Dog bite

Police responded to a local park where a man reported a German Shepard bit him. Where was the man bitten? In the park, of course, but more importantly in the hip. A second subject recognized the dog, saying it had jumped her son while he was skateboarding (the son, not the dog). When contacted, the dog owner thought the hip injury was a scratch not a dog bite, but the volunteer made sure he'd had a recent rabies vaccination (the dog; not the owner). Animal Control was notified and will chew on the report.

### March 10 DUI assist

Moraga police assisted Lafayette police with the investigation of a solo driver parked in the road and apparently passed out. Driver subsequently flunked sobriety tests (and clearly lacked parking skills) and was arrested for DUI, transported to county lockup and booked.

### March 10 Suspicious circumstances

Moraga parents told police five boys rang their doorbell and called their daughter derogatory names. Word games of the worst kind. No action was taken.

### March 11 Violation City Ordinance

Eleven o'clock and all was not well. Police responded to music and more than 150 partiers shaking their shamrocks six days early in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Police Lepre-calmed them down, sent guests snaking home and residents acknowledged their o'fense. No further action was taken.

### March 11 Assault

A domestic disturbance in the 100 block of Miramonte Drive resulted in one arrest for battery and a second for interfering. The first subject was booked in Martinez jail, the second cited and released. No injuries.

### March 14 Vandal

A broken window found in a creek plus items taken from a nearby building led the owner to believe teenage trespassers were at it again. Police made some suggestions on securing the property.

### March 14 Vandal

Someone put graffiti on both the Rancho Laguna Park men's and women's bathrooms after dark. Seems the culprit, whoever they may be, is an equal opportunity destroyer. Police have yet to flush them out.

### March 16 Vandal

It's not a gas: Will the driver of a small brown 2-door (and his two male passengers) please remember to disengage the nozzle before speeding away from the gas station? We found the pump, but haven't found you. Yet.

### March 16 Larceny

Police were on the dime picking up an employee turned shoplifter at Rheem Valley Center. The suspect was tabbed...er nabbed, and released.

### March 16 Remains Found

A hiker found more than he expected when he came across skeletal human remains on an area hillside. The remains were recovered and sent to the county coronor's office for forensic ID.

### March 17 Lost/Stolen property

A Moraga resident reported several thousand dollars in jewelry missing from her residence. She notified her insurance company; they asked for police involvement.

### March 17 Suspicious circumstances

A resident reported a large slab of rock had been knocked down. Police took it for granite, and although no stone was left unturned, no suspect(s) were found.

### March 18 Violation City Ordinance

An apartment party got out of hand...and mouth... when police observed 50 congenial collegians in their cups. The party of the first part (police) dispersed the party of the second party (attendees); one resident was cited, a second issued a warning.

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## After 4 years, Moraga approves new Chase building

By Sophie Braccini



Chase Bank location at the corner of Moraga Way and School Street. Image provided

Moraga's latest Town Council Meeting was the stage of a long-lived piece of local drama, one that pits those who want to create a new vision for the downtown versus those who take into account what exists and settle for it.

This time it was the design of the new Chase Bank at the corner of Moraga Way and School Street (Bob's Christmas Tree lot) that was at stake. The result was predictable: Like when Dollar Tree or Moraga Center Homes (The City Ventures project) were approved, if the code permits it, it will be built. And right now there are no zoning rules in the Moraga Center Specific Plan that could justify adding more trees, larger sidewalks or even a setback from the street, as some residents and officials may want.

The new bank building has been reviewed and discussed for four years, going through study sessions with planning staff, the design review board and planning commission. Mayor Teresa Onoda appealed the planning commission's final assent, to bring it to a council vote.

Chase Bank claims to have 3400 clients in Moraga. At the March 22 town council, its representative, Market Director of Real Estate Ronald Chester, stated that Chase would walk out altogether if the council added more conditions to approve the project.

The new bank's site will be located in a very prominent position in the future downtown as envisioned by the MCSP. School Street is earmarked to become the downtown main street and that corner would be the entrance to that commercial area.

The mayor said that she wanted to start implementing the vision of the MCSP with this project. She reminded the council that that vision was to create an environment more pedestrian- and less auto-centered. She added that shopping has changed, everything can be delivered, and that downtowns need to create an environment where people want to hang out. For example, Onoda wanted to add a larger sidewalk, six feet instead of five feet, and remove some of the parking lots along the School Street portion of the site to accommodate both a wider sidewalk and an ample vegetation buffer.

Council Member Kimberleigh



Korpus, who was on the planning commission when the study session took place, detailed her own requests. She reminded the council that the MCSP calls for School Street to include two traffic lanes, a wide pedestrian path, a bicycle lane and angled parking. She said that to achieve this it would require massive widening, but that if the Chase project is approved as is, this will not be possible.

The two women were not followed by any of their colleagues. Vice mayor Roger Wykle said that the new building presents the general town architecture existing in Moraga, and that implementation of the MCSP vision was something that could be materialized in the future. Council Member Jeanette Fritzky added that this building reminded her of the Orchard Supply Hardware store across the street. Council Member Dave Trotter said he did not want the bank to give up on Moraga and simply asked that pear trees replace some of the trees proposed in the plan.

Trotter noted that the zoning of the MCSP is not completed yet and that for that reason there is not any requirement of any setback at this time in the municipal code.

The building's plans were approved 3-2. A committee is working on the zoning of the MCSP, but no results are expected before the end of the year.

### What of Bob's Christmas Tree lot?

Council member Dave Trotter asked property owner Dave Bruzzone where would "Bob" of Bob's Christmas Trees go this year. Bruzzone answered that he would make sure that the beloved business would be provided with adequate space in the shopping center again in 2017.

## Many local parents continue to support 5th-grade teacher in 'Duct Tape' case

By Sophie Braccini



Parents wear their "I'm with Millie" badge: from left, Anne Naffziger, Natalie Doane, Janelle Chng, Laura Revelos, Sara Giordani.

Many local parents continue to support a Moraga teacher in what is being referred to as "the duct tape story" despite an editorial in another local newspaper that claimed the teacher lied.

Los Perales fifth grade teacher Millie Tang was accused of placing duct tape over a child's mouth last year. Documents released to the East Bay Times spell out the Moraga School District's conclusions written after Los Perales Elementary Principal Amy Black

interviewed seven students from the classroom, including the alleged victim, "John Doe." MSD's records indicated that a majority of the students as well as a colleague of Tang confirmed that the teacher herself placed the tape on Doe's mouth, which she denies.

But parents continue to support a teacher that they consider an exceptional educator, pointing out deficiencies in the district's inquiry and accusing the media of bias.

Parents of current and former students of Tang, as well as former students, continue to support the teacher, highlighting several elements they consider the MSD neglected. The parents first specify that only seven students out of 22 were interviewed, one by one behind closed doors in a manner that they feel was intimidating. One mother indicated to this newspaper that her child was interviewed and testified that the teacher did not put on the tape, but that "John Doe" did it himself as a humorous provocation.

The lawyer of the "Doe" family, Larry Cook, did not respond to our phone calls. The district attorney dismissed criminal charges in the case, but the civil suit is continuing. The documents filed by Cook refer to physical and psychological abuse of a child, stating that Tang placed the duct tape and ridiculed the child in front of the class, and that she also engaged in intimidation, coercion and threats. The documents also accuse Black of failure to prevent, correct, train and supervise the teacher, and states that the MSD authorized and/or ratified Tang and Black's misconduct toward "John Doe." ... continued on next page

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**Mayor Onoda declares a vibrant business community is within Moraga's grasp**

By Sophie Braccini



Mayor Teresa Onoda delivers the State of the Town address. Photo Sophie Braccini

In her State of the Town address, Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda said that the thrifty town had been built on a nonsustainable financial canvass and that things needed to change.

Her address was part of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce mixer on March 29.

Onoda also started a discussion with chamber members about the economic future of the town, reaffirming her support of the business community and challenging retailers to add charm to their storefronts and create the shopping experience Moragans deserve and want.

Onoda talked about the Moraga Center Specific Plan zoning and how work was being done to create a vision for the downtown. She explained that hillside and ridgeline rules were also being defined according to the town's principles to make the development process more predictable and simple for developers. She also explained how two elements of the town financial reality clearly showed that Moraga is underfunded: infrastructure, like storm drain maintenance, and staff compensation.

The mayor explained that Moraga gets only 5.3 percent of what its residents pay in property tax, the

second lowest percentage in Contra Costa County that was frozen by Proposition 13 in 1978. The consequence, according to Onoda, is that the town that was incorporated in 1974 with a minimal government principle is not equipped to face today's requirements and obligations, such as paying competitive salaries to staff and saving money to repair its infrastructure. She said that this year a measure to levy extra tax for repairs would be studied.

Kevin Reneau, past president of the chamber of commerce and owner of Senior Helpers in Moraga, asked the mayor how to convince people of the necessity for more taxes. Onoda responded that designing a measure with clear goals and educating residents was key to success, as was done to get the 1 percent sales tax approved.

Onoda stressed her support of economic development in town and support of streamlining the regulatory processes for new and existing businesses. Council Member Jeanette Fritzky added that development takes a lot of pieces and parts, and that Moraga needs a long-term economic development plan. She said that the risk was that one day Moraga would have no other choice than becoming part of a larger entity.

The mayor said that the town has the economics to keep businesses in town but that the online competition means that businesses would have to reinvent themselves. Edy Schwartz, a former chamber president, challenged everyone in the audience to communicate on social media about all that businesses in Moraga have to offer. Onoda added that she does it regularly when she has lunch out with her husband and she recommended that everyone participate in this buzz about the Moraga experience.

Kathe Nelson, chamber executive director, shared the unique atmosphere that is developing in Moraga where a business, Amoroma, decided to support another Moraga business, Moraga Produce.

The current chamber president, Wendy Scheck, concluded that she was hopeful that the attitude in Moraga was changing and that the close-knit and vibrant community everyone desires would be attainable. To top this optimistic mood Onoda announced a townwide hike scheduled on Oct. 14 on the Carr Ranch trails.

**Citizen of the Year  
Dinner set for April 22**

Submitted by Claire Roth

The dinner honoring Bobbie Preston, Moraga's 2017 Citizen of the Year, will be held at 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 22 at the Soda Center on the Saint Mary's College campus. Everyone is welcome and invited to attend.

Tickets are \$55 and may be purchased at www.moragachamber.org.

Come join your fellow residents to celebrate Preston and our community at this special event.

The Citizen of the Year event is sponsored by Saint Mary's College, Moraga Chamber of Commerce, the Lamorinda Weekly and Moraga Valley Kiwanis.

**Spring road repairs in downtown Moraga**

By Sophie Braccini

While the sinkhole repair plans are still being held under the California Department of Transportation's scrutiny, Moraga public works department has started its spring repair campaign partially funded with a CalRecycle grant. The objective is to have Moraga's main arteries in good shape for the triathlon on April 22. Edric Kwan, the town's public works director, believes that his plan will minimize unavoidable traffic impacts.

The reopening of Rheem Boulevard between St. Mary's Road and Moraga Road was key to keeping the drivers' stress level to a minimum. Repairs along Moraga Road present a different challenge depending on the number of lanes available in each segment. The most challenging is the narrow, two-lane stretch between St. Mary's Road and Corliss. Kwan elected to close the segment completely on Satur-

days only, on April 1 and 8, while during the week of the school's Spring break only one lane for alternate traffic is available. The first Saturday, on April 1, saw some lines and confusion, but people had not too much trouble using alternate routes.

Kwan explained that the repaving work of the section between Corliss and Draeger Drive will be conducted with lane closures during the weekdays using lane closures similar to the ones used during last fall's overhead utility undergrounding work. The project will also include a slurry seal of the roadway between Draeger Drive and Devin Drive, which will also utilize lane closures to complete the work. Everything is expected to be completed by April 22 and changeable messages with road closures information continue to inform motorists at major intersections.

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

**Many local parents continue to support 5th-grade teacher**

... continued from page A4

At this time, more than 80 letters of support for the teacher have been received and given to the MSD. The parents supporting Tang are dismayed that the East Bay Times never mentioned the letters that were sent to them. They wonder what is the reason, even calling it a "witch hunt."

At a recent fundraiser for the Moraga Education Foundation parents distributed "I'm with

Millie" stickers and they say that parents all over the district, not only Los Perales parents, choose to wear them in support of the teacher.


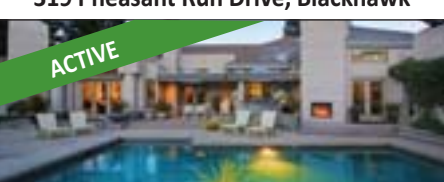
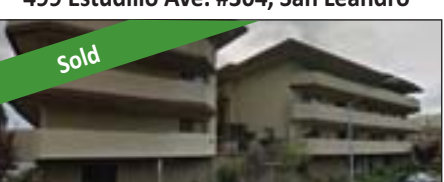

Gregory Read, a partner with the San Francisco law firm Sedgwick, offered Tang to be her lawyer pro-bono. The well regarded trial lawyer said that Tang has already a lawyer appointed by the school district but that she

needed a friend. Read has two grandchildren who are former students of Tang. He said that he did extensive interviews of the teacher and of parents and decided he should assist her. He says that the very petite teacher — often smaller than some of her fifth graders — is very distressed by what she feels in an injustice. Her whole life has been dedicated to teaching, as well as her humani-

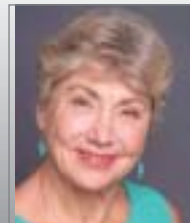






tarian endeavors, and she finds these accusations and attacks on her character devastating, he said.

When parents talk about Tang, the emotions also run very high, between anger, disappointment and deep sadness. A group of parents plan to attend the April 11 MSD board meeting to continue to affirm their support and demand that the district not settle

the case. They feel that MSD should support its teachers and not back down over what they consider frivolous lawsuits. Read is convinced that if the case goes to court the probability of winning is very high, but he warns that putting children on the witness stand could be a difficult experience.

<p><b>30 Arlene Lane, Walnut Creek</b></p> <p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p>  <p>Open for the first time Saturday, April 8th and Sunday April 9th from 1-4pm. Beautiful four-bedroom family home in the Parkmead area! Lovely yard on half an acre with pool, raised vegetable garden and play area. For more information, contact Dana Fillinger at 925.588.6409</p> <p>CalBRE#01731662</p>	<p><b>319 Pheasant Run Drive, Blackhawk</b></p> <p><b>ACTIVE</b></p>  <p>5 BR, 2 offices, bonus room and 7 baths. Designer lighting, 9-zone audio system, media room, 2nd dining area, pebble pool &amp; greenhouse and more. Offered at \$2,750,000 by Larry Jacobs, 925.788.9362, and Kress Hauri, 925.899.5739</p> <p>CalBRE#01465617/#01495118</p>	<p><b>499 Estudillo Ave. #304, San Leandro</b></p> <p><b>Sold</b></p>  <p>What a great location for this top floor condominium with views! This unit has 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a laundry nook. Other features include a wet bar, balcony, security and elevator. Sold for at \$406,000 by Regina Englehart, 925.876.9076</p> <p>CalBRE#01308462</p>	<p><b>944 Dewing Ave. Unit C, Lafayette</b></p> <p><b>PENDING</b></p>  <p>This contemporary 2-story townhouse is in a peaceful, serene setting in downtown Lafayette. It has 2 bdr. and 2-1/2 bath, with updated hardwood flooring, counters and fixtures. 2 sliding doors lead to a large, lush yard and allow lots of light into the home. Offered at \$698,888 by Rose Brudigam, 925.746.7650</p> <p>CalBRE#00571094</p>
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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, April 11, 5 p.m.  
Special Joint Meeting with City Council  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### Citizens' Infrastructure

#### Oversight Commission

Wednesday, April 12, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### 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



### March 5 to 18

Alarms	43
Noise complaints	4
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	4
Traffic stops	103
Suspicious Circumstances	4
Suspicious Subjects	20
Suspicious Vehicles	29
Barking Dog	
20 block Charles Hill Rd.	
Burglary, Commercial	
details n/a	
Civil	
100 block Orchard Rd.	
600 block Ironbark Cr.	
700 block Miner Rd.	
10 block Orinda Way	
Death, non-criminal	
60 block Donna Maria Way	
Disturbance	
60 Brookwood Rd.	
Lavenida Dr./Donna Maria Way (2)	
Donald Dr./Hall Dr.	
Dispute	
70 block Estates Dr.	
30 block Evergreen Dr.	
100 block Orchard Rd.	
Drunk in Public	
10 block Orinda Way	
DUI	
San Pablo/Miner Rd.	
Fraud	
reported to police	
ID Theft	
reported to police	
10 block Corte Sombrita	
Panhandling	
Safeway	
Police/Fire/ EMS	
10 block Crown Court	
BevMo	
Orinda Community Center	
Miramonte High School	
200 block Sundown Terr.	
Public Nuisance	
Eastwood/Coral Drives	
100 block Camino Pablo	
10 block Harran Cr.	
30 block Las Cascadas Rd.	
10 block El Caminito	
Moraga Way/Bryant	



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## 28 homes in Orinda Grove get new addresses

By Sora O'Doherty

In an effort to avert potentially lethal confusion, Orinda City Council voted to rename the streets in the Orinda Grove development, requiring changing the addresses of 28 residences.

Currently the development consists of streets and paseos, or pedestrian walkways. The houses face the paseos and have addresses on them, while the garages front the streets. Thus the addresses of the residences don't reflect the street name from which the residence is accessible, but rather the "paseo" name. With the renaming of the streets, the houses with garages on either side will be given addresses associated with that street name. The city designed the change to affect the fewest possible residence.

In an earlier attempt to clarify, address plaques were affixed to each garage. While Orinda first

responders are familiar with this arrangement, other emergency personnel are not, and staff has determined that there is a possibility that confusion could create a deadly delay if another jurisdiction needs to be called upon to respond to a 911 call. In an emergency, a delay of even a few minutes can affect the patient's outcome.

Not all the residents of Orinda Grove are thrilled by the change. Although the city will bear the

costs of changing the street signs, and the residents will not have to deal with the U.S. Postal Service regarding the change of address, some residents did appear before the council to object to the associated costs, for example reprinting of business cards and checkbooks. However, the city decided that the change was necessary to assure public safety and voted unanimously on March 21 to go ahead with the change. (See graphic.)

The land upon which Orinda Grove is built was part of a three-way swap that enabled the city to build its new city hall in 2007. Subsequently Pulte Homes developed the 11-acre former school site and the adjacent 3.1-acre city-owned ball fields, building 73 homes and the Orinda Union School District office building to replace the former district offices on the site. The homes were sold starting in 2013.



- Amber Valley Dr./Dalewood
- Camino del Cielo/El Toyonal
- 20 block Alta Vista
- 100 block Las Vegas Rd
- 100 block La Espiral
- 10 block La Vuelta
- 30 block Las Vegas Rd
- 80 block Davis Rd
- Reckless Driving
- Moraga Way/Overhill Rd
- Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.
- Hwy 24/Camino Pablo
- Valley View/Moraga Way
- Los Amigos/Camino Pablo
- Moraga Way/Camino Pablo
- 10 block North Ln.
- BevMo
- Glorietta Blvd./Orchard Rd.
- Shoplift
- CVS
- Rite Aid
- Stolen Vehicle recovery
- 80 block Orchard Rd.
- Throw from moving vehicle
- 70 block Moraga Way
- Theft, Petty
- 10 block Orinda View Rd.
- 20 block Overhill Rd.
- 40 block Hillcrest Dr.
- 10 block Ridge Ln.
- Theft, Grand
- 500 block Miner Rd.
- 200 block La Espiral
- Unwanted Guest
- Safeway
- 500 block Moraga Way
- Trespass
- Orinda Country Club
- Camino Pablo/Hwy 24
- Vandalism
- 40 block Pomello Pl.
- 10 block Paintbrush Ln.
- 10 block Juniper Dr.
- 10 block Orinda Way
- Welfare check
- Estabueno Dr/Moraga Way
- Orinda Intermediate School

## New tax-free municipal bonds to be issued for Orinda's streets

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda will issue \$35 million in municipal bonds on April 6 to provide financing for the continued repair and maintenance of residential streets. Of that, \$10 million is the second tranche of Measure J, passed by the voters in 2014; the remainder is from Measure L, passed in 2016.

Orinda bonds are rated AAA, according to James Cervantes of Stifel, the brokerage firm handling the bond sales. The tax-free bonds will be available in various configurations, from one to 20 years; depending on the bond, the interest rate will vary. The minimum increment to purchase is \$5,000.

Money raised by the bond issuance will fund the ongoing repair of residential streets. Arterial and collector routes, which bear more traffic, are not funded by bonds, but

by gas taxes and money returned to source by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority. These roads would include, for example, Miner Road and Moraga Way.

According to Farah Khorashadi, recently hired Paving Program Project Manager for Orinda Public Works and Engineering Services, the city is in the middle of a five-phase, 10-year paving project begun in 2012. By 2022, only maintenance of the roads should be required, all the substantial repairs having been completed. This year 63 segments of road will be repaired, including almost 60,000 linear feet of curbs and gutters. Khorashadi explained that prior to a residential street being repaired, residents are notified and asked to have their sewer lines checked and repaired or replaced as needed. The

sewer lines from the home to the main sewer line in the street are the responsibility of the homeowner. Once a street is newly paved, it can only be dug up for an emergency.

Some adjustment to the schedule of road repairs has been necessitated by the Miner Road sinkhole and the traffic increase on the detour routes. Repairs to Camino Sobrante from La Espiral to Miner Road had been scheduled for 2019, but have been moved up to this year.

Khorashadi started at Orinda at the beginning of the year, having retired from Riverside County where she worked in transportation design and maintenance for 25 years. She has a master's degree in engineering from Southern Illinois University. She rejoins her husband, who has lived in the Bay Area since 2008.

### Paving Project: Community Outreach Meetings

Orinda's 2017 Annual Paving Project is a combination of Measure J and L programs. This year Orinda will rehabilitate one collector road (El Nido Ranch Road) with a slurry seal and rehabilitate two school route roads (Don Gabriel Way and El Camino Moraga) with full depth reclamation (FDR). In addition, the Measure J and L pavement rehabilitation funding will rehabilitate 60 residential roads with FDR.

To learn about the projects and ask questions, attend one of the three scheduled community outreach meetings to be held at the Orinda City Hall in the Sarge Littlehale Community Room located at 22 Orinda Way:

- 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Monday, April 17
- 4 to 6 p.m., Thursday, April 27
- 10 to 11:30 a.m., Saturday, May 13

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**Sinkhole repair inches slowly forward**

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda reached a critical compromise agreement with the Regional Water Quality Control Board that should speed the progress of repairs to the Miner Road sinkhole.

A number of permits are still required, but that from the RWQCB is the most important and now more likely, owing to the city's agreement to increase the height of the reinforced concrete culvert by a half foot to provide better fish passage.

According to Orinda Public Works Director Larry Theis, the culvert will remain at 16-feet wide but the height will go from seven to seven-and-a-half feet. The additional half foot will be buried with channel soil, which fish reportedly prefer to concrete; the soil also reduces the water velocity through the culvert.

RWQCB wanted even more

depth, but every inch increase affects a lot of other things in the design, Theis said. This design change does not affect the culvert's flood capacity, which was a matter of concern to the neighboring homes. Theis also said that the compromise, reached March 30, took longer than Orinda wanted, as the city and RWQCB went back and forth on the issue. Based on the new final design, the city must obtain permits from all the regulatory agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Transportation.

The city is now making the necessary modifications to the engineering plans so that the final permit applications can be submitted. The design will also be reviewed by the contractor for a new cost estimate, which can then be submitted to Cal-

trans, along with the plans, for the city's official funding request.

The city continues to coordinate its work with the utilities during the construction of the sinkhole repair. EBMUD wants to turn the existing water mainline back on before April 10. That agency is expected to work with the city to either repair leaks so the mainline can be put back in service or to make other arrangements to ensure there are no service disruptions.

Contractor Chrisp Company is nearing completion of the centerline and edgeline striping along the Camino Sobrante and Manzanita Road detour routes. Theis says the remaining striping should be complete soon.

**Farmers Market**

... continued from page A1

As a nonprofit, part of the market's mission is educating people about the benefits of healthy eating. This year the focus is on families. There will be a children's activity every week at the kids' booth, which will be staffed by the market, but also by local community group volunteers. Activities will be based on the seasons, such as strawberry season, cherry season, and will also focus on obscure holidays like National Herb Day.

Michael Faircloth won't be returning to the farmers' market, having this year opened La Châtaigne bakery in Lafayette. The Bake Shop will be the new market bakery, and DeShasier raves about their wonderful bagels and unusual smears, new

breakfast sandwiches with eggs from Great Valley Poultry and amazing Mexican pastries. Other newcomers to the market include: Smit Ranch, provider of organic apples, preserves, honey and nuts; Michie's Munchies which will sell wheat free (not gluten free) bakery products and Anna's seafood selling fresh seafood.

DeShasier noted that the market has been an incubator for businesses, such as Donna Pickthall, who opened Genuine Goodness just down the street. The restaurant this year will be open on Saturday mornings, offering a modified, simpler menu featuring farmer's market produce in signature dishes.

**EBMUD's Orinda Water Treatment Plant back on line this month**

By Sora O'Doherty

The EBMUD Orinda Water Treatment Plant is on schedule to reopen between April 10-20. However, after the plant comes back on line, it will take five to 10 days before Orinda residents notice the improvement in the water, according to EBMUD Community Affairs Representative Kathryn Horn. That is because it will take that

long for the water from the plant to reach homes.

The most important work performed was the installation of a bifurcation valve. The valve, which is underground, allows EBMUD to split the plant in order to perform repairs on one side while the other side continues to operate. To do maintenance it was necessary to shut down

the entire plant, but in the future, that won't be necessary, Horn explained.

Other work on the plant included upgrading the electrical system and the chemical building. New filter underdrains replaced old ones, and EBMUD also worked on the water tank.

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**94 SANDERS RANCH RD | MORAGA**  
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 Elena Hood | CalBRE#01221247



**2180 SKY VIEW COURT | MORAGA**  
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 Patti Camras | CalBRE#01156248



**369 READ DRIVE | LAFAYETTE**  
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 Susan Schlicher | CalBRE#01395579



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 Elena Hood | CalBRE#01221247



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 The Holcenberg Team | CalBRE#01373412





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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](http://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>.

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GALLERY

# Emergency response times in north Orinda rise since sinkhole

By Nick Marnell



Photo Gint Federas

Moraga-Orinda Fire District emergency response times into north Orinda have increased by an average of one minute and 16 seconds since the collapse of a portion of Miner Road on Jan. 11.

Because of the formation of the sinkhole and the road closure, the district adjusted its routing model to effectively handle north Orinda emergency calls in the area primarily north of Miner Road. "And we

added an ambulance to Station 43," Fire Chief Stephen Healy said.

The chief responded to a suggestion from a resident for dynamic placement of an ambulance near the road closure while the city repairs the sinkhole. "Most of the Orinda calls are in the downtown area and in the St. Stephens area," Healy said, and the response times would increase for those calls if an ambulance were stationed closer to Miner Road.

According to district records, for the two months prior to the sinkhole, first-responding units arrived at 15 Code 3 north Orinda calls in an average of eight minutes and 33 seconds. For the two months since the sinkhole, first-arriving crews responded to 11 calls in the same area in an average of nine minutes

and 49 seconds.

One of the calls in the post-sinkhole time frame included a Feb. 20 response to a car fire in the far western end of north Orinda, on Bobolink Road. Because the first due responding unit from Fire Station 45 was on an emergency medical call, the crew from Station 43 ran the call and took more than 12 minutes to arrive. The car fire turned out to be a false alarm.

Comparing the arrival of first-responding units to the scene of all Orinda emergency calls of February 2016 to February of this year, average response time increased 24 seconds in 2017 to nine minutes and 17 seconds. For Moraga, average response time decreased 10 seconds between the same periods to six minutes and six seconds.

## Fire Chief Paige Meyer: the Joe Montana of fire service

By Nick Marnell



Courtesy San Ramon Valley Fire

Intelligence combined with people skills, passion and a solid work ethic invariably produce an effective leader. Lafayette's Paige Meyer, fire chief of the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, personifies that formula, even drawing a comparison to the San Francisco 49ers' all-time great quarterback.

### Early career

Meyer grew up in Stockton. He says his mother was a big influence in his life, teaching him to be the hardest worker he could be and do something you love and are passionate about.

His career in public service began as a lifeguard on the state beach circuit where he learned the severity and importance of helping those in distress. "I was doing something that mattered, with the self-satisfaction of making a difference."

On injury calls the fire department would come to the beach. The firefighters all thought Meyer had the greatest job in the world, but he felt a calling to theirs, and Meyer volunteered at the Stockton Fire Department. A true sense of purpose hit him as a volunteer.

### Public Service in Sunnyvale

Meyer became obsessed to score a firefighter job. He changed his Chico major to public policy, he commuted between school and Stockton for fire meetings and he tested for every fire job that came up. He landed his first paid position in Sunnyvale, in its public service department, where he worked as both a police officer and a firefighter. "I had little or no interest in being a police officer, though I have a ton of respect for them. I was terrified. I was a firefighter in a cop's world."

He learned on one of his first fire calls the importance of thinking and working smart. Meyer attacked a structure fire, into the smoke, the fire ripping and blowing, his helmet melting, his face burning — hard core firefighters love to "feel the fire." A colleague bailed him out. "It taught me that you should never have any close calls. You need to control your atmosphere when you walk in that building. If you can't, then the victim is dead. You have to understand that there's more to putting out a fire than adding water."

Meyer was bored with police work and he applied for firefighter positions. "I got job offers from Stockton and Vallejo on the same day. I leaned toward Stockton, my wife didn't want Stockton." He took the job in Vallejo in 1997.

### Sixteen years in Vallejo

His head nearly exploded with what Vallejo offered. "Diverse calls. Fires, shootings, stabbings, you name it. I loved it!" He got involved with the union on the negotiating committee. Meyer worked as a firefighter, captain and battalion chief but he twice turned down the fire chief position.

In 2011, City Manager Phil Batchelor, a published author, used

his way with words when he offered Meyer the fire chief job again. "I've got a question for you," Batchelor said. "Are you going to live your life with fear, or are you going to empower yourself to be as great as you can be? Answer that question, and you'll find the answer to whether you'll take this job."

"I took it," Meyer said. "He knew what would make me tick."

Meyer was 41 and never felt so stressed out in his life. He dealt with a math nightmare. Because of its dire financial plight the city had cut the fire staff in half, responding to 13,000 calls a year with four engine companies, down from eight. Fires burned longer because it often took longer to get to them. How do you keep people safe when you're doing more with less?

"You have to do things by the book. You have to think. Everyone wants to be a hero but you can't be a hero alone. Three firefighters might be on a fire a long time, and they have to make great decisions. You cannot operate the same way with a staffing reduction."

Meyer brought in command and control training. He had to deal with disciplinary issues. The firefighters' code? "The code is to give victims their best chance for survival, and to go home safe. The code isn't running around and getting yourself hurt or killed."

He loved leading a gritty department but he demanded that his personnel think and that they understand the job and the risks. The Vallejo crews didn't always do things the right way and Meyer had to change the mindset. If he didn't, he'd be handing a flag to someone's family member.

"I've met a couple of people who could outrun a fire, and I've met a couple of people who could grab me by the neck and drag me out of a burning building in 10 seconds. But 99.9 percent of us can't do it like in the movies."

### San Ramon Valley today

The Vallejo Fire Department was just that — a city department, with Meyer the department head. He jumped at the opportunity in 2013 to lead the San Ramon Valley Fire Prevention District — an independent, special district with its own governing board. Meyer loved that he could live and die on his own merits. Again he had to change a culture.

"We had financial problems we shouldn't have had. We were building a \$10 million fire station but the firefighters were taking a pay cut. It didn't make sense!"

Meyer changed the staffing model, redeployed resources and with the help of a better economy the district solved its fiscal problems. He lowered the station cost to under \$5 million.

The district runs 90 percent emergency medical calls. "So we better be the best at it." Meyer brought in a medical director and added training, constantly trying to improve quality. He ran the district as a business.

With the new deployment, the district cardiac save rate hovers at near 50 percent. "That's where we make an impact. But we can always do better." He plans to revamp the Fire Prevention Division from an enforcement arm into a business-friendly department, and to become more involved in disaster preparedness.

"Paige is doing an excellent job," said district board president Donald Parker. "He has brought about a harmony of the board, the union and the community unlike any chief I have ever seen."

Concurred by Capt. Mike Mohun, Local 3546 president, who said that Meyer and he share the same goals: To provide a high degree of service to the community, to give all employees the opportunity to succeed and to treat people with respect. "Paige relates well to others and recognizes their strengths. With his high level of energy and intelligence, I sometimes feel that I'm working with Joe Montana," Mohun said.

Meyer spends most of his off time with his wife, two daughters and son. His oldest plays on the Campolindo High School girls basketball team, the 2017 Northern California champions. (See page C1)

"My board believes in saving lives and property. My firefighters believe the same thing. The union and the administration are second to none. That makes my life easy."

"I'm a small part of big things that are going on."

Best-selling author Michael Lewis ("Moneyball") profiled Meyer and his Vallejo performance in "Boomerang: Travels in the New Third World."

### Corrections

In our March 22 article about MOFD finances, we incorrectly reported in the headline and in the body of the story the district general fund deficit. A write off changed the MOFD Statement of Net Position, resulting in a \$60 million unrestricted net deficit, not a deficit in the district general fund, which reported a \$3.7 million balance as of June 30, 2016. A mention of the district's balance sheet should have been stated as on the district Statement of Net Position.

Also in the March 22 issue, in the story "Miner Road sinkhole repair to begin as property owners and city come to right-of-entry agreement," the length of the delay caused by the sinkhole to emergency vehicles was misstated. At the Sleepy Hollow community meeting Fire Chief Stephen Healy of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District estimated that the delays ran approximately two minutes.

## Rheem Boulevard Opens

... continued from page A1

It was a team effort, she said, crediting former town manager Jill Keimach, who negotiated cost-sharing among participating agencies, former mayors Dave Trotter and Mike Metcalf who promoted the passage of Measure K funds for road repair, and public works director and town engineer Edric Kwan.

"This is exciting, taking things off the plate," said Kwan, who can now concentrate on sinkhole repairs

and repaving along a portion of Moraga Road. "I am not going to close two roads if I can help it," Kwan said. Recent rain delays pushed the road's opening back and frustrated both residents and town officials, but Onoda assured her audience the road was built without compromise. "We're building for the future in our splendid tiny town," she said. "First, Rheem Boulevard, next — the sinkhole!"



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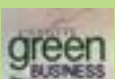
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**Letters to the Editor**

**Town Hall Meeting on ULI**

Dear Editor,

This appears to be the year for attending town hall meetings of one sort or another. The Orinda City Council and Planning Commission have given us yet another reason for wanting to do so when they hold their joint session from 5 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, April 11 in the Orinda Library Auditorium. At this meeting there will be a presentation by the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel, a highly respected organization, selected by the city council to share its views on ideas for the revitalization of our city's downtown areas.

As an Orinda resident of 50 years, I feel so fortunate to be able to live here and look forward to considering the ULI TAP's concepts for rejuvenation. This is an opportunity to be part of a creative and productive process and I welcome it.

Sharon Iversen  
Orinda, California

**School and park staff learn risks of playground pesticides**

Dear Editor,

On March 2, 89 school, park, and city representatives learned about risks to children and themselves from lawn chemicals commonly used on playgrounds and learned how to transition to a "Systems Approach" of organic maintenance. This workshop, sponsored by Parents for a Safer Environment and the Acalanes Union High School District, described how organic turf maintenance can reduce our bodies' contamination.

Unfortunately, lawn chemicals (2,4-D, Dicamba, MCPA, MCPP, etc.) used by public agencies, contractors and households are linked to hormone disruption, developmental and reproductive toxicity,

and cancers.

Researchers found 13 pesticides per child on average, with 2,4-D being detected in 20 percent of the population, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control & Prevention. Applicators show a 2,500 percent spike after treatment. Researchers say there are no safe levels of exposure to these hormone disruptors, triggering infertility, obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease and other diseases. (Vandenberg, et al).

Chip Osborne, a nationally recognized expert from Massachusetts, who has consulted hundreds of municipalities over the past 20 years, described the steps to transition from chemically intensive turf maintenance to organic management.

Healthy, chemical-free turf is better able to withstand pressures from heavy use and compaction, insects, weeds, and disease, as well as drought and heat stress.

Harvard University found that organic management cost the same as the conventional method after several years of transition, as did the Town of Moraga. Fostering soil microbes allows natural soil aeration, increasing water retention and reducing Harvard's water usage by 30 percent.

PASE has trained many volunteers/Interns to assess pesticides applied by public agencies and advocate for least-toxic pest management policies over 14 years. PASE welcomes those interested to attend a highly lauded presentation on April 18 prior to five Earth Day booth events April 21-23. Info@pfse.net or 925-283-4609. www.pfse.net

Keith Park, Elizabeth Hudson, Susan JunFish  
Parents for a Safer Environment, Moraga

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**All You Need to Know About the Home Office Tax Deduction**

April 2017

**W**ith nearly 40 percent of the American workforce telecommuting, many people wonder about the potential benefit of home office deductions, but may lose out on a potentially substantial tax break. Like many other types of write-offs, the home office deduction comes with multiple rules and best practices.

**Why Is It Valuable?**

Home office write-offs are complex, but beneficial as they are another way to deduct from your total taxable income. Many taxpayers are leery of the home office deduction due to confusion, but it is a potentially significant deduction – especially for self-employed individuals and small business owners who are looking for ways to reduce their overall tax burden.

**Who Qualifies?**

The home office deduction is most commonly used among small business owners and freelancers, although telecommuting employees may qualify too. Really, the deduction can apply to anyone who uses part of a home exclusively

and regularly for conducting a trade or business. (Occasional or incidental uses don't count.)

You must use the home office as a main place of business, such as where you meet with clients or customers in the normal course of your business day. The exclusive-use work area must be an identifiable space and should not be combined with personal-use space (such as the family TV room). If you are an employee, there is an additional requirement that the business use must be for the convenience of your employer and you must not rent the space to your employer.

Special rules apply to daycare businesses, separate structures and space used for storage purposes.

And if you think you don't qualify as a renter...think otherwise. Homeowners and renters are both eligible for a home office deduction – your home office just has to meet the above parameters to qualify.

**How Do You Calculate the Home Office Tax Deduction?**

The home office deduction can be

calculated in two ways: the regular deduction method or safe harbor.

**Regular Method**

This method involves totaling the direct and indirect expenses of your home office for deduction purposes. Expenses can include:

- Mortgage interest payments
- Real estate tax
- Depreciation
- Rent
- Dwelling insurance
- Utilities
- Maintenance
- General repairs

Direct expenses incurred only for the business part of the home (for example, painting the home office) are deductible in full. However, indirect expenses like mortgage interest are based on the percentage of your home devoted to business use. Whether you work out of an entire room or just part of one, you'll need to determine the percentage of your home used for business.

**Safe Harbor**

The safe harbor home deduction is a simplified way to claim a home office deduction. This option does not change the criteria for who may claim a home office deduction. If you use this simplified option, you can multiply the allowable square footage of your office by a rate of \$5. The maximum footage allowed is 300 square feet and thus the maximum deduction is \$1,500. This option will save you time because it simplifies how you figure and claim the deduction. It will also make it easier for you to keep records. Note that if you use this method, otherwise deductible expenses such as real estate taxes are fully deductible on Schedule A.

*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 Pamela at 925-284-9940 for an appointment or at the office at 3390 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, CA 94549.*

# Acalanes students will work for college

By John T. Miller



From left, Acalanes students Clay Schmidt and Jeremy Ridge.

Photo John T. Miller

A pair of enterprising students from Acalanes High School has formed a business partnership focused on providing needed labor to community members, while also helping to fund their college educations.

Clay Schmidt came up with the idea near the beginning of his junior year after hearing from a couple of friends who had been working all summer. He texted his friend, Jeremy Ridge, and wondered if they could advertise and find enough part time work for themselves and their friends to save for college.

The cofounders, along with a core group of eight fellow students that have known each other since Stanley Middle School, are extremely busy with their classes, sports, and extra curricular activities, yet they still have more than enough energy to take on part-time jobs in their spare time to try and stash away money for their future educations.

"We've generally been able to work about eight hours every weekend," says Schmidt, "but it's really hard to find any spare hours during the week."

That's understandable. Both Schmidt and Ridge take three Honors or Advanced Placement courses each, maintain nearly perfect 4.0 GPAs while also participating in athletic activities. Schmidt plays football and tennis and Ridge is a

top wrestler for the Dons.

Residents may have noticed door hanger advertisements, billing the group as "Local Helpers." The flier, along with word-of-mouth and a steady perusal of the Nextdoor Saranap website, has generated enough work to keep the group of students busy.

"We can do anything from manual labor, to baby sitting, to tech help or tutoring," says Schmidt. He mentioned that \$15 an hour is their suggested rate, but the client is encouraged to pay them what they are worth. "Sometimes we make mistakes, but we're willing to come back another day and make it right."

"Our goal is to work within the community and provide needed services to the people who live here, while also raising money for our own college education," added Ridge.

The two don't make any money for farming out work to others, but rather are glad to facilitate matching the community's needs with their friends' expertise.

Both Schmidt and Ridge give credit to their computer science teacher at Acalanes, Daniel Appel, for helping them to acquire the skills to make their undertaking a reality.

"We were given skills in his class that helped us create this business," said Schmidt, who is inter-

ested in pursuing software engineering and robotics in college.

Speaking of his students, Appel said, "Jeremy and Clay are the type who only need to see something once and then are off and running. After building simple websites in our AP Computer Science Principles course, they developed a personal website on their own. They did this based on their desire to improve the local community, and didn't receive any academic credit for it. I hope more students use computer science like Jeremy and Clay have done where local communities directly benefit."

Ridge, who hopes to go to an Ivy League college or perhaps Stanford, sees the enterprise as developing good relationships with community members. "A lot of older people need help in the garden, or in moving boxes. Sometimes their own child moves away and they need somebody to fill in."

The two will continue their endeavor through their senior year, but hope the idea will sustain itself. "When we're gone we hope it's not over," said Schmidt. "We hope that we can kick it down a year and someone else will carry it on."

To contact Local Helpers, their website is at [local-helpers.neocities.org](http://local-helpers.neocities.org) or call (925) 285-5229. Their email is [local.helpers175@gmail.com](mailto:local.helpers175@gmail.com).

# Two Lamorinda businesses honored with CoolCalifornia Small Business Awards

By Sophie Braccini



Middle and right, Sal and Susan Captain.



The gang at Lafayette Car Wash. Photos provided

The California Air Resources Board recently honored 13 California businesses for their remarkable practices as they surpassed others in their energy and water resources conservation, and in the optimization of their sustainable practices.

Among thousands of small California businesses from which the 13 were selected, two are from Lamorinda: Lafayette Car Wash And Detail Center and Captain Vineyards in Moraga. The business owners explain how their practices come from their desire to minimize their carbon footprint, and are also good for their bottom line.

Sal Captain and his wife Susan have been producing wine in Moraga for years. They are a recognized

Contra Costa Green Business and have been honored often for their dry farming and organic practice of growing grapes.

Sal Captain says that reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts is natural to them. The winemaker was raised in England where being thrifty regarding use of electricity and water was simply the way of life. He and his wife joke on how inspectors can't get over the fact that they use so little water, and have been checking their water meter many times for malfunction. What they have done is train their vines to live on very little water, growing deep roots. They believe that what people say about their wines and their intense taste and color comes from the dry farming.

The Captains, along with Blake Wallen at Lafayette Car Wash, explain that they had to fill up a very lengthy questionnaire to compete for the award. They had to answer questions about their practices over time of course, but also about their employees, where they were coming from and how much travel they had to complete to come to work.

Wallen explains that most of the workers at the Lafayette Car Wash are families from the area that have been working with them for many years. The car wash is well known for recycling the water that is used to clean the cars. What is less known is that all the electrical apparatus used in the business such as the vacuums use less electricity.

Wallen adds that the desire to do their part for the environment is certainly a motivation for his family, but that it also makes sense from a financial viewpoint.

The businesses were honored in Sacramento on March 20 during an official ceremony. CARB Chair Mary D. Nichols said that the award winners were the best examples of how more and more Californian small businesses are making smart, climate-friendly choices.

"From Arcata to Los Angeles, from a craft distillery to a window and solar panel cleaning service, small businesses throughout the state are showing that environmental protection and innovation are also good for the bottom line," she said. More information at [www.arb.ca.gov](http://www.arb.ca.gov).



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## A scaled-back Saranap Village moves to the Planning Commission

By John T. Miller



Saranap Village is taking shape in this rendering.

Image provided

After four trips “back to the drawing board,” the Saranap Village project is on track for review by the Contra Costa County Planning Commission this month or in May.

Although some neighbors still express concern over the size and scope of the project, the changes that have been made over the past four years appear to be enough to satisfy most of the residents.

The original plans — which called for a housing structure 75-foot tall with approximately 250 units and a six-story parking garage — have been substantially reduced.

Speaking for Hall Equities Group, the proposed builder of the development, Deb Karbo said, “The open house meetings and community surveys demonstrated that listening is important and can lead to enhancements that benefit neighbors and the economic viability of the project.”

At issue is the necessity to amend the general plan, which currently limits the height of buildings to 35 feet.

In a letter posted on Nextdoor Saranap, Paula Santi of the Saranap Homeowners Organization warns that proposed

heights in the range of 65 feet may “set a precedent for heights of further developments along Boulevard Way.” She urged that “the proposed heights be the exception rather than the rule for future developments in the neighborhood.”

Speaking on behalf of the Saranap Community Association, President David Dacus pointed out that the general plan has not been updated since 1991. “Currently, the general plan has no designation for mixed-use projects, which are now seen everywhere in California. The proposed amendment by HEG would apply to all the parcels in the project.”

“It’s difficult for folks to make a case for lowering the plans (even further),” added Dacus. “The HEG has done a good job of threading the needle of what’s appropriate for them to market and would be pleasing to the neighborhood.”

The scaled down housing version features 12 different floor plans with more studio and one- or two-bedroom units to address that market.

In addition to the proposed development, Karbo noted that major public infrastructure improvements would be made

along Boulevard Way extending well beyond the project site.

By way of historical background, before the 24 and 680 freeways were built, Boulevard Way was expanded into four lanes with plans to create a major thoroughfare from Mt. Diablo Boulevard, through Tice Valley to the Danville highway. That plan was abandoned when the freeways were put in, but the four, largely unnecessary lanes remain as far as Saranap Avenue.

The proposed development would narrow Boulevard Way to two wider than normal lanes with bicycle lanes, three new pedestrian crosswalks, a roundabout in place of a stop sign at Saranap Avenue, and angled parking. The crosswalks would have an island in the center so that pedestrians would only need to cross one lane at a time instead of five.

“All this would make traffic safer and smoother,” said Dacus.

Additional outdoor amenities include about 30 street trees, understory plantings, a fountain plaza and outdoor seating.

On behalf of Hall Equities, Karbo said, “It was evident by the public comments that the community recognizes the benefits of transforming Boulevard Way commercial district into a uniquely vibrant and connected community with fine living, small shops and restaurants, and a neighborhood market.”

According to Contra Costa County Senior Planner Sean Tully, the next step for the project will be for the zoning administrator to make a recommendation on the Environmental Impact Report, which will happen at either the April 3 or the April 17 meeting, or at a special hearing scheduled around that time. Tully’s understanding is that public comment will not be taken at this meeting. The Planning Commission will convene later in April (or possibly May) and will formally provide the public advanced notice at which time comments on the project will be welcomed.

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## Police: Prevention is key to stemming burglaries in Lamorinda communities

By Cathy Dausman

Are residential burglaries on the rise in Lamorinda?

"It does seem that way," says Orinda police Chief Mark Nagel, before adding that Orinda's numbers prove otherwise. When Nagel compared statistics for the first two months last year against this year it was nearly "even Steven" he said, with nine reported burglaries in 2016 and eight in 2017.

Burglary, defined as entering a building illegally with the intent to commit theft, is always a hot topic, Nagel said. He says his department has worked with law enforcement agencies from Oakland to the South Bay to solve burglary crimes.

Most frustrating for Nagel are the instances when residents are home or arrive home to confront a burglary in progress, and homeowners are at risk of bodily harm. Nagel said burglar alarms and motion lights are good deterrents; even creating a "safe room" within the house buys time and allows for help to arrive. Security cameras are also an effective crime deterrent; Nagel updated the Orinda City Council on their use on public streets at the March 21 council meeting.

Lafayette residents experienced an unexplained downturn in burglaries in 2016, said police Chief Eric Christensen. Four years ago the city reported six to 10 burglaries per month. His department handled only three total cases this year in January and February; two are already solved. Still, there is an increased concern about burglaries and crime in general, and that, Christensen says is a good thing:

"Are people paying attention (to crime stats)? Yes!" Home burglaries peak when the price of gold rises; they are also cyclical, Christensen says, increasing when people vacation during summer and winter holidays and homes are empty.



Security camera image of a car involved in a robbery in Lafayette on March 21st. Photo provided

Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda police departments each offer vacation home checks, and will notify homeowners if something is amiss.

Although Christensen, King and Nagel were all willing to discuss statistics and as-yet unsolved cases, they much preferred to educate the public about preventing burglaries. Each shared frustration over the simple things left undone which act as an open invitation to crooks. For example, King said Moraga experienced about 40 auto burglaries during the summer of 2015, each of which occurred on unlocked vehicles. The same is true for residential burglaries. Homeowners may intentionally leave doors unlocked, place a key under the mat for service worker access, open windows or fail to activate burglar alarms.

"The perception is we're living in a bubble (in Lamorinda)," said Nagel, "and it's just not true." In fact the same "location, location, location" that realtors love to tout is also attractive to would-be burglars. They love a home with easy freeway access. An empty house

For more information:

Preventing residential burglaries (Lafayette police):

[www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/city-departments/police](http://www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/city-departments/police)

Moraga vacation check request: <https://secure.blueoctane.net/forms/Staying-Safe-in-Orinda>:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-hUUzWK3S4&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-hUUzWK3S4&feature=youtu.be)

is attractive too, for all the wrong reasons. A home with doors and windows hidden behind shrubbery and insufficient outdoor lighting provides a burglar the cover of darkness and leisure time to break in away from neighbors' prying eyes. Nagel cites one burglary case where the intruder(s) simply walked through an open back door.

Crooks gained entry from the rear of a home in 86 percent of last year's Lafayette home burglaries, Christensen says, so the No. 1 preventative action a homeowner can take is to lock their backyard gates. Not a single home with locked gates was burglarized in Lafayette in 2016. Conversely a previously burglarized house is more likely to be burglarized again.

King, Nagel and Christensen explained that each one of them is in the crime prevention business. "If something can be prevented, I'm a happy camper," said King. "Even one (burglary) is too many for me," echoed Nagel. "California is the land of opportunity," Christensen said, before adding that should not apply to burglars.

## How to dispose of an unwanted gun

... continued from page A1

King said Lamorinda residents might discover a forgotten gun while cleaning out an elderly relative's home or come across a gun abandoned on a hillside. Safe handling practices evolved quickly after a gun stolen in 2015 in San Francisco from a Bureau of Land Management officer's personal vehicle resulted in the death of a bystander. California law now requires firearms in a vehicle to be secured in the trunk or in a locked container stored out of sight. Because of that Moraga police department is providing its officers with lock boxes to secure their department-issued firearm, King said. Lafayette and Orinda police do likewise.

Today when you purchase a firearm from a licensed gun dealer, you must either declare the make and model of the gun safe in which it will be stored or purchase a gun lock. "Many manufacturers supply a gun lock with the firearm (purchase)," King said. But sometimes safe handling means "hands off."

"Kids are curious," King said, and teaching them to treat guns with safety and respect starts when they are 5 or 6 years old. Officer Robert Ortiz, who processed my shotgun surrenders, says both children and adults ask if they can handle his handgun; the answer is always "no". He thinks of his gun

as a tool, but he thinks twice before unholstering it, because he is responsible for locating every casing of every round (bullet) he fires.

I began my visit by notifying the front desk — empty handedly — that I wanted to turn in a gun. Ortiz accompanied me to the car, where he retrieved the shotgun from the trunk. He carried it to a sand-filled metal tube, placed the barrel inside and squeezed the trigger. Nothing happened, as we had hoped. That meant the chamber was empty. He broke it open and carried it inside, where it was bagged and tagged. I supplied my name, address and birthdate, and the gun was placed in an evidence locker. Grandpa's shotgun plus an air rifle and BB rifle surrendered earlier will go to a site in the central valley and be melted down.

In addition to accepting unwanted firearms or ammunition each Lamorinda police department offers free gun cable locks. All anyone has to do is ask an officer or stop by the department, Orinda police Chief Mark Nagel said.

Lafayette police Chief Eric Christensen says that maintain-

ing a firearm in a home is a very large responsibility. "It's just not enough to hide the gun; the gun has to be secured while you are away from your home. I cannot think of a more terrible thing than for a burglar to get lucky by finding a gun and taking it with them, and then have the gun used in a crime. Everyone should ensure their firearms are locked up and inaccessible to thieves or others," he said. "We recover a lot of handguns that have been taken in other crimes. Lock them up," Christensen said.

"Treat every gun as if it is loaded, and treat it with respect," King said, adding that firearm safety is everybody's responsibility. With certain exceptions, it is unlawful to fire or discharge a firearm within Lafayette, Moraga or Orinda (ordinances 9.04.020, 9.12.020 and 8-602 respectively). And if you decide you no longer want a gun? "Call us," King said. Disposal is safe and free, no appointment necessary.

Note: Lock and disable any gun before surrendering it to police; keep it safely out of sight in your vehicle, and alert police empty handedly. An officer will retrieve it.

### Related Stories

<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0703/Recalling-Past-Lamorinda-Gun-Use.html>

<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0626/Gun-Ownership-in-Lamorinda-Safety-number-one-concern-among-local-police.html>

# Celebrate spring in Lamorinda

By Cathy Dausman



Some lucky youngsters in Moraga find eggs with the help of a Bunny friend.

Photo Andy Scheck

When the calendar says spring there comes a chance for celebrations both religious and secular in Lamorinda.

The moveable feasts of Passover and Easter both fall mid-April this year. Passover begins April 10 and runs through April 18; both Latin and Orthodox Easter celebrations coincide on April 16 in 2017. By the time you read this the Moraga Junior Women's Club Spring Egg Hunt on the Commons will have come and gone (it was March 25; see photo) but if the young 'uns are still twitching for some seasonal fun, more events "hopen" soon.

The Rotary Club of Orinda hosts its Spring Egg Hunt at 11 a.m. sharp April 15 at the Orinda Community Center Park. Between 1 and 4 p.m. April 15, Orinda Theatre Square offers rock climbing, a petting zoo, pony rides, face painting and live entertainment.

The Lafayette Community Center Foundation's Bunny Brunch begins at 10:30 a.m. April 15 at the Lafayette Community Center in the Live Oak Room. Tickets are \$10 per person and include brunch, a live show, an egg hunt and Mr. Bunny; the event sells out so plan to pre-register at [https://apm.activecommunities.com/lafayetterec/Activity\\_Search/1314](https://apm.activecommunities.com/lafayetterec/Activity_Search/1314).

In addition, the Lafayette Rotary invites children second grade and younger to their free Community Egg Scramble starting at 10 a.m. April 15 at the Lafayette Plaza Park near the Park Theater.

Moraga's Rheem Valley Shopping Center offers Easter clowns, an Easter Fairy, balloon art and pictures with the Easter Bunny from

noon to 3 p.m. April 15. Find a free photo coupon on the Rheem Valley website at [www.rheemvalley.net](http://www.rheemvalley.net).

Moraga Farmers' Market is hiding Easter eggs full of toys, candy and "Bunny Money" coupons during market hours April 16. The day also includes live music and activities for children. Feel the need to shop for fresh local produce outside? Orinda's seasonal Farmer's Market opened April 1 (no fooling!). Moraga Farmers' Market runs 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. year 'round on Sundays in Moraga Center.

In other spring news, the Orinda Community Foundation will host Orinda Action Day April 22; for details go online to [www.orindafoundation.org](http://www.orindafoundation.org). Sustainable Lafayette hosts an Earth Day celebration at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center plaza April 23



(visit <http://www.sustainablelafayette.org/earth-day-2017>). Contra Costa County Libraries are closed Easter Sunday, April 16, so check out your copies of "Happy Easter, Mouse," or "P is for Passover" early.

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## Pour Me

# Passover wines you won't want to spit out

By A.K. Carroll

Welcome to Pour Me, a new monthly column from your friends at the Lamorinda Weekly. When it comes to the world of spirits (the kind associated with hangovers, not hauntings), there is much to know and always something new to learn. Look to this space for new trends and local products, recipes, recommendations, and profiles of local winemakers, brewmasters and mixologists. We kick off the series with a spotlight on kosher wines, under-sung contenders among the world of viticulture.

If you're anything like me,

when you read the word "kosher" the first thing you think of is salt, pickles or hot dogs. You may know something about the restrictions regarding kosher products (no gelatin, shellfish or meat mixed with dairy), but you probably know little about the world of kosher wine. If anything, you've heard that it is notoriously sweet — often made with Concord grapes or other grapes not typically suitable for wine — or just plain bad. But this is not always the case. Though making a kosher wine comes with its own set of challenges (and requires a great deal of supervision), winemakers have made headway in crafting kosher vintages that are not only palatable, but pleasant.

What's Kosher?

The question of "what" makes for a kosher wine is also a question of "who" and "how," according to David Raccach of kosherwinemusings.com and other kosher wine sources. In order for a wine to be kosher, it must be produced, handled, and supervised by Orthodox Sabbath-observant Jews. The wine can only contain kosher ingredients, which means fruit from vines that are at least three years old, no hybrid crops and no unkosher additives or enzymes. This is where it gets tricky. Many of the acid blends and fining agents typically used by winemakers are a no-no when it comes to kosher laws, which means an extra hurdle to a well-balanced vino.

In order for a wine to be kosher for Passover — a weeklong spring celebration that runs April 10-18 this year — it must also be free of corn syrup and chametz (leaven, including yeast). As the chief catalyst for fermentation, additive yeast (often a byproduct of a grain) is a major part of typical winemaking. While most kosher wines are also pesach (kosher for Passover), some, like the notorious Manischewitz, don't make the cut.

The winemaking process itself must also be kosher. Only Orthodox Jews can handle the wine and winemaking equipment at all stages of the journey, from harvest to bottle, with a lot of cleaning and supervision along the way. Consequently, most kosher wine comes out of Israel and the majority of it is made by Orthodox winemakers. Some kosher wines are boiled or flash pasteurized prior to bottling, a process called mevushal. This practice is a remnant of centuries-old ceremonial law and allows a non-Jewish person to handle and pour the wine once it has gone through the process. Non-mevushal wines, on the other hand, must be served by a Sabbath-observant Jew in order to remain kosher.

There you have it: A quick tutorial to the world of kosher wines. But, which to serve at your holiday meal? Lamorinda stores offer several options. On the lower end of the spectrum, Trader Joe's carries a Perrenal Chardonnay and



Merlot that qualify as kosher and go for under \$6, as well as an assortment of Baron Herzog wines in the \$6-\$10 range.

Barzon Harzog wines can also be found at Moraga Wine and Spirits, as well as the Orinda BevMo. The Lafayette Whole Foods carries high-end mevushal wines from Californian and Israeli winemakers at Covenant; the Mensch Zinfandel and The Tribe Chardonnay fall in the \$20-30 range.

For the biggest selection check out the new Lafayette BevMo, where wine specialists and customized tags make it easy to locate a wide range of kosher options, from a \$6 bottle of sweet Concord-grape Mogen David to Napa-made Hagafen wines, which are subtle about being kosher and considered on par with comparable non-kosher wines. You'll also find a selection of Baron Harzog bottles, as well as non-meshuval wines from Yarden of Israel. L'Chaim!

### Where to find Kosher wines

**Trader Joe's:** 3649 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette (925) 299-9344  
Perrenal: Chardonnay, Merlot \$4.99  
Baron Herzog: Cabernet, Chardonnay, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc \$5.99-9.99

**Moraga Wine and Spirits:** 1437 Moraga Way, Moraga (925) 376-6111  
Baron Harzog: Cabernet and Chardonnay \$12.99

**Whole Foods:** 3502 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette (925) 284-5305  
Covenant: Mensch \$20.99, The Tribe \$32.99  
HoneyRun Mead \$13.99

**BevMo:** 6 Camino Pablo, Orinda (925) 254-3161  
Baron Harzog: Cabernet \$14.99 and \$13.49 Chardonnay  
Barkan: Cabernet \$14.99

**BevMo:** 3590 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette (925) 282-8185  
Mogen David \$5.99  
Baron Herzog: Cabernet and Chardonnay \$12-16  
Jeunesse, Black Muscat and Cabernet \$12-16  
Yarden: Red blend, Chardonnay, Merlot \$16-30  
Hagafen: Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot \$20-30

**Jackson's Wines and Spirits:** 3524 Mt Diablo Blvd # A, Lafayette (925) 284-4100  
Hagafen: Chardonnay \$21.99 and Cabernet \$39.99



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*Thoughtful Food*

**'Papa's Favorite Torte' travels from Christmas to Easter, and it's still delicious**

By Susie Iventosch

(Adapted from "Private Collection 2: Recipes from the Junior League of Palo Alto" by Sora O'Doherty)



Photo Susie Iventosch

When Sora O'Doherty is not busy doing investigative reporting and photography, or writing about local events for the Lamorinda Weekly, she can often be found in the kitchen creating some lovely and delectable concoction for her family, friends and coworkers. When she told me about the almond-raspberry torte she'd made for a Lamorinda Weekly editorial meeting, and then proceeded to send pictures, I realized this is the perfect dessert for Easter!

The torte is actually called "Papa's Favorite Torte" and O'Doherty's rendition is an adaption of the recipe found in "Private Collection 2: Recipes from the Junior League of Palo Alto," published in 1984. The anecdote introducing this recipe is really cute, too. "It became increasingly difficult to find an appropriate gift for Papa, so one holiday I treated him to this wonderful almond torte. It's been his special Christmas present ever since." That line was not attributed to anyone in the cookbook, but this dessert has become a favorite of O'Doherty's family, too.

"I've never made this for anyone who didn't love it," O'Doherty remarked. "It also transports easily and keeps beautifully!"

O'Doherty added one extra egg (an extra yolk in the crust and an extra white in the filling), as well as the jam spread over the crust. The original did not call for jam, and O'Doherty says she prefers something a little tart, like

raspberry or lingonberry jam, or even cranberry sauce.

To me, the raspberry jam is a natural with the torte and I used the Bonne Maman Raspberry Preserves, which is one of my favorite raspberry jams on the market. I was able to find lingonberry jam, too, and will absolutely try that one next time I make this dish. I made this torte two days ahead of my party and wrapped it loosely in foil. It really did hold up very well – even the crust remained nice and crisp. Then, I refrigerated the leftovers and found that the dessert is even better when chilled!

The recipe says to cook the torte for a full hour, but I found that mine was completely cooked in 45 minutes, so perhaps I have a hotter oven, but just keep an eye on it the first time you make it so you don't overbake it.

Also, the recipe calls for 8 ounces of almond paste, and if you use Odense brand, that tube is 7 ounces. O'Doherty uses the full 8 ounces, so she has quite a bit leftover from the second tube to use for other dishes. I love to make almond scones and our recipe calls for almond paste, (recipe in an upcoming column), so that is a great use of the extra. On top of that, I simply made mine with 7 ounces instead of 8 and it seemed to turn out just fine.

If you love almonds, you will most definitely love this torte. Many thanks to someone's "Papa" and to O'Doherty for sharing this delicious treat.

**INGREDIENTS**

- Crust**  
1 ½ cup all-purpose flour  
5 Tbsp. granulated sugar  
½ cup butter, softened to room temperature  
2 egg yolks (save whites for filling)
- Filling**  
8 oz. almond paste  
2 Tbsp. granulated sugar  
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour  
2 eggs  
2 egg whites  
½ tsp. almond extract  
½ to ¾ cup raspberry or lingonberry jam, or cranberry sauce
- Topping**  
½ cup sliced almonds, toasted  
½ cup powdered sugar  
2 Tbsp. milk

**DIRECTIONS**

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.  
In the bowl of a food processor mix flour, sugar, and butter. Mix until crumbly. Add egg yolks through the tube with the motor running. If you don't have a mixer, then you can cut the butter into the flour-sugar mixture with your fingertips and stir in the egg yolks with a fork. Mixture will be crumbly and will not form a ball or hold together.  
Turn dough into a fluted 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. Pat the dough into the tart pan, filling in all the nooks and crannies of the fluted edges. Use the back of a spoon to smooth it out. I sprayed my tart pan with a little bit of cooking spray before patting the dough into place.  
Very carefully spread a good layer of jam or cranberry sauce over the crust, being careful not to disrupt any crust crumbles.  
For filling, place almond paste, sugar, flour and 2 eggs and blend until very smooth. Add egg whites and almond extract and blend again until smooth. Pour over jam in prepared crust.  
Bake for 1 hour. Top will be a nice golden-brown. (Mine only took 45 minutes to cook until center was no longer jiggle and the top was a nice golden-brown.)  
Cool 10 minutes. While the torte is cooling, place the almonds in a pie tin and toast at 325 degrees for 10 minutes, or until slightly browned. Remove from oven. Combine powdered sugar and milk and spread over the top of the torte. Sprinkle toasted almonds over the top and arrange evenly, covering the entire top.  
Cool completely before serving. This torte keeps beautifully for several days at room temperature. I also refrigerated it and it was delicious cold.



**Cooking Term of the Week**  
**Coulis**

Coulis is a fruit or vegetable purée, used as a base for a sauce or as a garnish, but can also be a simple sauce by itself. The sauce may be thick or thin but is easily pourable. The fruits or vegetables have usually been cooked, puréed and strained to create a sauce-like consistency. Tomato coulis is often used in savory dishes, while fruits made into a coulis are normally served over desserts like crepes, ice cream, and cheesecake, or over breakfast dishes such as waffles or pancakes.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://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.

**Those pesky General Education requirements: How to make them work for you**

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

Graduating seniors deciding which college to attend or juniors considering which colleges to apply to should look carefully at a college's general education requirements. These are courses that everyone, regardless of their major, must take in order to complete their degree. They will usually represent one-quarter to one-third of the total credits required.

Some of the GE requirements will be courses you want to take, but others may not capture your interest. At most schools, the GE classes will consist of a semester or two of English composition, aka Expository Writing or Writing Seminar, and courses in the humanities, fine arts and performing arts, a social science, history course, foreign language, mathematics and science. Sound familiar? Yep, it's a lot like high school but college level. Sometimes there will be a community service requirement or a life fitness course requirement, often pass-fail. If you are looking at Jesuit or other

religiously affiliated colleges you will likely see requirements in subjects such as philosophy and religion, although they may have titles like "Meditative Arts" and "Faith in Modern Society."

Colleges have GE requirements because their leadership and faculty want to see their students engage in a broader-based liberal arts education, whether the students see value in it or not. However, the more required GE courses a student must take in additional to required classes for their major, the fewer the electives available. Designing your class schedule also becomes more challenging, especially in the early grade levels. If you have a choice between a school that has few GE requirements and one that asks you to take 12 credits in subjects of little interest to you or courses where you have considerable difficulty with in high school, the choice could affect the time it takes to earn the degree as well as college GPA.

Different schools address GE requirements differently. Some, such as Amherst, Brown, Hampshire and Smith have few or no GE requirements. You might have only one or two required courses, and then enjoy free rein to choose whatever classes you want, as long as you complete the prerequisites. The upside: you have the freedom to choose, as long as you have some idea what you might like to study. The downside: you are navigating your college education without the structure GE requirements can provide, and some students are more successful at this than others.

Here are three questions to ask yourself so you make better choices:

**Can you place out of the introductory courses?**

Some colleges will grant course credit based on a "4" or "5" on an Advanced Placement test. Others will ask students to sit for their own examination. Some schools may give credit for the intro course, but

ask students to take an advanced course in the same subject instead.

**How much variety is there to choose from in each subject area?**

Do you need to take calculus to fulfill the math requirement? If you are glad to leave math behind in high school some schools offer courses that are less quantitative, for example: the environmental and scientific issues behind an oil spill.

**Can you apply a course used to fulfill a General Education Requirement towards a major or minor?**

Some schools let you "double dip" courses towards fulfilling requirements as well as completing a major or minor. That required calculus course could be used to fill the calculus requirement for pre-med.

Students should ask these often pesky GE requirements questions and learn how to work them to their advantage. And as in all phases of the college admission process, realistic self-appraisal combined with

good research are factors important to success.



Elizabeth LaScala, PhD, brings decades of admissions expertise to personally guide each student through applying to well-matched colleges, making each step more manageable and less stressful. She has placed hundreds of students in the most prestigious colleges and universities in the U.S. Reach her at (925) 385-0562 (office) or (925) 330-8801 (mobile), or online at [www.doingcollege.com](http://www.doingcollege.com) or [Elizabeth@doingcollege.com](mailto:Elizabeth@doingcollege.com).

## Teen Writes

## Reasoning: The joy and angst of taking the dreaded SAT

By Alexandra Reinecke

In the car, it smelled like the new paint on the pencils. James Taylor warbled. I jiggled my leg. The oatmeal colored Birkenstocks my friend called 'those weird 70s shoes' and whose presence prompted my father's casual inquiry as to the state of my spiritual enlightenment—Jesus shoes, he taunted amicably, with the tone betraying the syllables—shook with my anxiety.

As my father drove I looked at the collection on my lap—a new pack of Ticonderoga pencils, an M&M spangled bag of trail mix, an oversized Starbucks drink too large for the cup holder in my father's BMW and too small to squelch my nerves. The thought of something carried-over from a CNN documentary whose name I had long since forgotten: the same candies that studded my break-time snack had been manufactured specifically to resist against such clamminess of hands like mine.

As I joined the groups clustered around the testing center I felt a simultaneous camaraderie and competition with the other test-takers. A girl from my Pre-Calculus class—large brown eyes, general meekness, a Patagonia fleece the color of Ocean Spray cranberries—small-talked me as I flipped through the packet of SAT grammar rules I'd drawn up that fall. Don't COLONize without a complete phrase, it told me; when in doubt,

punctuate with a comma.

We were assembled in a hall of lockers but were soon herded out, directed by adults drunk on the borrowed authority lent them by their stopwatches. As I returned to the realm of the pale mustard tile I thought momentarily of the cows we used to visit such a long time back, great black cows with marble eyes and orange ear tags the shape of houses. Policy, they said. Procedure. My fellow test-takers murmured expletives as they shuffled out of the building, some seeking refuge under the outside overhangs, others the menial heat provided in the bathroom.

Beside me an Asian father sang the quadratic formula to his daughter; a group of boys jostled each other, repeating a name to whose fame or notoriety I was unfamiliar. Taking up a place beside the faded mustard-tiled wall, I noticed how little squares devoid of tile sat lonely, the concrete like gaps of missing teeth. I scrutinized those around me. The white 'Y' leading 'Yale' on a T-shirt reminded me of a martini glass holding a honey-hued curl; Cal's buttercup script colonized T-shirts, both long-sleeved and short, sweatshirts with bears and without. As I analyzed my fellow test-takers I wondered whether they were similarly analyzing me. What impression did they gather from my newly cut hair pulled back into its chestnut

ponytail? What from the 'P' on my chest? Did they see what I had in my mirror's reflection that morning: a loose mouth, a weak nose, a determination in the eyes which atoned those other pieces, which gave reasonable claim to use of such a letter?

The room was cold, a deliberate precaution, the proctor informed us, against sleepiness. It was upon finding the abundance of life colonizing the walls—a pensive Martin Luther King Jr. poster, drawings of animals with the Spanish words for them beneath, a case filled with age-creaked Dia de Los Muertos chrysanthemums, handwritten notes affirming the character of the teacher whose instruction this space was usually privy—that the frank impersonality of the test became clear: how the answers were automated so that you had no increased likelihood of guessing correctly if you guessed C, that the essays were graded with numbers and not feeling.

When the test began, I bubbled answers in sets of eleven the way my prep-book had instructed me, reasoning the answers first, vehemently crossing out those which were wrong, and stringing the circled correct ones in the answer sheet in an almost methodic manner, like stringing letters for forming words, names, in friendship bracelets or going along a rosary's motion. I was trium-

phant when I corrected where I'd first chosen the option whose modifying phrase meant a Chinese New Year dragon's teeth had walked down a Chinatown street and snatched a bit of festival paper instead of that that dragon had walked and then snatched the paper with its teeth; I wrote an imagery-heavy essay in which I described the silver of NASA's rockets as being robbed of stream-trout's scales.

When it was over we filed out of the classrooms, the hallway, the school; the purple fleece I had stood beside earlier now appeared magenta in the sun. I returned to my father's car where I was subjected to tacit encouragement and more James Taylor. I returned to our house, to the butter-bourbon wood block of our kitchen island. I returned to catch up with CNN, to dress for the march that night, a fight more important than that arbitrated by the College Board and its bubbles, the testing center with its pale-yellow walls and college-sweatshirt-wearing students. I watched the other marchers in the street, and I did not try to reason with them. I watched the other marches with a rage in my chest stronger than that towards reading-section reasoning questions, or sums asked the no-calculator math section, or the lack of help given the guess of the letter 'C,' all of which, by comparison, were problems to which my attention was little matter.

## Assistance League of Diablo Valley's R.E.A.D. Program Thrives

Submitted by Betty Miller



Standing from left, Assistance League of Diablo Valley Corporate Partners Committee Chairman Linda Mercer and R.E.A.D. Co-Chairmen Meredith Kingsly-Brochier and Gen Camera welcome Fehr & Peers Corporate Partners employee volunteers Ryan McClain and Chelsea Caldetera's help in placing an I LOVE TO READ! sticker in hundreds of donated books.

One of Assistance League of Diablo Valley's hands-on philanthropic programs is R.E.A.D., an acronym for read, enrich, achieve and discover. Since 2003, the R.E.A.D. co-chairmen and committee members have taken great care in selecting books that they currently read in 13 schools and 48 classrooms each year. One of the most important themes they have focused on in the past six years concerns events that are relevant to the San Francisco Bay Area.

"Rosie Revere, Engineer," written by Andrea Beaty, captures the pride American women felt when taking over the jobs vacated by men who fought for the United States of America during World War II. "Pop's

Bridge," written by Eve Bunting, relates the construction of the "impossible bridge," the Golden Gate Bridge. "Too Tall Foyle Finds his Game," written by Golden State Warrior Adonal Foyle and Shiyana Valentine Williams, describes how an athlete finds a venue for his height, while "The Night Before Baseball at the Park by the Bay," written by David Schnell, depicts a young boy's dream of playing for the San Francisco Giants at AT&T Park.

To learn about all of the philanthropic programs that are primarily funded by the Assistance League Way Side Inn Thrift Shop in Lafayette, please visit this website: [diablovalley.assistanceleague.org](http://diablovalley.assistanceleague.org).

## Tim Rojas is Moraga's Employee of the Month

Submitted by Kevin Reneau



From left: Wendy Scheck, Mark Bellingham, Tito Rojas and Kevin Reneau Photo A. Scheck

Tito Rojas, a long-time painter and shift supervisor at Mark Bellingham Painting, has been named the Moraga Employee of the Month for February.

Rojas has been working on local homes for the past 12 years and is recognized as a skilled painting technician.

"Tito is a skilled craftsman," said Mark Bellingham. "He's worked here for 12 years and not only produces superior work, but

also approaches every job with enthusiasm and superior work ethic. We are most fortunate to have him in our company.

In winning the award, the Moraga Rotary and Chamber of Commerce will award Rojas a gift card to Safeway as well as a gift card to Peninni's in Moraga. Rojas was presented with his award and gifts at a recent Moraga Rotary meeting at Saint Mary's College.

## Silver Award

Submitted by Mabel Vo



From left: Girl Scouts Mabel Vo and Megan Crane Stanley Middle School students stand by one of their Silver Award projects at the downtown Lafayette Plaza.

Mabel Vo and Megan Crane recently completed their Girl Scout Silver Award project.

For their project the two eighth-graders did a pilot program for recycling bins at the downtown Lafayette plaza with the permis-

sion of Joan Bruzzone. Leading up to the project they held an education booth collecting signatures at 2016 Earth Day, attended numerous events on pollution to learn more on the topic and collected data on the trash collected during their pilot program.

## In Memory

## V. Eugene Garbarino

November 13, 1926 - March 28, 2017



Bay Area resident, Dr. Victor Eugene Garbarino, 90, died peacefully on March 28, 2017 at his home in Orinda, California.

After serving in the Army during WWII, he came home and put himself through University of Michigan's dental school and began his practice in Orinda. He married his wife of 60 years, Joan Garbarino, and raised a family of six children: Paul, Tim, Claude, Alexa, Ann, and Thad. He was a beloved husband, a devoted father, and a kind and generous friend to everyone who knew him. Quick to laugh with an adventurous soul, 'Gene' was a student of life with a boundless interest in the world around him, a true gentleman from the Greatest Generation.

A celebration of his life will be held privately. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Gene's name to Las Trampas, Inc. PO Box 515, Lafayette, CA 94549 or made on line at <http://lastrampas.org/donate/>.



**30 camps listed**

# SUMMER CAMPS 2017

## 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Camp Guide

### Part 2, Half-day Camps

(We published Part 1, Full-day camps, March 8, 2017)

With the recent spring weather, summer can't be far behind. That means it's time to sign up your child for a super summer camp or enrichment program. Take a look at our half-day camps, listed on B5 -B8. And check out all our camps and classes in our May 17 issue.



Photo provided by Stem Workshops

### CREATIVE ARTS/THEATRE/MUSIC

<p><b>Academy of Language and Music Arts/ ALMA (Orinda)</b></p> <p>Private lessons in all instruments and also private lessons in languages, including Italian, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and ESL. Special summer group classes and performing ensembles, including rock combo, jazz combo, vocal ensemble, drum circle, theatre and acting skills. All ages and levels are welcome.</p> <p>Phone: (925) 254-5056; (925) 254-5053 www.alma-leap.com</p>	<p><b>Berkeley Rep School of Theatre (Berkeley)</b></p> <p>This three week hands-on Filmmaking &amp; Acting Intensive covers theory, pre- and post-production, and concludes with a final screening for family and friends.</p> <p>Evenings from 6:30 -9:30 p.m., Dates: July 17 – Aug. 4 for entering grades 9-12.</p> <p>Phone: (510) 647-2972 www.berkeleyrep.org/summerintensive</p>	<p><b>Musical Theater: Castle Tales (Orinda)</b></p> <p>Join Andrea's Musical Adventures on a magical journey through the enchanted forest. Build a snowman with Elsa and Anna, climb a beanstalk with Jack or go to the ball with Cinderella. Craft your own props and costumes, play acting games, dress-up and sing every day.</p> <p>Dates: June 12-16 from 1-4 p.m. Aug. 7-11 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. www.cityoforinda.org Phone: (925) 254-2445</p>
<p><b>Sewnow! Fashion Design (Lafayette) <small>see ad</small></b></p> <p>Have a blast, learn to design, sew, and illustrate like a pro and walk away with unique personalized fashion items. Camps include fashionkit patterns and digital instructions, fabrics, notions, custom embroidery, and participation in our end-of-summer fashion show. One-week, half-day and full-day camps for juniors (second and third grade), kids, and teens.</p> <p>Dates: June-August Phone: (925) 283-7396 www.sewnow.com</p>	<p><b>Summer ART Camp: Planet Earth (Lafayette) <small>see ad</small></b></p> <p>Let your artists experiment with a variety of media and projects while gaining a deeper appreciation for the environment of our planet. Artists will immerse themselves in three-dimensional work and gain experience with sketching, drawing, pastels, canvas painting, silk painting, ceramics, and creating collaborative artwork.</p> <p>Phone: (925) 299-1515 www.theart-room.com</p>	<p><b>The Crucible Youth Summer Camps (Oakland) <small>see ad</small></b></p> <p>A creative experience they will never forget! The Crucible is the only place where kids can explore such a wide range of arts—blacksmithing, glass blowing, ceramics, jewelry, neon, welding and robotics—all under one roof. Weeklong youth camps, for ages 8-18. Morning and afternoon camps.</p> <p>Dates: June 19 and Aug. 4 www.thecrucible.org/youth-camps/ Phone: (510) 444-0919</p>
<p><b>Town Hall Education Summer Camps &amp; Classes (Lafayette) <small>see ad</small></b></p> <p>The award-winning Town Hall Theatre educational programs return this summer featuring skills-based and performance-based theatre classes for ages 4-18 years old. Titles include "There's No Place Like Home," "Peter Pan Jr.," "Treasure Island" and "SPAMALOT, The Musical!" Skills-based classes include Improv, Voice for Musical Theatre, and Stage Combat to name a few! Dates: June-Aug. www.TownHallTheatre.com</p>		



Photo provided by Adventure Day Camp



Photo provided by IDTech

## Amazing Summer Math Camps

- **The Wide World of Sports Statistics**  
Play sports and calculate your statistics
- **Conquer Common Core Math**  
Clarify/review current year's math and prepare for the next
- **Classes to Attack Algebra**  
Prepare for all levels of algebra from pre-algebra to algebra II through games, art and humorous lectures
- **Get a Jump on Geometry:**  
A fun, hands on class for high school students

\*\*\*\* **Warning** – These classes might trick students into believing that math is fun \*\*\*\*

If you have further questions feel free to contact Michael at [m.adler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.adler@sbcglobal.net)

Classes taught by teacher & experienced math instructor, Michael Adler

To enroll contact the Moraga Parks and Rec. Department at [www.moraga.ca.us](http://www.moraga.ca.us) or call (925) 888-7036

Want a great tutor who is fun? Individual/small group summer or year round tutoring available  
[m.adler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.adler@sbcglobal.net)



Michael Adler

## Cougar Football

EST.  1996

### FULL GEAR YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP

INSTRUCTOR: KEVIN MACY, HEAD FOOTBALL COACH AT CAMPOLINDO HIGH SCHOOL

GRADES 4 – 8, SEPARATED BY GRADE

DATES: July 10 thru July 21 (M – F) TIMES: 1:30 – 5:00 P.M.  
FEES: \$350 (T-shirt included)



FOR REGISTRATION FORMS, CONTACT:  
925/280-3950 x-5163, [kmacy@acalanes.k12.ca.us](mailto:kmacy@acalanes.k12.ca.us)  
or download registration form at [campofootball.com](http://campofootball.com)

**ROUGHING IT DAY CAMP**

**Lamorinda's Hometown Camp**  
Located at the Lafayette Reservoir • Ages 4-16  
Free Transportation • Free Extended Care



**roughingit.com/visit**  
**925.283.3795**

## Oakland Strokes Summer Rowing Camps

Rowing Camps for Boys and Girls Ages 12 – 17

### Learn to Row Crew!

Our summer program is designed to provide an enjoyable but very real introduction to the great sport of rowing. We use these introductory camps as a recruiting program for all of our rowing teams. They provide excellent training for beginning rowers in rowing technique, teamwork, physical fitness and endurance. Within a week rowers will gain enough experience to compete in their very first race, an exciting experience for all! Classes now available on the San Pablo Reservoir or Oakland Estuary.

### One Week Introductory Sessions (8:30 - 11:30am)

- June 12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)
- June 19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)
- June 26<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)
- July 10<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)
- July 17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)
- July 24<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> (Intermediate\* 10:30am - 1:30pm)

\*Intermediate sessions available to athletes who have completed a prior one week introductory session or our middle school program

Ideal for students entering 9th or 10th grade!

**Learn More & Sign Up!**  
[www.oaklandstrokes.org](http://www.oaklandstrokes.org)



**EXPLORE THE WORLD OF ART THIS SUMMER!**

- Sketching, drawing, pastels, canvas painting, silk painting, ceramics
- A variety of media and projects
- Students connect to the world around them
- Focus on endangered species, glaciers, and life on land and under the sea
- Three-dimensional work



June 12- Aug 25 | Week-long camps  
 Morning: 9-noon | Afternoon: 2-5 | Full Day: 9-5 | \$250 per week\*  
 91 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette | 925-299-1515 | theart-room.com  
\*(cost for morning or afternoon, not both)

**Miramonte Swim Club**

Lamorinda Youth Recreational Swim Team

- Summer Swim Team for ages 4-18 which competes in the OMPA (Orinda Moraga Pool Association).
- Summer Junior Gator Program for beginner swimmers.
- No club membership required in order to participate in clinics and summer team.
- Afternoon practice options for summer swim team.
- Summer Team practices and competes in beautiful 16-lane pool (Miramonte High School).
- Fall and Spring Swim Clinics for Experienced Swimmers and Learn to Swim Classes for Beginner Swimmers.
- **Experienced and dedicated Coaching Staff.**

Registration for Spring and Summer can be found on [www.msccgators.org](http://www.msccgators.org)



**EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES**

**HIKING WITH LLAMAS!**  
 JULY 17-21ST

Orion's most popular summer camp is back! During this camp students will geocache, hike in the redwoods, ride horses and yes-hike with llamas! The group will also learn social skills, build physical stamina and learn to adapt to new social situations. We are excited to offer another group the opportunity to experience this fun activity week! **A fun camp for 8th, 9th and 10th grade students.**

Phone: 925-377-0789

[www.orionacademy.org](http://www.orionacademy.org) 350 Rheem Blvd. Moraga, CA

**ARTEMIS ROWING**

LEARN TO ROW CAMPS  
 BEGINNER AND ADVANCED BEGINNER

BOYS & GIRLS  
 IDEAL FOR GR. 8-10



8 AM - 11 AM

JUNE 12-16\*

JUNE 19 - 23

JULY 10 - 14

JULY 17 - 21

JULY 31 - AUG 4

AUG 7 - 11

BEGINNER ONLY

REGISTER ONLINE AT

[WWW.ARTEMISROWINGCLUB.ORG](http://WWW.ARTEMISROWINGCLUB.ORG)

@JACK LONDON AQUATIC CENTER,  
 115 EMBARCADERO, OAKLAND, CA



Photo provided by Saklan School

**ACADEMIC/LANGUAGE/SCIENCE**

**Amazing Math Classes**

(Moraga)

see ad

Weeklong sessions taught by experienced, funny teachers through the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department. Sessions include elementary school math and science, sports and statistics, algebra I, high school geometry, and algebra II. Contact head teacher Michael Adler or Moraga Parks and Rec Department. Individual or small group tutoring also available.  
 Email: [m.adler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.adler@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.moraga.ca.us](http://www.moraga.ca.us)  
 Phone: (925) 888-7036

**Fun music lessons!**

(Lafayette)

The Lamorinda School of Musical Arts offers individual lessons (piano or voice) for students ages 3 and up during the summer. A Grammy Award winner, director Xiomara Di Maio teaches at Stanley Middle School and is known for her creative approach and joyful way of teaching children. Dates: schedule based on your availability.  
 Email: [xiomydma@gmail.com](mailto:xiomydma@gmail.com)  
 Phone: (925) 878-5159

**Lorie Tutors Writing Camp**

(Moraga)

This weeklong camp for incoming first-third graders with Mrs. Lorie (a Rheem Kindergarten teacher) will help foster a love of writing. Focusing on fun and engaging lessons and activities, campers will learn engaging strategies to write narrative, information, and opinion pieces. Maximum of 15 students.  
 Dates: June 26-30 (Mon., Wed., Fri. only; no Tue. or Thur. class)  
[www.lorietutors.squarespace.com](http://www.lorietutors.squarespace.com)

**Saklan School**

(Moraga)

see ad

Summer @ Saklan provides culture, language and summer fun for ages 3-11. Mornings are filled with enrichment in Mandarin, French, Japanese, Spanish and Italian. Afternoons are packed with field trips, swimming, art & music. Three-week sessions 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Full or half-days, with extended care available. Mini Campers, ages 3-5 & Explorers, ages 6-11.  
 Dates: June 12 - Aug. 11  
 Phone: (925) 376-7900  
[www.saklan.org](http://www.saklan.org)

**Spanish Immersion Summer Camps with Viva el Español**

(Lafayette)

Learn or improve Spanish language skills through games, music, arts & crafts, and cooking. During each weeklong camp students learn vocabulary related to a specific kid-friendly theme such as Wondrous Outdoors at the Reservoir or Secret Formula "Laboratorio." Half-day 9 a.m. to noon. Full day options are available.  
 Phone: (925) 962-9177  
[www.vivaelespanol.org](http://www.vivaelespanol.org)

**STEM Workshop Series**

(Orinda)

Dynamic STEM workshops! Each fast-moving, high-energy science designed to challenge the children & have them asking for more. Spectrum of Science offers dynamic, active & hands on science workshops for preschool, elementary & middle school. Have fun & let the learning begin!  
 Email: [AmyBeth@spectrumofscience.com](mailto:AmyBeth@spectrumofscience.com)  
 Phone: (925) 820-2415  
[www.spectrumofscience.com](http://www.spectrumofscience.com)

**Summer Bridge Math**

(Moraga)

This program, intended to be both fun and educational, is designed to reinforce previous math concepts, while introducing future ones. Manipulatives and interactive problem solving will be a part of each session. Groups of no more than nine students and will meet four times over the summer - led by Mr. Lorie, a JM math teacher.  
 Dates: various dates and times  
[www.lorietutors.squarespace.com](http://www.lorietutors.squarespace.com)

**The Writing Studio - Camp Young Writers**

(Lafayette)

Summer camps at The Writing Studio provide both writing instruction and one-on-one sessions for grades 3-12. Writers step into a world of storytelling and essay-based expository writing, developing strong writing skills in the process.  
 Dates: June 12-31; July 10-Aug.4  
 Phone: (925) 385-0211  
[www.lafayettewritingstudio.com](http://www.lafayettewritingstudio.com)



Photo provided by Adventure Day Camp

**The Writing Studio**

A Camp for Young Writers

June 12-30  
 July 10-August 4

Join **CAMP YOUNG WRITERS** this summer as your children enter a world of **CREATIVE NARRATIVE** and **ABSORBING ESSAY-BASED WRITING PROJECTS**. Through grade appropriate classes and one-on-one sessions, students learn proper sentence structure, the elements of well-written essays, creative use of descriptive words, correct grammar, usage, and so much more.

**CAMP YOUNG WRITERS** is open to students in grades 3-12 who strive to improve their writing skills. Projects consist of first person narratives, historical biographies and literature analyses. Our camps will take place **June 12-30** and **July 10-August 4**; sessions will be held three days per week, 2-5 pm.

For further information, please call 925-385-0211 or visit us at [www.lafayettewritingstudio.com](http://www.lafayettewritingstudio.com).



**THE WRITING STUDIO**  
 Where Words Come to Life

3455 Golden Gate Way, Suite A, Lafayette (925) 385-0211

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**

**STROKE CLINICS, APRIL SWIM CONDITIONING, AND SUMMER SWIM TEAM**

Visit [www.lmyaswim.com](http://www.lmyaswim.com) for more details!



- **Sunday Stroke Clinics** - begins March 5 (stroke specific sessions)
- **April Swim Conditioning** - begins April 11 (get in swim shape!)
- **Summer Swim Team** - begins May 2 (early registration discounts)

**PARENT INFORMATIONAL MEETING -Thursday, March 16@6:30pm**  
**ACALANES HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA OPEN TO ALL!**

SUMMER CAMPS 2017 Half Day Camp

**SPORTS**

**Artemis Rowing**

(Oakland)

see ad

Artemis Rowing is a competitive rowing program based at Oakland's Jack London Aquatic Center. Throughout summer, Artemis is offering fun Learn to Row camps for students in grades 6-12. Enroll in two or more and be ready for our middle/high school teams in fall! Ideal for grades 8-10.

www.ArtemisRowingClub.org

**Cougar Youth Football Camp**

(Moraga)

see ad

The Cougar Youth Football Camp directed by Head Coach Kevin Macy for grades 4-8 is held at Campolindo High School. All equipment is supplied; T-shirt is included. Registration forms can be found at campfootball.com.

Dates: July 10-21 (Monday – Friday, 1:30 to 5 p.m.)

www.campfootball.com

**Lamorinda Soccer Camps**

(Moraga)

see ad

Lamorinda Soccer Club Summer Camps are a place where kids have fun and learn about the game of soccer! We focus on kids having fun with small-sided games as well as arts and crafts projects. We welcome all girls & boys at any skill level between the ages of 5 to 10.

admin@lamorindasc.com  
www.lamorindasc.com

**Miramonte Swim Club (MSC)**

(Orinda)

see ad

2017 Swim Team, Spring Stroke Clinics, and Junior Gator Learn-to-Swim program. No club membership is required in order to participate in clinics and summer team. The summer team practices and competes at Miramonte High School's 16-lane pool. Registration is now open.

Phone: (925) 247-8110

www.msccgators.com

**Oakland Strokes**

(San Pablo Reservoir or Oakland Estuary)

see ad

The Oakland Strokes summer program is a half-day summer camp open to any child sixth through 12th grade. The program is a "learn to row" program, focused on taking kids from never rowing, to being proficient, and teaching the basics and includes conditioning. Dates: Various one-week sessions starting June 12.

Email: oaklandstrokes@gmail.com  
www.oaklandstrokes.org

**Randy Bennett Basketball Camps**

(Moraga)

see ad

The Randy Bennett Day Camps held at Saint Mary's McKeon Pavilion are a great way for boys and girls ages 4-13 to receive top-class instruction on every aspect of the game. Throughout the week Coach Bennett will lead instruction on every aspect of the game. Morning, afternoon and full day options.

Dates: June 6 - July 14  
smcmensbasketballcamps.com

**Saint Mary's College Athletic Camps**

(Moraga)

St. Mary's College offers 40-plus sports camps on one of the most picturesque campuses on the West Coast. SMC offers boys and girls camps for ages 4-18. Summer 2017 offers all sports, baseball, basketball, running, soccer, softball, tennis and volleyball camps.

Dates: various dates and times available  
smccamps@stmarys-ca.edu  
Phone: (925) 631-4FUN (4386)  
www.smccathleticcamps.com

**Sports, Kidz Love Soccer Camp**

(Orinda)

Spend a week enjoying the world's most popular sport. Play fun soccer games to build skills in an age-appropriate camp. Learn and practice soccer skills including: dribbling, passing, receiving and shooting. Everyone is a winner as the week's fun culminates in a "World Cup" tournament. Dates: Aug. 14-18 (9 a.m.-12 p.m.)  
Phone: (925) 254-2445  
www.cityoforinda.org

**Summer Tennis Camp – St. Mary's College**

(Moraga)

Camps will address technical, tactical, and fitness aspect of the game through personal instruction and specifically designed age/level appropriate drills, as well as competitive aspect through match play and fun games. Morning sessions 9 a.m. to noon for boys and girls ages 8-15. Full day option available. Dates: 1-week sessions June 12 - Aug. 11  
www.smctenniscamps.com



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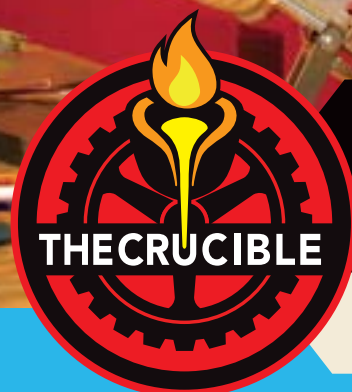
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[TheCrucible.org/youth-camps](http://TheCrucible.org/youth-camps)

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**Half-Day SUMMER CAMPS 2017**



Photo provided by Stem Workshops

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS**

**Build a Peace Village**  
(Orinda)

The Orinda Community Church will be hosting a Peace Village camp this summer. The camp will teach the Peace Village core curriculum of mindfulness, media literacy, connecting with nature, and conflict resolution to children ages 6-13.  
Dates: Aug. 14-17 from 1-4 p.m.  
Phone: (925) 254-490  
Email: kelseyhpeteron@gmail.com  
www.orindacommunitychurch.org

**Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church**  
(Moraga) see ad

MVPC will transform into the Maker Fun Factory, a place buzzing with excitement and alive with gadgets and gizmos aplenty! Enjoy awesome music and experience Bible stories with all five senses. We'll have ingenious crafts, high-energy recreation, and a kaleidoscope of snacks. 9 a.m. - noon.  
Children must be 4 years old through entering 5th grade.  
Dates: June 19-23  
www.mvpc.today.org

**Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church**  
(Lafayette)

Maker Fun Factory: Created by God Built for a Purpose. Gear up for an adventure! At Vacation Bible Camp this year, we will ground kids in the rock-solid foundation of God's love through songs, stories, games, experiments, and more. For 4-year-olds through completed fourth graders.  
Dates: June 12-16, afternoon  
Phone: (925) 283-8722 x234  
Email: ryan@LOPC.org  
www.LOPC.org

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church



Vacation Bible School  
**June 19-23**  
9:00am - 12:00 noon

GEAR UP for a hands-on amazing week! MVPC will transform into the Maker Fun Factory, a place buzzing with excitement and alive with gadgets and gizmos aplenty! Enjoy our awesome music and experience Bible stories with all five senses. We'll have ingenious crafts, high-energy recreation, and a kaleidoscope of snacks. Come put it all together at VBS this summer. **After all, you were MADE for this!**

**Camp cost: \$70 per child** (\$90 after June 1st)  
Children must be 4 years old through entering 5th grade.

**Register online today!**  
[www.mvpc.today.org](http://www.mvpc.today.org)



10 Moraga Valley Lane  
Moraga, CA 94556  
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**VARIETY**

**City of Lafayette - Recreation Summer Camps**  
(Lafayette)

Art, soccer, cheerleading, cooking, dance, science, engineering, LEGOs, tennis, Critters-N-Clay, music, robotics, basketball, carpentry, flag football, gymnastics, golf, chess and more! Registration Begins April 10th.  
Dates: various dates and times available.  
Phone: (925) 284-2232  
www.LafayetteRec.org

**Moraga Parks and Recreation Summer Camps**  
(Moraga)

Lego, Minecraft, and Pokemon oh my! Your child's Summer adventure starts here. Come check out the variety of camps offered through the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department for 2017! Camp Hacienda, Bricks 4 Kidz, Techsplosion, Little Medical School, Coding Camp, Incredifix, Kindercool, Skyhawks Sports, Math, Science, Speech, Debate, and more! Registration is open now. Dates: various dates and times available  
Phone: (925) 888-7045  
www.moragarec.com

**Sienna Ranch**  
(Lafayette)

Camp choices at Lamorinda's own ranch camp include morning Farm Hands and Nature and Horseback Riding camps as well as afternoon pottery, woodshop, archery, art and animals, horses and more. Serving campers entering grades PreK-8 with select teen programming, Sienna Ranch offers week-long, half-day or full-day camp options.  
Dates: various dates and times available  
Phone: (925) 283-6311  
www.siennaranch.net

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Location:  
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DATES:  
Week 1: June 12-16  
Week 2: June 19-23  
Week 3: June 26-30  
Week 4: July 10-14  
Week 5: July 17-21  
Week 6: July 24-28  
Week 7: July 31- August 4  
Week 8: August 7-11  
Week 9: August 14-18  
Times: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm



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The Lamorinda Weekly Summer Camp listings are not paid advertising. Our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. In the event we have inadvertently printed misinformation, please let us know. LW is not liable for errors or omissions.



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Looking Good in Lamorinda

Vintage and bling highlight spring

By Moya Stone



Vintage handbags in exotic leathers at Cuesta Antiques in Lafayette.

Photos Moya Stone

It's spring! Time to revisit the closet and consider a new addition or two to freshen up our look.

Specialtees in Lafayette's Fi-

esta Square says this season celebrates the shoulder. Tops with an off-the-shoulder silhouette work well for all ages and body types. As for bottoms, cropped! Wide-

leg cropped and boot cut jeans are what's hot.

Speaking of jeans, Patrizia Marrone proprietor of Patrizia Marrone on Fiesta Lane in Lafayette tells me that embellished is everything. Marrone stocks her elegant boutique with European designs offering Lamorinda something a little different. This spring jeans in traditional blue and also white are distressed and detailed with both large and small stones, in some cases rhinestones around the cuff for some unexpected sparkle.

The latest trend in jewelry is to layer two to three or more delicate pendants and Natasha Grasso Jewelry in Moraga has just the thing. Each piece is gold-filled or silver and in charming motifs such as horseshoes, love knots, keys and stars or the more edgy skull. Grasso also uses semi-precious stones in her work, which in addition to necklaces includes earrings, bracelets, and rings. I'm thinking Easter, graduations and Mother's Day. Natasha Grasso Jewelry is located in the Rheem Shopping Center 386 Park Street in Moraga.

I recently stopped by one of my favorite shops in Lafayette, Cuesta Antiques, and discovered a small collection of exotic leather vintage handbags. Peruse any fashion magazine and you will notice exotic leather is all the rage in accessories. Cuesta has one-of-a-kind 1950s bags in, ostrich, alligator, and even sea turtle. Each one in impeccable condition and, considering the rarity of the leather, reasonable price tags. Plus the vintage factor decreases the guilt. Thinking ahead to Father's Day, the shop also carries vintage men's accessories such as wallets and flasks. Cuesta Antiques, 3540A Wilkinson Lane in Fiesta Square.

The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock and Roll opens April 8 at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the legendary counterculture centered right here in our own San Francisco, this exhibit features more than 300 artifacts of the era including handmade fashions by local designers. Crochet, embroidery, leatherwork, denim, and of course tie-dye were the fashion trends among youth who wanted to set themselves apart from mainstream America and anyone over 30! The Summer of Love Experience runs through August 20, 2017. And these will all be the more fashionable at Lafayette's own Summer of Love concert series beginning in June.

Enjoy the sun and go forth in style!

Moya Stone is a writer and blogger at [www.overdressedfor-life.com](http://www.overdressedfor-life.com).



Delicate pendants at Natasha Grasso Jewelry in Moraga.



Embellished jeans at Patrizia Marrone in Lafayette.

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

## Lamorinda's Religious Services

**Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422  
www.holyshepherd.org



### HOLY WEEK SERVICES

**MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 13**  
7:00 p.m.

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 14**  
12 Noon & 7:00 p.m.

**EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16**  
8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship  
9:30 a.m. Blended Worship  
10:45 a.m. Celebrations Worship  
Easter Breakfast 9:00-11:00 a.m.

### SAINT GILES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

9am Sunday School & Communion Service in the SMC Chapel



stgiles-moraga.org  
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traditional liturgy + inclusive theology



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org  
All are Welcome!

**Palm Sunday**  
**April 9, 10:00 am**  
Procession of the Palms

**Maundy Thursday**  
Supper, Prayer, Music, and Reflection  
**April 13, 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall**

**Easter Sunrise Service**  
**April 16, 7:30 am in the Olive Grove**

**Children's Easter Egg Hunt**  
**9:00 am in the Court Yard**

**Easter Celebration Worship**  
**10:00 am in the Sanctuary**



### Lafayette United Methodist Church

955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 thelumc.org

**April 9:** Palm Sunday Worship 10am

**April 13:** Seder Dinner 6pm

**April 16:** Easter Sunday Worship 8:30 & 10:30am  
Brunch & Easter Egg Hunt 9:30am

*We Love God, Love Others & Serve the World*

### St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

A Loving Community

**Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM**

*In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare*  
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

### LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Join us for Holy Week and Easter Sunday



- 4/9 - Palm Sunday Service at 12:00 p.m.
- 4/13 - Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00 p.m.
- 4/14 - Good Friday Service at 7:00 p.m.
- 4/16 - Easter Sunday Services at 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., & 11:00 a.m.
- More info at LOPC.org/new/easter

49 Knox Drive • Lafayette, CA • (925) 283-8722 • LOPC.org • #LOPC

### ORINDA CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

24 Orinda Way (next to the Library) - 254-4212

**Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am**

Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm

Reading Room/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat 11 - 2

www.christianscienceorinda.org



### St Stephen's Episcopal Church

66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda  
254-3770. www.ststephensorinda.org  
Sunday 8am, 10am

### JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

*all are welcome*

Sunday mornings, 9:30am

Sunday evenings, 5pm - beginning April 30

Easter Sunday, 9:30 & 11am



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www.mvpc.today.org  
925.376.4800

## Not to be missed

### ART

**The Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery in Lafayette** presents Side x Side, an exhibit that features the paintings of James Koskinas and Julie Schumer through April 15. They both work in acrylic and tend towards a painting style of large scale abstract expressionism and figurative. jenniferperlmuttergallery.com.

**Certified appraisers from Michaan's Auctions** will give verbal appraisals on Fine Art, Furniture and Decorative Art, Jewelry, Stamps and Coins, Asian Art, etc. from 4-7 p.m. on April 21 (by appointment) at the Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. This fundraiser is sponsored by Moraga Women's Society. Bring your heirlooms or garage sale treasures for evaluation. Call Tammie Chambless (510) 227-2530 for appointment. Entry + up to 3 appraisals: \$25. Pay at the door and proceed to the Community Room. All proceeds go to Moraga Schools.

**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 Honeydots, from Forestville, whose ceramics consist of utilitarian platters, mugs, casserole dishes and more. The show runs to June 3. For more information, visit the gallery's website: www.moragaartgallery.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 through May 13. Plus, there are beautifully crafted, ceramic, wood and glass pieces, and original designer jewelry. For more info visit www.valleyartgallery.com. It's located in Walnut Creek.

**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-visions 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.

### MUSIC

**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 in partnership with the library.

**Saint Mary's Jazz Band Concert 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 7,** Soda Activity Center, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. Featuring Music from: Miles Davis, Gordon Goodwin, Thelonious Monk, Carlos Santana, Duke Pearson, and Count Basie. Tickets are \$5; \$2 for students and seniors and are sold at the door. Cash or Check only. Doors open 30 minutes before performance time.

**Pacific Chamber Orchestra concludes its** 28th season at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday April 22 in the Sanctuary, led by Maestro Lawrence Kohl. The program includes Beethoven's Leonore Overture #3, Brahms's Symphony #1 and Elgar's Concerto for Cello with Nina Flyer, soloist. Ms. Flyer has toured, recorded, and taught throughout Europe and America. She is a professor of cello and chamber music at the University of Pacific Conservatory of Music. Tickets may be purchased at the door or at www.pacificchamber-orchestra.org.

**The award-winning musical "In the Heights"** presented by Saint

Mary's Performing Arts Department, runs Thursday April 27 through Sunday April 30 at Saint Mary's LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, in Moraga. By the acclaimed creative team behind Hamilton, IN THE HEIGHTS tells the universal story of a tight knit Latin American community in Manhattan and is grounded in universal themes of family, community and self-discovery. Tickets: \$18 with \$15 for students and seniors are available at the https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/in-the-heights-event-listing. Show times: 8 pm. April 27; 4 p.m. April 28; 9 p.m. April 28; 8 p.m. April 29; 2 p.m. April 30. Additional info. (925) 631-4670; tms8@stmarys-ca.edu.

**Enjoy a rare appearance by Juke Joint,** Lamorinda's own Classic soul and R&B band at Bonehead's BBQ, 3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette from 5:30 to 8:30 on Saturday, April 29.

### LECTURE, LITERATURE & SCREENINGS

**"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.

**There will be a screening of "Racing to Zero"** at 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Friday, April 14 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda. This is a documentary of San Francisco's commitment to turn all garbage into resources. Be inspired by this upbeat fast-paced journey through the city's waste stream, and see how action is achieving results. More info: (925) 705-2744

**The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion & Rock & Roll** at 1 p.m. on Monday, April 24 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Orinda Library welcomes Alfred Escoffier, a Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco docent, who will share highlights of this exhilarating display of memorabilia celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love at the De Young Museum. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.

**Lamorinda Arts Council will host their 2nd Annual ShortDocs 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.

### KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

**Get ready 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, the Easter Fairy, balloon art and more. 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. For more information on Spring holiday events, see page B1.

**Orinda Rotary Club's Annual Egg Hunt** is at 11 a.m. sharp on April 15 at the Orinda Community Center Play Field. There will be over 1000 eggs and prizes for all as well as pic-

tures with the White Bunny. Ages: Toddlers through Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 only. Be sure to bring a basket. Rain cancels the event. For more information on Spring holiday events, see page B1.

**Community Egg Scramble, 10 a.m. Saturday, April 15** at the Lafayette Plaza Park near the Park Theater. Open to all kids through second grade. Free and made possible by the Rotary Club of Lafayette. For more information on Spring holiday events, see page B1.

**Orinda Academy will be holding an Open House** from 7 to 9 p.m. on April 19 for fall 2017 enrollment. Orinda Academy is located at 19 Altarinda Rd.

**The City of Lafayette and the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce,** in partnership with local non-profit organization Sustainable Lafayette, will host the city's 12th annual Earth Day Festival at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The theme of this year's festival is "Sustainable Youth" and the event will showcase local youth groups as well as exhibitors will provide attendees with inspiration and awareness about how to make their local community more sustainable and connect them with opportunities to help. The Festival will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 23 on Golden Gate Way behind the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, and at the plaza of the library, located at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette.

**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 through April 30. The Lamorinda Idol program includes workshops, multiple performance opportunities, parties and the Finals at the Orinda Theatre Sunday, Aug. 26.

### OTHER

**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

**Have a case of Spring fever? There is no better cure** than bringing a new kitten or cat into your family. See the beautiful kitties at Community Concern for Cats' adoption event from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, April 8 and 9. Our Lafayette and Walnut Creek locations are open on Saturday and Sunday. Our Pleasant Hill location is only open on Saturday. Find us at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information, see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

**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 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. 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/.

... continued on next page

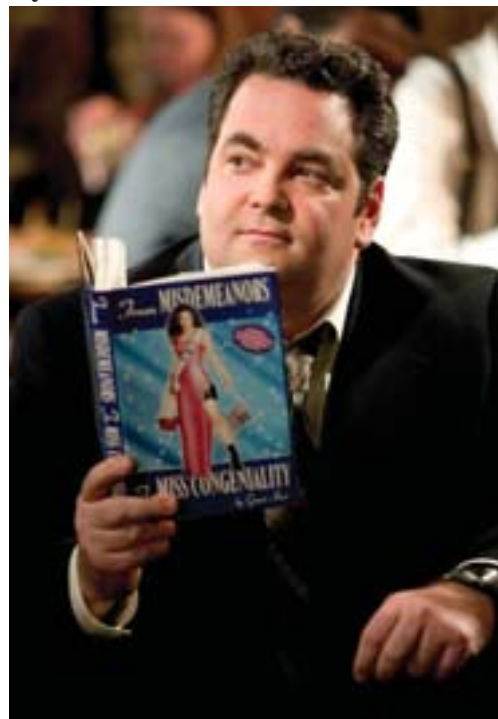
**MOVIE REVIEW**

*Film Clips*

**Hollywood meets Orinda with the return of stand-up comedy**

*Lamorinda Weekly Readers Get 2 for 1 Tickets!*

By Derek Zemrak



John DiResta Photo provided

**J**ohn DiResta will bring laughter to the Orinda Theatre at 8 p.m. on Thursday April 13. DiResta is the real deal. He was raised on the rough and tumble streets of Long Island where he made fun of people. If you got mocked by John DiResta then you were in with the "in" crowd.

A former New York City Transit police officer, DiResta started his comedy career in 1992 in the bowels of the New York comedy circuit. Five years later his one-man show, "BEAT: A Subway Cop's Comedy," opened to rave reviews. The New York Times called him "UP-ROARIOUS!" John quickly signed a huge development deal with ABC/Disney. John quit the police department and moved his wife and three kids to the west coast.

In the fall of 1998, his sitcom, "DiResta" launched on the UPN Network. DiResta then went on to secure very big roles in the movies "Miss Congeniality" with Sandra Bullock and "15 Minutes" with Robert De Niro. During that period, he made two memorable appearances on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno" and the "Howard Stern Show." In spring 2004 John's show, "Trash to Cash," premiered on the FX Network. He went on to star in "How To Lose a Guy in Ten Days" and "Miss Congeniality Two." In fall 2007, DiResta began work on his next two TV adventures: "American Body Shop" was on Comedy Central for one year and "Hammered" lasted two seasons on HGTV/DIY networks.

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<b>April 7</b> <b>Dr. Bobbi Preston,</b> Chief Operating Officer, <b>No One Left Behind</b>	<b>April 14</b> <b>Kim Overaa, "Morning Harvest" Farm. Transitioning age 18-23 Foster youth</b>
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**Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting.**  
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<b>April 6:</b> <b>Joann Heydenfeldt</b> Adjunct Professor at St Mary's A Scientific Discussion of Mindfulness- What is True and What Isn't	<b>April 13:</b> <b>Kathy Merchant</b> What is happening at Las Trampas
--	---

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**OTHER ... continued**

**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](http://www.jewish-contracosta.com) (925) 937-4101.

**Building Jewish Bridges presents Adoption** in Jewish and Interfaith Families from 7:30 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, April 20 at B'nai Tikvah, 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek. Join adoptive parents and an adoption professional to discuss how families give children a secure Jewish identity while honoring their culture of origin. Free. For more info see <http://www.buildingjewishbridges.org> or call (510) 845-6420 x11 or email [dawn@buildingjewishbridges.org](mailto:dawn@buildingjewishbridges.org).

**Acalanes High School SAGE (Students for the Advancement of Global Education) Club** presents its fundraiser movie night at 9:30 p.m. on April 21.

**Saint Mary's celebrates its status as a Fair Trade College** with this yearly free Fair Trade Festival, happening from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday April 28. Coffee, chocolate, tea, handicrafts, and other Fair Trade goods will be available — both free samples and items for purchase. Enjoy a BBQ for \$5. For more information about this event and SMC's Fair Trade efforts, visit [www.stmarys-ca.edu/fairtrade](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/fairtrade)

**Don't miss Lafayette Dogtown Downtown** 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, April 29 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center & the Lafayette Plaza. This free event is for dogs and dog lovers. Designed to be a fun and festive canine-focused event, Lafayette Dogtown Downtown 2017 includes outdoor working dog and canine agility demonstrations, fun dog competitions, creative canine crafts and other activities for dog lovers of all ages. Visit [www.LafayetteChamber.org/dogtown](http://www.LafayetteChamber.org/dogtown).

**The semi-annual giant book sale sponsored by The Friends of the Moraga Library** will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 29.

Books of every category will be sold at prices ranging from 25 cents to \$4. Beginning at 1 p.m. a bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with all the books it can hold. Come to one of the biggest bargain sales in Lamorinda. The sale will be held at the Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road.

**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](http://www.moragachamber.org/faire) or, call Gloria at (925) 247-4473.

**POLITICAL GATHERINGS**

Join the Lamorinda Democratic Club to discuss "K-12 Public Education - Follow the Money" from 7 to 9 p.m. on Monday, April 13 at the Lafayette Library and Community Center. The U.S. Department of Education is proposing to change how funding is provided as well as requiring that States allow for vouchers that fund private schools. Learn how these proposals will affect our local schools. Cost is free for members and students, \$5 for non-students. For additional information, see [ldclub.org](http://ldclub.org).

**SENIORS**

**Pleasant Hill Senior Center presents "Crime Prevention Education: ID Theft"** from 4 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, at Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. This workshop trains citizens on how to implement crime prevention strategies, home security improvements and the Neighborhood Watch Program. Free. Seating is limited. Must RSVP in advance. For more info see <http://CrimePreventionApril19.eventbrite.com> or call (925) 798-8788.

**Anne Randolph Physical Therapy presents Fall Prevention** from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26 in the Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center. Falls are a threat to health and independence. Learn how to gain better balance, avoid falls and remain self-suffi-

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cient. Senior Services Members: No charge/ Non-Members: \$10

**Come to the Early Stage Alzheimer's Forum** from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on May 5 in Lafayette (exact address location will be provided upon registration.) Participants will have an opportunity to learn more about the disease, treatment and research updates as well as discuss common challenges and coping strategies during breakout sessions. This is a free event, open only to early-stage individuals and their care partners. Space is limited; early registration is recommended. For more information or to register, please contact Lan Trinh at (408)372-9982 or [ltrinh@alz.org](mailto:ltrinh@alz.org).

**GARDEN**

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club's monthly business meeting** 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 member. Maureen Little: [mslittle44@gmail.com](mailto:mslittle44@gmail.com) (925) 820-1476

**Culinary Herbs for Warm Weather at 1 p.m. on Friday, April 14** in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Orinda Library welcomes Elana O'Loskey, who will share with her knowledge of culinary herbs to grow now. She's an experienced herb grower, teacher, and talk show host of "Gardening with Spirit." Join us for recommendations, planting guidelines, recipes, door prizes and more.

**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 through April 15 (closed Easter Sunday). 1290 Moraga Way, Moraga (next to Moraga Fire Station). For information call Claire Curtin, (925) 299-1353.

**The Montelindo Garden Club Meeting (third Friday** of every month, September through May) will be at 9 a.m. on Friday April 21 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St.

Stephens Drive, Orinda. Everyone welcome. Presentation: "Do I Have Pollinators for You!" by speaker Ellen Zagory, director of horticulture.

**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 noon on April 6 at the Lafayette Veteran's Building, located at 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Splan will show 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](mailto:cpoetzsch@gmail.com).

**Sudden Oak Death Blitz from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** on Saturday, April 22. Orinda Library welcomes the University of California at Berkeley College of Natural Resource who will show how to help stop this disease as a Citizen Scientist. Attend a short and informative training session where you will receive a SOD Blitz collection kit. For more information go to: [www.sodblitz.org](http://www.sodblitz.org).

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## Campo girls' hoops team advances to state finals

By Karl Buscheck



The Campolindo girls basketball team.

Photos Gint Federas

When the Campolindo girls' basketball team fell in the Division 3 CIF State Championship game 62-45 to Rosary Academy, head coach Art Thoms gathered his squad to remind them of everything they had achieved.

"After the game, the girls were upset and I huddled them together," Thoms recalled of the scene at the Golden 1 Center – the home of the NBA's Sacramento Kings – on March 24. "And I said, 'Just remember the journey and all of the fun that we had during the season and the goals that we did accomplish during the season.'"

The loss to the Fullerton powerhouse, whom Max-Preps ranked as the No. 20 team in California, concluded the Cougars' campaign (27-7, 9-1) and marked just the club's second loss since the middle of January.

"Obviously, they're very talented," Thoms offered when asked to explain the team's impressive performance. "But they really played for each other."

As had been the case throughout the regular season, a triumvirate of juniors powered the Cougars through their playoff push.

"I call them the Big Three," Thoms said of the trio, consisting of Aubrey Wagner, Haley Van Dyke and Ashley Thoms.

While that group of standouts drew the most press, the Cougars were able to advance so far thanks to the help of a whole cast of contributors, beginning with junior wing Grace McGuire.

"She actually got the sportsmanship award for the finals game," Thoms said. "She was steady all year. She works hard, plays well every single game and is really a pleasure to coach."

Thoms also highlighted the contributions of junior starter Jessi O'Reilly, junior wing Kailey Meyer and sophomore wing Mariella Crudele. O'Reilly, was one of the team's captains and was the Cougars' vocal leader. Meyer, who didn't even play basketball last season, was a key cog in the rotation, and Crudele hit her stride late after an early injury threatened to derail her year.

"She really started to get back into form toward the end of the season," Thoms said. "And we look for her to make huge contributions next year."

The team's run to the California's largest stage, which also featured an NCS semifinals appearance, didn't shock the coach.

"I honestly expected to win the league, which (we did as) co-champions," Thoms said. "And I expected to make it to the state championship."

The Cougars shared the DAL National League crown with Miramonte, who tumbled out of the D2 state bracket in the regional semifinals, losing 66-65 to Vanden on March 18.

"I knew it wouldn't be easy," Thoms added. "But I really believed that and I talked about that from the first day of practice."

The inflection point for the Cougars came less than a month into the season when the team took out Salesian – the program that would eventually dump them out of the NCS tournament – 67-59 on Dec. 22 in Richmond.

"I just felt it was realistic (to make it to the state finals)," Thoms said. "I felt like we had the talent to make it there. I knew the key point would be believing that we could make it there and I think that winning the Salesian game during the season was kind of turning point. They believed that they were as good as I thought they were."



Aubrey Wagner



Haley Van Dyke



Ashley Thoms



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## Wright reaches state finals for academically-gifted Mats wrestling team

By Karl Buscheck



Skyler Wright in his state match against Dillon Cravens, #5 Central Section Senior from Bakersfield Photos provided



Wright grapples Heritage in his qualifying match at NCS.

It was during Skyler Wright's sophomore season that Jose Herrera, the head coach of the Miramonte wrestling program, began to grasp just how talented a wrestler he had in his midst.

That spring, Wright, who started working out in the weight room as a fifth grader and wrestling as an eighth grader at Orinda Intermediate School, secured an NCS spot and went on to topple the No. 3 seed in the tournament.

"From the very first sight ... (I could tell) he was just a fanatic," Herrera recalled of the senior star, who took off in the spring of 2015 when he learned to master the technical side of the sport.

This spring, Wright anchored a Mats team that not only claimed third place at NCS, but that was also the most academically successful in the region. Miramonte posted the highest GPA for any team with at least seven wrestlers on the roster, making the program the NCS CIF Scholastic Championship Team for 2016-2017.

The feat impressed, but didn't surprise the head coach.

"I'm extremely proud," Herrera said. "But again, being in this community that I'm in as a coach, that's kind of the standard and almost the expectation of every student to kind of overachieve and anything but the highest (level) is unacceptable."

At the NCS meet, held on Feb. 24 and Feb. 25, Wright placed in second in the 152-weight class, earning an automatic bid to the state finals.

"He was one of the top 32 wrestlers in that weight class in the state of California," Herrera said. "And the state of California has over 1,000 wrestling programs, so he's con-

sidered in the top two, three percent of athletes in the state."

At the state championship – hosted at Rabobank Arena in Bakersfield on March 3 and March 4 – Wright advanced to the second round of the competition before exiting the tournament. Wright took down Dillon Cravens of Bakersfield – the No. 5 overall wrestler in the Central Section – before losing to Ed Bilezekchian of Santa Ana in his second match.

The loss brought an end to Wright's wrestling tenure with the Mats and also capped his second consecutive season in which he'd been the top 152-pound athlete in the the league.



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# Acalanes lacrosse team is charging through league play

By Karl Buscheck



Acalanes Collin Jeffries and Miramonte Josh Radlow

Photo Gint Federas

Asked about the possibility of the considerable outside hype becoming a distraction for the Acalanes lacrosse team, head coach Brent Ringwood had to let out a laugh. "Honestly, I don't think they even know about those rankings," Ringwood said of his club, pegged as the No. 20 team in the state and the No. 71 team in the nation, per Max-

Preps. "They're used to being pretty well regarded. We haven't had a down season in a really long time," Ringwood added. "And we always talk about the history of the (program) and they put in the work." As Acalanes carves through the schedule with an unblemished 8-0 record in league,

the Dons have suffered just one defeat overall, falling 12-4 on Redwood of Larkspur back on March 18.

"We weren't really sure how the team was going to be this year," Ringwood admitted. "We knew we had a lot of talent, but we didn't quite know how they fit together and at the beginning of the season we were kind of getting by the skin of our teeth, but lately we've found a groove."

Perched atop the Diablo Athletic League standings, the Dons (10-1), have benefitted from a roster stacked with skilled athletes.

"We've got some talented players," Ringwood said. "But we're spread pretty evenly across offense and defense."

With six DAL contests remaining on the docket, the Dons are on the path to scratching the first bullet point off their annual to-do list.

"We have the same goals pretty much every year," Ringwood said. "We ask the kids for team goals at the beginning of each season. We have them submit them and write them all down. They always consist of two goals. They want to win league. They want to compete for an NCS championship."

Last spring, Acalanes advanced to the quarterfinals of the NCS Division 2 bracket before watching their season come to an end. While the focus remains on the league schedule and the task at hand, the Dons already have designs of producing yet another deep

postseason march.

"I think Division 2 teams will tell you that we're going to be there or we're going to be close at the end," Ringwood said. "We just want our shot."

Campolindo is one of the teams that is angling to take down the Dons. The Cougars face off against Acalanes on the road on May 2 in the penultimate game of the DAL season.

Campolindo was on the wrong end of the score line in the first meeting, falling 9-7 to Acalanes on March 24. The loss stands as one of just two defeats for the Cougars, who sport an 8-2 mark overall and a 7-1 record in the DAL.

After dropping the season opener 13-5 to Monte Vista back on Feb. 21, Campolindo has found its form, running off eight wins in a stretch of nine matches.

Miramonte sits in a tie for fourth in the DAL table after edging Northgate, 9-8, on the road on March 30. The win stemmed the team's two-game slide, and leaves the Mats at 5-6 overall and 4-4 in league play.

While head coach Byron McGovern's team dropped back-to-back contests to their local rivals during the week of March 14, the Mats still have one more crack at the Dons and Cougars, respectively. The Mats visit Moraga on April 21 for DAL showdown with their neighbors and travel to Lafayette on April 25 to meet up with Acalanes.

# Lamorinda Rugby Hosts Canadian Team

Submitted by Doug Pearson



The two teams pose together under the goalposts at Wilder after the match.



Shawnigan Coach Ander Monro congratulates Lamo on the match and thanks them for their hospitality. Lamo players, pictured from left, Nick Miller, Nick Pearson, Marco Nykodym, Miles Beaubelle, Konrad Mader, Tighe Tejada, Dominic Bradley, Nick Bettencourt, Max Schoenberger, Owen McNamara, Alex Cortessis, Logan Branch, Mateo Larson.

The Lamorinda Rugby JV team got a taste of international rugby flavor this week. On Tuesday, Lamo players met players from Shawnigan Lakes (British Columbia) and took them into their homes as guests for the night. The following night, the two teams played each other at Wilder Field in Orinda. The Shawnigan players started the game with a furious pace and scored twice to go ahead 12-0 in the early minutes. Lamorinda fought back and tied the game at halftime 12-12. The Lamorinda players had woken up and in the second half put 24 unanswered points on the board. Final Score: Lamo 36-Shawnigan 12. Zach Barker (Miramonte), Nick Bettencourt (Acalanes) each scored tries with Kaleo Nelson (Campolindo) converting the extra points. Logan Branch (Acalanes) had a couple of 20-yard runs and Nick Miller (Miramonte) had some nice tackles in the match. Following the match, both teams awarded players of the match to the other team and sat down for a post-match pasta feed as is the custom in rugby. Lamo players hosted the Shawnigan players one more night at their homes and wished them good luck on the rest of their tour of Northern California. The Lamorinda JV team is looking to continue their undefeated season with a play-off run that will end in April.

**Submit stories to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com**

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# LMYA Volleyball is in Full Swing

Part of the LMYA Spring Sport Spectrum-- Volleyball, Softball, Baseball, Teeball



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## The Heart of LMYA Volleyball

More than a decade ago, Eric took the helm of a fledgling LMYA Volleyball program and, with his passion for the game, improved and energized the program. Among his innovations was to bring college and high school volleyball players to help train the coaches and to act as role models for LMYA's aspiring athletes. Eric also coaches volleyball at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School and shares his talent at Campolindo High School and St. Mary's College. Where did his enthusiasm come from?



ERIC STANDRING

"My interest for volleyball sprang from an incident in London, England when I was 14 or 15. Until then I played baseball as a pitcher, and basketball as a center, and a little soccer in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. At the American School in London, a PE teacher, Mr. Dodson, was watching me and a few older kids as we tried to dunk volleyballs after a basketball game. I could dunk so Mr. Dodson asked me to play volleyball against the military kids in the south of England that weekend. I remember getting knocked out while trying to block from the 10' line. Somehow that caused me to like volleyball more than all the other sports I had played. Today, with a Master's Degree in leadership from St. Mary's College, I see in volleyball more interdependence than in other sports. What other sports (by and large) require two assists before the attack? What other ball sport has more people in such as small (30' x 30') space? All in all volleyball plays well into my passion for developing youth in teaming skills"

# CYO March Madness

Submitted by Jack Appleton



Top row, from left, coach Peter Reidenbach, Joe Reidenbach, Jack Dowley, Cole Santangelo, coach Stuart Colaco; bottom row from left, Will Appleton, Phin Kofman, Dashiell Strottman, David Gonzales and Jake Colaco; not pictured Stewart Cocotis.

The fourth-grade St. Perpetua boys' basketball team version of March Madness is known as the Tournament of Champions and includes eight of the best teams from

CYO leagues in the area. The St. Perpetua boys won three games in a row, culminating in a championship win over St. John's of Sacramento.

## League title for OIS basketball

Submitted by Jason Curry



Top row, from left, coach Jason Curry, Andrew Sidlauskas, Tyler Lenk, Chase Lenk, Nicolai Bell, Ben Murphy, Zach DeLange; bottom row, from left, Anthony Ricevito, Peyton Harris, Christian Gee, Kenny Kostermans, Brian Dolan and Caden Breznikar.

The 7A boys basketball team from Orinda Intermediate won the league title on March 15, defeating Martinez Jr. High in a come-from-behind victory. The Bulldogs fin-

ished a great season with an overall record of 22-2. The team was led by Tournament MVP's Ben Murphy and Andrew Sidlauskas.

## Orinda Intermediate wins 6th grade league tournament

Submitted by Chase Jiannalone



Photo provided

OIS 6th Grade Basketball team won a hard fought victory by sweeping Albany Middle School, Longfellow Middle School (Berkeley) and Joaquin Moraga Middle School.

Named All Tournament was Luke Dun-

can and Tournament MVP Rome Jiannalone. Team members Nasen Alm, Gio Bottene, Dorian Byrd, Ethan Conley, Cole Davidson, Brett Jasper, Sebastian Rguem, Shep Romary, Will Stokes, Julin Huang, Brian Edelen (not pictured).

## St. Perpetua 5th grade American Girls team won the Diocese Basketball Championship

Submitted by Andrea Hilsabeck



Back row, from left: coaches Jim Smith, Brad Hilsabeck and John Lyons. Front row, from left: Adriana Smith, Madeline Jerge, Hailey Hilsabeck, Natalie Lyons, Katie Kostolansky, Anna Mollahan, Natalie Aiken & Jenna Steele. Not pictured: Tea Sloane Smith

## St. Perpetua 6th grade girls national team clinches league championship

Submitted by Kevin Guthrie



Front row, from left, Quinn Guthrie, Sophie Westen, Anya Peterson, Erin Hambidge; back row from left, coach Kevin Guthrie, Lauren Kuo, Kate Carter, Sarah McCarthy, Alexa Carter, Alexandra Ames, Keilly Kilpatrick, Molly Strohmeyer, coach Gregg Ames. Photo Jack Carter

The St. Perpetua 6th-grade Girls CYO National Team capped off an exciting basketball season with a pair of overtime wins in the West Diablo League Playoffs Feb. 25 and 26. The entire team exhibited grit, determination and teamwork through-

out the highly competitive season as they secured six of their 11 wins by three or fewer points, including a two-point victory in the semifinals and a come-from-behind, one-point victory in the Championship game.

## The Lady Panthers of St. Perpetua win Diocese again

By Jim Gebhardt & Steve Haggerty



Front row, from left: Mia Mastrov, Ellie Palma, Claire Rowe; back row, from left: Jim Gebhardt, Kiana Thorson, Grace Gebhardt, Julie Haggerty, Zoe Edelman, Rosie Grant-Hudd, Steve Haggerty (not pictured: Alexandra Wecsher) Photo provided

The eighth-grade American girls' team from St. Perpetua finished their CYO experience by winning their fourth CYO Diocese Basketball Championship in five years. This year's playoffs were once again exciting. St. Joan of Arc's seventh-grade girls team played up in the eighth-grade American division for the first time and upset undefeated Good Shepherd's 8th grade girls team in a game that went down to the wire. With the win St. Joan of Arc advanced to the finals to play a St. Perpetua squad who beat Immacu-

late Heart 47-41 in the semi-finals on Saturday. The championship game on Sunday saw the seventh-graders from St. Joan of Arc off to a blazing start with a 13-4 lead over the defending Diocese champions. Slowly St. P's chipped away at the deficit with great teamwork, determination and hustle. St. P's held a comfortable lead for most of the second half. The girls from St. Joan of Arc wouldn't give up, though, scoring a three-pointer with seconds remaining to bring the final score to 38-34. Way to go girls!

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# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 11 Issue 3 Wednesday, April 5, 2017



*April Gardening Guide with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D12*

## Changing your garden, changing your life

By Sophie Braccini



*Kay Countryman and Ron Briggs*



*Photos Sophie Braccini Robert Sorenson*

Every year, the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour features new and mature gardens composed mostly of native plants. The three Lamorinda gardens featured here — and which will be on the tour — are each so different from each other, but all testify of how gardening practices have shaped not only the landscape but also the lives of the gardeners.

Over several decades Orinda's Robert Sorenson has restored the wild native habitat on his very large property that extends on both sides of a creek; Kay Countryman and Ron Briggs replaced the lawn in their medium size backyard three years ago with natives, working with a landscape architect; while Tré Fran has transformed a relatively small front-

yard into an intricate kingdom for tens of different natives. Each of these residents came from a different background but with a similar quest for beauty and authenticity. They all say that the experience they have in their garden is enriching their lives.

Sorenson embarked on the restoration of his one-acre property years ago. The front of the Orinda house already sets the tone with native grasses under the trees, and the voyage in nature continues in the back. It is somewhat of a little expedition to explore the whole property. Sorenson has built stairs and bridges to access both sides of the creek with recycled woods and there are no guardrails of any type. But the hiking effort is totally worthwhile.

There, people will not only discover Califor-

nia natives, they will be exposed to an area that has been entirely restored to its original flora. Sorenson removed all the invasive and nonnative plants and went on a hunt for plants from the local watershed. Collecting seeds in nearby parks and buying small plants in specialized nurseries, he worked tirelessly to create a sustainable space of beauty. There are literally hundreds of native plants to be discovered on that land.

Sorenson is a Berkeley optometrist who says that gardening is his way of balancing his life. He feels that he is a student of nature, and that even if he has researched plants for years there is still so much for him to learn. He also loves to experiment and propagate.

... continued on page D4



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City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	7	\$525,000	\$2,399,000
MORAGA	9	\$484,000	\$2,000,000
ORINDA	7	\$960,000	\$3,150,000

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

- 18 Juniper Drive, \$858,000, 3 Bdrms, 1683 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 3-8-17;  
Previous Sale: \$525,000, 01-17-03
- 1556 Rancho View Road, \$2,399,000, 4 Bdrms, 3246 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 3-8-17;  
Previous Sale: \$1,836,000, 10-11-16
- 3100 Sandalwood Court, \$1,083,000, 4 Bdrms, 1783 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 3-10-17
- 590 Silverado Drive, \$1,385,000, 3 Bdrms, 2012 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-8-17;  
Previous Sale: \$950,000, 12-03-12
- 3375 South Lucille Lane, \$860,000, 3 Bdrms, 1464 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 3-13-17
- 3711 West Road, \$525,000, 1 Bdrms, 832 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 2-28-17;  
Previous Sale: \$425,000, 11-01-06
- 1003 Woodbury Road #202, \$860,000, 2 Bdrms, 1110 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 3-10-17

### MORAGA

- 1976 Ascot Drive, \$484,000, 2 Bdrms, 1234 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-8-17;  
Previous Sale: \$129,500, 04-19-90
- 2059 Ascot Drive #211, \$463,000, 2 Bdrms, 1193 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 2-27-17;  
Previous Sale: \$289,000, 08-13-10
- 789 Augusta Drive, \$1,435,000, 5 Bdrms, 2992 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 3-7-17;  
Previous Sale: \$1,020,000, 07-28-03
- 3 Crockett Drive, \$2,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 3730 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 2-28-17;  
Previous Sale: \$780,000, 08-15-96
- 140 Donald Drive, \$1,010,000, 3 Bdrms, 1431 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 3-10-17
- 120 Draeger Drive, \$1,220,000, 3 Bdrms, 1624 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 3-10-17;  
Previous Sale: \$905,000, 07-24-08
- 48 Sullivan Drive, \$1,440,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 3-10-17;  
Previous Sale: \$655,000, 06-14-00
- 415 Tharp Drive, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2284 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-2-17;  
Previous Sale: \$1,185,000, 06-16-15
- 145 Westchester Street, \$740,000, 2 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 3-1-17

### ORINDA

- 14 Charles Hill Circle, \$960,000, 3 Bdrms, 2011 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 2-27-17
- 98 Estates Drive, \$1,506,000, 4 Bdrms, 2141 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 3-8-17
- 59 La Espiral, \$1,345,000, 3 Bdrms, 2564 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 3-7-17;  
Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 03-08-07
- 36 Las Vegas Road, \$3,150,000, 5 Bdrms, 3941 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 3-1-17;  
Previous Sale: \$846,000, 12-24-15
- 46 Muth Drive, \$1,210,000, 3 Bdrms, 1372 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-2-17;  
Previous Sale: \$658,000, 01-25-11
- 131 Oak Road, \$1,746,000, 4 Bdrms, 3700 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 3-10-17;  
Previous Sale: \$540,000, 11-01-05
- 68 Persimmon Walk, \$1,320,000, 4 Bdrms, 2394 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 3-9-17

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# Changing your garden, changing your life

... continued from page D1



Photo Sophie Braccini

During the tour, several speeches and a concert will take place in the beautiful garden.

Tré Frane's garden is also the result of a lifelong quest. The plant physiologist studied the functioning of plants and was a technology teacher at Glorietta Elementary School for years. She knows her plants and loves to experiment in her garden. The relatively small front yard opened during the tour is a treasure trove for anyone interested in natives. Frane says that more than 50 different species are represented. Over the years she has cultivated over 100 different plants. She observes them, but if she notices that they do not thrive in her garden, she lets them go.

Almost every morning when the weather is right, she comes to her sitting rock in the garden with a cup of coffee, enjoys the beauty, notices the changes and observes the natural life that thrives in her garden.

During the tour where she'll be featured for the first time, she plans to be there along friends who have volunteered to help and she will answer questions. She will show off her three different varieties of poppies, wild gingers, yarrows, different buckwheats, irises, dogwoods and so many more. Alexandra Ashton, the landscape architect who worked with her to reshape her garden and who proposed new plants, will also be there.

... continued on page D13



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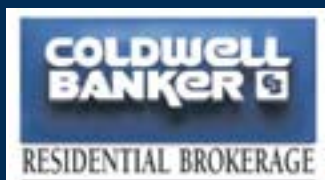
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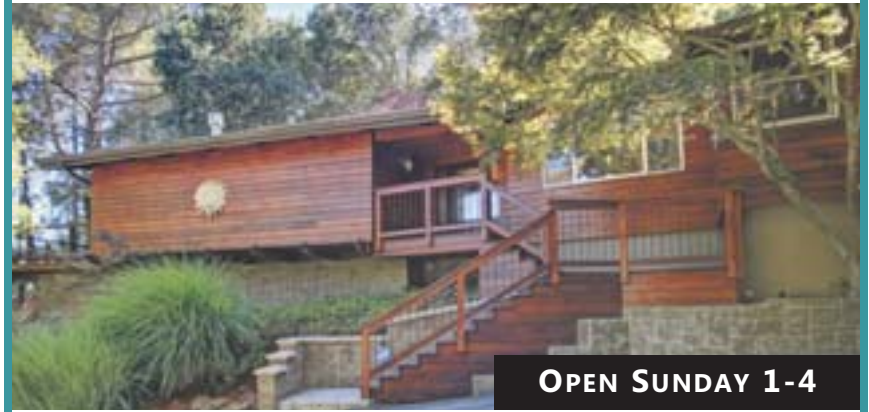
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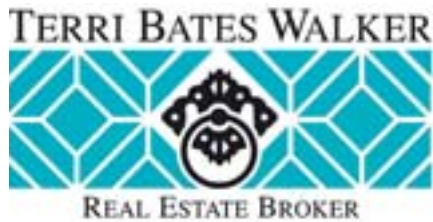
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## Stylish Solutions

# Leave space for who you will become

By Ann McDonald



Color has a huge impact on our lives. If the thought of a complete removal or overhaul is daunting, consider using simple, smaller elements. We see side table/stool, pillows, artwork, and even a bench used here. Practice in children's rooms or family rooms to ease yourself in. Photos provided

**H**ow are you, Lamorindans? My heart hopes well. This spring has been such a precious time in Lamorinda, all the rains bringing blooms before their time. I am loving it.

This is my last regular column for our beloved Lamorinda Weekly as my team and I are transitioning into other design work, most notably, diving deeper into manufacturing for our Bespoke Holiday Collection as well as expanding our library of online Design and Decorating classes. For more information, you may visit [www.couturechateau.com](http://www.couturechateau.com).

For now, know I have reached out to a dear designer to who will take precious care of this column space in the months to come.

In transition, I felt like sharing the most important piece about designing your home spaces, from almost 30 years on the front lines of true luxury design.

If you were a longtime client, you and I would have shared many discussions around this topic. It feels so close to the heart, and yet many miss it. Because you are wise enough to live and thrive in Lamorinda, I'm certain this will resonate with you.

1) Your designed home should be a place you BECOME, not a place you store.

Let me explain by way of an exaggerated example:

One of the keys to successful luxury design is movement. To move, there must be

empty space. What is missing is as important as what is included. We are constantly designing with an eye to a future incarnation and legacy, of an individual, family, community or business.

Imagine if we did interior design for a business and installed antique dial up land line phones, instead of Wi-Fi. What sounds preposterous for a business is often de rigeur for home design.

Think about it: We reach the stage where we can afford to decorate or reconstruct, and the first thing we do is pull out our magazines of dream rooms past. Proverbially, we are installing landlines in the forms of sofas, pictures, accomplishments.

We pile up memories and have them framed. We line our halls and shelves with what happened, and rarely leave empty space for what will.

One of the exercises I recently had a client walk through, and then did myself (ouch!), was to go through their home and tag everything that was given, inherited or chosen for them by someone else. Then we tagged everything that was centered around a memory older than seven years.

Do you know what was left? Very little.

And here's the kicker: It's a stunning home! Spectacular inherited pieces, museum-worthy art, blue and white for miles, gorgeous framed art from children, photos from precious trips. However, very little was directly a result of the homeowner's true heart for what was ahead in their life.

Without even thinking, they had become a "luxury store house" with no room for movement.

A strong example to be sure, but one worth recalling when we put our homes together.

... continued on page D10

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## Stylish Solutions

# Leave space for who you will become

... continued from page D8

2) You have something brilliant to bring to the next season of life in Lamorinda, and how you design your home will tell me a great deal about what part you will contribute.

It's okay to have some antiques, and old photos, but begin to think objectively when it comes to creating a space to move you forward.

This can be hard. It's OK to cry. It's even OK to fail! It's even OK to rent storage space. But if we want to keep growing and becoming something other than a memory, we must embrace the process. Many of you know from last month's article, I was moved to redecorate after my own experience doing the same, and I'm in the business! I'm the professional. Aren't we glad we're all human?

To go forward in your design, embrace your home as process, and ask yourself questions:

- Is my space ready for the next? Is there any empty space?
- Will this home handle where I want to go? Where my Lamorinda family is hoping to be in one, three, or even five years?

My client and I decided upon a 30 percent rule. Thirty percent or roughly one third of the things from the past could remain, but they did so only on rotation. There had to be new art, new photos, empty spaces...where the next incarnation of life would have space to reside.

3. "Blessing comes when it has space to reside" - Ann

Some of my past articles deal with these nuances, and I encourage you to read them. I really feel like Lamorinda is one of the most precious places in all the Earth. Let's cherish our homes and design them with an eye towards refreshing the future, and making all things possible.

In closing, it has been an absolute pleasure to write this column monthly. I love being a part of your home story. For now, blessings and best from my design heart to yours!

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



*Consider the office: Contemporary or traditional, it matters not. The design of the systems and structures to host the office are always the most up to date. We don't fill it with low speed dial up phones.*



*Create spaces for the next season. Leave some areas undone, so the next piece of your journey can find its way in.*

### Designer Clearance

As one last hurrah, we are hosting a Designer Clearance Sale on Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22 at 5 Tappan Lane, Orinda. I have engaged a professional Estate Sale Company to handle the inventory sale, as there is simply too much for my team and me to manage. We are clearing out our fabric warehouses as we transition into more holiday production, and have tremendous inventory of fabric, accessories, smalls, table top and more to sell.

You may find more information on the sale at [www.couturechateau.com/sale2017](http://www.couturechateau.com/sale2017). Please make sure to be on the email list for updates and times.

We look forward to seeing you then!



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## April Gardening Guide

# The Art of Growing Grass

By Cynthia Brian

“Now every field is clothed with grass, and every tree with leaves; now the woods put forth their blossoms, and the year assumes its gay attire.” ~Virgil

**Y**es, California passed Proposition 64 last November. However, this column is not about cultivating marijuana, although I am writing about the glories of grass.

Spring is spectacular with its wardrobe of rainbow blooms. Trees are covered with blossoms, the fragrance of freesia engages our nostrils, and the ubiquitous beauty surrounding us is awe-inspiring. We are so blessed that Mother Nature celebrates the rebirth of the seasons with a grand April entrance.

Because of the warmer soil, fall is the best time to plant or reseed a lawn, yet spring runs a close second in popularity. If you haven't torn out your swath of grass in the past few years during our dreadful drought, no doubt you are now looking at a runway of green in your yard thanks to the months of rain. To manage your efforts maintaining the health, beauty and benefits of your lawn for the remainder of the year, get started this month with simple best practices.

Tips to Growing a Lush, Green, Sustainable Turf

- Decide if you want to seed, sod or reseed. Seeding for the first time is best done in autumn when the soil is warm as germination is swifter. You can successfully reseed, overseed and sod in spring, including those irksome bare patches.

- Whichever you choose, your first consideration is to properly prepare your soil. Check the PH level. Ideally lawns should be in the six to seven range. If lower than six, add lime; if higher than seven, add sulfur to bring the PH down.

- Pull the weeds. If you have lots of weeds, keep in mind that weeds mean that the soil conditions are imbalanced. Weeds provide homes and food for microbes but your soil must be improved before your new sod or grass seeds will thrive. Many “weeds” are actually gourmet dinner or tea ingredients including plantain, dandelion, creeping Charlie, mint, mustard, lambs quarter and more.

- Order several yards of enriched soil and compost to be delivered. Ask the yard experts what is their best soil for improving your lawn. Soil is the foundation.

- Add organic fertilizer to accelerate deeper rooting.

- Aerate to loosen the soil. A core aerator will punch holes in the ground to bring air and water to the roots. The finger plugs are to be left on the surface to naturally decompose. Less compaction equals better drainage and absorption.

- Consult your favorite nursery professional for a recommendation on the best seed combinations for you. I'm a huge fan of mixed growth lawns for year around enjoyment. I reseed with Pearl's Premium ([www.PearlsPremium.com](http://www.PearlsPremium.com)) interspersed with plugs of isotoma (blue star creeper) and white and red clover. Together they make a very attractive natural rug and the clover is a natural nitrogen supplier. Some people enjoy lawns laced with wild strawberry, violets, mint, or even planted with bulbs.

- You may have to cover reseeded areas with netting to keep the birds away. For small areas, discarded window or door screens work well.

- Let the rainfall do the watering to get your grass established. If it's later in the season when the rain has stopped, water deeply in the morning twice a week or as needed.

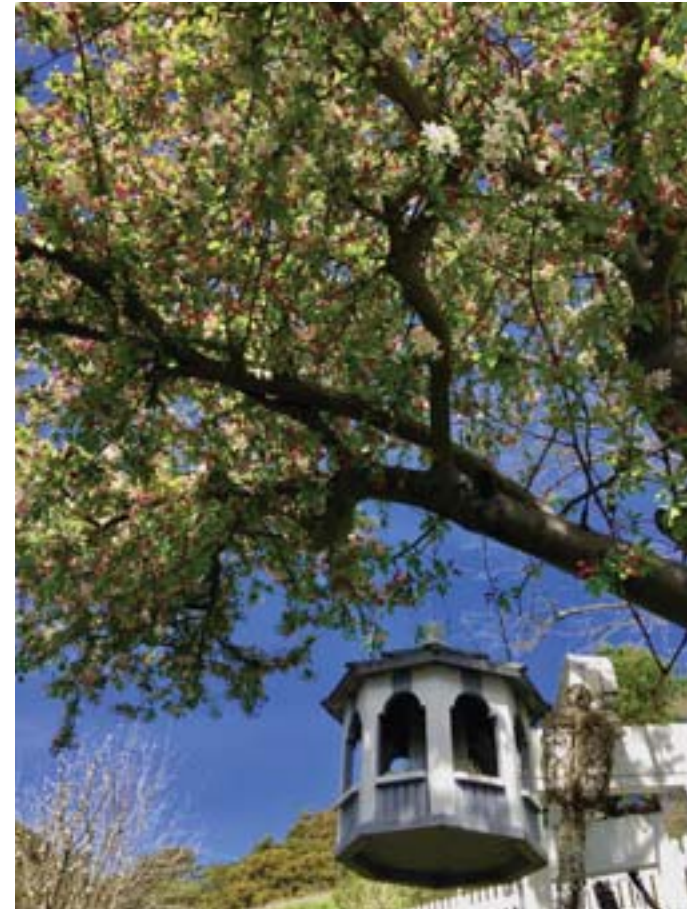
- Mow your lawns with a sharp blade on a high setting without the bag allowing the cut grass to remain on the lawn. This is called grasscycling and is the most beneficial component of cultivating a lush, deep green, thick healthy lawn. If you are buying a new mower, buy a mulch mower, which will chop the grass. Grasscycling allows the clippings to be the fertilizer that provides nutrients to your grass. Scientific research indicates that the content of typical grass clippings by weight is nitrogen (N) 4 percent, potassium (P) 2 percent, and phosphorous (K) .5 percent. By recycling your grass clippings back to your lawn, you use 25 percent less additional fertilizer.

- Mulch the reseeded areas to create a strong turf.

- Stay off the grass while it's growing!

- For those of you who are “Ex-lawn Rangers,” you can create an inviting mosaic with massed groundcovers and low growers including dicentra, ajuga, creeping thyme, golden creeping Jenny, dwarf cinquefoil, or even sedum. You'll need to clip, snip, and maintain. Most groundcovers are not foot-traffic friendly.

... continued on page D14



A birdfeeder anchors a flowering crabapple tree.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Blue star grass amidst the fallen petals of peach blossoms.



# Changing your garden, changing your life

... continued from page D4



Photo Sophie Braccini

In their Lafayette home Kay Countryman and Ron Briggs will also showcase their garden for the first time. The backyard used to be a lawn that year after year absorbed an increasing water — and financial — budget. Countryman had been going to the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour for years and really liked a garden a friend of hers had done. Roxy Klein was the architect and she and her husband decided to work with her.

Klein designed the garden and established the plant list, creating spaces and areas in the garden that gave the couple a feeling of space they had never had before. The garden was completed two years ago and the couple soon noted that it had consequences on their lives they had not expected.

Not only was their water cut by 66 percent, but the new landscape created a new experience for them. They say that it is as if the garden suddenly became alive. They felt that it was drawing them outside; they noticed that they were spending much more time in the garden, feeling grounded and happy. There they observe the wildlife coming back, the change of seasons, the beauty and variety of the environment. Briggs said that he would never have guessed how much the new garden would mean for his well-being.

## The Tour

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is on Sunday, May 7. It is free and self-guided. This year, for the first time, participants can choose between receiving a free PDF of the 80 page garden guide or paying \$10 for the printed guide. More information at [www.bringingbackthenatives.net](http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net). There are 39 gardens on the tour, eight from Lamorinda, and several nurseries, including some that rarely open their gates to the public.

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# The Art of Growing Grass

... continued from page D12

## Benefits of Maintaining a Lawn

Although many people tend to discourage lawns in landscapes as a water conservation method, I am a firm believer that the humble grass shoot offers benefits to our health and wellbeing. Besides the fact that children and animals enjoy a safe, comfortable place to tumble and toss, lawns contribute to better air quality by trapping dust and smoke particles while cooling the air from the ground up.

Our environments are made more habitable by the generation of oxygen absorbing the pollutants of carbon and sulfur dioxide. Lawns clean the air we breathe. Erosion is controlled because water can't carve deep recesses in a thickly planted lawn. Water filters through turf grass making our ground waters safer and cleaner for the environment. A patch of green soothes the eye when viewing a landscape, offering a resting space between the color explosions of flowers and shrubs. Lawns offer a buffer zone in fire prevention. Several years ago when one of the biggest wild fires in our national history hit the forests of Northern California, our family cabin's grassy meadow became the safe zone for dozens of firefighters from around the country. That lawn literally saved lives and the forest from the raging blaze.

Prepare your grass for healthy growing this spring, and get ready for the fun-filled days of croquet, ball games, picnics, sprinkler baths, or just staring up at the clouds.

Remember that maintaining your lawn enhances the environment, improves your health, and optimizes your enjoyment of the great outdoors. And that's great grass!



A close up look at clover as a lawn substitute.



Pearl's Premium lawn two days after mowing.

## Cynthia Brian's Goddess Gardener Tips for April

**BEWARE** of ticks. Check your body, hair, and clothing after gardening. On a rainy day in mid March when I was covered head to toe in clothing, a tick bit me on my neck. The golf ball size lump is still painful.

**TURN** houseplants a quarter round every week to give adequate amount of sunlight to all parts.

**BAIT** for snails and slugs.

**VISIT** the Wagner Ranch Wildlife Festival on Sunday, April 23 for free family fun. There will be honeybees, goats, turtles, birds, garden activities, food, music, nature tours, arts and crafts. 350 Camino Pablo Rd. at Bear Creek Road in Orinda. <https://fwrna.org/wildlifefest/>

**PERUSE FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY.** Award winning photographer Anne Morrison Rabe's Spring Flowers exhibit is showcased now at home/made Kitchen & Bakery, 337 Rheem Boulevard in Moraga. Almost all of Anne's photographs were shot with an iPhone. Eat, drink, and enjoy the art. [www.Amr-Photography.com](http://www.Amr-Photography.com)

**PREORDER** 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](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com). A quarter of the proceeds benefit the 501c3 Be the Star You Are! charity.

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Cynthia Brian in the garden.

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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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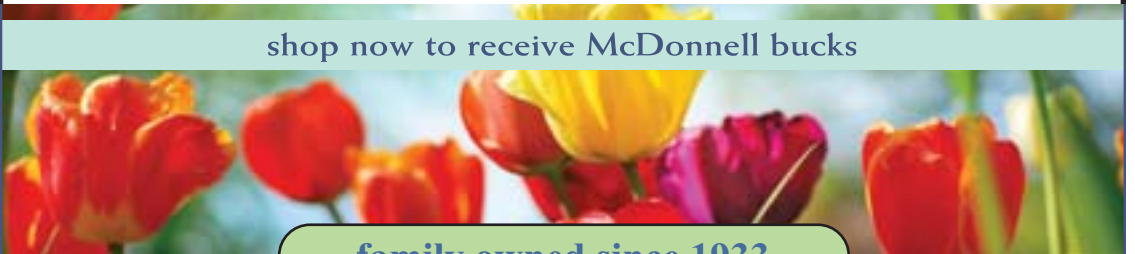
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