

LAMORINDA WEEKLY



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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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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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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.



Trees at risk at the Lafayette Reservoir.

Photo provided

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

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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Fire station construction is going slowly – page A8.

Local Petanque is on the world stage – page B1.



Dons’ Panfili is a double threat in basketball and softball – page C1.



Get the dirt on preparing soil for your gardens this July – page D1.





Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, July 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

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

Design Review

Monday, July 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org




Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

June 18 - July 1

Alarms	96
911 Calls (incl hang-ups)	10
Noise complaints	5
Traffic stops	145
Suspicious Circumstances	11
Suspicious Subjects	27
Suspicious Vehicles	18
Service to Citizen	50
Animal Cruelty	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Auto Burglary	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
900 Block Village Center	
Barking Dog	
800 Block Tanglewood Dr.	
Battery	
Pleasant Hill Rd./Greenvalley Dr.	
3500 Block Powell Dr.	
Beat Info	
4100 Block Canyon Rd.	
Civil Disturbance	
1600 Block Taylor Blvd.	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Civil Problem	
900 Block Janet Ln.	
Shell Gas Laf	
500 Block Dawkins Dr.	
1000 Block Miller Dr.	
Civil Standby	
3200 Block Alta Ln.	
Commercial Burglary	
600 Block St Marys Rd.	
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.	
Disturbing The Peace	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
DUI Misdemeanor	
St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.	
Fire/Ems Response Info	
N Lucille Ln./Peacock Blvd.	
100 Block Secluded Pl	
Wb Sr 24 Eo Acalanes Rd.	
Fireworks	
500 Block Merriewood	
Forgery	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
Found Property	
Moraga Rd./School St.	
1800 Block Reliez Valley Rd.	
3600 Block Deerhill Rd.	
3900 Block Quail Ridge Rd. (2)	
Police Department	
3500 Block Terrace Way	
Fraud Credit Card	
4000 Block Los Arabis Dr.	
Grand Theft	
900 Block Hough Ave.	
10 Block Green Acres Ct.	
Hailed By Citizen	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./1st St.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Harassment	
Police Department (2)	
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
2nd St./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Identity Theft	
3400 Block Silver Springs Rd.	
900 Block Kelley Ct. (3)	
3200 Block Sweet Dr.	
3500 Block S Silver Springs Rd.	
In Custody Theft	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Juvenile Disturbance	
Moraga Blvd./3rd St.	
500 Block Silverado Dr.	
Litter	
3900 Block Quail Ridge Rd.	
Lost Property	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
Medical Police Needed	
3800 Block El Nido Ranch Rd.	
600 Block Glorietta Blvd.	
1100 Block Laurel Dr.	
Neighbor Dispute	
3600 Block Bickerstaff St. (2)	
Ordinance Violation	
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
Panhandling	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.	
Patrol Request	
Mcgraw Ln./Reliez Valley Rd.	

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Mark Kindhouse resigns, opening a vacancy on the Lafayette School District board

By Pippa Fisher

The Lafayette School District board announced a vacancy following the resignation of Board Member Mark Kindhouse and is now seeking applicants.

Kindhouse, who was elected to the board last November, submitted his resignation June 29 following a career move, which will take him and his family out of the area.

As a result the school board is seeking candidates for a provisional appointment. Whoever is appointed will fill the seat until the next scheduled election, which is November 2018. Whoever wins then will finish out the term — two years at that point.

LAFSD Board President David Gerson explained that the board had the option to fill the vacant seat by either appointment

or a special election. Had they decided to hold a special election, the winner then would have completed the remainder of the term, ending in December 2020.

However Gerson said that the board decided on the appointment process in large part due to the cost of holding a special election as well as timing.

“The appointment process is at no cost to the district and we will have a full five-person board in August versus holding a special election, which is expensive and would require several more months before we would have a new board member seated.”

Gerson added, “We are confident that we will have at least one qualified candidate apply for the position in the appointment process.”

The board will interview candidates at a public meeting to be held at 6 p.m. Aug. 16. If one or more candidates receive a nomination from a board member there will be a vote. A person receiving the majority of the votes will be immediately sworn in as a board member.

The LAFSD board oversees the four elementary schools in Lafayette as well as Stanley Middle School but does not include Acalanes High School.

Qualified residents can find further details and the application form on the Lafayette School District website at www.lafsd.k12.ca.us/ by following the link under announcements on the home page.

Kindhouse reflects, “In my limited time on the board, I am

extremely proud of my work in participating in the design approval for the new Stanley campus buildings, purchasing the Old Lafayette Library, making thoughtful, difficult, but required cuts to reduce district expenses, continuing the Child Abuse Prevention Council’s programming efforts, getting to know and better understand the needs of the special education community, reviewing the district’s strategic plan and approving the Local Control and Accountability Plan.”

“Mark was a welcome addition to the board,” says Gerson. “We will miss his thoughtfulness and his collaborative approach to addressing the issues of the day. We wish him great success in his new position and with this move to southern California.”

Vision for Lafayette creeks applauded but council takes no action yet

By Pippa Fisher

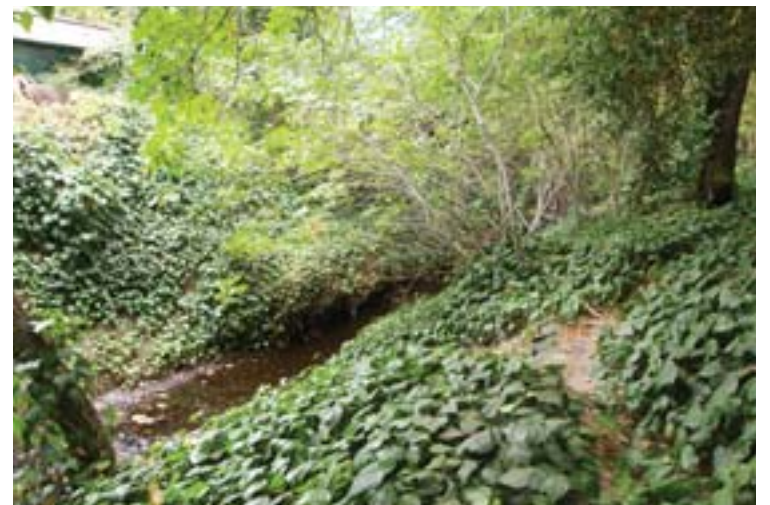
As plans for the restoration and development of the downtown creeks are unveiled — including viewing areas and patios, creek access and crossings — members of the Lafayette City Council praised the detailed report for its broad vision and flexibility.

A measure to adopt the Downtown Creeks Plan was before the council on June 26. Creeks Committee Chairman Will Elder, along with Gates and Associates consultant Steve Goetz, presented the main points of the 148-page report.

Together they explained that the plan’s vision seeks to unify elements over the next 20 years as creek-side parcels of land that are

currently privately owned come up for redevelopment.

... continued on next page



A section of the creek on the west end of Lafayette. Photo Pippa Fisher

Lafayette School District Governing Board Vacancy

Application and Selection Procedures

The Lafayette School District Governing Board has a vacant position due to the resignation of a board member effective June 29, 2017. The board is proceeding with filling the vacancy by provisional appointment. The person appointed shall hold office until the next regularly scheduled election for district board members (November 2018) and shall be afforded all the powers and duties of a board member upon appointment.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE To be considered a candidate for a provisional appointment to the Lafayette School District Governing Board an application packet must be submitted no later than Tuesday, August 8, 2017. The application packet must include:

- Letter of interest relating to pertinent experience
- Current resume
- Completed application form

Application forms are available at the Lafayette School District Office, 3477 School St., Lafayette or online at www.lafsd.org.

Candidates are considered eligible if they are 18 years of age or older; a citizen of the state; a resident of the school district; a registered voter; and not disqualified by the constitution or laws of the state from holding a civil office.

APPLICATION PACKETS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAIL or IN PERSON AT THE LAFAYETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE, 3477 School Street Lafayette, BY NO LATER THAN 3:00 P.M. on TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2017.

By mail: Application packets must be received at the Lafayette School District Office on or before Tuesday, August 8, 2017.

In person: Application packets can be delivered to the district between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

SELECTION PROCEDURE The board will interview candidates at a public meeting on Wednesday, August 16, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Stanley Middle School Library, 3455 School Street, Lafayette CA.

The board will accept oral or written public input and will select the provisional appointee by a majority vote at this meeting.

Within 10 days following the board meeting the district will post a notice in all district schools and in the newspaper stating that the vacancy has been filled and that unless a petition is filed that meets the requirements of law within 30 days of the provisional appointment, the appointment will become effective.

Please direct any questions to:
Lafayette School District Executive Assistant, Sharon Carman, at (925) 927-3502.

Leigh Creekside Park is as controversial as ever

By Pippa Fisher



Leigh Creekside Park

Photo Pippa Fisher

More than 50 meetings later, the controversy around Leigh Creekside Park remains as acrimonious as ever with many residents questioning the fairness of the focused Environmental Impact Report.

The Lafayette City Council heard a status update at the meeting July 26 from Parks, Trails and Recreation Director Jonathan Katayanagi, who said that the focused EIR that city staff had been ordered to prepare at the February meeting would begin in July. The results of this EIR, focused solely on noise, should be available in early 2018. The city is working with the environmental consultants PlaceWorks.

During the February meeting, the council approved the development of the controversial play structure to be built subject to the results of the focused EIR, against the wishes of those residents who prefer the park to remain "passive" – left in its natural state which is what they claim was intended all along for that parcel of land.

On the opposite side are those who want a play structure; who want a more "active" park.

And, several years since the first meetings about this, both sides are still as divided as ever.

The "passives" argued that the city has ignored a glaring need for complete environmental review by opting for the narrow EIR. They say that many areas need further study, including traffic, parking, damage to tree roots, soil compaction, loss of

habitat for birds and other wildlife, including the endangered western pond turtle and California red-legged frog.

One speaker, among the several that urged the council to look for creative alternatives, suggested building a "tot lot" by the gazebo on Mount Diablo Boulevard where he said there would be less environmental damage since the area has already been covered with concrete.

Lafayette resident and lead proponent for the play structure, Grace Dixon, did not agree. She said that the gazebo area was too close to Mount Diablo Boulevard. She said what Leigh Creekside Park is currently lacking is kids and what it needs is something to draw kids in.

Council Member Ivor Samson noted that there were many questions about the fairness of the process. He said the fact-based comments from area residents constitute "fair argument," which he said, "we ignore at our peril." He said there was significant risk of litigation, but that even beyond that, it is "not the way Lafayette does business."

Samson went on to say that many people in the community are concerned the council is not looking at this objectively.

Although this item was only on the agenda in the form of an update, with no action to be taken, Vice Mayor Don Tatzin and Samson both said they would be putting it back on the agenda at a future date.

Vision for Lafayette creeks

... continued from page A2

The plan addresses the improvement of water quality, encourages parcel-specific enhancements and proposes using the public projects in the west end of Lafayette as a catalyst for private projects.

Unifying elements include creek walkways, interpretive signage, creek icons and uniform fencing.

Water quality will be improved through low impact development requirements, pervious paving, rain gardens, which take runoff water from the streets to gardens that serve to purify the water before it goes to the creek, and riparian habitat restoration, including some removal of non-native plants.

Elder explained that the plan was to focus initially on the west reach and to start by addressing erosion. He said that once the public sees what can be done, it would be a catalyst for private development. They plan to restore the creek all the way along to the gazebo on the east end, through the downtown area.

Using the creek which flows by the Cooperage as an example of a private project, Elder said they are looking into replacing the current concrete sections of the creek with stone, making the walls more decorative and re-

placing the current chain link and barbed wire fencing with a more attractive alternative.

City council members uniformly praised the work of the creeks committee. Council member Cam Burks said it showed "excellent vision" but noted, having only just seen the report, that he would like more time to review it before making further comment on something that could cost the taxpayers millions of dollars.

Similarly Council Member Ivor Samson said that because of the financial implications he would need more time to study it and give it the time it deserves.

Council Member Mark Mitchell echoed concern about the cost and the need to look into outside funding sources as well as the implications for cost in terms of maintenance.

Vice Mayor Don Tatzin said he supports the plan but noted that it is a long report and most members of the council had not had enough time to review it thoroughly so suggested it be continued to the second city council meeting in September when all members would be present.

That motion to continue was carried unanimously with Mayor Mike Anderson absent.

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Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, July 12, 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, July 26, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, July 17, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, July 24, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

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



June 20 to 27

Alarms	21
Noise complaints	1
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	2
Traffic stops	36
Suspicious Circumstances	11
Suspicious Subjects	2
Suspicious Vehicles	1
Barking Dog	
1900 block Ascot Dr.	
Battery	
100 block Corliss Dr.	
Child molest	
300 block Rheem Blvd.	
Disturbance	
10 block via Barcelona	
70 block Donald Dr.	
10 block Doral Dr.	
500 block Center St.	
500 block Moraga Rd.	
Dispute	
Moraga Commons Park	
Location n/a	
DUI	
800 block Villa Ln.	
Excessive speed	
Brandt Dr/Harrington Rd.	

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Moraga declares fiscal emergency with thin budget

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga Administrative Director Amy Cunningham asked the Moraga Town Council to declare a fiscal emergency for the town.

This does not mean that the city is bankrupt, but that the recent emergencies and ongoing state of minimal resources have stretched the town's budget too thin. The declaration will, according to staff, allow the town to more easily pursue new avenues for more sustainable and locally controlled income sources.

The two infrastructure incidents that have plagued Moraga last year and this year — the sinkhole and the failing Canyon bridge — have tapped Moraga's reserves,

leaving the town's coffers almost drained and the administration unable to face its obligations should a new incident occur, Cunningham said. But this is not all. The director pointed out to the council that the town has been underfunded from the start and that it resulted in years of deferred maintenance, and a lack of asset replacement funding.

Cunningham and Town Manager Bob Priebe agree that declaring the emergency sends a message to the community and to agencies the town is dealing with: Moraga has a problem that will not go away on its own.

When she made her budget presentation to the town council on June 28 Cunningham showed a balanced operational budget but with no surplus to be directed to the depleted asset replacement fund and the reserves. Cunningham warned that in the future, even operational expenses might not be covered by revenue, as requirements increase and revenue does not.

The director highlighted the fact that previous studies have shown that Moraga does not have a spending problem, but a resource problem. The per capita expenditure for public services is the lowest in the area: Moraga spends \$481, when Lafayette spends \$673, Orinda \$732, Danville \$704, Clay-

ton \$888, and San Ramon \$1,004.

One of the reasons Moraga is so poor is because it gets the lowest percentage in Contra Costa County of the property tax paid in town: only 5.32 percent, a figure that was negotiated by Moraga's founders at incorporation and that was frozen in perpetuity when Proposition 13 passed. Cunningham explained after the meeting that no one was willing to challenge this discrepancy, because according to the director, giving more to Moraga would mean giving less to another community.

At this time, Moraga's total reserve, including the developer's fee fund from Palos Colorados, is about \$2.3 million. The funds to provide an emergency bridge on Canyon Road have already been deducted. These funds, or at least a portion, as well as those going to the repair of the sinkhole near Rheem Boulevard, should come back to the town in the future. Cunningham was sure to note that federal processes are very long and that reimbursement is always at the discretion of the administration.

Seth Frieman was the only Moraga resident who came to the meeting to comment about this topic. According to his calculation, Moraga needs to find \$55 million of additional resources to compen-

sate for the years of delayed maintenance and asset replacement. He noted that if the town decides to go for a parcel tax it would have to be in the \$1,200 to \$1,500 per parcel range to make a dent.

Cunningham said that staff will be looking at all possible options. The first step will be a new public survey to assess what people want to preserve as far as public services. It will happen by the end of July. Then different funding mechanisms will be studied.

The council unanimously approved the budget and the declaration of fiscal emergency. Council member Kymberleigh Korpus asked if such a declaration would hurt Moraga's credit rating. Priebe answered that the town's financial situation would dictate what its rating would be, and that it was not good.

Heads up for a new survey

Residents will be asked in the coming weeks to participate in a survey that will gauge their priorities regarding town services. The survey will be done through a mixed use of phone calls, texting and online questionnaires.

Sinkhole repair

Moraga Public Works department said that the repair work for the sinkhole is planned to start on July 17 and last until Oct. 7. The town will close Rheem Boulevard at the intersection with Moraga Road for the entire duration of the repairs.— Sophie Braccini

Moraga Town Council postpones local Poet Laureate decision

By Sophie Braccini

The members of the Moraga Town Council could not decide if a local poet laureate should be a shared Lamorinda resource or uniquely Moraga's.

Two projects are competing for local approval: a concept where Moraga and Saint Mary's College would collaborate to appoint an unpaid poet who would produce poetry and programs for the town, and the Lamorinda Arts Council's program that will appoint and fund a multi-cities poet that will create poetry for events and run literacy programs. The four council members present at a recent meeting could not find a majority for either option and the topic was continued to a future date.

Mayor Teresa Onoda proposes a Moraga-only poet laureate's program run by the parks and recreation department in collaboration with SMC. The idea started germinating in 2015 when Onoda and other art-minded Lamorinda people met with the Orinda Arts Council that had decided, under the leadership of Maestro Lawrence Kohl, to embrace the three communities. At the time, the idea was to combine the creativity and energy of the three communities, including SMC and local schools.

LAC's project is to appoint a laureate who will work with the three towns, or only two if Moraga does not want to join in. The non-profit has raised money to give that person a stipend. The laureate will be appointed for two years, write poetry to celebrate events and conduct training in schools. The pro-

gram does not require Moraga's financial participation.

The mayor is quite passionate about developing a unique program for Moraga. She explained at the June 28 meeting that this would contribute to making Moraga a fabulous place. She added that she has talked with SMC's president Jim Donahue countless times about this, that SMC is a powerhouse for poetry with the head of the creative writing department being the poetry editor for New York Times. She concluded that she did not want to exclude anyone, but that she was the mayor of Moraga, not of Lamorinda.

Council Member Dave Trotter argued that President Donahue had sent a letter to the council indicating that both options — a Moraga or a Lamorinda poet laureate — would be something the college would support. He said he favored the LAC's proposal because it was funded and already well defined. He wanted to make sure though that the poet could be someone working in Lamorinda and not necessarily living in Lamorinda as is indicated in the LAC's project. Vice-mayor Roger Wykle agreed.

Council member Kymberleigh Korpus, on the other hand, said that she could not support either program. She explained that she did not like in the LAC's project that the town would not have a decision-making responsibility in the choice of the poet, as that person was going to be writing about the town. She liked

that this project was a private one since she believes that the town should not spend time and money running it. She added that the

Moraga-only project had merits, but was not fully developed yet.

All agreed to postpone the decision to a later date. Kohl said after

the meeting that LAC, as requested by the Moraga council, will provide a new proposal taking into account its feedback and thoughts.

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Jay Ingram reflects on future challenges for Moraga Parks and Recreation

By Sophie Braccini



Jay Ingram with his staff, Kimberly Nelson and Clinton Calkins.

Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram left the town of Moraga after the Fourth of July festivities to take a new position in Pleasanton, where he will lead the much bigger community services department. Many in town expressed their sadness about seeing him go after 10 years, saying that he grew the department to a full-service level.

Ingram said he is proud of the work did and that he will miss the people on staff and in town whom he established great partnerships with over the years. He added that the greatest challenge of the coming months is to plan for the future of the Hacienda de las Flores.

In a recent letter to the board of the Moraga Park Foundation, its president, Karen Mendonca, wrote that over the past 10 years Ingram brought a calm, assured leadership presence to the Parks and Recreation Department and that he

and his small, competent staff had worked together to accomplish big things.

Ingram certainly added a lot to the parks and recreation services. He explained that the three-person department grew in terms of programs and infrastructure. When he took over, Moraga had just terminated an agreement with Lafayette, which had been running the recreation activities for both communities. Moraga was left bare, but one by one, new activities were offered to residents and the choices grew, including the mother-daughter tea, the creation of Camp Hacienda, the recent family campout, the spring egg hunt in the Moraga Commons Park, and the always sold-out breakfast with Santa and Santa home visits.

Ingram and his team also supported activities for adults such as the Pear and Wine Festival, the community garage sale, the holi-

day craft faire at the Hacienda, and recently the Hacienda Nights with food trucks and the leisure sports triathlon. Parks and Rec also catered to the older population by organizing senior trips in the Bay Area.

The Parks and Recreation staff recently unveiled the July activities calendar, which includes new activities such as Frisbee with the Cops on July 17 and Cornhole at the Commons on the evening of July 12. The five new dates for the food trucks at the Hacienda are also on the calendar, starting on July 14 and 28 (details at www.moraga.ca.us/dept/park-rec/prmonth).

Ingram says he will miss the people of Moraga the most. One of the best examples of the trust that was built between local service groups and government, he said, was the creation of the all-access playground, made possible through fundraising by the Moraga Rotary for the Commons Park.

"We have been able to work collaboratively and solve problems together," said Ingram. He added that the lack of funding in Moraga forced him to constantly ask for money from different groups when he wanted things done, but that was also how the synergy and trust was built.

While proud of the job he did, Ingram said he regrets a few things: First, that the community center called for in the parks and recreation master plan never came to fruition, due to lack of funding and public space to build it, and second, that the plan for the revitalization of the Hacienda de las Flores was not completed during his tenure. He noted that the committee working on this has plans to start with the creation of a restaurant there, and he hoped that it can be done while preserving the rental of the space for weddings and other events.

Ingram said that he will keep in touch with Moraga and promised to come back at least for the inauguration of the all-access playground.

July is Parks & Recreation Month Full Calendar of Activities moragarec.com



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The Town of Moraga accepts a big check from the Rotary Club of Moraga to build a brand new all-access playground at the Moraga Commons Park. From left, Rotary President Kevin Reneau, Council member Kymberleigh Korpus, Rotarian Tony Schoemehl, Rotarian Frank May, Council Member Dave Trotter, Mayor Teresa Onoda, Vice Mayor Roger Wykle, Rotarians Bob Fritzky and John Erickson. Photo Clinton Calkins

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 6 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Planning Commission

Tuesday, July 25, 7 p.m.
Special Joint Meeting with City Council
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Citizens' Infrastructure

Oversight Commission

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

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

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Main Street America promotes a healthy vision for Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty

When Main Street America offered its final report to the Orinda city council, there were some surprises.

While the study found that Orindans tend to be older and richer than residents of other places and that Orinda's retail leakage is more of a hemorrhage than a dribble, the report suggests some novel approaches to development, such as making Orinda a health and fitness mecca.

Another surprise was that, after interviewing many residents from many different groups, The National Main Street Center concluded that, in general, most groups interviewed are in favor of multi-family residential housing as a "value add" to downtown, but concern remains around levels of density, building scale, impacts on parking, and whether community infrastructure could support additional residential growth.

The final report was presented to the city council by Matthew Wagner, Ph.D., Vice President of Revitalization Programs. Wagner emphasized that the process of downtown revitalization could be slow and incremental but still eventually successful. He did recommend that Orinda formalize a city-managed effort using city staff. The complete report can be read at <https://cityoforinda.box.com/s/ywaz9rr041e37d0ct7d-kykotsbeduxax>.

NMSC specifically focused on the market and how to competitively position downtown Orinda from a consumer and business mix perspective but their work in other respects aligned well with the study conducted by the Urban Land Institute (ULI). The NMSC also agreed with ULI's suggested downtown mission statement: "Orinda strives to provide excellent service in a fiscally responsible manner and to promote a safe, healthy and vibrant community."

After considering the strengths, weaknesses and threats to Orinda's downtown, NMSC recommended that the city strive to encourage health and wellness businesses, such as medical offices, alternative therapies, pharmacies and natural food and remedy purveyors, as well as sporting good/bicycle stores, gyms, and perhaps a hospital or urgent care facility. Also included in this would be healthy restaurants, and studios for yoga, martial arts or dance.

Such businesses can be encouraged, NMSC concluded, by a variety of activities, such as adding bike paths and bike racks in the commercial district, installing a way-finding system from outdoor attractions to downtown, signs and markers to create walking and running trails in and around the commercial district, or installing exercise equipment in a pocket park. NMSC also recommended activi-

ties such as meeting with the business owners and the managers of parks or recreational sites so they can understand and further hone the strategy to enhance sports and recreation attractions.

Another suggestion is that Orinda develop an event downtown that connects to regional recreational attractions, and gave as an example Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where they hold a winter carnival where some ski sports that normally take place on the mountains are brought downtown - including "ski joring," where a skier is pulled by a horse. Orinda could develop a brand identity that connects health and wellness to the district by, for example, holding a health fair, with healthy cooking demonstrations, physical activities, and opportunities to get screened for blood pressure and other health indicators. Working with restaurants to offer healthy options on their menus and help them to distribute the menus through other businesses that are part of the Health and Wellness cluster was also recommended, as was working with a local gym to run outdoor "boot camps" during warmer weather months.

NMSC also looked at the possibility of encouraging entrepreneurial businesses, including shared office spaces, drop-in spaces and supporting spaces such as cafes and bars or a brewery. Business might also be encouraged by of-

fering conveniences, such as groceries, restaurants, office supplies, daycare, dry cleaners, postal/pack-and-ship services, accounting and tax services, banking services, gas stations and hair care.

The report contains many alternative avenues upon which Orinda might achieve downtown development, listing the pros and cons of each. The following next steps are offered: adopt transformation strategies as market framework for downtown, examine and align on near term organizational structure focused on implementation of strategies, take a new group to visit California Main Street programs, or offer stakeholders Main Street 101 webinars. Orinda could also adopt a one year economic vitality workplan.

Paul Ugenti, owner of 25A Orinda Way, suggested that Orinda might be a center for venture capitalists in the East Bay. Ugenti expressed great enthusiasm for downtown development and urged the city council to involve the new business owners in the process. He himself volunteered for just about anything the council might ask of him. Aaran Schultz suggested that visuals are very important to people in Orinda, and Kathleen Jenkins said that housing is not Orinda's problem, but that downtown development should concentrate on serving the people who already live in the city.



June 14 to July 1

- Alarms 44
- Noise complaints 1
- 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 3
- Traffic stops 32
- Suspicious Circumstances 10
- Suspicious Subjects 11
- Suspicious Vehicles 9
- Abandoned Vehicle
40 block Brookwood Rd.
- Animal cruelty
Europa Hofbrau
- Barking Dog
100 block Donna Maria Way
50 block Miner Rd.
- Burglary, Residential
10 block Stanton Ct.
- Dependent child
Post Office
- Disturbance
Donald Dr./Hall Blvd. (2)
80 block Donald Dr.
- Dispute
60 block Diablo View Dr.
- DUI
10 block Orinda Way
20 block Moraga Way
- Fraud
200 block Camino Sobrante
- Health & Safety violation
Donald Dr./Hall Blvd.
- ID Theft
10 block Ivy Dr.
30 block Valley Dr.
- Injury Accident
60 block Coral Dr.
E Altarinda Dr./Orindawoods
- Missing Adult
10 block Ardor Dr.
- Missing Juvenile
10 block Camino del Cielo
- Promiscuous Shooting
10 block Monte Vista Rd.
- Reckless Driving
Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante
10 block Tumbling Brook Rd.
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd. (2)
San Pablo Creek/Miner Rd.
Manzanita Rd/Camino Pablo
Irwin Way/Orinda Way
San Pablo Dam/Bear Creek Rd.
Hwy 24/Camino Pablo
- Shoplift
Rite Aid
- Theft, Petty
50 block Bates Blvd.
70 block Muth Dr.
- Theft, Vehicle
Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd.
- Threats
10 block Overhill Ct.
- Trespass
Kite Hill Rd/Orindawoods
100 block Camino Sobrante (2)
Orinda Country Club
El Ribero/Camino Sobrante
- Warrant Service/Arrest/Advise
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.
Safeway

Taste of the World food trucks coming to Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty



Orindans will soon be able to enjoy a weekly food truck event involving seven food trucks from Taste of the World from 5 to 9 p.m. each Thursday Aug. 5 through Oct. 19 in front of the Orinda Community Center.

The trucks will include a desert truck and a beer and wine truck, with the remaining five rotating among TOW's other available trucks. TOW has trucks of its

own and contracts with 80 other food trucks. In addition to food, the event will include live music on a stage in front of the fountain on the library plaza and games in the plaza. There will be portable seating for 24 in the plaza in addition to existing seating there and in Orinda Community Park. The aim is to provide a family-friendly activity in downtown Orinda.

The food truck idea is enthusiastically supported by What's Up Downtown Orinda. At the July 5 Orinda City Council meeting Vice Mayor Amy Worth especially thanked Trudi Loscotoff for her efforts in contacting Taste of the World to bring them to Orinda. All members of the city council seemed enthusiastic about the idea of the food truck event; their only concern appeared to be deciding on the best night for the event in order

- Food Truck
- Potential Game Area
- Performer/Stage Area
- Beer Truck
- Area Blocked Off By Cones
- Tables X4 (Seating for 6 Per Table)

to assure its success. TOW began in Martinez and now does events in several East Bay cities including Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, Concord and at the Richmond Kaiser Permanente facility.

Two managers will be present at each food truck event and the area will be thoroughly cleaned by TOW staff at the end of the event. TOW donates 10 percent of its profits to the Monument Crisis Center, and offered to donate to a different organization if preferred, but city council members said that they support the work done by the crisis center.

TOW's slogan is "Taste international, support local," and the organization stated it is willing to partner with local establishments as well, which may ease concerns expressed by the executive director of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, Sophie Braccini, who wrote to the city council hoping that the event won't be done at the expense of existing businesses.

Orinda employees strike, citing 'bad faith negotiating'

By Sora O'Doherty

City of Orinda workers represented by Teamster Union 856 staged a two-day strike to protest what they see as unfair bargaining by the city.

About 20 out of the city's 38 current employees are members of the Teamster's Union. Negotiations for a new contract broke down, and the contract expired on June 30, although most of its provisions continue in force, according to Orinda Interim City Manager Steve Salomon. With no agreement at the last meeting and no further meetings scheduled, the union filed an unfair labor practices complaint with the Public Employees Relations Board, and notified the city on Thursday June 29 that there would be a strike on Monday and Tuesday, July 3 and 4, with workers returning to work on July 5.

According to the Teamsters, the strike was called to draw attention to the city's bad faith negotiating and to demonstrate that city management isn't above the law. "They've been arbitrarily refusing to negotiate with us over important topics," said Robbie Thompson, a maintenance worker for the City of Orinda. "We want to be treated with respect and the games they play in bargaining

are just plain unfair." Workers are hopeful that the city will heed the protest and cease and desist.

Salomon noted that one of the strike days was a holiday and the other was a work day. He estimated that four to five employees did not come in. Salomon expressed the

city's wishes that the employees and their union will return to the bargaining table and hopes that they will have a new agreement soon.

Union workers include city administrative staff, parks and recreation employees, workers in the engineering and planning depart-

ments, and civilian workers who respond to citizen requests in the City of Orinda Police Department. Although there are only 20 union employees currently, there are 23 positions covered by the union. However two are vacant and one employee is out on medical leave.

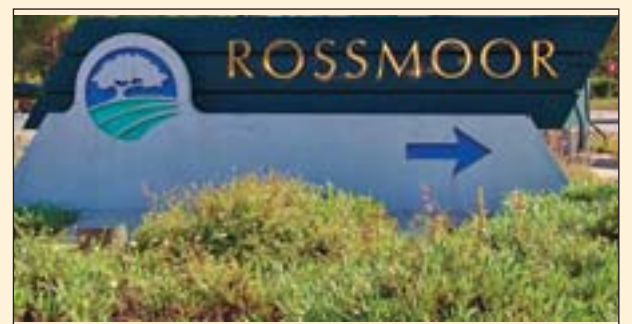


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Orinda Planning Commission supports Short Term Rental restrictions

By Samuel Ganten

Orinda has a long history voicing strong opinions about housing development and increased density, with one of those issues being short-term rentals (STRs).

As part of a continuing discussion on development in the Lamorinda area, the Orinda Planning Commission recently voted unanimously on a resolution to support restricting short-term rentals, agreeing to a cap of 100 STRs in Orinda.

Orinda's sales tax consultant, Muni Services, looked at AirBnB as well as other listing sites and estimated there are approximately 37 active short-term rental listings in the city, according to the staff report presented to the commission.

The changes to the ordinance would require short-term rental owners to register with the city, confirm the city's transient occupancy tax applies to STRs, and emphasize that STRs must comply with various city rules designed to avoid nuisance issues such as overcrowding, excessive

noise, and illegal parking.

To address concerns of events being held at STRs, the ordinance would also cut the maximum occupancy from 30 persons to two per bedroom, plus five, with a three-bedroom home able to house 11 people.

Beyond this, the amendment to the Orinda zoning code would limit the amount of STRs to a maximum of one for each single property.

As part of the vote, Vice Chair Brandyn Iverson and Chair Willy Mautner expressed a desire for a three-strikes penalty for violators and a further reduction of maximum occupancy to two per bedroom plus three, resulting in the same three-bedroom home able to accommodate nine people.

During the public hearing portion of the June 27 meeting, residents expressed support for the restrictions, citing issues with traffic and congestion they perceived with the short-term rental units. In several cases, the speakers advocated for either a total ban on STRs or a shift to

case-by-case consideration, similar to Lafayette, which requires Land Use Permit approval for short-term rentals. Lafayette's land use permit application fee is between \$2,250 and \$5,700. No recent short-term rental land use permit requests have been submitted, the staff report noted.

One speaker during the public comment portion stated that despite the occupancy being cut significantly, the amount of cars on the streets would still be intolerably high, leading to traffic and parking issues, while another resident commented that there should be no regulation on STRs due to the valuable services it encourages, such as immigration to Orinda and tangible economic benefits to renters and other members of the community.

The commission expressed its appreciation for residents' desire to reduce stress on the roads yet simultaneously encouraged a middle ground between owners of STRs and the concerned residents.

Commissioners Joe McGrath

and Mautner, with the rest of the committee, moved for the approval of the amendment to cut the maximum occupancy from its current proposed level with consideration of these issues.

Despite support for the resolution, Planning Commissioner Louis Adamson agreed with one speaker's expressed concern over

the lack of an enforcement mechanism for the resolution. However, the commission as well as staff said that enforcement of the ordinance was not a concern.

The Planning Commission forwarded its recommendation to the Orinda City Council for future discussion and a vote.

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Ali & Jerilyn Babington | CalBRE#01984317



16 VALLEY VIEW LANE | ORINDA
\$2,575,000
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Laura Abrams | CalBRE#01272382



15 MERRILL DR | MORAGA
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Elena Hood | CalBRE#01221247



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Elena Hood | CalBRE#01221247



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Vlatka Bathgate | CalBRE#01390784



34 SANDERS RANCH RD | MORAGA
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Cookie Javinsky | CalBRE#00598341



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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors
Wednesday, July 18, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors
Tuesday, Aug. 8, 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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Still no construction activity at stations 43 and 16

By Nick Marnell



Station 43: Nothing to see here.

Two rebuilt Lamorinda fire stations are set to open in 2018, but both properties may be put into service later than originally planned.

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Chief Jeff Carman has bemoaned the languid pace of the Lafayette Fire Station 16 construction at each district board meeting this spring. “Albeit slowly, we are making progress on that station,” Carman told his directors June 13.

Deputy Fire Chief Lewis Broshard explained that because a fire station is an essential services facility, the building and design requirements are far more rigid than for a single-family home, and that adhering to those requirements lengthens the construction process.

Lafayette approved the fire sta-

tion architecture in February. The application for a building permit followed, and LCA Architects of Walnut Creek put together the station construction drawings, including structural engineering, drainage and architectural plans, and ConFire submitted three sets of those drawings with its application to Lafayette in June. After favorable reviews by the city, the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District and, yes, the fire district, the county Building Inspection Department will issue the Station 16 building permit, expected by early September.

“It’s a new building, on a challenging lot, and it’s taking a bit longer to approve,” said Chris Joram, Lafayette planning technician.

For now, ConFire continues its prequalification of contrac-



Station 16: Awaiting the call.

“We want builders who have done a fire station in the past five to seven years,” said Assistant Fire Chief Aaron McAlister, who has taken over as point-person for the district fire station projects. “They have to have experience dealing with government, and know how to deal with government.”

Concord-based Pacific-Mountain Contractors of California, which recently built Fire Station 32 in Alamo and is rebuilding Fire Station 43 for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, is expected to bid on Station 16. McAlister expressed no concern over one contractor working on two fire stations concurrently. “If a contractor can keep the same subcontractors in the same vicinity, that’s a good thing,” he said.

Once the district receives the building permit the Station 16

project will go out to bid. ConFire should award the contract in October, with the shovels to hit the ground on Nov. 1. “Our realistic opening date is November of 2018,” McAlister said.

Meanwhile, work on MOFD Station 43 has hit a snag, possibly delaying a first quarter 2018 re-opening.

“All permits are in place, but the district has not begun construction until it works out a few contract issues,” Fire Chief Stephen Healy said. In May, the MOFD board refused to approve a \$100,000 contract increase requested for construction of the fire station, insisting that many of the extra charges incurred were not the responsibility of the district.

“Early 2018 is still possible, but it’s becoming more challenging,” the chief said.

Photos Nick Marnell

The doctor in the dugout

Gutierrez loves children, and he thrives on the adrenaline rush. “Out of 100 kids that come to the emergency room, maybe one will be seriously ill. That one comes to the ICU. That’s where the action is,” he said.

Gutierrez leads a department of doctors, nurses, therapists, nutritionists, pharmacists and parents, and they all make the hospital rounds together. Adhering to such a team concept was an easily transferable skill from his days on the diamond, and that background

also helps Gutierrez deal with the failures he experiences; according to the doctor, an infant fatality occurs in fewer than 1 percent of his cases. “We’re batting .999, but that doesn’t make it any easier,” he said.

But miracles do happen. To this day, Gutierrez does not understand how one baby, in septic shock and with a number of organs damaged, came through. “When you save a kid, it’s like when you get a big hit, or score the winning run,” said Gutierrez, who would know because he has done all three.

Gutierrez plays baseball not only because he loves it but also to deal with stress. “You make an error, you strike out, you lose a ball game — it’s not that big of a deal. I never get upset on the baseball field,” he said. “When you strike out you’re going to have to get back in the batter’s box and try again. I love the challenge of hitting a baseball, and on defense I want the ball to come to me.”

When it does it is a calming sight to Gutierrez’ teammates. “He displays such great hand eye coordination on our infield at shortstop and second base, I can only imagine how great he is in the operating room,” said his MSBL manager, Don de Cordova.



Jorge Gutierrez

Photo provided

The smooth hands play equally well on the ball field and in the hospital. “You have to have good hands to insert breathing tubes, long catheters, IVs — they are hard to do on kids,” Gutierrez said.

Some of those kids are walking around today thanks to his work at Kaiser. Cards from children he’s saved hang all over his office wall. One of his first patients sent Gutierrez her high school graduation picture. A baby with a heart virus — her heart kept stopping — miraculously survived. She, too, sent him a picture: She just had her own baby.

“I would do this all over again,” Gutierrez said of both his career in

... continued from page A1

medicine and his passion for playing baseball.

Bobby Brown is the most famous doctor-ballplayer in Major League history. Brown studied for his medical degree while he played third base for the New York Yankees from 1946 to 1954. He appeared in four World Series, practiced cardiology in Dallas after his retirement from baseball and later became president of the American League.

Had Gutierrez stayed with baseball through college as he pursued his medical degree, who knows how far his own career on the diamond may have taken off.

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County Planning Commission OK’s Saranap Village; Board of Supes next

By John T. Miller

Before an overflow crowd of more than 200 residents, the Contra Costa County Planning Commission voted 4-1 to approve Hall Equity Group’s plans to build Saranap Village. Commissioner Donna Allen, who echoed some of the concerns expressed by community members at the meeting and wanted a better set of plans to read, cast the lone dissenting vote.

An overwhelming majority of the speakers spoke out in favor of the project, but a handful of community members appealed to the Planning Commission to look into several areas to both improve the project and create guidelines for the future that would alleviate problems with subsequent developments in the area.

Paula Santi, president of the Saranap Homeowner’s Association, called on the commission to begin the process for a Specific Plan for Saranap, saying, “This project has been divisive for our community. With so much growth potential for our area, a Specific Plan would make it so we don’t have to do this

piece-meal.”

Longtime Saranap resident Jim Changaris asked for direction from the county to keep the height down, watch out for traffic safety, and settle on a time of completion so the construction didn’t linger. “I don’t think anyone in this building is opposed to the project,” he said. “It’s just that some guidelines need to be put in place.”

Former Lafayette Parks and Recreation Manager Jennifer Russell, who also resides in Saranap, expressed the need for more time to review the development agreement and was also concerned that the project’s commercial space be filled with viable retailers. “In (HEG’s) previous development in Pleasant Hill, much of the downstairs retail space was vacant for long periods of time,” she said.

Other concerns included the placement and safety of bike lanes, the angled parking on the street and the project casting an all-day shadow on an existing structure.

HEG declined to rebut any of the concerns, and the Planning

Commission expressed the desire to implement the “Complete Streets” concept from the county’s general plan, which involves designing streets for everyone’s use.

The Saranap Village project went through numerous revisions over the course of the last five years, and most of the community members praised HEG for their flexibility and openness in listening to the concerns of the residents.

Next stop is the Board of Supervisors. Sean Tully, senior planner with the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development hopes that the matter can be readied for the supervisors’ approval for one of the board’s August meetings. “This goal may change if an appeal of the county Planning Commission’s decision is received,” said Tully. “In the event the board approves the project, there would be no additional county decision makers that the project would need to be heard before.”

The next meeting of the Board of Supervisors will be on July 18.



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Letters to the Editor

Clean up your trash at the Commons

Dear Editor,

Even though Moraga's small public works staff did its usual amazing job of getting the Commons back in order after the Fourth of July extravaganza, a tremendous amount of trash on the bandshell hill needed to be removed on the morning of the July 5. It made our wonderful park look terrible, so I spent the morning picking up most of it and the lone public works employee later gathered the plastic for recycling.

Do offices still have signs that read "Your mother doesn't work here, clean up after yourself?" Do the national and state parks still instruct visitors to "Leave nothing behind but footprints?" I recommend that we post signs like that at the Commons, as well as adding more trash receptacles, with the signs attached to them.

Community leaders insist that Moragans aren't responsible for the mess, that it is people from out of town. One wit's suggestion that we build a wall and make another city pay for it probably isn't feasible because the idea appears to have failed at another level of government. No, we still welcome visitors to the Commons, and all we ask is that they not leave it looking like it did on the morning of July 5. It is Moraga's living room.

Dale Walwerk
Moraga

Less students on the bus means more cars on the road

Dear Editor,

Reportedly a "School Bus Stop Safety Study" has been done for

Orinda School Bus Routes which proposes "significant school bus route changes" to many Orinda bus routes for the coming year, including Route 11,12,13,15,16,17, and 18, and essentially proposes the elimination of school bus access to all of the El Toyonal hill (Route # 18), and Brookwood, and Charles Hill Road, as well as rerouting and/or reducing bus routes on several other routes including Bus 13, 11, 12, and 15.

In Lamorinda, the school districts do not run the school bus program. Instead the school buses are run by a JPA or Joint Powers Agreement between all four school districts and three city councils, established in 1994. The stated purpose is to "relieve traffic congestion." That makes sense, since the more students on the bus means less cars on the road during the morning carpool/ commute time.

Now, fast forward to Oct 7, 2016, and the school bus company "First Student" sends a letter to "Lamorinda Parents, Guardians and students," which explains that there is a "severe nationwide driver shortage." The following month, the seven member Board of the JPA voted to hire a consultant to do a "School Bus Stop Safety Study." The Draft report did not become public until early May, 2017, at the end of the school year and a busy time for parents. The consultant does not have an engineer on their staff, is from out of state, and yet are evaluating whether the school buses are complying with CA Vehicle Code. It certainly raises many questions and concerns.

The Board of the JPA (the LSBTA) is likely to make a decision at their next meeting on July 13. Details: <http://www.lamorindaschoolbus.org/public-meetings-links>.

html.

If the LSBTA Board follows the recommendation of the consultant, they will be reducing students' access to school buses in several neighborhoods, and adding to cars on the road. How would that be following their purpose of "relieving traffic congestion"?

Sarah Butler
Orinda

Save our School Bus Route!

Dear Editor,

To date, over 250 parents and community members have signed a petition to the Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Agency regarding a proposal for significant changes to Orinda school bus routes. A portion of the petition is available below or at this link: <https://www.change.org/p/save-school-bus-service-in-orinda>

The Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Agency includes the following board members: Lafayette City Council Member Don Tatzin, Lafayette School District's David Gerson, Orinda City Council Member Amy Worth, OUSD's Julie Rossiter, Moraga Town Council Member Jeanette Fritsky, Moraga School District's Heather O'Donnell and AUHSD's Nancy Kendzierski

We petition the Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Agency to reject the recommendations in the flawed "safety" study, and instead continue to provide vital school bus service on current routes so that our children have safe, reliable, and accessible transportation to and from school.

The school bus is the safest vehicle on the road and the safest way to get our children to school.

The school bus also benefits every member of our community by decreasing traffic congestion on Camino Pablo and Moraga Way and at our schools, maintaining property values in affected neighborhoods, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, and providing our children with a beloved and beneficial opportunity for independence and social interaction.

Despite the absence of any significant problems with the existing school bus service, the consultant study recommended the elimination of certain current Orinda school bus routes. Eliminating school bus service will add scores of vehicles to our roads during the morning and afternoon commute-

and worse, force children to walk along narrow, poorly lit roads with no sidewalks or crosswalks.

The proposed alternative will either force children to walk treacherous stretches of road that lack pedestrian safeguards or require parents to drive children to the bus stop — decreasing safety and/or increasing congestion and pollution. LSBTA must maintain school bus service to all current riders in a way that does not eliminate the safety and other benefits the bus provides to the entire community. Please save our school bus!

Michelle Swaney
Orinda

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Complaint filed in attempt to save targeted trees in Lafayette

... continued from page A1

They held pop-up discussion opportunities alongside the Lafayette-Moraga Trail and at the Lafayette Reservoir to answer questions from residents.

In a letter dated June 7 from the city to PG&E, Mayor Mike Anderson set out expectations that there will be clear answers provided to all concerns prior to the company coming back before the city council.

Anderson also required that PG&E submit a site plan with property lines showing trees proposed for removal and a mitigation plan showing location of trees to be planted, signed by the property owner. On city property he said that PG&E must work with the city to prepare an acceptable restoration plan that maintains aesthetics.

Now Save Lafayette Trees, headed by Lafayette residents Michael Dawson and David Kosters, has hired Berkeley-based environmental lawyer Stephan Volker and set up a Go-Fund Me to help with

costs.

Dawson says that filing this petition was not their first choice of action. "In fact, we made every attempt possible to convince the city to reverse the agreement on their own by meeting with them and providing many pages of research documents. We pointed out that PG&E's own study concludes pipeline integrity is not impacted by tree roots. Three first-responders stated that trees don't impede their emergency response in a pipeline emergency."

"What did the city decide to do? Simply pass along the message to us that PG&E would delay their cutting to late summer. It seems inevitable that trees will be removed, despite our help and the public's outcry, so we have no choice but to pursue our lawsuit."

Dawson says he is hopeful that the court will see the city side-stepped important environmental reviews. Additionally he says, "Our hope is that not only will these trees

remain standing, but we'll also help call attention to the true safety measures PG&E should be prioritizing, such as conducting state-of-the-art inspections and adding automatic safety valves in our neighborhoods."

He says that PG&E should also fix the four-foot length of exposed pipeline along the Lafayette-Moraga Trail. "Since PG&E rolled out this 'community' project across the state, we want to ensure they are paying attention to our unique community pipeline safety concerns, some of which mirror factors that were seen as negligible in managing prior to the San Bruno tragedy."

Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk commented, "I was surprised to see the lawsuit, but remain hopeful that the parties can work cooperatively outside of the courtroom to develop a pipeline safety solution that is acceptable to everyone."

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With fanfare, Miner Road reopens to the public after sinkhole

... continued from page A1

She thanked elected officials. "We lean on all these folks, because it was any number of state, regional, and federal agencies we had to interact with. The City of Orinda by itself doesn't always have quite the loud voice that we think we do, so we want to thank all these folks for their support."

State Senator Steve Glazer added, "Total cost came in at \$2.8 million dollars, this from a city budget of \$11 million. In a small town, that's a big number. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Caltrans, and more... all had to come together to approve every step to get subsidies... the good work from Larry Theis resulted, we believe, in significant subsidy... 75-90 percent covered by other agencies."

together. Hats off to Orinda for getting this done in record time."

Afterward, Public Works Inspector Tod Fierner painted some gravity: "People wonder why it took six months. Three of those months were because of the rain. What was ironic about the day (the sinkhole started) is we had driven over this area three times, because we had a tree down. School buses went through here that morning. Beneath it was air. The asphalt held everything up. There was no base underneath at all. Oh, my God, it was lucky nobody got hurt. About 6,000 people use this road."

Chris Carpenter, community affairs representative for Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, shared, "We had to work within the slope of existing sewer lines. We had pumps at the manhole up the street, pumping out and over into this manhole. The pipes are supported by ground, so when ground went away, pipe support

went away, and the pipes broke. We were here 24 hours a day for months, making sure we don't have an overflow into the creek system. Once a creek's involved, you get water agencies involved, and state legislature... it ends up a big deal. PG&E has gas lines through, and water mains. All the permits required... once you crest the slope line of a creek, Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, everybody has to approve.... If you just fix what's there, you can get reimbursed pretty easily.... But if you just put back what was there, they may face the same issue again. In trying to improve, and still get reimbursed, there was a lot of work. The right thing to do is fix all the problems. I'm sure many of Larry's (Theis) late nights and hours were spent working with people to pull that off."

At 8 p.m. on Friday, June 30, Miner Road was reopened to public traffic.

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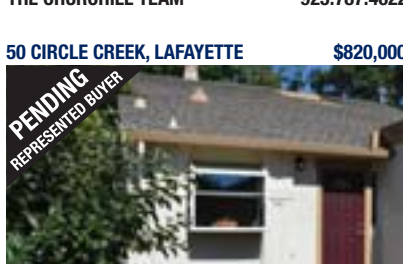
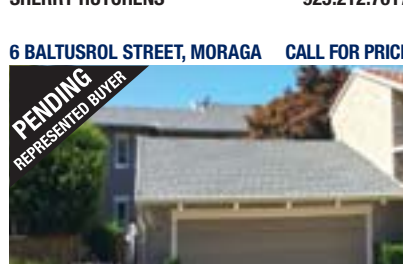
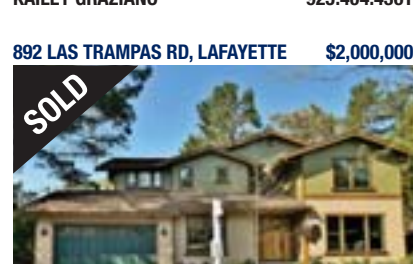



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Life in LAMORINDA

Lamorinda Pétanque goes global

By Sophie Braccini



Noah in Marseilles

Do you know pétanque? Fourteen-year-old Lafayette resident Noah Sonet does and he is representing Lamorinda at the pétanque world championship in Marseilles, France this summer.

The young member of the Lamorinda Pétanque club is one of three young Americans on the U.S. junior team. While his son Noah is competing in France, Gilbert Sonet will be featuring the local club in San Francisco on July 15 as part of the annual celebration of the French-American friendship that takes place (almost) on Bastille Day, which is July 14.

Who knew that the club that was founded in Lafayette and endowed with beautiful courts along Saint Mary's Road less than 10 years ago would grow to breed champions? Gilbert Sonet was instrumental from the start in the creation of the club. He is a native French businessman who has been working in the restaurant and retail industry for years and lives in Lafayette with his family. His son Noah has been playing pétanque since he was 4 years old and quickly showed great talent. Two years ago he won the U.S. championship as part of a "triple" — a team of three players of different ages, with

his father and another Lamorinda player.

Pétanque is a rather simple game of small metal bowls (boules) that have to get as close as possible to a wooden target (cochonnet). It is part of the very ancient and wide family of games that involve rolling a ball toward a target; bocce in Italy and lawn bowling in England are part of the same group. This French version was born in Provence in the mid-19th century. There is a U.S. pétanque fédération that connects clubs all over the country, and 10 clubs are affiliated in northern California.

Gilbert Sonet insists that even if some players at the Lamorinda Pétanque club are very serious, the majority just play to have a fun family time and a picnic under the trees of Lafayette. He says that the majority of the members are English speakers, always ready to show the game to beginners on a Sunday afternoon and lend some bowls.

It is the same spirit of inclusion that drove Gilbert Sonet to say yes when he was contacted by Charles Ségalas to organize pétanque demonstrations and games at the San Francisco Bastille Day celebration. Ségalas is the president of an organization that connects all

the French clubs in the Bay Area. There are some 30,000 French citizens in the Bay Area, and many more who have become Americans or have French parents.

Ségalas says that the July 15 party at Justin Herman Plaza at the Embarcadero has been revived by the French Consul in San Francisco, Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens with the support of San Francisco mayor Ed Lee. The event will feature local French businesses, entertainment, food and libations. After 6 p.m. a dance party is organized on the plaza.

Gilbert Sonet and members of the Lamorinda pétanque will start playing and teaching the game starting at 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. He has already prepared the "boules," the Lamorinda banners, and his joyous energy along with his unmistakable French accent that will do wonders to get people to participate.

By the time the party ends, Gilbert Sonet should have the results of the world tournament and hope to be able to announce it. The event is free and opened to the public. More information is available at www.bastilledaysf.org.

Photos provided

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Noah Sonet shows his pétanque style in Lafayette.

Lafayette Plaza rocked by Lamorinda Idol finalists

By Pippa Fisher



Lamorinda Idol contestant Maggie Heiskell sings during Rock the Plaza. Photo Pippa Fisher

Crowds enjoyed the evening sunshine and the musical sounds of Lamorinda's finest young musicians, packing the Plaza on a recent Friday night as many of the 36 soloists and 10 groups selected as finalists for the Lamorinda Idol Competition performed at the Lafayette park.

These finalists will be given the chance to perform at several events over the summer prior to the finals, which will be held at the Orinda

Theatre on Aug. 27. Winners will be selected based on a combination of judges' and audience votes.

The contest, now in its 12th year, is sponsored by the Lamorinda Arts Council. The talented young performers remaining in the competition were selected from an initial group of 150, from 27 schools. The program is open to those from kindergarten through 12th grade who either attend school or reside in Lamorinda.

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Orinda on parade: Celebrations mark Independence Day around town

By B. B. Kaye



A veteran waves to the enthusiastic crowd at the Fourth of July parade. Photos B. B. Kaye

Thousands of people from Lamorinda and beyond, festively dressed in red, white and blue, strolled from the BART station and parking lots of businesses closed for Independence Day. Families set up folding chairs, couples chatted arm-in-arm, children ran excitedly, and teenagers staked out vantage points along walls and bleachers.

Early risers had enjoyed a pancake breakfast, served every year by the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, at Orinda Library Plaza. Orinda Mayor Eve Phillips greeted the assemblage, the American flag was raised and National Anthem sung in ceremony, and Orinda's 33rd annual Fourth of July Parade and Celebration began.

This year's parade was declared "The Year of the Czechs," to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation, and so the Czech Republic flag and anthem were also honored. The U.S. Sister City Program was begun by US President Dwight D. Eisenhower, to nurture international friendship and cultural diversity.

Soon after opening ceremonies, runners met for the annual Haley's Run For A Reason, benefitting the Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood Foundation. As athletes started their five-mile run, the Friends of Orinda Library book sale opened at the library, and the streets filled with live jazz music.

The last of Haley's Runners came in, bleachers and streets lined with expectant faces, and the voices of Masters of Ceremony Steve Harwood and Scott Butler boomed out, introducing marchers as they came into view.

Flags and floating balloon arches framed the spectacle as veterans and Cub Scouts proudly led, followed by the airs and rumble of bagpipers and drummers in kilts. Police motorcycles purred, and the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department's massive new, brightly painted ladder truck rolled along, crew alert, monitoring radios even during this festive mission. Rescue dogs trotted with handlers, making friends with the littlest spectators. Marching bands exploded with the bright sound of trumpets, basso of tubas, and staccato and thump of drums.

Parade Marshals in traditional Czech clothing rode a Czech-themed float, and the East Bay Banjo Club played Czech favorites; small reminders that, not only are we an independent nation, but one composed of different cultures.

Elected officials beamed, and local civic groups and athletic teams presented on decorated floats and trucks, young passengers waving excitedly to curbside friends. A horse-and-wagon proceeded, reminding of days gone by, as did classic cars, from the era of high automobile art, polished chrome and fins, a glimpse of muscle in the grumbling idles. Children thrilled to beautiful dancers in circus dress on stilts bending gracefully to high-five onlookers, and the flashy undulations of a Chinese parade dragon mesmerized the crowd.

After the last marchers passed, revelers enjoyed Classic Rock, R&B, Motown, and funk at Orinda Theatre and in Orinda Park. Hungry people noshed on Thai food, ice cream, kettle corn, hot dogs, snow-cones and cold drinks, and engaged with exhibitors at booths filled with nature, science and civic activities for everyone.

The joy and freedom of such days is what Americans celebrate every year.

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Boy Scouts and veterans led off the parade.

Moragan runs half marathon to take Global Healing to its next phase

By Sophie Braccini



John Donnelly and Dr. Karla Cerritos at the Roatan Public Hospital in Honduras. Photo provided

Doctor John Donnelly has never been afraid to reinvent himself in order to achieve what he believes is the right thing.

The Moraga resident was an immunologist who conducted research for most of his career until he decided to cross the divide and work for nonprofit organizations. He now presides over Global Healing, a Berkeley-based nonprofit that aims at training and empowering health practitioners in countries that lack sufficient medical funding, especially those working with mothers and their young children. He will run the San Francisco half-marathon on July 23 to raise funds for his organization.

Donnelly portrays himself as a serial retiree, a polite way to say that he quit some of his former employers. He retired from Merck before joining Chiron and retired again after it was purchased by Novartis. He then joined his first nonprofit, Path, a 40-year-old organization that provides services to mothers and children in countries that most need it. Donnelly negotiated contracts with large foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to organize the low cost production of vaccines for children in these countries. He explains that pharmaceuticals now are more inclined at producing and commercializing drugs at full price in rich countries and low cost iden-

tical ones in poorer countries at the same time. Donnelly loved the work at Path, but after a few years, the intense necessary travel started to be too much, so he retired again.

He was then approached by Global Healing, which has been in existence for 20 years, and needed a new president.

In spite of his reserved nature, Donnelly speaks of Global Healing with passion. The goal of Global Healing is to make sure that mothers and children get the best quality health care in their country, provided by local skilled healthcare professionals. Donnelly explains that in many poor countries as the standard of living increases the basic medical needs are taken care of, such as vaccines and contraception. But when people get really sick, doctors do not have the latest training and equipment that will allow them to save their patients.

Donnelly gives the example of Vietnam's main pediatric hospital where Global Healing works in the pediatric Intensive Care Unit. He has traveled to the country several times and formed ties with many people there. He is acutely aware of the difficulties people still face to get medical treatment. It can take 16 hours to reach the national hospital for a very sick child who needs advanced treatment. Vietnam does have a rapidly growing economy, but big divides exist between

regions.

Donnelly explains that Vietnamese doctors are very qualified, but have been trained and have equipment that date from the previous century. For example, when infants need breathing assistance, they used to be put on ventilators with tubes going down their throat. The children had to be sedated, because it is painful. A sedated child cannot eat, so he has to be fed intravenously, and has to be turned every two hours. Nowadays, doctors here use continuous positive airway pressure that blows air in the child's nose and helps inflate the lungs. The outcome for children is much better.

Global Healing works with American volunteers who are sent abroad to train the medical teams and also bring the appropriate technology when possible. In the Vietnamese example, the device is not very expensive and Global Healing provides it.

The nonprofit works with experts, such as Professor J. Colin Partridge at UCSF, to identify the techniques that are most easily transferable and will make the most impact. Global Healing currently works in Honduras, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Vietnam.

Donnelly leads an organization with a staff of four, including himself, a board of directors, and advisory board and scores of medical volunteers who travel the world to train others.

Global Healing needs support here also: volunteer photographers, filmmakers and administrators are in demand. Donations are also welcome and Donnelly goes the extra mile for it. He can be seen at 5:30 a.m. training for the half marathon in the streets of Moraga. He says that he used to run marathons, but that since his knee surgery he cannot run as fast as he used to.

To sponsor him go to <http://bit.ly/2szAPYk>. More information about Global Healing is available at globalhealing.org.



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Community mourns Miler Gloor Magrath, longtime Lafayette business owner

By John T. Miller

Miler Gloor Magrath, who for over 40 years was a co-owner of Diamond K Supply in Lafayette, passed away earlier this month following complications from a stroke. He was 62.

Magrath became President of Diamond K in 1990 and ran the business along with his brother, Bill, and sister, Anne Magrath Coleman. His siblings will continue to run the company. Their parents, Bill and Nancy Magrath, originally purchased an interest in the business in 1947 from Ogen Kiesel and eventually assumed full ownership.

The current manager of Diamond K, Kevin Montgomery, has worked for them for three years. He commented, "Miler was a very generous man, donating to local schools regularly. He also was a huge fan of the Eagle Scout projects in Lamorinda and constantly donated materials to them as well. Miler leaves a void here at Diamond K that will never be filled, but we will carry on this business in his memory."

Magrath was born in Oakland,

grew up in Lafayette and graduated from Acalanes High School and California State University, Chico. His passions included traveling with his family and friends, duck hunting, golf, fishing, gardening and the San Francisco 49ers. According to Montgomery, he was never without his San Francisco Giants hat, either.

Magrath is survived by his wife, Maureen; two daughters, Molly and Mackenzie; his faithful dog, Maisy; sister Anne Magrath Coleman; brother, Bill Magrath; father-in-law, Dr. James McFadden; and many nieces, nephews, grand-nephews and in-laws. He is predeceased by his parents, Bill and Nancy Magrath, and mother-in-law Pat McFadden.

The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of your choice.

All are welcome to a celebration of Magrath's life to be held from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, July 16 at Contra Costa Country Club in Pleasant Hill, where he was a member. Diamond K will be closed on that day.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

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Lafayette Juniors raise \$60,000 for local nonprofit charities

Submitted by Rachelle Lara



Pictured from left, Cathy Kauder, Mindy Harmeyer, Erica Mason, Deanne Pearn (Contra Costa Interfaith Housing), Tina Frechman, Rachel Blatt, and Jeannine Palmer. Photo provided

The Lafayette Juniors raised \$60,000 in the last 12 months for local nonprofit organizations. On June 1, the Lafayette Juniors awarded the funds to Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, Alternative Family Services, The Taylor Family Foundation, and Trinity Center in a special ceremony at the Lafayette Community Center.

Lafayette Juniors has a history of organizing fundraising events like the Rummage Sale in the fall and the Kitchen Tour in the spring to raise money for selected beneficiaries. This year the Juniors chose Contra Costa Interfaith Housing – an agency that has been providing permanent, affordable housing and support services to homeless and at-risk families and individuals since 1991 – as their major beneficiary. The Juniors donated \$30,000 to support the work of CCIH, inspired by their vision that every family in our

community deserves secure housing and the dignity of self-sufficiency.

Lafayette Juniors also donated \$15,000 to Alternative Family Services, and \$7,500 each to The Taylor Family Foundation and Trinity Center.

Lafayette Juniors is looking forward to continuing this tradition of giving and is accepting applications from now until July 31, 2017 from all nonprofits in Contra Costa and neighboring counties in the San Francisco Bay Area who serve women, families, and seniors and others requiring assistance. The Juniors will select four organizations from the applicant pool to become their 2017–2018 beneficiaries. Fundraising for these groups will begin this fall. To obtain an application or learn more about the Lafayette Juniors, visit www.lafayettejuniors.org.

Moraga Troop 212 celebrates 10 new Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Siv Ricketts



Photo provided

Moraga Boy Scout Troop 212 presented its 54th Eagle Court of Honor on Sunday, April 30 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church to recognize the achievements of 10 new Eagle Scouts: Spencer Drennan, Evan Gabrielson, Paul Gannett, Calvin Gee, Chris Gonser, Brian Gross, Eddie Gross, Chad Sonnenschein, Daniel Warner and Chris Wright.

Each young man participated in an average of 50 camping trips, including wilderness camp, 50-mile Sierra treks and high adventure experiences such as fishing in Alaska, kayaking in Oregon and pack-rafting in Montana.

For their Eagle projects, on average involving about 100 hours of planning, leadership and work, this group of Eagles focused largely on schools and improving educational experiences for students locally and around the world.

Drennan and Brian Gross built and in-

stalled garden boxes at Merriewood Children's Center and Los Perales Elementary School. Warner refurbished Richmond High School's band room while Wright installed a permanent basketball hoop at Campolindo High School. Gabrielson built furniture for Harbor House in Oakland and Gannett rebuilt a storage shed for MVPC Nurtury Preschool.

Gee and Sonnenschein both collected backpacks and school supplies, one for Amor Ministries in Mexico and the other for Kids Alive International in the Dominican Republic. Gonser refurbished donated laptops for Kids Alive International in Peru.

Eddie Gross made over 100 survival strap bracelets for overseas US troops.

Troop 212, under the leadership of Scoutmaster John 'Otter' Drennan, is chartered by Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. Since 1963, Troop 212 has awarded 415 Eagle Scouts with Scouting's highest honor.

Troop 30638 earns Silver Awards

Submitted by Yuka Akera



[Editor's Note: In the June 28 issue of the Lamorinda Weekly, the wrong photo ran with this story. Here are the Silver Award winners.]

Some members of Campolindo ninth-grade Troop 30638 earned their Silver Award for their project, "Polystyrene Ban in Moraga School District." Emily M., Ava S., Aislinn W., and Alexandra Y. focused on the community issue of polystyrene (Styrofoam) use within the school district. Styrofoam is a carcinogen and can cause painful side effects due to chemical that leech into food and drink.

MSD buys lunches from various vendors, many of which are served in Styrofoam. The three elementary schools plus one middle school combine for 2,000 students. Over the course of a single year, literally tons of Styrofoam is used within the district. The negative impacts were presented to the school board, which was well received and the girls were asked to write out an official resolution. The ban was presented to the school board, which voted unanimously to adopt the resolution to

ban Styrofoam. A month later, the board implemented the ban. The girls saw how board meetings were run, and policies made, as well as learned that people are willing to help make the world a better place to live in.

Other members of Campolindo ninth-grade Troop 30638 earned their Silver Award for their project, "Multimedia Presentations for the Elderly." Lily Mae C. and Christine Z. created a multimedia presentation to show to their local retirement home. As the seniors do not travel outside often, they can become disconnected with the world. The presentations kept them up to date with present day news and tried to teach them new things. Meetings were initiated for discussions during the presentations by asking questions. One difficulty encountered was keeping the seniors engaged, as they often fell asleep. Showing pictures and videos they enjoyed seemed to help keep their attention.

Girl Scouts earn Bronze Award

Submitted by Yuka Akera



The Bronze award winners of Troop 0712.

Orinda Intermediate School sixth-grade Troop 32909 earned their Bronze Award for their project, "Camp Supplies for Kids in Need."

Rina F., Gianna G., Shelby M., Beatriz S., Amanda T., Ava U., Syndey W., Elise C., Amelia C., Julia B., Yasmin H., Alana R., Kaitlyn R., and Abby R. chose to help their community by holding a donation drive to support Shelter Inc., which focuses on stopping the cycle of homelessness and helping

provide everyday essentials to people in need. They hosted a "Pajama Party" for the other troops at Wagner Ranch asking the attendees to bring a donation item that might be used for an outing such as sunscreen, beach towels, flip-flops, and goggles. The girls planned and organized the activities for the party, then ran stations, served food, and led the younger girls in games and songs. The party was fun for everyone, and the troop collected over 85 items.

Rotary helps fund buses and other aid for Indian orphanage

Submitted by Frank Darling

Recently, Rotary Club of Orinda, with the help of other local Rotary clubs, presented \$40,000 of the \$50,000 that was raised to for the Little Flock Orphanage in southern India.

Rotary set out in 2011 to raise \$25,000 for a bus for the orphanage in Southern India but raised \$50,000. Rotary Club of Orinda led the project and the clubs of Lamorinda (Lafayette, Sunrise, Rossmoor, Moraga) contributed money, as did the Interact Clubs of Northern California. (Interact are high school Rotary clubs.)

Rotary purchased the first bus in 2013 by matching \$10,000 with Little Flock, and is buying another bus in 2017.

The remaining funds match Little Flock funds for their medical and dental clinic as well as their school that serves the orphans and the village around them.

To find out more about Little Flock visit www.littleflockhomes.org. It's located near a small village about 90 minutes

from Chennai (formerly Madras). The orphanage was founded to handle orphans and castaways. It also serves the village with a population of about 1,000 with medical, dental and educational programs.



Nurse and Orinda resident Rhonda Darling and Viji Cammauf, founder of the Little Flock Orphanage.



A bus bought in part by funds raised by local Rotary clubs.

Lions roar with Pride Awards

Submitted by Dan Hagan

Once again the Moraga Lions gave out Lions Pride awards to students from the Lamorinda middle schools. The students are recommended by teachers and selected by the administration of each school. The 2016 winners and families are pictured below.



Stanley Middle School

Pictured, bottom row, from left, Frank Tinley (grandpa), Ludy Tinley (step grandma), Mike Evans (Danny's step father), Pattie Curtin (Danny's mom), Danny Tinley (Award winner), Dan Hagan (Moraga Lions), Ryland Nella (Award winner), E.J. Nella, Lucia Nella. Top Row, from left, Stanley teachers and staff, Di Harlow (special services assistant), Sue Applin (home economics teacher), Alissa Reddam (instructional support teacher), Dale Webber (instructional support teacher), Tiffany Sullivan (counselor), David Schrag (principal).



Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School

Pictured, from left, Ricci and Bruce Jamgotchian, Isaac Jamgotchian (Award winner), Ray Casabonne, Zahra Taymuree (Award winner), Assad an Manizha Taymuree.



Orinda Intermediate School

Pictured, from left, Xander Deanhardt (Award winner), Clay Deanhardt (Xander's father), Ray Casabonne, Patti O'Brien (Julia's mother), Julia Miller (Award winner).



Saint Perpetua School

Pictured, from left, Keum Roberge (mother), Lauren Roberge (Award winner), Dan Hagan, Jack Flitter (Award winner), Chris Flitter (mother), Heidi Schwarck (teacher).

Service-Learning Camp offers teens a diverse experience

By Adam Blake



Isabella Chechele, Tyler Gough, Joshua McCooey.

Photos provided

Hidden behind towering shelves of canned goods and fresh produce, a group of 15 cheerful Lamorinda day-campers diligently bagged juicy plums into bright green bags.

These young volunteers were helping the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano package food for the 190,000 individuals its able to serve every month, thanks to the help of altruistic community members.

The Concord warehouse was merely one stop on a busy schedule of diverse hands-on service activities campers engaged in as a part of Lafayette United Methodist Church's Day Camp from June 26-29.

"Through the service projects effort, we hope to teach teens that people come from different economic levels and circumstances, and help teens to reach out and help others in their wider community," said Sue Renno, who has served LUMC's Day Camp director for the past 17 years.

From playing board games with special needs adults at Futures Explored in Lafayette to assembling snack bags for homeless clients at the Trinity Center in Walnut Creek, each day camper was introduced to new, tangible ways to make a positive impact right in their own backyard.

Pat Hershey, head of the service-learning program, has been a regular volunteer at the food bank for seven years, acting as somewhat of a liaison to the church by organizing food drives and ushering in new volunteers.

She prides herself as a member of the "Food for Children Boxing Team," though clarified that the only bruises inflicted were to over-ripe fruit.

These efforts reflect Hershey's firm belief that being of service to the community is a key aspect of church life. She is hopeful that the camper's experience will translate into a lifelong desire to be of service to others in their communities.

"I find that most people want to make a contribution and be of help to others, but sometimes they don't really know how to do that," Hershey said. "I try to make it easy for them by showing them ways that they can help make life better for people in the community."

Back in Lafayette, LUMC's campus was bustling throughout the week with 70 preschoolers through fifth graders engaging in fun activities that teach basic values. Energetic campers rotated through lively stations, including a petting zoo in the spirit of this year's harvest theme.

"We wish our program to complement the efforts of local parents in teaching good values to their children, specifically this year: love, joy, peace, patience and kindness, through stories, music, skits, games, crafts and fun," Renno said.

Renno introduced the service-learning component for older campers 10 years ago in an effort to instill the importance of understanding and serving those that come from less fortunate economic backgrounds, a sentiment Hershey also underscored.

"Sometimes living in Lafayette and our Lamorinda area, we don't always see the face of hunger, even though there are hungry people right here," Hershey said. "I'd like for the campers to come away understanding that we can make their lives better."



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The Lamorinda Arts Alliance presents a new exhibit titled Halcyon Days at the Diablo Fine Art Gallery in Walnut Creek that runs through Aug. 5. Halcyon Days' refers to a period of peace and calm, something we could all use. The artists reflect on this idea in a variety of media including paintings, photography, sculpture and ceramics. Unique jewelry is also a feature of the gallery.

MUSIC

Enjoy a Twilight Concert and Picnic honoring our veterans and saluting our troops featuring The Midnight Flyers (acoustic Eagles covers) and The Big Band of Rossmoor from 5:30 p.m. to twilight on Saturday, July 15 at the Lafayette Rotary stage and picnic area inside the Lafayette Reservoir and overlooking the lake. Free to the public. Bring a blanket, your lawn chairs and a picnic. Golf cart shuttles will be available from the main parking lot up to the Rotary Stage. For more information visit www.rotarylafayette.org.

The Walnut Creek Concert Band presents Summer "Pops" Concert at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 18 at the Lesh Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. www.lesherartscenter.org ; www.walnutcreekconcertband.org. \$14 - \$17; Free admission for students. Tickets available at box office or online at http://lesherartscenter.showare.com/SummerPopsConcert2017

It's time to sit back and unwind at the free summer concerts in at the park series from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Orinda on Tuesday nights.

Free concerts from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday evenings at the Moraga Commons Park. Bring your picnic blanket or lawn chairs to the grassy hillside in front of the band shell. Enjoy the music while your children enjoy the park. The volunteers of MPF will cook dinner with the Snack Bar opening at 6 p.m. July 13: Foreverland - Electrifying tribute to Michael Jackson; July 20: Beatles Flashback - Tribute the Beatles.

THEATER

Cal Shakes will present "The Glass Menagerie" written by Tennessee Williams and directed by Lisa Portes from July 5-30 at the Bruns Amphitheater located off the Wilder Road exit of Highway 24. There is a free, 20-minute informational Grove Talk starting 45 minutes before each and every performance with plenty of picnic benches. Tickets and exact show times available at www.calshakes.org.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

The UC Theatre Taube Family Music Hall presents Bill Nye the Science Guy at 7 p.m. on July 15, doors open at 6 p.m., at the UC Theatre Taube Family Music Hall, 2036 University Avenue, Berkeley. Bill Nye the Science Guy visits for one unforgettable evening to read and sign his new book, "Everything All at Once." Cost: \$42.50, includes a copy of Nye's new book. For more info see www.theuc theatre.org/event/1469944-bill-nye-science-guy-berkeley/ or call (510) 356-4000 or email information@theuc theatre.org.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Make Solar Fairy Lanterns from 12 to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 15 at the Lafayette Community Garden with artist Susan Dannenfelser for a magical workshop! Bring that special Mason jar you've been saving (not required), along with any fairy- or gnome-like decorations to make a lantern that is uniquely yours! Supplies provided. We'll also demonstrate alternative light sources. All ages are welcome at this intergen-

erational workshop. A responsible adult must accompany children under 16. The class is free, but a \$5 donation is appreciated. To register for classes, please visit www.lafayettecommunitygarden.org.

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center is celebrating makers, creators, and the curious in the community at MakerFest from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 22. The fourth annual MakerFest will include demonstrations for all ages in 3D printing, air-powered rocketry, robotics, weaving, music and art. We'll also be introducing a new Pancake Bot. Register free online at: http://tinyurl.com/makerfestLAF2017.

The Berkeley Kite Festival is from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on July 29 and 30, Cesar Chavez Park, Berkeley Marina. Free event with kite competitions, the "Octopile," Candy Drop, Kite Battles, Kid Zone with pony rides, bounce houses, and more. Food, crafts, and free kites. www.BerkeleyKiteFestival.com, (510) 235-KITE or www.AnotherBullwinkleShow.com for vendor info.

The Contra Costa County Library invites children, teens and library users of all ages to take part in Summer Reading. Summer Reading runs through Saturday, Aug. 5. This year's theme is "Build Your Brain" and the program is filled with activities, events and reading lists designed to exercise your brain. Readers of all ages can participate online or use a paper reading record. Completed reading records or online completion certificates should be returned to one of the 26 Contra Costa County Library branches by Aug. 5. All finishers will receive a book prize and be entered into a drawing for a chance to win additional prizes. For more information on Summer Reading visit a local Contra Costa County Library branch or www.cclib.org/summer.

OTHER

Operation Wedding Gown. The national nonprofit Brides Across America honors our first responders and military personnel by giving wedding gowns to these heroes at partner bridal salons and making wedding dreams come true. On July 14, Lace and Bustle Boutique located at 3569 Mount Diablo Boulevard #E in Lafayette will be hosting one of these wedding gown events. To register for the event go to www.bridesacrossamerica.com. Military brides must bring proper identification along with deployment papers to be presented the day of the event. First Responders must bring a valid work ID the day of the event. To contact the store directly call (925) 298-4100.

Dance on Film: "42nd Street," 1 to 3 p.m. on Friday, July 14 at the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The film stars Warner Baxter, Bebe Daniels, George Brent and Ruby Keeler. Before the film screening tap teacher, and Diablo Ballet Executive Director, Susan Boreliz, will demonstrate some of the amazing dance steps featured in the film including, buffalos, cramp rolls, and even the Ruby Keeler, named for the film star. Tickets free (\$5 donation is appreciated). Registration is recommended to ensure seating. Refreshments.

Kittens, kittens, kittens! Community Concern for Cats invites the to meet these adorable babies from 1 to 4 p.m. at this weekend's adoption event, Saturday and Sunday, July 15 and 16. Locations are Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information, see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

A free workshop, "Taking Control of Your Finances in 8 Steps" begins at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 19 at the Orinda Library. This is a two-hour educational program where attendees will learn the basics of taking control of their finances and can

get their questions answered. There is absolutely no selling during this event which is put on by The Financial Planning Association of the East Bay, a nonprofit organization.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society presents Peru Peregrinations from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 20 at Northbrae Community Church, 941 the Alameda, Berkeley. Peru is a land of many habitats, from dry Tumbas, the high Andes down the center of the country, to the Amazonian forests and rivers in the east. Cost: \$5 donation for non-members. For more info see www.goldengateaudubon.org or call (510) 843-2222 or email ggass@goldengateaudubon.org.

Contra Costa Tale Spinners at 7 p.m. on Thursday, July 27 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Join us for a story swap with Jeff Byers, well known to Bay Area audiences, who believes longing drives every good story. Come see if you agree. Share, listen, expand your universe.

The California Retired Teachers Association invites all educators from the Lamorinda area to its next luncheon from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 2 at the Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive, Pleasant Hill. Featured speaker is State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. Cost is \$25. Call Lorrie at (925) 937-2898 or email jalosborn@gmail.com before July 22.

The Lamorinda Safety Faire, organized by the Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission, will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 5 at St. Mary's College, 1928 St. Mary's Rd. Learn how to protect yourself and your family while children enjoy seeing and sitting in helicopters just after they land. Other special emergency vehicles will be available. CERT booths will be there with information and demonstrations.

Diablo Ballet's Annual Gourmet Gallop food and wine walk returns to downtown Walnut Creek for the seventh consecutive year from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 10. The event invites guests to sip, sample and stroll their way through 16 downtown Walnut Creek locations as they experience a one-of-a-kind culinary adventure. TICKETS: \$39 per person on or before July 2, \$45 per person starting July 28 are available online at www.diabloballet.org or by calling (925) 943-1775. Group rates are available.

SENIORS

After Hormones: Healthy Skin, Bones & Wellness at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, July 19 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. The clinical team from Comprehensive Wellness will share how to optimize your health after your hormones have dipped or disappeared. Learn about the way later life hormone levels affect bones, skin, and overall well-being and what you can do to get the most out of each day.

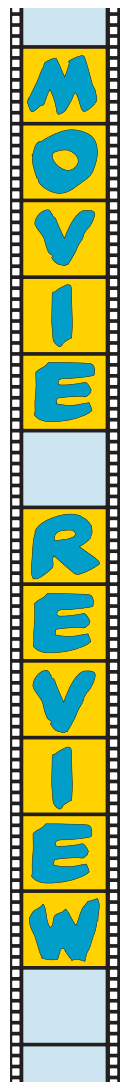
Smart Driver 4 Hour Refresher Course from 9 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, July 20 at the Toyon Room, Lafayette Community Center. Refine your driving skills, develop safe, defensive techniques, and possibly lower your insurance premium. Offered through AARP. \$15 AARP members; \$20 non-members. Max: 25 paid registrants. To reserve your spot, send check, made payable to AARP, to Lafayette Senior Services, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette, CA 94549.

Anne Randolph Physical Therapy Presentations — Pain Management from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 26 in the Sequoia Room, Lafayette Community Center. Learn how improving posture and muscle strength can reduce or eliminate pain altogether. Stop suffering and take control. Fee per class: Members: no charge/ non-members: \$10.

Film Clips

Sail the Titanic, laugh out loud and enjoy sleight-of-hand at Lamorinda Theatres

By Derek Zemrak



There are several special events coming to the Lamorinda theaters in the next few weeks beginning with “Titanic” at the **Orinda’s Thursday Free Movie Night, 7 p.m. July 13.** The story of the Titanic begins in the present, 2.5 miles under water where a fortune hunter (Bill Paxton) is looking for treasure amongst the ruins of the broken ship. From this point the film morphs into the past and the launching of the ill-fated ship and the love story of artist Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Rose DeWitt (Kate Winslet). Titanic won 11 Oscars in 1998.

7 p.m. Saturday, July 15, at the Rheem Theatre, Derek Zemrak will present a history of the Life of Marilyn Monroe. She was famous for playing the “dumb blonde” and became the one of the most popular sex symbols of all time. Come and learn more about her fascinating life

through Zemrak’s lecture, rare movie clips and live music from her movies performed by Patti Leidecker. Marilyn Wines from Cine Cuvée will be sold at this event. Admission is \$15

2 p.m. Wednesday, July 19, at the Rheem Theatre – Moraga Movers Movie with Larry Swindell. “Yankee Doodle Dandy” starring James Cagney, Joan Leslie, and Walter Huston, is the biographical musical about the life of renowned playwright, composer, actor, dancer and singer George M. Cohan. Admission is \$7.

8 p.m. Thursday, July 20, is Comedy Night at the Orinda Theatre with comedian Johnny Steele. He is a comedian, talk show host, writer, humorist, political satirist, actor and all-around loudmouth commentator. Admission is \$20.

6 and 8 p.m., Saturday, July 22, is the return by popular demand of Illusionist Timothy James. After sold-out shows on May 20 and June 3, James has agreed to return on July 22 for two additional shows – 6 p.m. for kids and 8 p.m. for the PG13 show. Get ready for a night of amazing sleight-of-hand, hilarious audience interaction and the grand finales. These shows are fun for all ages and for all generations! Pianist Patti Leidecker will accompany him on the baby grand piano. Admission: Kids’ Show, \$10 under 18; \$15 18 and over. Admission to the PG13 show is \$15.

A realistic and raw version of ‘The Glass Menagerie’ at CalShakes

By Sophie Braccini



Raphael Jordan and Phoebe Fico.

Photo provided

It starts slowly, almost softly like a sweet song on an old record player. Tennessee Williams’ “The Glass Menagerie” is a play about memory, yes, but painful memories. The kind that tore you apart growing up and that can only be looked at with a nostalgic feeling of understanding and forgiveness many years later. Director Lisa Portes made the choice of realism by choosing to portray Laura as a young woman with a real handicap.

Why highlight the physical difference of one actor? Because it creates a different vision of Williams’ work that affects the entire play. In Portes’ “Menagerie,” Laura is not a slightly limping young woman whose handicap is more in her head than in reality; it is a true challenge, and the traits, and the words of the characters around her become more real and raw. The mother’s unrelenting expectations for her daughter seem even more unrealistic, the impending treason of the son to escape is even more

unforgivable. This version of “The Glass Menagerie” is harsh and poignant, a modern take on a masterpiece definitely worth getting tickets.

The production is led by Portes’ vision, and it is executed with great deftness by a cast of four actors. Karen Aldridge shines as the mother, Amanda. Portes gave the role of the anxious and socially humbled former southern “belle” to an African-American actress, explaining that there were indeed black debutantes in the South at the turn of the 20th Century. But ethnicity is irrelevant here. Aldridge is a superb actress who portrays Amanda with energy and passion, charm and vulnerability. At times overbearing, she is very touching in her desperate attempt to create a family and a future as her children are drifting away.

Sean San José is Tom Aldridge, the son and narrator of the story. The actor is very strong and assured, physically moving furniture,

jumping on and out of stage, with untrammelled energy, displaying physically his impatience at leaving the suffocating nest.

In the middle of the battle between a mother wanting to control and a son wanting to escape, there is a fragile angel of purity, Laura, the daughter who escapes reality in the world of her glass menagerie. The character played by Phoebe Fico is heartbreaking and casting it a young woman who is indeed disabled shows Portes’ determination to anchor the text in reality. When her character struggles to sit on the floor, the actress does so indeed, and to this writer the most moving scene is certainly when she dances with Jim, her “gentleman caller.”

Raphael Jordan plays Jim, the former high school hero and classmate who comes to visit for a night. Jordan has the right vibe and jolliness to portray here the image of the American dream, the young man momentarily socially set back, but who deals with reality with determination and has a realistic and positive plan to make it. He also expresses with sensitivity his affection for Laura. For a few minutes, one might believe that something is possible between the two.

The staging, the costumes, the lights, and of course the marvelous natural setting of the Bruns Amphitheater add to the experience of the spectator.

“The Glass Menagerie” will play until July 30. For tickets go to www.calshakes.org.

diablo ballet
Larrea Jones, Artistic Director

ANNUAL DANCE ON FILM SERIES

Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation with Diablo Ballet, The San Francisco Dance Film Festival and the Lamorinda Weekly present

Highlights from the 2016 Dance Film Festival including award-winning screen dance shorts and the documentary film “Kick Ball Change”, which offers a window into the creative and inspiring mind of Maxim Kozhevnikov, five-time professional world champion in ballroom dance.

July 23, 4:00-6:00 pm

Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall

\$10 Admission and Refreshments.

For event and ticket information, visit:
www.lafayettelib.org or call (925) 283.6513 x 102
Diablo Ballet: 925.943.1775 | www.diabloballet.org

Service Clubs Announcements

LAMORINDA Sunrise Rotary
Friends, Fun, Service Above Self

We meet Friday mornings at 7:00 am at The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

July 14 Adjunct Professor Doug Paxton, Saint Mary’s College, on Values in Action, Leadership and Organizational Change	July 21 Learn about the Families Without Borders projects in Sierra Leone from the first, highly successful graduate, Ibrahim Kalokah.
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Whoever would have thought the 2017 June/July AARP edition would feature “older buyers trying to simplify travel desires” by scaling back to “head-turning” Teardrop Trailers? We did!

Lafayette Rotary Club

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

July 13: Bob Shusta -More police stories

Tribute to the Troops
Honoring our Veterans and Saluting our Troops
Saturday July 15, 5 PM to Twilight
Lafayette Reservoir
FREE to the public and all military

Free concerts to rock Lamorinda this summer

- Lafayette**
July 15, 5 pm to Twilight Tribute to the Troops
Free concert, bring your picnic
- Moraga**
Thursday evenings at the Commons are for relaxing with friends and enjoying the bands. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs to the grassy hillside in front of the band shell. The volunteers of MPF will cook dinner for you with the Snack Bar opening at 6 p.m.
- July 13 Foreverland -Tribute to Michael Jackson
 - July 20 Beatles Flashback - Tribute the Beatles
 - July 27 Mixed Nuts - Jazz, soul, blues and rock
 - August 3 House Rockers - Rock and soul
 - August 10 Apple Z - Rock and roll
 - August 17 Fundamentals - Red-hot rockin’ soul
- The County Food Bank will have collection bins near parking lots each Thursday. Concerts start at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m.
- Orinda**
It’s time to sit back and unwind at the free summer concerts at the park series on Tuesday nights.
- July 18 Lamorinda Idol
Food Truck: Pia’s Pizza
 - July 23, Opera in the Park, 5-7 p.m.
 - July 25, Bruce Gunn & Big Rain — Soulful Rock Country
Food Truck: El Ranchero (taco truck)
 - August 1, JetBlacq — Jazz
Food Truck: Rebel Dog Hotdogs
 - August 8, West Grand Blvd — Motown
Food Truck: An the Go (Asian Fusion)
 - August 15, Big Band Jazz
Food Truck: Kenny’s Heart & Soul (Soul Food)
- The concerts run 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Also coming up in Orinda this summer:
The Orinda Village Starlight Players have three plays at the Orinda Community Park this summer:
Malcolm Cowler’s adaptation of L. Frank Baum’s “The Wizard of Oz” runs July 21 through Aug. 12
Robert Merrill’s “Five-Door Farce,” Sept. 1 through Sept. 30

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Thoughtful Food

Tasty Treats for Tortilla Time

By Susie Iventosch



The Berber Family from left, Alex, Carol, Manuel and Andrew at Saint Mary's College.

Photo provided

As a kid growing up in the Lamorinda area, Alex Berber always had the feeling that he would join the family business one day. "I never wanted to admit it, but deep down I always knew. And, here I am! The one thing I did not know or understand at the time is how incredibly fortunate I was to have this opportunity later in my life."

That family business is Mi Rancho, a thriving tortilla company that sells more than 4.5 million tortillas to the combined retail-food-service markets on a daily basis. Mi Rancho has been owned and operated by the Berber family since 1954 when Alex's great-grandfather, Robert Berber, Sr. and his grandparents Robert Berber, Jr. and his wife Ofelia moved to Oakland from Los Angeles to purchase the only Mexican grocery store in the area. The store, originally located on Seventh Street in Oakland, drew crowds from all around the local area for the fresh handmade tortillas, chilies, spices and hot foods.

When the Berber family took over, Ofelia's cooking turned the place into a favorite local haunt, with lines forming around the block to purchase her famous lunches. Eventually, when the company began selling its premium tortillas and chips to local food service establishments, it finally outgrew the building and moved to a much larger facility in San Leandro.

Today, the business is run by the third and fourth generations of the Berber family – Manuel and Carol Berber and their sons An-

drew and Alex. Both boys are graduates of Campolindo High School and the University of Colorado, Boulder. Manuel, who said it was a given that he would join the family business when he came of working age, is especially proud of the fact that the boys have chosen to come into the fold of the family business.

"College was our primary goal for Andrew and Alex, and after earning their degrees, both of them worked for other firms outside of the tortilla business," he said. "But now that they are fully invested in the family business, it means so much more. We are passing the torch to the boys for the continuation of the Berber family business."

Andrew Berber, the elder son who is primarily focusing on the operations side, says that growing up in a family business taught him the importance of relationships and connecting with people. "Being the fourth generation to run, operate and work at Mi Rancho is a huge milestone that hopefully one day will be surpassed by the next (fifth) generation of tortilla lovers."

Mi Rancho produces organic tortillas the old-fashioned way, using whole kernel, non-GMO corn locally sourced in the Sacramento valley. They use a process called nixtamalization whereby whole corn is cooked, steeped and rinsed (the nixtamal) and then ground into fresh masa using authentic hand-carved lava stones. According to Mi Rancho production manager Julio Sandoval, the company has a person dedicated to sharpening

the lava stones, because properly carved stones create the best masa texture.

Manuel Berber says this is the traditional way that dates back to the Aztecs, but today most tortilla manufacturers shorten the process by using masa to begin with instead of whole kernel corn. "By beginning with fresh corn, you can achieve a tortilla with a truly rich corn taste," he pointed out.

An additional benefit of corn tortillas is that they are gluten-free, which is a huge plus for so many on wheat-free diets these days.

Carol Berber, who is of Italian heritage, loves the idea that there are so many ways to use tortillas in cooking. She has shared with us her recipe for Carne Asada and Charred Vegetables on Parmesan-crusted Tortillas for what she calls "pure tortilla joy."

"Tortillas are so diverse and have so many uses, such as pizza crust or even crackers," Carol noted. "We don't even know how many ways they are being used out there!"

Mi Rancho also makes flour tortillas as well as their Organic Ancient Grain tortilla made with amaranth, millet, flax and quinoa. Mi Rancho moved into the mass retail market just six or seven years ago, and now sell their goods locally at Diablo Foods, Whole Foods, Safeway and Lunardi's markets.

For more information, visit www.mirancho.com.

Carne Asada & Charred Vegetable Parmesan-crusted Tacos



Photo Susie Iventosch

Courtesy of Carol Berber

INGREDIENTS

Large Skirt Steak

1 cup orange juice (You can also use pineapple juice for a sweeter flavor.)

½ cup soy sauce

1-2 tsp minced garlic

Mi Rancho Organic Corn Tortillas

1 cup parmesan cheese

1 red bell pepper, remove seeds and slice into strips

1 green bell pepper, remove seeds and slice into strips

1 yellow/orange bell pepper, remove seeds and slice into strips

4-6 green onions, sliced in half

3-4 garlic cloves, sliced thinly

Olive or vegetable oil

Mexican Crema

DIRECTIONS

For the marinade, mix orange juice, soy sauce and garlic. Marinade skirt steak in the fridge for no more than 1 hour – if left too long the citrus will break down the meat too much and make it tough. Heat a hot, cast iron pan on the grill or in the house. On high heat, add oil, all bell peppers, green onions and garlic. Fry until crispy and charred.

Bring steak to room temperature. On a hot barbecue grill, cook strip steak on high heat, flipping only once, for 2-3 minutes on each side. Remove and let rest. Cut into strips, cutting against the grain.

Place tortillas on the grill and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Remove once the cheese melts and the tortilla is toasted and bubbly. This will act to seal the tortilla and adds tons of flavor.

To assemble your tacos, add generous portions of carne asada, charred vegetables to the tortilla with the cheese on the inside. Add crema to taste.

That's pure tortilla joy.

Cooking Term of the Week

Invert Sugar

Invert sugar is the result of the breakdown of complex sugar into its component sugar molecules of fructose. The result is a sugar that is half of each. This is used in certain products to improve shelf life, and it can also be used in candies to make them smooth and in cookies to keep them soft and chewy. It can also be used in home brewing. If you find a recipe that calls for invert sugar, honey is the best substitute. For more information on invert sugar and its uses, properties and how to make it, visit:

http://www.pastrysampler.com/Articles/Pastry_Baking/Invert_Sugar.html

Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



A note to caregivers when it's time for outside care for elderly loved ones

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson

If you're feeling guilty about placing a family member in a care facility, you are in the "normal" range of the family caregiver trajectory. And in defense of the word "normal," there is none. We all proceed through events differently.

In my many years of working with family caregivers and my own emotional journey moving my mom to assisted living, I felt the very real feeling of guilt that is sadly experienced by most of us.

Some time ago, I learned that there are two kinds of guilt. One is when we have done something with the intention to hurt another, or we have forgotten or ignored something, unintentionally putting ourselves, or others in harm's way. This type of guilt usually needs some form of forgiveness or repayment. I call this good guilt because we learn from it and if we do our homework in kind and loving ways, it can free us from old hurts and allow us to move on with our lives.

The other kind is "bad" guilt, and that is the kind of guilt that family members often experience after placing a loved one in a care setting, giving up the day-to-day care or finding a safe place for one who can no longer care for themselves. It is bad because this is not something you would choose if things were different. The true feelings should be falling into sadness, grief or maybe even some anger at "why us" at this time in our lives.

The reason this is considered bad guilt is that you did nothing to cause it. You did not inflict the dementia, the stroke or any other chronic illness. Even if you found yourself to be lacking in physical or emotional strength, and that is why you chose this time to make a move, it truly is about the other needing more care than you can deliver. Not because you are weak or unloving, but because the other person's needs are greater than your energy or emotional reserves. Remember in care settings the individuals employed work only eight

hours, not 24.

Monthly Affirmation: "Love is doing what is needed, not what is necessarily wanted."



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 28 years.

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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Local newspaper delivered to Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Double trouble: Acalanes' Brooke Panfili earns 1st-Team honors in 2 sports

By Karl Buscheck



Brooke Panfili's first love is basketball.

Photos Gint Federas

For veteran coach Victor Silva, it's difficult to name a peer when it comes to Brooke Panfili, the recently graduated as a dual-sport star at Acalanes.

As the head coach of the basketball program and an assistant on the basketball staff – Panfili's two teams – Silva is uniquely qualified to speak on the impressive tenure of the new grad.

"I've been coaching now for 10 years, (and) she might be the most athletic girl I've ever been around," Silva said. "She's fast. She's strong. The coordination. She's a fantastic shooter. She might be the best shooter I've ever seen."

Panfili, who ran the point for the Dons basketball team, secured first-team all-league honors in the Foothill Division of the DAL after averaging 16.7 points per game and adding 4.0 assists, 3.8 rebounds and 3.9 steals.

Panfili followed that up by landing a place on the first-team of the Valley Division softball team this spring.

"She has a drive too," Silva explained. "She doesn't like to lose. She's takes losing pretty hard. I think you could throw her in a wa-

ter polo game – even though she's never played – and she'd get by. I really do. Whatever she's going to do as far as athletics, she's going to succeed just because she's such an athlete."

After the rare two-sport first-time all-league feat, Panfili is headed to Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas, in the fall on a hoops scholarship.

"Basketball is Brooke's true love," Silva explained. "That's the sport that she loves and so it's just going to be basketball (at Saint Edward's)."

Panfili, who had previously played as an off guard before taking over the point in her senior season, helped pilot the Dons to a 19-11 record (6-4 in DAL) and the No. 3 seed in the NCS D II bracket.

Amid Panfili's many exploits on the court, the memory that most stands out for Silva is when the guard willed the club to a rescue against Redwood in the quarterfinals of NCS.

"The score was tied, it was like two minutes to go in the game and every time the other team came down the court and scored, Brooke would (answer) right back," Silva

recalled. "I mean, it was like she took the whole team on her shoulders that game."

Panfili ended up pouring in 21 points. The Dons won 69-67.

"And she just has that kind of ability to do that, you know, take over a game" Silva added.

Silva believes his ex-charge could once again be a two-sport player at the next level – if she wanted to.

"There's no doubt in my mind that if she wanted to play softball in college, somebody would take her," Silva said. "She's just that good of an athlete."

A three-year varsity player in both sports, Panfili pitched and played second base for the softball team during her freshman, sophomore and senior season. She took off the spring of her junior year so that she could focus on securing her collegiate basketball future.

"She pitched every big game we played in," Silva said. "We made it to NCS and she pitched in that game (against Kennedy)."

During her senior spring, Panfili spun a 1.88 ERA, holding the opposition to a .156 batting average in 37.1 innings.

"She was our go-to pitcher," Silva continued. "She was very talented. Like I said, basketball was her sport, but she was a good pitcher. She was the captain on both teams."

As Silva noted, even though Panfili was never especially vocal on the court or on the diamond, she had a knack for bringing her teams together.

"The amazing thing is at Acalanes, everyone has always got along with Brooke, they've always respected her and she's been a leader in a quiet way," Silva said. "I think you can ask anybody on the team and they'd tell you that. She's someone you can count on."



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2016-2017 Boys DFAL All League, Spring Sports

DAL All-League – Valley Division

Baseball – 2016-17

Co-Most Valuable Players

Tim Tague (Miramonte)
Sam Liang (Miramonte)

1st Team All-League

Casey McGonigle (Miramonte)
Ben Jungbhuth (Miramonte)
E.J. Hidges (Miramonte)
Jake Hassard (Miramonte)
Nick Foster (Miramonte)
Nolan Brown (Miramonte)

2nd Team All-League

Will Cassriel (Miramonte)

Honorable Mention

Deckers Barr (Miramonte)
Will Duby (Miramonte)



Tim Tague

Photos Gint Federas



Sam Liang

DAL All-League – Foothill Division

Baseball – 2016-17

Co-Most Valuable Pitchers

Josh Candau (Acalanes)

1st Team All-League

Daniel Kim (Acalanes)
Nick Berry (Acalanes)
Tyler Ewing (Acalanes)
Michael Hooper (Campolindo)

2nd Team All-League

Kevin McConnell (Acalanes)
Vincent Mossotti (Campolindo)
Mike Crews (Campolindo)
Will Bishop (Campolindo)
Matt Mead (Campolindo)

Honorable Mention

Nick Kresnak (Acalanes)
Lucas Allen (Campolindo)
Will Rembac (Acalanes)
Matt Vicencio (Acalanes)



Josh Candau



Daniel Kim

DAL All-League – Foothill Division

Boys Golf – 2016-17

First Team All-League

Alex Meyers (Miramonte)
Ryan Burnett (Campolindo)

Second Team: All-League

Nicholas Klock (Campolindo)
Julian O'Donnell (Acalanes)
Jay Thomas (Campolindo)
Jack Moeller (Campolindo)

Honorable Mention: All-League

Jacob Rosenberg (Acalanes)
Hayden Catron (Campolindo)
Sam Sernett (Miramonte)

DAL All-League

Boys Lacrosse - 2016-17

Co-Most Valuable Player

Nate Welcomer (Acalanes)
Drew Cirelli (Campolindo)

First Team

Colin Jeffries (Acalanes)
Ryan Doyle (Campolindo)
Michael Bone (Acalanes)
Will Rack (Campolindo)
Kannah Cruickshank (Campolindo)
Josh Baginski (Acalanes)
Foster Jones (Campolindo)
Joey Gladden (Acalanes)

Second Team

Fynn Chorak (Acalanes)
Nainoa Azevedo (Miramonte)
Charlie Hawkins (Miramonte)
Sam Ortlieb (Acalanes)
Ryan McCormick (Campolindo)

Honorable Mention

Matty Mariani (Acalanes)
Adam Shafer (Campolindo)
Matthew LoPresti (Campolindo)
John Cirelli (Campolindo)
John Berg (Miramonte)

DAL All-League – Foothill Division

Boys Volleyball – 2016-17

Most Valuable Player

Gage Worsley (Campolindo)

1st Team

Ryan Nagle (Campolindo)
Rupert Dusauzay III (Campolindo)
Sam Foster (Miramonte)

2nd Team

Charlie Sanchez (Campolindo)

Honorable Mention

Christian Lim (Miramonte)
Matt Lai (Campolindo)

DAL All-League – Valley Division

Boys Volleyball – 2016-17

Most Valuable Player

Connor McCarthy (Acalanes)

1st Team

Carter Smith (Acalanes)
Bijan Shahabi (Acalanes)
Nick Smyrnios (Acalanes)

2nd Team

Brad Altbaum (Acalanes)
Colin Kirbach (Acalanes)

Honorable Mention

Alex Franke (Acalanes)



Nate Welcomer



Drew Cirelli



Gage Worsley



Ryan Nagle



Rupert Dusauzay

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2016-2017 Boys DFAL All League Lamorinda U16 Girls reach Champions

... continued

DAL All-League

Boys Track – 2016-17

1st Team All-League

Niki Moore (Campolindo) 1600M, 800M
 Jesse Iniquez-Stralla (Acalanes) 100M, 200M, 4x400 Relay
 James Bull (Miramonte) 3200M
 Ethan Westemeier (Acalanes) 110M Hurdles, 300M Hurdles,
 Triple Jump, High Jump
 Matt Immesoete (Miramonte) Pole Vault

2nd Team All-League

Jonathan Fierro (Miramonte) 1600M, 3200M
 Ryan Nall (Acalanes) Shot Put, Discus Throw

Honorable Mention

Jared Yabu (Campolindo) 3200M
 Kai Weyland (Campolindo) Long Jump
 Owen McNamara (Acalanes) Pole Vault
 Carson Etmyre (Acalanes) 4x400 Relay
 Vance Parry (Acalanes) 4x400 Relay
 Christian Lyons (Acalanes) 4x400 Relay

DAL All-League

Boys Tennis – 2016-17

1st Team All-League - Singles

Nico Haet (Miramonte)
 William Hwong (Miramonte)
 Cal Hunter (Campolindo)

1st Team All-league –Doubles

Cole Brightbill/Jim Heo (Acalanes)
 Jake Oxendine/Ben Fish (Campolindo)
 Matt Przekop/Narayan Sharma (Miramonte)

2nd Team All-League –Singles

Trenton Tso (Acalanes)
 Ryan Everly (Acalanes)

2nd Team All-League –Doubles

Kush Subramanian/Dominic Davidson (Miramonte)
 Grant Yolasan/Ty Dow (Campolindo)
 Stephen Tse/Zach Kumar (Miramonte)

Honorable Mention –Singles

Rohan Saha (Acalanes)
 Nick Bohm (Campolindo)
 Jack O'Melveny (Miramonte)

DFAL All-League

Boys Swimming – 2015-16

1st Team All-League

Sam Ayers (Campolindo)
 Max Cruz (Campolindo)
 Jolen Griffin (Campolindo)
 Mason Loyet (Campolindo)
 Carson Van Farowe (Campolindo)
 Michael Wheeler (Campolindo)
 Max Younger (Campolindo)
 Tyler Abramson (Miramonte)
 Christian Schillinger (Miramonte)

2nd Team All-League

Derrick Garcia (Campolindo)
 Niel Binnie (Miramonte)
 Will Clark (Miramonte)
 Mikey Dakis (Miramonte)
 Eli O'Brien (Miramonte)
 Stephen Schmidt (Miramonte)

Honorable Mention

Casey Conrad (Acalanes)
 Brad Robison (Acalanes)
 Matt Ruegg (Acalanes)
 Jake Stone (Acalanes)
 Alec Baker (Campolindo)

Lamorinda U16 Girls reach Champions State Cup Final

Submitted by Christine Pitt



Front row from left, Emily Cohen, Isla Burch, Jordan Goularte, Sierra Harley, Siena Giordano, Julia Horner-Bell, Ava Schmitt, Mia Castillo, Natalie Means; back row from left, Marisa Charrette, Sasha Sadoff, Anna Pitt, Yasmeen Dao, Alaina Sekany, Margaux Clarke, Aliye Wingate, Isabel Fine, Alison Whipple, coach: Mohamed Mohamed.

The U16 Lamorinda girls soccer team reached the champions U16 State Cup Final, the highest level of the State Cup.

For many of the Lamorinda players this is a continuation of a journey that began when they entered the Lamorinda developmental program at the U8-U10 age group. During these formative years the players acquired their technical skills in a fun, learning environment. Later these players are challenged to perform at the highest level in club tournaments at the state and

national level.

The U16 girls team amassed an impressive 18-6 record during the cup run and faced Davis Legacy, the No. 1 team in the nation in the final. Lamorinda gave Davis a great game and kept the game close for 60 minutes down 2-1 and hit the woodwork three times during this period. Later as they sought the equalizer Lamorinda gave up two more goals. Currently the team is ranked No.2 in Northern California and No. 16 in the nation.

MBA Yankees win Mustang division championship

Submitted by Brian Myers



Pictured from left, Liam Nyhan, Andrew Vaughn, James Erickson, Carson Rossi, Andrew Davenport, Cameron Mayo, Cort Woodford, William Myers, Maddox Johnson, Tommy Beckwith, Jack Elder, Jack Mooradian. Coaches were Brian Myers, Darren Johnson, Patrick Rossi and Robert Woodford.

On June 6 the Moraga Baseball Association Yankees won the Mustang division championship, hosted at Buckeye Fields in Lafayette.

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LMYA SWIM Attends 1st Annual Oakland A's Bay Area Swim Team Night!

Fantastic family fun night for all! Each attendee received an A's Swim Cap to commemorate the outing! It was the perfect mid-season break for LMYA families and Coaches to bond as a team while supporting a local Bay Area sports team. As proud hosts of "County", the LMYA swim team is currently busy planning the 57th Annual Contra Costa County Swim Meet. To keep up to date on all things related to the LMYA swim team please visit www.lmyaswim.com, Like us on Facebook, and/or follow us on Twitter(@LMYASwim).



Orinda Aquatics hosts the 2017 Pacific Swimming Junior Olympics

By Karl Buscheck



Zach Le-Nguyen placed 3rd in the individual medley

Photo Gint Federas

Beginning on July 7, Orinda Aquatics hosted the 2017 Pacific Swimming Junior Olympics at the Soda Aquatic Center in Moraga.

The meet, which featured approximately 1,000 swimmers, was the championship event for the top athletes, aged 14 and under, from across Northern California.

"We try to do a good job for the swimmers and the parents and for the coaches," said Don Heidary, coach and co-founder of Orinda Aquatics. "So, it's an honor, but it's also a great responsibility to present the best competitive environment for the kids."

Orinda Aquatics has put on the meet, which is awarded by a bidding committee, in the past, and will host the Far Westems, a five-day meet which will take place at the end of July 2018.

Heidary credited the parent volunteers who help the Orinda Aquatic coaches with organizing and staffing the three-day meet for making it a success.

"Our parent community does a great job in trying to make the meet work, make it efficient and make the accommodations as positive as possible for the coaches," Heidary said.

"You can't run a meet like this without a strong parent-support group," Heidary added. "It's definitely not the coaches that do this, it's the parents."

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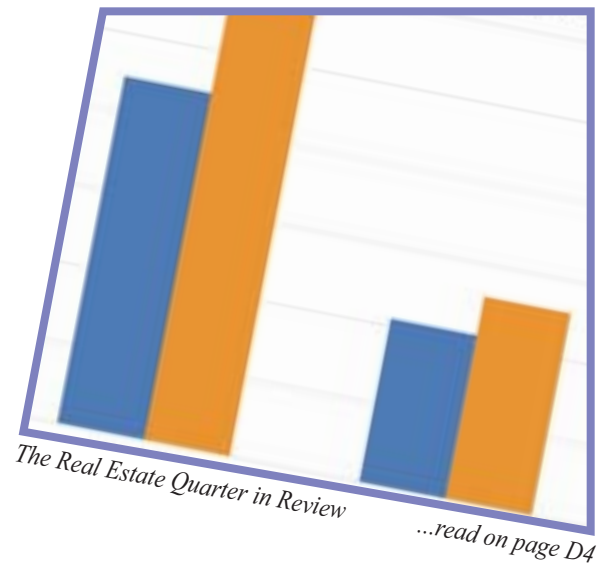


by Susan Lewis

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 11 Issue 10 Wednesday, July 12, 2017



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Talking Dirt

By Cynthia Brian

You're not a realist unless you believe in miracles. ~Anwar Sadat



Star jasmine cascading over a rock border gives dimension to a garden.

The singular American summer festivity of Independence Day is a time for people to gather, celebrate, travel, and spend treasured moments with family and friends. Picnics, barbecues, swim parties, parades, concerts, and, of course, fireworks are the highlights of the Fourth. As homeowners prepare their patios, porches and backyards for the forthcoming celebrations of the summer season, I've been busy consulting with clients on how to improve their landscaping.

The number one problem in the gardens that I visit is the quality of the soil. Long ago my Daddy told me there is a difference between dirt and soil. We can be dirt rich and soil poor. Unfortunately, many gardens are filled with lots of dirt and very poor soil.

Mother Nature is a miracle worker, yet it's up to those of us who till to create the vision and set the groundwork for her to do her real work. In order to grow a healthy and beautiful garden, the richness of our soil is paramount. Just as we wouldn't build a house without first constructing a solid foundation, we can't plant a garden unless healthy soil is in place. Over the years, times of droughts or seasons of heavy rainfall deplete the nutrients in our soil.

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued on page D12



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	16	\$689,000	\$3,830,000
MORAGA	3	\$1,150,000	\$2,000,000
ORINDA	16	\$425,000	\$3,900,000

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

- 989 Carol Lane, \$1,125,000, 5 Bdrms, 2235 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-30-17;
 Previous Sale: \$290,000, 09-19-96
- 391 Castello Road, \$920,000, 3 Bdrms, 1286 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 5-30-17
- 1018 Dyer Drive, \$820,000, 2 Bdrms, 1164 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-23-17
- 4111 Hidden Valley Road, \$895,000, 3 Bdrms, 1352 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 5-25-17;
 Previous Sale: \$32,500, 05-21-71
- 3398 La Caminita, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2630 SqFt, 1930 YrBlt, 5-23-17;
 Previous Sale: \$880,000, 01-20-06
- 847 Las Trampas Road, \$1,185,000, 4 Bdrms, 1921 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 5-26-17;
 Previous Sale: \$775,000, 07-22-11
- 1042 Leland Drive, \$910,000, 3 Bdrms, 1582 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 5-25-17
- 561 Morecroft Road, \$1,775,000, 5 Bdrms, 3338 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 5-30-17;
 Previous Sale: \$1,330,000, 10-28-09
- 628 North Silverado Drive, \$1,210,000, 3 Bdrms, 2135 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-26-17
- 888 Paradise Court, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 2560 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
 Previous Sale: \$217,000, 10-24-86
- 529 Silverado Drive, \$1,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 2044 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 5-25-17;
 Previous Sale: \$439,000, 06-24-92
- 595 Silverado Drive, \$1,615,000, 4 Bdrms, 2620 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 5-24-17
- 627 St. Marys Road, \$980,000, 3 Bdrms, 1549 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
 Previous Sale: \$278,000, 10-28-93
- 3744 Sundale Road, \$689,000, 2 Bdrms, 771 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-22-17;
 Previous Sale: \$382,000, 11-08-13
- 1201 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$3,830,000, 5 Bdrms, 4956 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt,
 5-25-17; Previous Sale: \$2,837,500, 09-15-10
- 3385 Woodview Drive, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 2575 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 5-25-17;
 Previous Sale: \$1,090,000, 12-11-07

MORAGA

- 1084 Baitx Drive, \$1,775,000, 2 Bdrms, 2596 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
 Previous Sale: \$1,135,000, 01-25-16
- 1324 Rimer Drive, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1840 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 5-31-17
- 2180 Sky View Court, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 4433 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
 Previous Sale: \$748,000, 02-14-97

... continued on page D10



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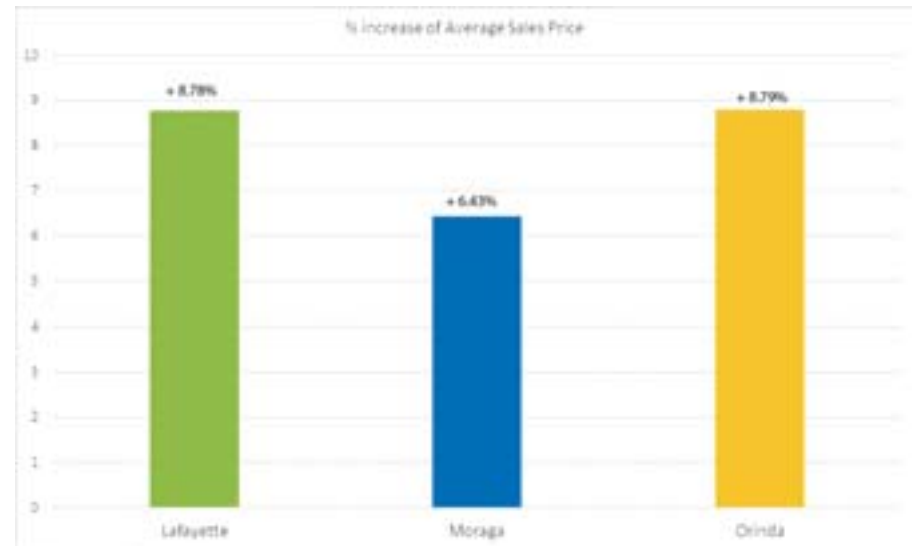
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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

Spring home sales bloom in Lamorinda

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T



The second quarter of 2017 was again seasonally strong with an increase in year over year closed sale activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate. Supply continued to be low, pending were sales up, and the average sales price remained high in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from April 1 through June 30, 2017, 114 single family homes closed in Lafayette. This was an increase from the 89 single family homes closed in the same period one year ago. Sales prices ranged from \$740,000 to “\$6.3 million and the average number of days on market was 19. In the year ago second quarter it was also 19 days, the same as in 2014 and 2015. The average sales price was \$1,684,206 up from a year ago when it was \$1,548,262. In the second quarter of 2015 it was \$1,670,209. In the second quarter of 2014 it was \$1,396,941. Previous second quarter averages were \$1,226,216 for 2013 and 2012 when it was \$1,053,173.

In Moraga the number of single-family closings was 52, an increase of 10 from the year-ago period. Prices ranged from \$725,000 to \$2,650,000. The average sale price was \$1,401,392 which was an increase from \$1,316,655 in the second quarter of 2016. In 2015 it was \$1,368,425. In 2014 it was \$1,301,236 for the same period and \$1,144,668 in 2013 and \$983,785 in 2012. The average marketing time was down slightly to 27 from 31 days a year ago.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings was at 84, an increase from the

second quarter of 2016 when it was 74. Sales prices ranged from \$885,000 to \$3.9 million with an average price of \$1,723,552. A year ago it was \$1,584,174. In the spring of 2015 it was \$1,532,761. In the same period in 2014 it was \$1,434,930. The 2013 average was \$1,282,236. It took an average of just 18 days on the market to sell which was a little higher than the 15 days on the market a year ago.

The average sales price figures in all three communities were the highest for any quarter ever.

In the quarter ending June 30, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$660 per square foot versus \$598 per square foot in 2016. It was \$594 in 2015. It was \$537 per square foot in the second quarter of 2014 and \$495 per square foot in the same time in 2013. Moraga homes sold for \$588 per square foot this last quarter and Orinda was at \$626.18. In 2016, in the same calendar quarter, these amounts were \$566 and \$600 respectively.

In Lafayette, the average sales price was 102.7 percent of the final asking price, the same as last spring. In Moraga it was 102.4 percent and in Orinda it was 103.3 percent.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had five resale closings between \$689,000 and \$860,000, Moraga had 17 ranging from \$350,000 to \$952,500 and Orinda had three that ranged from \$425,000 to “\$1 million.

... continued on page D8

Corrections

In the June 14 issue of the Lamorinda Weekly, David Mazaika was improperly identified in the article “Where there’s smoke there’s barbecue.” In the July 12 article “Outdoor living, great schools, and accessibility keep Lamorinda real estate hot,” realtor Jim Colhoun’s name was misspelled. The Lamorinda Weekly regrets the errors.



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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

Spring home sales bloom in Lamorinda

... continued from page D4

As of July 7, 2017, there were 97 homes under contract in the MLS in the three communities combined with asking prices of \$419,000 to \$4,995,000. A year ago there were 71 homes under contract per the MLS in the three communities combined with asking prices of \$435,000 to \$3,625,000. It should be pointed out that there is only one "Potential Short Sale" that is currently pending and subject to lender approval. At this same time a year ago there were none. There are no pending REO (bank owned) sales.

This is due to property values continuing to increase versus four years ago and many of those sellers are no longer "under water" or have been able to refinance their homes and are no longer at the point of foreclosure.

Inventory, however, remains low. There are 118 properties on the market and a year ago there were 107 available properties in the three communities combined. Two years ago there were 110. This is quite a change from July, 2011 when the inventory was at 219 homes.

There are "only" 50 properties on the market in Lafayette — about the same as the 44 at this same time a year ago. Asking prices in Lafayette currently range from \$699,000 to "\$25 million. In Moraga, buyers have their choice of 27 homes or condominiums listed between \$399,000 and \$3,050,000. A year ago at this time there were 18. So supply is up in Moraga.

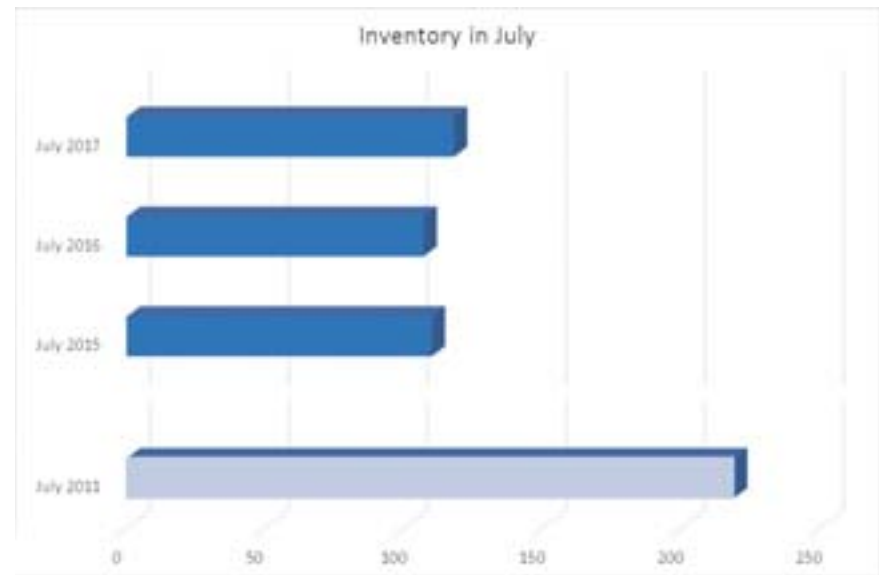
In Orinda there are 41, nearly the same as the 45 on the market at the same time a year ago. The list prices range from \$875,000 to \$16.5 million.

There are no bank-owned or short sales currently in the MLS available in any of the three communities.

At the high end, 54 homes sold above \$2 million in the three communities combined. A year ago there were 25. There are 40 currently available above this amount in the three communities combined.

Interest rates continue to be at very attractive levels and many corporations have expanded their businesses and continue to relocate families both into and out of the area.

Lastly, it is important to look at what homes are selling for versus their list prices.



Often homes come on the market at unrealistic prices, and they do not sell, but in the second quarter of this year many homes have had multiple offers and have sold at or above the list price.

We are also seeing many buyers having to make offers without the traditional contingencies of obtaining financing or having a home appraise or even having the home inspected. Many sellers are now opting to obtain presale inspections in order to understand the condition of their homes and to also prevent a buyer from trying to renegotiate a lower price or repairs.

Of the 114 single-family sales that closed in Lafayette in the second quarter of 2017, 79 sold at or above the final list price.

In Moraga, 36 of the 52 sales were at or above the asking price and in Orinda, 60 of the 84 sold at or above the final listing price.



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

ORINDA

- 2 Berrybrook Hollow, \$2,625,000, 5 Bdrms, 4505 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
Previous Sale: \$54,500, 12-01-95
- 73 Brookwood Road #49, \$425,000, 1 Bdrms, 673 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 5-30-17;
Previous Sale: \$291,000, 08-05-14
- 80 Davis Road, \$550,000, 3 Bdrms, 1996 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
Previous Sale: \$550,000, 02-29-16
- 16 East Altarinda Drive, \$1,615,000, 3 Bdrms, 2577 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
Previous Sale: \$1,525,000, 02-19-14
- 286 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,099,000, 2 Bdrms, 1397 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 5-25-17;
Previous Sale: \$527,500, 03-14-02
- 238 Hall Drive, \$945,000, 3 Bdrms, 1735 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 5-30-17
- 228 Longview Terrace, \$1,165,000, 3 Bdrms, 2130 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
Previous Sale: \$750,000, 09-19-03
- 5 Meadow Park Court, \$1,415,000, 4 Bdrms, 2167 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-22-17;
Previous Sale: \$716,000, 06-18-03
- 24 Moraga Via, \$2,530,000, 4 Bdrms, 3593 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 5-31-17;
Previous Sale: \$2,200,000, 05-14-04
- 70 Moraga Via, \$1,735,000, 4 Bdrms, 2659 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$1,385,000, 06-08-10
- 27 Orinda View Road, \$3,900,000, 5 Bdrms, 5159 SqFt, 2012 YrBlt, 5-26-17;
Previous Sale: \$3,425,000, 05-15-13
- 5 Owl Hill Court, \$2,675,000, 4 Bdrms, 4699 SqFt, 2007 YrBlt, 5-25-17;
Previous Sale: \$400,000, 05-26-93
- 246 Sundown Terrace, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3948 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 5-30-17;
Previous Sale: \$2,415,000, 02-03-06
- 48 Tappan Lane, \$1,179,000, 3 Bdrms, 1698 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-24-17;
Previous Sale: \$1,055,000, 03-23-05
- 208 The Knoll, \$950,000, 2 Bdrms, 2116 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 5-22-17;
Previous Sale: \$855,000, 04-29-14
- 18 Via Hermosa, \$1,255,000, 2 Bdrms, 1544 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 5-22-17

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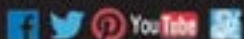
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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Talking Dirt

... continued from page D1

When our fruit trees are not producing or our flowers aren't blooming we question why this is happening. My first response is to gaze at the ground. When was the last time you added compost? Do you mulch regularly and fertilize when needed? Have you had your soil tested? Do you need to purchase clean soil?

I am a big proponent of having new fresh enriched soil delivered every few years to enhance the condition of the dirt. Home gardeners can have their dirt tested for a fee from a variety of labs across the United States to find out about the physical contents, contaminants and chemicals. With this information, you'll be able to optimize the growth of your plants and diagnosis any soil-related issues. Here is a sampling of places in California that you can contact. Visit their websites for more information or call to find out what is required.

A & L Western Laboratories, Inc. Modesto, CA 95351 www.al-labs-west.com 209-529-4080	Harmony Farm Supply and Nursery Sebastopol, CA 95472 www.harmonyfarm.com 707-823-9125
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Control Laboratories Watsonville, CA 95076 www.compostlab.com 831-724-5422	Peaceful Valley Farm and Garden Supply Grass Valley, CA 95945 www.groworganic.com/soil-health.html
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Dellavalle Laboratory, Inc. Fresno, CA 93728 www.dellavallelab.com 800-228-9896	Soil and Plant Laboratory, Inc. San Jose, CA 95128 www.soilandplantlaboratory.com 408-727-0330
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Fruit Growers Laboratory, Inc. Stockton, CA 95215 www.fglinc.com 209-942-0182
--

Test results of soil samples may indicate an excess of salts, improper nutrient levels, too high or low pH, or problems with the soil itself. With the guidance provided by soil testing, gardeners will be able to fertilize properly and amend your dirt, creating the soil for optimum growing.

Dig in the dirt! Amend the soil. Miracles will appear.

... continued on page D14



The magnificence of the magenta hydrangea.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Swallowtail Butterfly pursuing Jupiter's Beard

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Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

HARVEST garlic. Dig the heads out with a spade. Don't just pull on the stems. Move the garlic out of sunlight immediately to a shady, dry area such as a porch or a garage where circulation is good. (My garage smells like a delicious Italian kitchen!) Garlic cures best with the leaves on. Don't wash your garlic or scrape the dirt off of the bulb. Either lay flat or gather the stems into bunches to hang upside down to dry. Braiding works with softneck garlic. Curing will allow you to enjoy your garlic into winter. You can eat the garlic immediately as well. Save a few of your biggest heads to use as seed garlic for planting in the fall.

PLAY a lawn game that is new to you. How about the beanbag toss game or the ring toss similar to horseshoes called Quoit? If you are not too adventurous, stick to croquet and bocce!

PROLONG the life of lemons by filling a jar with water, adding the citrus, and covering tightly. The fruit will last longer than in the refrigerator and the jar makes a pretty counter display. Limes work the same except they require refrigeration.

REHYDRATE wilted vegetables by placing them for 15 minutes in a large bowl of cold water.

PICK carrots at their prime when they are still young, thin and sweet. The bigger they get, the stringier and tougher. Carrots don't need to be peeled. Scrub and go.

GATHER seeds from faded nasturtiums and four o'clocks to replant wherever you want more plants. Nasturtiums are beautiful cascading over a retaining wall or climbing a trellis while four o'clocks open their blooms in the afternoon at – surprise – 4 p.m. daily.

CUT rose rosettes to dry for a fragrant and elegant potpourri display.

WATCH for butterflies, especially yellow swallowtails. They are so intent on the flowers that they appear unafraid of the camera lens.

PICK plums and prunes. Large crops may cause branches to break. Food banks welcome fresh fruit when you have extra.

ENJOY the bounty of fruits and flowering trees and shrubs of July.

SWIM and have fun in the sun this summer. Don't forget your sunscreen!

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



Harvest garlic. Don't wash until using.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Yellow plums



Drying roses for potpourri is easy.



Rose of Sharon Hibiscus is a beautiful addition to any garden



Cynthia Brian with her favorite fragrant lily-Lillium Speciosum

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

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

Her new book, Growing with the Goddess Gardener will be available soon!

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90 Hillcrest Drive Charming remodel with awesome views on a favorite Glorietta street in heart of Orinda! Canadian maple hardwoods, Anderson windows, stainless steel appliances, marble counter tops, all new decking & landscaping.
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ORINDA



429 El Toyonal Located in the Orinda hills amongst the trees, this private home is near trails, open space & a short distance to Tilden Park. Updated kitchen, French doors to balconies, hrdwd flrs thruout, built-ins, .92 acre.
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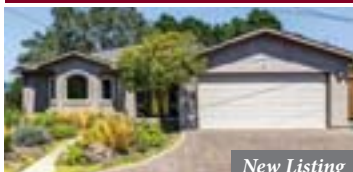
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New Listing

188 Hall Drive Beautiful Craftsman style single level home on private 1 acre. Natural wood vaulted ceilings, walls of windows & spacious open floor plan. 4 beds, 3 baths in apx. 2548 sq. ft., hardwood floors, large level patio & lawn.
\$1,650,000

ORINDA



New Listing

5 Hilary Way Beautiful apx. 2854 sq. ft. home, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. Highlights include updated kitchen with stainless appliances. Close to elementary school and Rim Trail.
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ORINDA



New Listing

12 Crestview Court Contemporary inspired home on priv. cul de sac with pano. views of Orinda hills. Spacious home, 2 master suites, family rm/kitchen combo. Pool, pool house & full size water slide. Easy commute to BART, schools.
\$1,785,000

ORINDA



9 Las Piedras Gorgeous recently remodeled gated estate, minutes from downtown Orinda. Apx. 3,850 sq. ft. custom 5bd/3ba home on .48 park like acres. Level lawn, pool, views of Briones Reservoir, Mt. Diablo.
\$1,795,000

ORINDA



22 Van Tassel Lane Quality crafted 5bd/4.5ba Mediterranean style w/ideal inside/ outside living spaces. Over-sized rooms offer great light & elegant spaces to entertain. Atrium, guest cottage, sauna, wine cellar, pool & spa.
\$2,585,000

ORINDA



160 Camino Don Miguel One of a kind estate overlooking Orinda Country Club. Rebuilt from the ground up in 1996 by the finest craftsmen to preserve the original elements of the home. Resort quality pool & spa, gardens, views & guest house.
\$4,950,000

ORINDA



10 Winding Lane A tasteful estate situated up a winding lane of 8.6 acres. 3 main structures of apx. 23,422 sq. ft. with Main Residence, Carriage House & Sports Complex. Handcrafted features well beyond the norm.
\$16,500,000

MORAGA



Pending

102 Brookline Street Modern elegance, vaulted ceilings, custom finishes & abundant light are some of the wonderful features of this detached 3 bedroom, 2 bath, apx. 2098 sq. ft. renovated Moraga Country Club home.
\$1,165,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

3564 Silver Springs Road Sought after Silver Springs neighborhood! Totally remodeled in 2014 with outstanding quality and taste this apx. 4025 sq. ft. 5 bedroom, 4.5 bath with a .77 level lot is a must see and a dream come true.
\$2,995,000

ALAMO



115 Bando Court Spacious 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath home, new kitchen, updated baths, hardwood floors, sparkling pool on cul-de-sac.
\$1,685,000

KENSINGTON



71 Rincon Road Adorable 1950 Cottage, apx. 1224 Sq. Ft., 3 Bedrooms, 2 New Baths, Hardwood Throughout, Fresh Paint.
\$940,000

SAN RAMON



New Listing

110 Montclair Place 3 bedroom, 2 bath home, apx. 1479 sq. ft. situated on an apx. 7000 sq. ft. lot in prime location!
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WALNUT CREEK



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