



Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Aug. 8, 7 p.m.
Special Joint Meeting with City Council
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Citizens' Infrastructure

Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Aug. 9, 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



Alarms	77
Noise complaints	14
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	7
Traffic stops	44
Suspicious Circumstances	8
Suspicious Subjects	11
Suspicious Vehicles	17
Animal Cruelty	
Orinda Theater	
200 block Village Square	

Battery

Bevmo

Barking Dog

20 block Woodacres Ct.
20 block Daryl Dr (2)
200 block El Toyonal (2)
100 block El Toyonal

Burglary, Auto

Casa Orinda Restaurant
60 block Brookwood Rd.

Burglary, Residential

10 block Greenwood Ct.

Disturbance

100 block Overhill Rd.
Manzanita/Acacia Drives
70 block Donald Dr. (2)
20 block Carisbrook Dr.
30 block Via Callados
Orinda Theater
Orinda Intermediate School
Donald Drive/Hall (2)
50 block Moraga Way
100 block Stein Way

Dispute

10 block El Toyonal
10 block Oakridge Ln.

Drunk in Public

10 block Theatre Square

DUI

Los Amigos/Camino Pablo

Fireworks

Valley Dr./Heather Ln.
30 block Charles Hill Rd.
Reported to MOFD
Lomas Cantadas/Los Venado

ID Theft

reported to police
90 block Via Floreado (2)

Litter

20 block El Gavilan

Loitering

McDonald Dr./Hall

Panhandling

Hwy 24/Camino Pablo

Police/Fire/ EMS

Lafayette Park Hotel
200 block Hall

Reckless Driving

Camino Sobrante/La Espiral
Lombardy Ln./Van Ripper
Camino Pablo/Brookwood
Camino Pablo/Miner Rd.

Tamper with Vehicle

El Nido Ranch/Charles Hill

Theft, Petty

Holy Shepherd Church
100 block El Toyonal
El Toyonal/Alta Vista
500 block Tahos Rd.

Trespass

50 block Moraga Way
Quarry Hill Rd./Big Leaf Rd.

Vandalism

Casa Orinda Restaurant
Paintbush Ln./Big Leaf Rd.

Warrant Service/Arrest/Advice

Hwy 24/Wilder (2)

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.

Send a letter to the editor:
letters@lamorindaweekly.com



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Orinda City Hall houses rare and beautiful artwork

By Sora O'Doherty



Portrait of cellist Zdenka Cerny Vasak by Czech artist Alfons Mucha, donated to the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation by Otto Vasak, son of Zdenka. Photo provided

With 2017 being the Year of the Czechs in Orinda, it is a good time to recall that Orinda City Hall houses a beautiful portrait of cellist Zdenka Cerny Vasak by the renowned Czech art nouveau artist Alfons Mucha. The portrait was a gift to the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation when Bobbi Landers was

mayor of Orinda. Landers could think of no better place for the artwork than in City Hall, where any of the Czech residents of Orinda could easily see it.

The portrait was donated by Otto Vasak. He had inherited it from his mother, the famous cellist Zdenka Cerny Vasak, who had trained in her father's conservatory as a girl. In 1913 Mucha, a family friend, painted the portrait of Zdenka with her cello for a concert poster for an upcoming world tour. The tour, scheduled for just when World War I erupted in Europe, was canceled. The portrait hung in the artist's studio.

The history of this artwork was discussed 45 years ago in the Chicago History Magazine, Spring 1972, by Katherine Wagner Seineke in an essay entitled, "Mucha's Chicago Poster." Visitors to City Hall may obtain a copy of the article upon request. Seineke explains how the portrait came to be, and how it came to return to the United States:

"The star pupil of Cerny conservatory was Cerny's own eldest daughter, Milada, who, a prodigy at the piano, has already made a successful concert tour of Europe in 1903 at the age of 10. ... But it was Milada's little sister Zdenka, who would be the subject of a Mucha portrait in his best medium, the color lithograph poster.

"During his early stay with the Cernys young Zdenka became a favorite of Mucha. He was very much a member of the family and often played simple piano parts in family trios on relaxed musical evenings. ...

"On a visit to the Cernys in March, 1913, ... he renewed an old promise to Zdenka to do her portrait. She was now sixteen, an accomplished cellist, and of a rare swan-like beauty.

"The poster was intended for Zdenka's European tour, but the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary on Serbia caused Zdenka to cancel and hurry back to Chicago. The posters were used for her American concert tours, but her career was short. By the end of the war she was married and had given up the concert stage. Papa Cerny took a trip to Prague later in the twenties when he learned from Neubert that Mucha still had the drawing at his Zbirah Castle in the country. Mucha told Cerny ... that of all the posters he had designed, Zdenka's was his favorite. When he learned that Zdenka has asked her father to look at the drawing if it still existed, Mucha took it from the wall and removed it from its silver frame. Rolling it up he gave it to Cerny, saying, 'Take it to Zdenka in Chicago with my love.'"

For further information on Mucha, see <http://praguedayschicago.com/MuchaBooklet.pdf>

First Student puts the brakes on some Orinda school bus routes

By Sora O'Doherty

Half of the school bus routes in Orinda have been changed to such an extent that parents will probably not use them in the fall.

The Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Agency board might have considered an extension to see how the routes could be improved, but was stymied because school bus contractor First Student refuses to provide services to routes deemed unsafe. Although the routes have been safely operated for over 20 years, the LSBTA commissioned a study by School Bus Consultants that branded many bus stops and routes as unsafe. Route 18, which used to service El Toyonal, is canceled, with no stops left on the route, replaced by a group stop in Orinda Village. Routes 11-2 (Manzanita) and 13 (Charles Hill) are also severely impacted.

Consultants presented LSBTA members with a revised report at its July 13 meeting that made no changes to their recommendations. Many members of the public, mostly parents, vociferously objected to the changes, but the board seemed out of options when First Student stated flatly that they would not continue to operate the disputed routes, even as a temporary extension to allow a search for solutions.

First Student, whose representatives included Dave Collins, area general manager for California, and Henry Cooper, location manager, also rejected a proposal to have pilot cars precede the school buses to assure safety, and said that they would not operate under those conditions.

In the end, the board adopted the recommended revisions to all the routes, but set up a subcommittee to try to find solutions for the worst affected routes, and noted that no parent would be financially penalized if they drop the bus in the fall but seek to rejoin later. LSBTA board members made clear they were extremely concerned that the changes proposed by SBC in the name of safety could also result in more dangerous conditions for students, from walking along or crossing unsafe streets to being transported in private cars, which is considered less safe than transport

in a school bus.

Two Orinda board representatives, Julie Rossiter of the Orinda Union School Board and Amy Worth, vice mayor of Orinda, will serve on the subcommittee. Rossiter voted against adopting the SBC recommendations, and Worth stated that it would be her preference to continue to operate the routes during the search for solutions. The other members of the subcommittee are Laura Allaire, school bus liaison for Wagner Ranch Elementary School and LSBTA board member, and Moraga City Council Member Jeannette Fritsky, who volunteered to join the subcommittee so that more than Orinda would be represented.

General Counsel to the LSBTA Mala Subramanian advised that to continue the routes in the face of the SBC report would constitute negligence — perhaps even triggering strict liability for any ensuing accident. Although asked repeatedly by the Moraga Town Council representative Fritsky to provide some authority for her position, Subramanian could not. Amy Roach, a parent and an attorney with many years of government work experience with the state of California, noted that legally the board does not have contract liability and that

it is not negligent to operate the bus routes in question. "My child is 70 times safer on a school bus than in my car," Roach said, concluding that this is "one big experiment with the child's safety."

Parent Courtney Brothers said she spoke with a First Student driver who said she had no problems with route 11-2, even in the presence of the dump trucks being used in the Miner Road sinkhole repair, and was very unhappy to hear of its possible discontinuance. Sarah Butler, formerly an OUSD board member, explained the difficulty of dealing with this issue, which only came up in May, over the summer. She urged the board to slow down and form a subcommittee.

Many parents who addressed the board were lawyers or engineers who offered their professional opinions on the crucial issues of safety and liability. The speakers pleaded for an extension of the bus routes for next year in order to allow for changes to be made to address the problems identified by SBC. The consultants rejected the notion that narrower buses could solve the problems in Orinda, citing industry best practices, but they were unable to refer the board to any written collection of such best practices.

Larry Theis, Orinda director of public works who conducted stakeholder meetings, strongly recommended keeping the routes as is and using a pilot car, at least for El Toyonal. The proposed changes, he said, reduce the service provided to the community. Theis and Jason Chen, an Orinda senior engineer, garnered praise from the speakers for their commitment to trying to solve the bus problem, and Theis praised the community as being exceptionally cooperative, noting that area residents will already yield the right of way to the school bus.

Parent Eileen Fitz-Faulkner asked the board to consider how many accidents will be caused by the lack of a school bus, and urged the board to look for buses with double turning axles, like fire trucks. Nick Kosla noted, like many others, that he had purchased his home because of the existence of the school bus route, and wondered if the safety issue had been thoroughly vetted when the routes were adopted some 20 years earlier. He sought a second opinion looking for solutions, such as a traffic safety analysis based on the existence or absence of the school bus route.

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