

LAMORINDA WEEKLY



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9th Annual Aging by Design Senior Symposium

Saturday, August 5, 2017
8:30 am – 12 pm

Lafayette Elementary School
950 Moraga Rd., Lafayette

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Residents and city dignitaries cut the ribbon to reopen Miner Road.

Photo Steve Ehrhardt

With fanfare, Miner Road reopens to the public after sinkhole

By B. B. Kaye

As city officials set out tables and chairs, bottled water and cupcakes, residents streamed in to see the reopening ceremony of Miner Road. Work crews hurried to clear the site, right up to the minute Orinda Director of Public Works Larry Theis spoke.

“We’re aren’t quite finished, but we’re very close. I’d

like to go back a bit in time...” They described the sinkhole discovery, realizations of its seriousness, and late nights planning and collaborating to satisfy governing agencies. He thanked everyone who gave long hours.

Orinda Mayor Eve Phillips said, “A lot of work went to make sure we were providing the right feedback. We’re al-

ways here for your feedback. We’re hoping this will never happen again, but if it does, we probably learned a few things along the way. I think the end result, frankly, that we’re getting the road reopened in a pretty good amount of time for any public works project that I’ve seen, is not too bad of an outcome.” ... continued on page A10

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Complaint filed in attempt to save targeted trees in Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher

The group known as Save Lafayette Trees has filed a complaint in court demanding the reversal of a tree-cutting agreement in order to protect 272 trees deemed at risk from PG&E chainsaws.

The complaint was filed in Contra Costa Superior Court against the City of Lafayette and PG&E on June 26.

Save Lafayette Trees claims, “Not only did the city fail to notify residents of the plans to circumvent their own tree protection ordinance, both the city and PG&E bypassed very important environmental review regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act.”

The growing group of residents formed the organization after learning of the city’s March 27 agreement with PG&E to remove 272 trees. The utility company deems the removal necessary to ensure the safety of the high transmission gas pipelines under its Community Pipeline Safety Initiative.

However Save Lafayette Trees does not believe the removal of the trees is needed



Trees at risk at the Lafayette Reservoir.

Photo provided

for safety and argues furthermore that removing the trees would eliminate natural habitat, destabilize slope structure, reduce shade along trails and change the semi-rural feel of the city.

As a result of initial pushback from residents, PG&E agreed to delay the start of the tree removal and agreed to come back for another presentation before the city council at the end of the summer.

... continued on page A9

Lamorinda’s doctor in the dugout

By Nick Marnell



Jorge Gutierrez

Photo provided

South Orinda’s Jorge Gutierrez plays in the Tri-Valley Men’s Senior Baseball League, part of a national organization that includes ball players of all ages and experience levels. Gutierrez

also works as a physician in a hospital intensive care unit. But Gutierrez does not sit in the dugout flipping through Boyd’s Pathology textbooks; he is so unassuming that many of his teammates and opponents may not know his vocation until they read this article.

Gutierrez credits his years of playing ball and the lessons he learned on the diamond as major contributors to his success in the medical profession.

“Baseball was a great outlet. It kept me out of trouble,” Gutierrez said. He grew up in Oakland, and his mother told him that if he did not get good grades, he would not play baseball. So he got good grades — good enough grades to propel him through UC Berkeley, Harvard Medical School and a 10-year residency at the UC San Francisco Medical Center. “Without the resiliency I learned playing baseball, I don’t think I would have made it through Cal. I don’t wilt when things get tough,” Gutierrez said.

In 2005 he moved to Kaiser Oakland as a pediatric ICU physician, in charge of all in-patient pediatric services. ... continued on page A8

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