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A Republic Services truck picks up recycables in a Lafayette neighborhood on April 13.

Photo Andy Scheck

Local recycling concerns mount

By Nick Marnell

China's March 1 decision to halt import of select categories of solid waste, including certain types of plastics, paper and textiles, has put pressure on the local recycling industry, as public officials look for ways to offset the loss of a large market for the recycle and reuse of disposable products.

Solid waste disposal in Lamorinda is managed by the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, a joint powers authority operating as RecycleSmart. Its board of directors includes two representatives from each member agency – unincorporated Contra Costa County plus five county municipalities – with Lafayette Council Member

Mike Anderson the 2018 board chair. The authority contracts with Republic Services to collect recycled product from homes and businesses, and with Mt. Diablo Recycling to package the recycled product and sell or otherwise dispose of it.

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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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DAN GREEN

Orinda City Council expresses outrage about EBMUD soil removal project

By Sora O'Doherty



Map showing closed section of trails

Provided

Orinda City Council members reacted with shock and anger when staff told them that the East Bay Municipal Utility District plans to move some 200,000 cubic yards of accumulated trench soil over Orinda roads and past Wagner Ranch Elementary School at the rate of 17 heavy trucks per hour in each direction from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. for seven months. Director of Public Works Larry Theis told the council that the city had received very little notice of the project, scheduled to begin April 16 and run through October. The route the trucks will take goes from Bear Creek Road, down Camino Pablo to Highway 24, and returning on the same roads. The excess soil will be transported to Oyster Point near the Oakland Airport. The project will also close some trails in Briones Regional Park.

Council Member Darlene Gee said she was frustrated and disheartened that EBMUD doesn't seem to feel the need to be a good community partner. Vice Mayor Inga Miller went further, labeling it "outrageous that barely six months after EBMUD came here to apologize for its poor communication skills in the Glorietta and Orchard Road incident," they are again failing to communicate with Orinda. She said it has now come to light that at that very time EBMUD had gone ahead and was secretly working on this project.

"It's a terrible travesty," Miller said, and not acceptable – 130 of the heavy trucks will be going past an elementary school, past the path where students are walking to school. The trucks will also damage some newly paved parts of Camino Pablo. This stated that each single truck trip has the equivalent impact as 8,000 passenger vehicle trips.

Mayor Amy Worth expressed her concern about EBMUD proceeding without sufficient notice, and announced that EBMUD would appear at the city council meeting on April 17, the day after the project is scheduled to begin, to respond to council questions. Perhaps owing to the lack of notice, no members of the public spoke to the plan at the April 10 City Council meeting.

Although the city only recently received notice of the EBMUD project, it has been in the planning stages since August, the same month as EBMUD's public apology to Orinda for the Orchard Road debacle (see the Aug. 23 Lamorinda Weekly article, "Orchard Road Detour Ends"), according to a letter to City Manager Steve Salomon from EBMUD's General Manager Alexander R. Coate. City staff have now filed a Public Records Act request with EBMUD. This stated that he thinks EBMUD has behaved "in bad faith."

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Singer-songwriter musical experience at THT – page B1.



Sports C1-C4

Lamorinda high school girls lacrosse – page C2.



Our Homes D1-D20

Bringing Back the Natives tour – page D1.





Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, April 23, 7:30 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

TBA
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, April 23, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, April 18, 7 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, April 18, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
District Office Board Room
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting
notes and announcements

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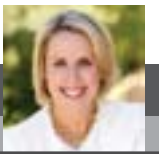
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DANA GREEN



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City council to serve as planning commission during new commissioner search

By Pippa Fisher

While Lafayette prepares to get new planning commissioners in place as soon as possible, the council has adopted an urgency ordinance to allow the city council to serve as the city's planning commission until a quorum of the PC is appointed. The ordinance also reduces the number of planning commissioners from seven to five, at least in the short term.

Following the adoption March 26 of Council Member Ivor Samson's and Vice Mayor Cam Burks' suggested new tougher conflict of interest policies designed to rebuild integrity

and trust in government, five planning commissioners resigned, leaving the city effectively without a PC.

As a result of the vote, the council called a special meeting April 2 to decide how to proceed.

The evening got off to an unexpected start with vehement comments made by former mayor Brandt Andersson as he challenged Samson to confirm his promise that he would not run again for office when his term was up. He made his remarks during time allocated for public comments unrelated to agenda items and to which the council does not have to respond.

Andersson called into question Samson's integrity, accusing him of hypocrisy. He reminded the council that Samson had given his word at his appointment to the council that he would not seek re-election at the end of his term. Now, claimed Andersson, far from being "the self-appointed protector of integrity in government" he had heard that the council member had been "quietly sounding out city leaders to see how they would react if he went back on his word and ran for the council seat."

Andersson then asked Samson to prove that he was a man of his word and confirm that he will not

run for another term with a yes or no answer.

Samson responded that such a personal attack was beneath Andersson. "I was appointed to a two-year term. I intend to act as a council member in all respects for that two-year term and do what I think is right. Beyond that I will not debase myself by responding to your questions."

"So I had my answer," Andersson said later.

The former mayor declined to name his sources.

Mayor Don Tatzin commented later, "While what the council does is a result of who runs and who gets elected, I prefer that the election process not be part of a council meeting."

A testament to strong feelings around the subject of integrity in the commissions, four former mayors were present at the special meeting, which Burks noted was powerful to see.

And Andersson spoke again, this time addressing the issue at hand of the new policy. He questioned how forcing commissioners with whom no one had a problem to resign would improve the integrity of government.

Public sentiment about the

more restrictive rules that now force a commissioner with a conflict of interest to resign continued to run high a week later, with several speakers during the regular April 9 city council meeting still voicing concerns over the new policy.

The city council however is moving forward.

Subcommittee members Tatzin and Council Member Mike Anderson met before the city council meeting April 9 to come up with questions for the interview process, that applicants would have about a week to prepare.

Tatzin hopes to be able to start interviewing soon. He said they currently have about 10 interested applicants.

Applications are due by April 30 but interviews are likely to begin sooner due to the number of vacancies. However all applicants who get their applications in by the end of the month will be interviewed before all the positions are filled. Initial appointments might be made as soon as April 23, said Tatzin.

Those interested in applying should go to www.lovelafayette.org/pc to obtain an application and to view the current commission work plan.

Jenkins honored as Citizen of the Year



Don Jenkins and Don Tatzin

Photo Andy Scheck

Lafayette's Citizen of the Year Don Jenkins was honored April 13 at a sold-out dinner attended by local dignitaries, friends and family all of whom agreed that Lafayette is a better place for all the time he has volunteered in so many capacities.

Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin pointed out that Jenkins has been making Lafayette better since the '70s when he moved here; in other words, "For 40 of Lafayette's

50 years."

And Tatzin, with the beleaguered state of the city's planning commission still very much on his mind, could not help but wonder, "Since you volunteer for everything, do you have any interest in joining the planning commission?"

"I'm color-blind," replied Jenkins.

"Doesn't matter," retorted Tatzin.

- P. Fisher

Lafayette's native son among those honored in new memorial

By Pippa Fisher

Twenty-two fallen service men and women from Contra Costa County who lost their lives in the line of duty since 9/11 will be honored and permanently remembered on a new memorial to be installed at the front of the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Center. It will be the only monument in California to recognize the entire group.

The dedication is set for April 29, the 10th anniversary of Lafayette born and raised Senior Airman Jonathan Vega Yelner's death in action in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Constructed of three large slabs of granite weighing 7 tons and standing 6 and a half feet tall, the monument has been designed to fit the space in the circle at the entrance. It will have space for additional names as needed.

Lafayette resident Michael Gilson, himself a fifth-generation

veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force overseas between 1966-70, hopes it will be a reminder of those being honored to the thousands of people who drive by or visit the building each year.

Gilson says it will be a perpetual memorial - a continuing acknowledgement of the sacrifices of the volunteer troops from this country.

"Today's generation of service men and women, unlike mine who were drafted, all volunteer," says Gilson. "They chose to go and it's important to recognize them."

Gilson also points out the importance of recognizing the sacrifice of Gold Star families - those mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, husbands and wives who have lost loved ones.

Yolander (Jolie) Vega says she would love it if Lafayette residents would fly an American flag on April



Senior Airman Jonathan Vega Yelner who was killed in action in Afghanistan 10 years ago. Photo provided 29 on their front yards to honor and recognize their city's fallen hero on the anniversary of her son's death.

The young man went to school at St. Perpetua's and De La Salle High School, belonged to Boy Scout Troop 243 and worked at Safeway and the Hungry Hunter in his hometown. ... continued on page A9



The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applicants to fill several volunteer positions.

Planning Commission. This five-member body is responsible for matters relating to land use and development in the city. The commission serves as an advisory agency to the City Council for administering the laws and ordinances governing the approval of general and specific plans, zoning text amendments and rezonings. The commission also hears and decides on applications for subdivisions, land use permits, variances, and ridgeline development.

Members of the Planning Commission are required to be qualified electors of the City of Lafayette, and are selected on the basis of training, education, occupation and expertise. The commission reviews design drawings, construction plans and technical reports.

The following are planning documents that commissioners must be familiar with to execute their duties. 1) Lafayette General Plan; 2) Lafayette Municipal Code, Title 6 -Planning & Land Use; 3) Downtown Specific Plan; 4) Downtown Design Guidelines; 5) Residential Design Review Guidelines.

Link to the application and additional information www.lovelafayette.org/pc

Individuals with questions may call Assistant Planning & Building Director Greg Wolff (925) 299-3204. Completed applications must be received by 5:00pm April 30, 2018.



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Community urged to give the gift of green at this year's Earth Day Festival

By Pippa Fisher



BigStock image

Lafayette's annual Earth Day celebration will once again be offering fun for all ages but organizers Sustainable Lafayette also want to draw residents' attention to its focus of the entire month – the 50th Anniversary Community Gift or the gift of clean energy.

In honor of the city's 50th anniversary Mayor Don Tatzin has set a goal of getting 1,000 residents to "opt up" to deep green, or 100 percent renewable energy, in their homes and businesses.

Sustainable Lafayette hopes that by reaching this goal Lafayette can become the cleanest, most sustainably powered city in the Bay Area and the push to get residents onboard is on during April – Earth month.

The city introduced Marin Clean Energy as a choice for residents in 2016 and the following year took the decision to opt up all city electricity accounts to 100 percent deep green.

Residents will be able to learn

more about their energy options at the festival, which once again will be offering education on all matters green.

This year, along with the live entertainment the Lamorinda 4-H will be hosting a petting zoo. Local Girl Scout troops will be offering demonstrations at environmental education stations.

As in previous years there will be a bike safety rodeo hosted by Bike East Bay and free bike registration by local Cub Scouts as well as free on-site basic bike repairs from The Bike Mobile.

Refreshments will be available, with The Counter serving their Impossible Burger, a burger made entirely from plants, and IzzyA's frozen custard truck will be among some of the food trucks.

The festivities will all be happening from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 22 on Golden Gate Avenue, just behind the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

Bear relocates to Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher



How "Ursus Redivivus" will look once installed on Golden Gate Way.

Photo provided

A rather large grizzly bear will be relocating to Golden Gate Way very soon. Lafayette will be hosting the bear sculpture for a two-year period in the city's first experience of temporary public art.

The work of Bay Area artists Chad Glashoff and Alex Nolan, the 7,200-pound kinetic, interactive bear stands almost 12-feet tall. The sculpture, entitled "Ursus Redivivus, Recycled Bear" is constructed almost entirely from scrap metal from escalators salvaged during a Berkeley department store remodel, and recycled tools.

The sculpture is currently standing outside the Orinda Library and is now due to move on, having been part of the city's rotating public art program. Plans to move the sculpture to Moraga fell through when the town council chose another piece to display at the Rheem Shopping Center.

Ursus spent time in Berkeley in front of the downtown Berkeley BART station from 2015-16 before coming through the tunnel

to Orinda.

The city council heard from members of the Public Art Committee at the April 9 meeting. The PAC gave three suggested locations within the city for the bear. The council voted unanimously to locate the bear at 3505 Golden Gate Way, given the central location and high visibility, combined with the relative ease of installation.

In a statement included in the staff report, Nolan writes that he and Glashoff are excited for the opportunity to leave an impression on those who perceive this work of art. "It excites conversation, and references the rebuilding of an endangered species back into the wild," he says.

"Hopefully people will understand the meaning as more than just a CAL bear, but instead a lasting reminder of the wrongs done to this species, generations ago."

The \$1,050 cost of installation at this location will come from the public art fund.

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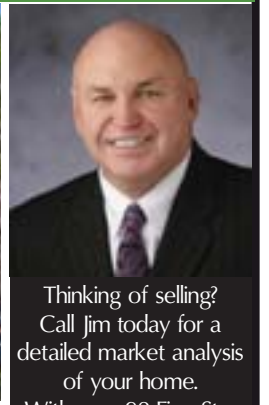
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Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, April 25, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, May 9, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

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

Design Review

Monday, April 23, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Moraga School District
Tuesday, May 8, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

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Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

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Moraga

Police

Department

Incident

Summary

Report

March 27 to April 8

Alarms 15

911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 2

Traffic 41

Suspicious Circumstances 10

Suspicious Subject 6

Suspicious Vehicle 3

Service to Citizen 29

Patrol Request/ Security Check 74

Vacation House Check 2

Supplemental Report 7

Welfare Check 3

Abandoned Vehicle

2000 Block Ascot Dr.

Accident Property

Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.

Battery

50 Block Ashbrook Pl.

Burglary

500 Block Moraga Rd.

Civil

10 Block Gloria Ct.

200 Block Paseo Bernal

10 Block Magee Ct.

Commercial Burglary

1100 Block Moraga Way

Coroners Case

30 Block Miramonte Dr.

Disturbance-Domestic

Moraga Commons Park

Disturbing The Peace

Bollinger Canyon Rd./St. Marys Rd.

200 Block Paseo Bernal

Dui Misd

100 Block David Dr.

Excessive Speed

Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way

Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.

Moraga Rd./Saint Marys Rd

Failure To Obey

St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.

Found Property

Police Department

Fraud Credit Card

300 Block Birchwood Dr.

100 Block Longfield Pl.

Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.



Hillside and Ridgeline regulation approved after 5 years of work

By Sophie Braccini

At its April 11 meeting the Moraga Town Council approved the updates and modifications of its regulations pertaining to hillside and ridgeline development. The process to amend local code started five years ago, and took that long to go through iterations, public discussion and forums, as well as several staff and elected official changes, until it was finally completed. While protection is popular among a large number of residents, major property owners, such as the Bruzzone family, continue to be staunch opponents. Some people also called for caution over restricting development and its potential economic impact.

The conversation on hillside and ridgeline protection is as old as the town itself; in fact it predates its incorporation in 1974. Over the past 10 years, the major land use discussions were at the end of 2008 with the Measure K ballot proposition for more protection that lost the popular vote, and the five-year

process that aimed at removing ambiguities and clarifying the implementation of the Moraga Open Space Ordinance that was passed in 1986.

"I'm very pleased that the Town Council voted unanimously last night ... to support the new hillside and ridgeline regulations," said Mayor Dave Trotter. "I've been working since 2006 to promote and enact policies that actually protect ridgelines from development, preserve the beauty and semirural environment of Moraga, reduce the density, footprint and visual impacts of new homes in hillside areas of the town, and uphold the open space values and legal requirements embodied in MOSO."

Some of the key elements of the modification include adding new prohibition of development within 200 feet of significant non-MOSO ridgelines such as Rheem Ridge and Bollinger Ridge; new visual separation requirements for development from the crest of ridgelines

when viewed from designated view points on the scenic corridors; new development guidelines for buildings on the valley floor to minimize impact on distant views of the hills; a new "development envelope" concept to replace the "cell" as the area to measure the average slope of a development area; new procedures for final determination of high risk areas with the imposition of keeping the 1 unit per 20 acre limitation in such an area, even if the high risk is mitigated.

The town made the finding early on that amending the rules did not require that it conduct an environmental review. An EIR is needed when a project has a significant impact on human health or the environment; here, however, the modified rules are about what will not be done, not what will be done. The lawyers of the Bruzzone family argued that the town should have done an EIR because the new rules will impact safety, and will prevent development that would

be beneficial to the economy of the town.

Kathe Nelson for the Moraga Chamber of Commerce made a general statement indicating that the town should consider the economic impact of the revised rules. It could be construed that more rules means less development, and less attractiveness to new businesses. A new resident made a similar comment, indicating that Moraga should do its fair share to ease the Bay Area housing shortage.

The bulk of the higher density housing planned in town is located in the Moraga Center Specific Plan area, and that zone is exempt from the modified rules. The other area that could potentially be impacted by the new guidelines for development on the valley floor is the Rheem Center.

A second reading of the amended texts will be made at the next council meeting, before the rules are applicable to new projects.

Staffing levels in Moraga discussed

By Sophie Braccini

During his short tenure as interim town manager, Jim Holgersson asked Management Partners for a report assessing staffing levels in town and improvements that could be made. The results show that Moraga has fewer employees than comparable Bay Area cities, and that progress could be made by using software to automate some tasks. New town manager Cynthia Battenberg hopes to use the report to improve her new team's efficiency.

"In terms of staffing, my experience these first few weeks mirrors the findings of the report that Moraga's staffing level is lean and the significant vacancies (which was approximately 20 percent in March) impact operations," Battenberg said.

The report looked at the cities of Half Moon Bay, Hercules, Lafayette, Orinda and San Anselmo, five Bay Area cities with popula-

tions between 12,000 and 26,000, and median household incomes between \$100,000 and \$200,000. The first striking fact is that Moraga has the third highest median household income (\$136,336) of the cities being compared, but less than half of the total operating budget of the peer agencies. Moraga operates with fewer staff than its peers and therefore provides less service. The areas of administrative services, public works, recreation, and park and facilities maintenance are where Moraga's staffing levels are much lower than its peers.

Management Partners inter-

viewed staff and found important strengths and organizational values that should be recognized and preserved as new people come on board. First and foremost the consultant noted the quality of existing employees who understand the importance of public service and try to serve the community as best they can with limited resources. The consultant wrote that this value is found in all levels of the departments with both newly hired and long-term employees.

The consultant also noted that Moraga staff still relies on manual systems to record and capture data,

which can present an obstacle to understanding the work that needs to be done compared to what can be done with existing staffing levels.

During her comments to the council about the report, Battenberg indicated that two vacant positions would stay open in order to save money and invest in needed technology.

Management Partners also noted that Moraga does not track the workload and performance of its employees, which makes it difficult to explain service levels to the community, and recommended that the town develop such measures.

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Storm drain fee vote: the business of ballots

By Sophie Braccini



Marty McInturf places ballots in the red locked box.

Photo Sophie Braccini

All Moraga property owners by now should have received the ballots to vote for or against the storm water fee. The fee includes the 12 parcels owned by the town, which are assessed approximately \$14,500 a year for the runoff from its properties into the storm drain system. The council decided to vote yes and Mayor Dave Trotter will sign the 12-vote ballot.

Town Clerk Marty McInturf, who receives the ballots, explained that up to 14 parcels can be listed on one ballot. As of April 12 she said she had received about 1,500 ballots. When they arrive, either given to her by hand in her office by a voter, or bulk delivered by mail, the ballots are put in the wired and padlocked red metal box that sits in her office. At night the ballots are taken to a safe location: the police department evidence room, which can only be accessed by the chief of police or his second in command.

McInturf warned that the deadline to physically receive the ballots is May 15 at 5 p.m. Since the ballots are handled by the post office as bulk mail, it goes through Oakland and can take several days to reach Moraga's town offices. McInturf therefore recommends mailing the ballots back ASAP, or hand delivering them at 329 Rheem Blvd. as the deadline nears.

The clerk explained that she gets two or three phone calls every day with questions about the ballots: property owners who can't find their ballots, people who say that only their spouse has received a ballot and not them. McInturf said that the fee is assessed per property and that each parcel gets one vote. If multiple people own one lot, they have to decide together what the vote will be; there is no splitting the vote.

If people cannot locate their ballot, McInturf will have SCI Consulting reissue a ballot to them. She added that the computer system that will read the votes has a registration of all the ballots that have been printed and will only count one vote per parcel. She expects that the vote count will take one or two days and the public is welcome to witness it.

There was discussion at the dais at the April 11 council meeting to decide whether or not the council should take a position and vote. It was noted at the meeting that some residents wrote letters to staff objecting to the town vote because of the weight carried by 12 votes. Town attorney Michelle Canyon indicated that the council should not campaign for or against the fee, but could vote. Council Member Jeanette Fritzky voted with her colleagues to endorse the fee, but decided against having the town vote for its parcels. She explained that when property owners vote it is with the authority derived from owning one or more parcels, but that the town owns property by virtue of residents paying taxes, and that this was a very different paradigm. She added that if she knew what the majority would choose, then that would be what the council should do, but it is not the case and the town should abstain from voting.

The other council members unanimously decided that since they were elected officials, it was their responsibility to vote and they did.

A new Finestra (window) opens at the Hacienda

By Sophie Braccini

A special town meeting was scheduled on Tuesday, April 17 to discuss a lease contract between the Town of Moraga and Jeff Assadi to open a restaurant on part of the ground floor of the Hacienda de las Flores. The meeting happened after this paper went to press. At the time Lamorinda Weekly discussed with stakeholders, all were hopeful that this contract would be approved as they saw this partnership as the best possible option for the building.

For years the Hacienda subcommittee has worked with successive town staff and interested parties to find an economically viable solution for the Hacienda, a town landmark that exudes charm but is under-used and requires many updates.

The subcommittee was supposed to come to the council with the elements of a request for proposal, when Assadi contacted the town. The experienced restaurateur was running La Finestra until the building on Lafayette Circle burned to the ground last July. Assadi has been looking to resettle since.

The rush in the process – Assadi has other options and is on a timeline to be able to keep his onerous food and beverage license – ruffled some feathers, but the council decided that a special public meeting be conducted on April 17 to accommodate both the busy man and democratic transparency.

Wendy Scheck, a Moraga resident who sat on the committee for years, explains that the lease is a unique opportunity to fulfill several important requirements: maintain the Hacienda as a mixed-use community venue; increase revenues from the property; have it open every day, including weekends to the public; and address needed maintenance.

... continued on page A11



MCE Contra Costa

In April 2018, residents and businesses in Moraga, along with Concord, Danville, Martinez, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, San Ramon, and unincorporated Contra Costa County, will have their electricity service upgraded to 50% renewable energy at lower cost than PG&E, or they can choose another service option.

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How does MCE affect electricity services for Moraga residents and businesses?

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Does MCE cost less than PG&E?

Yes. MCE's 50% renewable electricity **costs less** than PG&E's 33% renewable electricity. You will save between 2-5% (3% on average) with MCE depending on your rate class. MCE has reduced rates the past two years in a row. For detailed rates and cost comparisons visit: mceCleanEnergy.org/rates

Do CARE, Medical Baseline, and other discount programs continue with MCE?

Yes. Low-income assistance programs like CARE, FERA, and Medical Baseline are unaffected by enrollment; these customers receive the same discount with MCE as they would with PG&E. Customers in these programs do not need to re-enroll nor take any further action.

Will my billing change?

No. PG&E will continue to send one monthly bill. Instead of one fee that combines charges for the delivery and generation of your electricity, the bill will show separate charges — one for electric delivery (PG&E) and one for electric generation (MCE). **MCE's generation rates simply replace the generation charges you currently pay to PG&E;** they are not an additional charge.

Is MCE's power supply more renewable than PG&E's?

Yes, considerably! MCE's power supply contains a higher portion of renewable resources like solar, wind, bioenergy, and geothermal. According to the most recent California Energy Commission Power Content Labels, MCE's Light Green service is 55% renewable and PG&E's service is 33% renewable.

Which communities does MCE serve?

MCE has been serving Bay Area electric customers since 2010. Today, about 255,000 customers in Marin and Napa Counties, and the cities of Benicia, El Cerrito, Lafayette, Richmond, San Pablo, and Walnut Creek are buying more renewable energy from MCE. Concord, Danville, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley,

Pinole, Pittsburg, San Ramon, and unincorporated Contra Costa County will enroll with MCE in April.

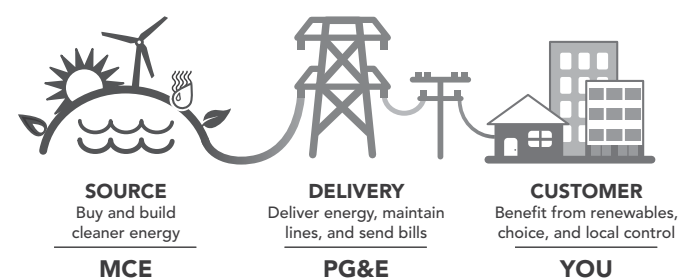
What kind of organization is MCE and who controls it?

MCE is a local, not-for-profit, public agency directly controlled by its member communities — like Moraga. Formed by the public to buy cleaner power and re-invest ratepayer dollars locally, MCE always prioritizes the interests of its customers. MCE's Board of Directors are democratically elected leaders from each community MCE serves and are not paid for their role with MCE. In consultation with MCE's staff, the Board determines MCE's rates, policies and programs in meetings that are open to the public.

How is MCE funded?

Like PG&E, MCE is funded by electricity ratepayers through their monthly energy purchases. MCE is not funded by taxpayers. A cornerstone to MCE's mission is to redirect ratepayer dollars back to local economies, and reinvest in its communities by providing low, stable rates, supporting local workforce development, and partnering with community-based organizations.

HOW MCE WORKS





Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

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

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 24, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Citizens' Infrastructure

Oversight Commission

Wednesday, May 9, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

School Board Meetings

Orinda Union School District

Monday, May 14, 6 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

March 25 to April 7

Alarms	49
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	5
Traffic	126
Suspicious Circumstances	8
Suspicious Subjects	18
Suspicious Vehicles	9
Patrol Request/ Security Check	57
Service to Citizen	52
Supplemental Report	9
Vacation House Check	37
Welfare Check	3
Accident Injury	
Manzanita Dr./Camino Pablo	
Accident Property	
60 Block Avenida De Orinda	
Acacia Dr./Manzanita Dr.	
40 Block Alta Vista	
Bear Creek Rd./Camino Pablo,	
40 Block Estates Dr.	
Valley View Dr./Moraga Way	
Auto Burglary	
20 Block Bryant Way	
Barking Dog	
10 Block Kittiwake Rd.	
10 Block Parkway Ct.	
200 Block El Toyonal	
80 Block La Espiral (2)	
Beat Info	
20 Block Sally Ann Rd.	
Camino Pablo/Via Corte	
Civil	
10 Block Altarinda Rd.	
10 Block Camino Pablo	
20 Block Irwin Way	
20 Block Orinda Way	
Chevron	
Post Office (3)	
Shell Gas	
Civil Problem	
Beverages And More	
10 Block Richard Ct.	
Dependent Child	
Golden Gate Way/1st St., Lafayette	
Disturbance-Domestic	
Orinda Theater	
Dui Misdemeanor	
Moraga Via/Glorietta Blvd.	
10 Block Richard Ct.	
100 Block Moraga Way	
Fire/Ems Response Info	
20 Block El Camino Moraga	
Found Property	
40 Block Rheem Blvd.	
Hailed By Citizen	
CVS	
Wilder Road Behind Soccer Fields	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
10 Block Orinda Way	
Identity Theft	
20 Block Southwaite Ct.	
Police Department	
Lost Property	
Police Department	
Loud Music	
50 Block Brookside Rd.	
Loud Noise	
100 Block Meadow View Rd.	
Loud Party	
1000 Block Lindsey Ct., Laf	
50 Block Knickerbocker Ln. (2)	
Medical Hospital	
10 Block North Ln.	
Missing Adult	
10 Block North Ln.	
Motorist Assist	



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Debate continues over Orinda's private road maintenance

By Sora O'Doherty

Residents of private roads continue strenuously to press the Orinda City Council to alleviate their plight, which they say is unfairly burdensome on them for no logical reason, but Orinda staff have recommended that there be no change to the city's policy on private roads. On April 10 the city council received a report prepared by Director of Public Works Larry Theis, City Manager Steve Salomon, Finance Director Paul Rankin and City Attorney Osa Wolff. Private road residents submitted their own report imploring the city to set up a special task force to investigate the issue. After a long and heated discussion, the council directed staff to come back to them at a publicly noticed meeting and tell

them who should be on such a task force and what its general scope should be.

The private road residents argue that there are many private road residents, representing 20 percent of the households in Orinda, who live on streets that are not maintained by the city. These residents pay the same taxes as every other Orinda homeowner, but do not receive the benefit of having their street maintained. Their report characterizes this as disenfranchisement of a significant minority of Orinda. The difference, they maintain, is due to an historical arbitrary government decision on who receives public benefits and who does not. Further, they say, it is the private road residents who will help pass future

road maintenance taxes. This said that plenty of the private roads, over half, were always intended to be private and were never offered to the city. However he acknowledged that some areas go back to Spanish land grants without subdivision maps. Eleven percent of the private roads were dedicated to the city by developers but were not accepted by the city, and these were mostly cul de sacs. Theis and Wolff both spoke of the much debated issue of using public funds to maintain private streets, which, they said, raises the issue of gifts of public funds. Further, Theis said, staff wants to give five years notice terminating the agreement under which Orinda maintains the private roads in Orindawoods.

Staff are extremely concerned about any additional fiscal burden on the city's limited funding, including any liability that might be associated with adopting the private roads. The existing policy on the acceptance of existing private roads for public maintenance states that the only roads that might be considered for such acceptance "shall connect directly to a public street or highway," which rules out any private streets that connect to another private street, which may or may not connect directly to a public street. These and other requirements, which staff continue to support, would, according to the residents, exclude 200 of the 204 existing private streets.

... continued on page A8

Resident requests code enforcement; city responds, "sue your neighbors"

By Sora O'Doherty

John Bilello lives in a lovely home on Lombardy Lane in Orinda, but he isn't happy. Since he bought the house about two years ago, he is now facing \$200,000 worth of work to his home to address water damage that he says is caused by neighbors who put in drainage systems and are diverting storm water from their properties onto his. The other properties are on Irving, a street that sits just uphill from Lombardy Lane. Bilello says that he has had thousands of gallons of water flowing onto his property from the neighboring properties, resulting in damaged floors inside his home and stains

on his concrete driveway. The entire home is tilted. A representative from Ned Clyde Foundations has estimated the work to repair the foundation at some \$72,000, with another \$10,000 to correct the cracks in the house that will result from the foundation correction.

It is clear that this is an existing drainage system in place. At the back of his property, in the corner, is a hole in which can be seen a large clay pipe which fed water through the Bilello property to Lombardy Lane. Bilello argues that this system was installed illegally without easements or permits, but the city of Orinda does not seem to agree. Bilello says that he has undertaken extensive research with the city as well as with Contra Costa County and can find no evidence of any existing easement or permits for the drainage system. There is a large file at the city of public documents about this dispute, which can be viewed by anyone who requests them. Included in the file is a diagram from the diverting parties

showing the diversion system.

Bilello has employed an attorney, but he is not interested in suing his neighbors, as he says the city is telling him to do, but he really wants the city to begin a code enforcement action against parties who he alleges have installed the drainage systems and sump pumps without permits (in violation of Title 18 of Orinda muni code. 18.03.055). In a recent letter to all interested parties, Planning Director Drummond Buckley said, "Staff has reviewed carefully all the relevant information before the City related to this matter. After considering that evidence, the City has, as a courtesy, advised all interested parties that it is not immediately exercising its discretion to pursue code enforcement, but retains the option to do so in the future (e.g., based on new and/or additional evidence). Staff spent a great deal of time reviewing all the evidence provided and has not determined that there is a code violation related to drainage in the vicinity of ... Lombardy Lane."



A clogged drainage pipe

Photo Sora O'Doherty

The letter does indeed, to Bilello's consternation, advise the parties to "seek adjudication in court (or through other means)." Buckley strongly recommends that the parties to this private drainage dispute work to resolve the issue through "litigation, mediation, negotiation, or other appropriate means." Buckley concludes, "The City will not adjudicate that private dispute, as such adjudication is not within the City's authority or jurisdiction."

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Red-legged frogs and friendly goats welcome visitors to Wagner Ranch Wildlife Festival

By Sora O'Doherty



Wildlife, like this parrot, will be on display at this year's festival.

Photo provided

Once a year the historic ranch and 18-acre nature preserve at Wagner Ranch Nature Area in Orinda opens to the public for its wildlife festival, which this year occurs on Sunday, April 22. From

11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. visitors can enjoy a variety of activities for all ages, especially kids. At the pond, visitors will be able to see red-legged frogs and the resident western pond turtle, known as Mr.

T. Animals in the garden include friendly goats. There will be hands-on nature arts and crafts, and Earth Day games. A rare docent tour will take in the meadows, woodland, ponds and streams, and the historic home site of Theodore Wagner, California's first Surveyor General. Food and beverages will be available for purchase, or visitors may bring picnics to enjoy at the many available picnic tables. Several community organizations will also present earth-friendly endeavors.

Near the entrance, visitors can check out native plants and make donations. Children can pick up Wildlife Passports to get stamped at 10 stations for a free honey stick at the Friends of the Nature Area station. Tours will start from Tour Tree every hour, beginning at 12:30 p.m. with Reg Barrett and John Helms. From 1 to 3 p.m. there will be a Critter Hunt in the garden, and children kindergarten age and younger can take home toy critters. At 4:15 p.m. there will be a raffle drawing (raffle tickets will be available near the entrance and winners need not be present).

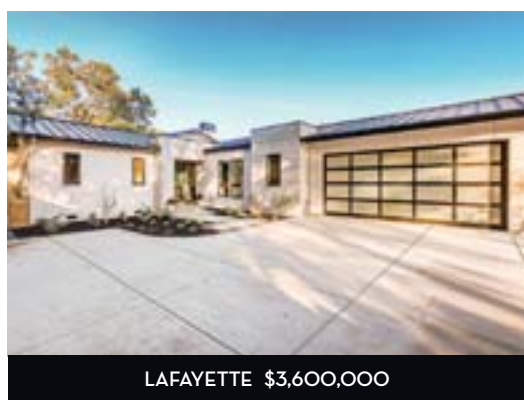
Central area activities will include: Chester Miner and the Native American Singers and Drummers, Lamorinda

Weekly garden columnist and author Cynthia Brian, wildlife columnist Joan Morris, wildlife tattoos by Coyote Brush Studios, face painting by Orinda Junior-ettes, booths featuring Sustainable Contra Costa, OIS Green Team hands-on activities, Orinda Historical Society, Friends of the Moraga Adobe, Old Yellow House – a net-zero historic home on Moraga Way – and live music performed by ALMA students. Visitors will also be able to check out solar oven cooking by Wendy Helms, nature fun presented by the East Bay Municipal Utility District, tile painting, nature art, pond explorations, frontier chemistry with Daniel Phillips, buzzing with honey bees by Steve Gentry, Friends of Orinda Creeks, Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area and the Plein Air Artists. Massage by Derry Calay will also be available.

In the dining area there will be a food tent where visitors can purchase food tickets and exchange them for lunch items.

Wagner Ranch Nature Area is located at 350 Camino Pablo just beside Wagner Ranch Elementary School. Admission to the Wildlife Festival is free and all are welcome.

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

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

ConFire Board of Directors
 Tuesday, May 22, 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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Believe it! Fire Station 16 is under construction

By Nick Marnell



Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin, left, seems overjoyed at Station 16 groundbreaking.

Photo courtesy city of Lafayette/Jeff Heyman

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District celebrated the groundbreaking of Lafayette Fire Station 16 with a gold shovel ceremony April 11, and the 22 gold shovels used for the event could

have each signified one of the many obstacles the district had to overcome to finally begin the construction.

“It was hard getting here, but we’re here,” said Fire Chief Jeff

Carman, who credited the efforts of public officials, his staff, neighborhood groups and the firefighters union for navigating through years of frustration to arrive at the day’s banner event. The station closure,

the wrath of the city, the financial problems, the failed joint venture with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, all disappeared in the rearview mirror as Carman announced additional fire protection coming for the western Lafayette area, a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, not unlike the North Bay region that was devastated by wildfires in October.

“Station 16 makes us safer,” Lafayette Mayor Don Tatzin said more than once to the dozens of attendees.

Assistant Fire Chief Aaron McAlister, the master of ceremonies and the district point person for the project, warned the Los Arabis Drive neighbors that thanks to the vehicle activity and the construction noise about to commence, things will get worse before they get better, words spoken just before a mid-April storm rolled over the hills into Lafayette. “But you know where we’re headed, and we thank you for your support,” McAlister said.

ConFire expects to commission the rebuilt Fire Station 16 in early 2019.

3 Orinda elementary schools among 7 distinguished schools in county

Submitted by Carolyn Seaton

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson recently announced the elementary schools honored as California Distinguished Schools for 2018. Orinda Union School District’s Del Rey Elementary, Glorietta Elementary, and Wagner Ranch Elementary are three of the seven elementary schools designated as Distinguished Schools in Contra Costa County.

Del Rey, Glorietta, and Wagner Ranch qualified to apply for the

honor based on outstanding student academic performance, high participation rates on state testing, and low student suspension rates. Principals of each nominated school collaborated with a school site team to complete an application in which they described a model practice at the school, how the practice was implemented and monitored, and the results of its implementation on students and staff.

A total of 287 elementary schools have been awarded the

2018 Distinguished Schools designation across the state. The California Distinguished Schools Program alternates every other year between elementary and secondary (middle and high) schools and is returning after a three-year break. In May, the California Department of Education is hosting a California School Recognition Program Awards Ceremony to honor schools that are 2018 California Distinguished Schools and recipients of other prestigious honors.

On behalf of her fellow members on the board of trustees, OUSD Board President Carol Brown stated, “We are so very proud of this recognition of Del Rey, Glorietta, and Wagner Ranch elementary schools. Our teachers and staff, talented students, and committed parents work in partnership to provide extraordinary learning environments across the District. We are thankful to serve as trustees in a community that strongly values and supports public education.”

Debate continues over Orinda’s private road maintenance

... continued from page A6

Many private road residents spoke in the public forum portion of the meeting. Steve Cohn asked the council to reject the staff recommendation and to instead create a task force. Jennifer Wallace said

that many public roads don’t even meet the standards for private roads to be accepted as public roads. The staff report, she noted, suggests that neighbors sue each other. She added that the private roads are used for

very public access to things such as school busses, regular busses, and trails. Melissa Roeder said that it is not acceptable that private road residents continue to be taxed for benefits that they don’t receive, and mentioned that PG&E is a very uncooperative owner of lands on private roads. Cindy Finch countered the notion that the residents wanted private streets: they don’t, she said. Bob de Oro of Orinda Downs told the council, “Just because it is hard, doesn’t mean you should just stop,” a sentiment echoed later by Council Member Darlene Gee.

Gee spoke at length and passionately about the need for a task force. “I appreciate staff’s focus on the fiscal and liability issues,” she said, “but I personally have lived here long enough that I don’t feel that we became a city just to protect the entity we created. We created the city so that we could have the best community that we could possibly provide for all of our residents.” Gee acknowledged how hard the issue is but added, “There is a huge difference between the Wilder homeowner agreements, which are very modern and have all been done very recently, and a road like Mira Loma, which has no rhyme or reason as to how it ended up with half the street being one way and the other half being the other.

“Even our own staff,” she added, “testified that you can go back and dig and dig and dig but some of these things just don’t add up.” She praised the information submitted by Steve Cohn and the resident’s group, and spoke at length about how the private streets mirror the public streets, with many cul de sacs, characterizing Orinda as “a windy stretch of a lot of residential streets that go nowhere.” Gee said that she would be more than happy to sit on the task force. “I very much agree with the idea of having a task force to explore what the entire range of options are without that being a promise to do anything other than to hear everybody’s voice and really think it through,” she concluded to applause from the audience.

Vice Mayor Inga Miller also prompted a response from the audience, but it was to correct her use of the term “our money.” Miller quickly agreed with the audience members who shouted out that it is taxpayer’s money, but she contrasted the often wealthy residents of Orinda with the “very unwealthy” city itself. She stressed the need to maintain funds to deal with difficult issues, such as the Miner Road sinkhole or the upcoming damage to Camino Pablo by EBMUD’s latest project.

EBMUD soil removal project

... continued from page A1

In the letter, EBMUD claims that a traffic impact study is only required for projects that generate over 50 peak hour vehicle trips and that their project is well below the threshold limit. EBMUD also claims that, based on traffic data from Orinda’s 2015-23 Housing Element Update, the additional vehicles generated by its project will temporarily increase morning peak hour traffic on Camino Pablo on average less than 3 percent and will avoid afternoon peak hour traffic.

According to EBMUD, the trucks will run from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

On its website, EBMUD says that it is communicating with local cycling groups as well as Wagner Ranch Elementary School regarding the temporary increases in truck traffic. A portion of Oursan Trail within Briones Reservoir will be rerouted during this time. Maps of the truck hauling route and the Briones trail reroute can also be found online at www.ebmud.com.

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Will Landed help Orinda educators purchase homes?

By Sora O'Doherty

Recognizing that attracting and retaining talented teachers, staff and administrators is of utmost importance to maintaining educational excellence, the Orinda Union School District board of trustees has taken steps to counteract the high cost of local housing and assist OUSD teachers and other employees to purchase residential property. The board concluded that salaries have not kept pace with the cost of living for those in, or commuting to, Orinda.

At its March meeting, the OUSD board approved a resolution to partner with Landed, a San Francisco-based startup that helps school personnel purchase homes through a down payment assistance program. The program provides half of the down payment on a home, up to \$120,000 per household, in exchange for a portion of the gain in the value of the home when it is eventually sold. Landed's down payment support will be available to all teachers, administrators, and staff who have worked for OUSD for at least two years and can contribute their own 10 percent down payment.

"Orinda is one of least affordable cities in the Bay Area," noted OUSD Board President Carol Brown. "Without innovative solutions like Landed, most of our educators cannot afford to live in or near our community. We believe Landed will be a valuable tool to improve district retention by providing educators with a pathway to home ownership."

OUSD Superintendent Carolyn Seaton added, "Orinda Union School District receives among the

lowest per pupil state funding of all public school districts in California. Consequently, it is challenging to offer competitive salaries for our teachers and other employees. Fortunately, Landed offers an opportunity to provide Orinda teachers and staff with assistance for a down payment on a home at no cost to the district."

Last year, Landed received a \$5 million investment from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to help educators in three public school districts on the Peninsula buy homes. Thanks to subsequent partnerships with large foundations, Landed has established the U.S. Educator Housing Fund to bring down payment support to educators in expensive cities around the country. Since its founding in 2015, Landed has already helped over 40 educators purchase homes in San Jose, Oakland, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and other cities across California.

"We couldn't be more thrilled to partner with the Orinda Union School District," said Landed Head of Engagement Nikki Lowy. "We believe in upholding the essential professionals who uphold all of us. While we recognize that Landed is just one of many solutions needed to address the housing crisis in the East Bay, we're excited to offer a new tool to help Orinda educators live in or near the beautiful community they serve."

An informational session was scheduled for OUSD employees in April. In the interim, interested OUSD educators can apply for Landed support immediately at <http://www.landed.com/interest>.

Lafayette's native son among those honored in new memorial

... continued from page A2

Vega explains, "Jonathan volunteered to serve a 365-day deployment to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as a driver for the Kapisa and Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team for the U.S. Air Force. He was part of the first Civil Affairs Team to establish a permanent presence at Fire Base Kutschbach (FBK), Tag Ab district, Kapisa Province."

On April 29, 2008, Vega says that her son was driving his team on a mission to conduct battle damage assessment outside of the village of Bedreau.

"As the convoy began to travel back to FBK, a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at the lead vehicle in the convoy. Jonathan aggressively and accurately maneuvered his vehicle to allow the gunner to return fire. After suppressing the enemy fire, Jonathan's vehicle was

struck by an improvised explosive device, killing him instantly," says Vega.

He posthumously received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Funds for the new \$50,000 memorial have been raised by donations including an anonymous gift of \$25,000, with the rest of the cost being covered by a fund from the Lafayette War Veterans.

Gilson says the dedication will start with a ceremony inside and then head outside for the unveiling of the monument. Many of the elected officials of Contra Costa County will be in attendance. Vega Yelner's Boy Scout Troop 243 will participate in the ceremony that Gilson says will be inspiring.

"I encourage everyone to attend," urges Gilson.

The dedication is scheduled for 2 p.m. April 29 at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Center.



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Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop opens third branch in Lafayette

By Nick Marnell

Given the opportunity to promote themselves, new businesses are usually excited to run down the list of products or services they provide the marketplace.

But Adam Abdallah, owner of Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop in Lafayette, launched directly into a description of what his new retail store is not.

"We are not a dispensary. And we do not sell any illegal product. No marijuana, no THC packets in any of our stores," Abdallah said. "We are a general retail store."

A general retail store that caters to smokers. Cigars, cigarettes, e-liquid, vape juice, vaporizers, tobacco and glass pipes, hookahs, and Middle Eastern tobacco flavorings line the walls of the spacious establishment, the third location for the company, with shops in Castro Valley and Livermore.

"There's no other store like ours around," Abdallah said, noting that as opposed to fighting heavy competition by opening in Walnut Creek, he feels he has the

Lamorinda market to himself in Lafayette.

"It's popular, crowded, lots of traffic. The Roundup is always active," he said. "And with the high income in the area, who wouldn't want to come to Lafayette to set up shop? My market is everyone in Moraga, Orinda and Lafayette."

Abdallah tried three or four other potential locations in Lafayette but they did not pan out. One evening, driving along Mt. Diablo Boulevard, he saw the For Lease sign at 3566. He went to the city offices, filled out paperwork, and within 10 minutes, Blazin' Jayz was in business in Lafayette.

The retail store opened March 27. Abdallah said he has had limited pushback from residents and the city, and none whatsoever from the police. A group of parents came to complain about kids smoking cigarettes and vape, and though Abdallah explained that his store could not be blamed for things that occurred prior to his opening, he did tint his storefront



Adam Abdallah, proprietor of Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop in Lafayette

Photo Nick Marnell

windows after that discussion as a cooperative gesture. The city asked Abdallah to move the hookahs from the front of the shop to the rear, but that's been it, he said.

"We respect our neighbors. We want everyone to understand what our business is," Abdallah said. "We are a smoke shop for 21 and over, and for adults who are curious. We also carry jewelry, incense, accessories, and lots of gift items." He allows

no smoking in the store, and that means no smoking by the owners and managers.

Abdallah stressed that no one is permitted in the store unless they are 21. They must present ID, and he allows no exceptions. What about the teenage boy who wants to buy his mother sticks of incense for her birthday?

"He cannot enter this building," Abdallah said. "It's not always about the money. I have kids

myself and we take this very seriously. We do not sell to minors."

The new business owner emphasized that he intends to be a good neighbor. "You will never have to worry about your kids," Abdallah said. "We love Lafayette!"

Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop is located at 3566 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette, and is open daily, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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Las Trampas School recognized on 60th anniversary

By Sora O'Doherty



Las Trampas residential buildings for children prior to 1970. Photo courtesy Las Trampas

Orinda Mayor Amy Worth was delighted to present a proclamation recognizing the 60th anniversary of Las Trampas School at the city council meeting April 10. Mayor Worth called the school "one of the treasures of our community." The school was honored for its efforts on behalf of the developmentally disabled. The proclamation states that 60 years ago a group of committed parents and neighbors founded the Las Trampas School in Lafayette to provide a safe and nurturing place for their children with developmental disabilities. Currently intellectual and developmental disabilities affect more than 3,500 adults in Contra Costa County. Since its inception, the school has changed its focus to developmentally disabled adults.

The proclamation was accepted by Daniel Hoag, executive director, and Cathy Merchant, who has been involved with Las Trampas over many years. Hoag said that he could not be more pleased to be part of an organization that was here since well before the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act of 1968, the Rehabili-

tation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Hoag said that the purpose of the school is to serve and to provide dignity and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities. "It was this area of California" he said, "that was instrumental in moving people out of institutional settings and into the community."

Looking to the next 60 years, Hoag plans to be working toward people with disabilities being fully included in every aspect of the community.

Hoag thanked Inga Miller, who served on the Las Trampas board right before she was elected to the City Council. Miller said she learned how many Orinda residents were involved in the founding of Las Trampas, which was for their children. It is, she said, "a very, very special place, a really lovely organization."

Worth agreed that it really is true that Las Trampas preceded all the state and federal legislation on disabilities and that Contra Costa County still has a tremendous challenge to provide housing for adults with disabilities. She thanked Las Trampas for their fine work in making it happen.

Las Trampas' big fundraiser, "What's in Our Hat?" will be held at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa from 3 to 6:30 p.m. Sunday, April 29. Champagne, cocktails, premium wines, appetizers and a themed buffet will be served. Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased at www.lastrampas.org. There will be a raffle and a silent auction, and entertainment will be provided by Generations in Jazz Combo.

Concern in the local recycling industry

... continued from page A1



Photo provided

In 2017, Republic collected 5,503 tons of recyclable materials in Lafayette, 3,437 tons in Moraga and 3,891 tons in Orinda. Those figures were virtually identical with the 2016 totals.

According to Ken Etherington, executive director of RecycleSmart, Mt. Diablo Recycling sold all of the 2016-17 Lamorinda recyclables to China, which now threatens to halt the import of much of that material. "These are the most severe import restrictions from China I have ever seen," Etherington said. "China still accepts recycling; however, the materials need to be very clean and free of contamination, like garbage and food waste." The contamination threshold China now permits is 0.5

percent. Anderson noted that recent audits of recyclable materials show that the amount of contamination has increased from 5 percent to 8 percent. "Keeping these recyclables 'clean' is the number one way to keep the cost of recycling of these materials low and guarantees that there will be a market for them," he said.

"I think all agencies within the RecycleSmart Authority are concerned about the recent restrictions China has placed on recyclables," said Roger Wykle, Moraga representative on the authority board. Both he and Orinda RecycleSmart board member Amy Worth encourage the contractor to seek other markets for the sale of recyclables.

In 2017, Southeast Asia countries answered the bell, with Thailand increasing recyclable imports 400 percent, Malaysia 295 percent and Vietnam 105 percent over 2016. "But will there be enough capacity in those countries?" Marva Sheehan of HF&H Consultants asked the CCCSWA board in February.

"Collectively, we may also need to take a serious look at processing this material here in the U.S. The best thing for Moraga would be to find a viable market for our recyclables, put these materials to good use, and keep it out of our landfills," Wykle said. Worth and Anderson also oppose sending recyclables to landfills.

Creating new domestic plants to recycle the recyclables will take years, but consumer education can make a much quicker impact. Etherington said that the authority will soon run a program of heavy consumer outreach to stress keeping recyclables clean and free of contamination, making them easier to market. "Don't throw out your mayonnaise jar with half of the product left inside. Lightly wipe out or rinse each bottle you discard," he said. "And don't use the blue cans as garbage cans."

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Letters to the Editor

Orinda council should vote “no” on Wilder Amendment

The Orinda City Council should reject the proposed Eighth Amendment to the Wilder Development Agreement. An important issue is being overlooked.

The issue that is being overlooked is that the City and the Developer have a binding contract that the Developer wants to change so it can make more money, while offering the City little or nothing in return. It is the duty of the Council to represent and defend the interests of the City and its residents. The Developer is not a charitable organization but rather a for-profit business. The Developer wants concessions so that it can make more money. It is the job of the Council to obtain a quid pro quo that has value substantially equivalent to the value that the Developer desires. Yet I see no mention of this in the discussion.

The City Staff is equally culpable. The Staff, like the Council, has a duty to represent and protect the residents of Orinda. Yet a member of the Staff told me that it is not the City Staff's duty to obtain a quid pro quo. I respectfully disagree.

I also respectfully disagree with Councilmember Gee, who reportedly stated that “she could see how residents might feel that things had been misrepresented, but that was between the homeowners and the developer.” The Council should not take action favorable to a Developer that might lead residents to feel that things had been misrepresented by the Developer, especially considering that the City is getting little or no value in return.

It is very disappointing that, with the exception of Mayor Worth, we cannot count on our elected Council, to represent and defend our interests.

Nick Waranoff
Orinda

Moraga Storm Drain Fee

We've all seen the signs around town, now here are the facts:

Each of our property owners in Town are being asked to vote on a fee based on their fair share of storm water that they contribute to the Town's storm drain system. This fee (if passed) will be paid as follows:

- 75% percent will be paid for by single family homeowners,
- 5% by schools,
- and the remainder by commercial, multi-family and other property owners.

This proposed fee will be used to address long overdue maintenance/replacement of the storm drain utility that runs throughout our town. It is exactly the same as a sewer, electricity, or phone/internet bill that all of us (including the schools) are already paying. In fact, it can easily be argued that the storm water utility fee is something we all should have been paying all along.

For the Moraga School District for instance, the fee is calculated to be \$21,400 per year for all of their properties, which equates to 1/10th of 1 percent of their annual \$23 million budget. Or put in other terms, approximately \$12 per student per year.

For the average homeowner, the fee will be \$120 per year or about \$10 per month (two lattes at the new Starbucks).

In my view this is a very small price to pay to avoid future sinkholes/disruptions in our town, maintain our overall quality of life and preserve safe drinking water reservoirs for all East Bay Area residents.

Please open your ballot when you receive it in the mail, check “Yes”, sign it, and mail it back in the pre-paid postage-free envelope.

Bret Lorie, Bess Inzeo, and Serina Culleton
Teachers in Moraga School District

A request for yes on storm drain fee

Moraga has a problem – a big problem – a problem that needs attention. It needs attention now.

Our public storm drain system is old and deteriorating. Conspicuous failures tell the story – the Rheem Boulevard sinkhole that disrupted traffic for a year; failure of this same pipe 40 feet away 10 years earlier; flooding of the Pavilion on the Hacienda grounds in 2006, caused by a failing culvert on the same drainage creek.

Yes, there is a problem, no matter what the naysayers claim. The next sinkhole is just a matter of time. Who knows how serious.

The Town has proposed a solution to avoid failures causing disruption and flooding. But the program will

cost a lot of money – money the Town does not have. No matter how much the Town tightens its belt, no savings could be realized that would dent the program cost. New revenue is essential.

Some say the Town has no credible plan. Experts say otherwise. What is certain is that the problems will not just go away. Deferring the work will only cost more as storm drain system deterioration continues. The proposed solution is a positive step toward solving the problem. Naysayers have yet to propose a credible alternative – not one.

The property-related fee program is based on the Prop 218 rules that were developed by the Jarvis-Gann Taxpayer group who also brought us Prop 13. It offers a reasonable way to assess property owners to fix the problem. A majority of voting property owners must approve in order to enact the fee measure. Sure, schools and churches will be assessed. They contribute to storm water runoff, no matter what the naysayers claim. The storm drain fee would be just like the charges property owners pay for all other utilities.

If the fee is not enacted, no future Town Council is likely to try again to pass any kind of measure any time soon. Meanwhile, the storm drain system continues to rot. It's time to act.

Please do the sensible thing. Vote YES. Be sure to sign your ballots before mailing to the Town.

Michael Metcalf
Moraga

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

Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

A new Finestra (window) opens at the Hacienda

... continued from page A5

Jeff Assadi's plan is to open a new full-service La Finestra including catering operations.

The proposal included the town making an initial expense, not to exceed \$60,000 for a new ADA restroom, an investment that would remain with the property. Current

recreation activities would be relocated to the Casita and La Sala. The Hacienda grounds, including the Pavilion would still be available for rental for weddings, private events or meetings. The restaurant would become the preferred caterer for the Hacienda events.

The proposed lease terms would be five years, renewable, with a market rate rent, plus a percentage rent on net revenue.

Results of the April 17 meeting will be added to the on-line publication of this article.



We urge you to vote YES on Measure L, the Council-approved plan for the Deer Hill property. Your **YES** vote preserves over half of the land as open space and community parklands, while allowing a limited number of homes and providing many benefits to Lafayette residents.

- ✓ **YES** for 11 acres of public parklands and trails
- ✓ **YES** for a full size, all weather, multi-use athletic field
- ✓ **YES** for a 2.9 acre dog park with separate areas for large and small dogs
- ✓ **YES** for a new neighborhood park and playground, the only one north of Highway 24
- ✓ **YES** for a 78 car parking lot near Acalanes High School
- ✓ **YES** for over \$500,000 in bicycle and pedestrian improvements on Pleasant Hill Road
- ✓ **YES** for 44 single family homes
- ✓ **YES** for a new public trail with scenic views of Mt. Diablo

VOTE YES ON MEASURE L on June 5, 2018

Please join these community leaders in supporting Measure L!

Don Tatzin, Mayor
Cam Burks, Vice Mayor
Mike Anderson, Councilmember
Mark Mitchell, Councilmember
Anne Grodin, former Mayor
Brandt Andersson, former Mayor
Carol Federighi, former Mayor
Erling Horn, former Mayor
Teresa Geringer, President, Lafayette School Board
Meredith Meade, Lafayette School Board

Fred Lothrop, Chair, Emergency Preparedness Commission
Carol Singer, Chair, Parks, Trails, and Rec Commission
Joe Dougherty, Parks, Trails, and Rec Commission
Mark Poole, Parks, Trails, and Rec Commission
Patricia Curtin, Former Planning Commission
Will Lovitt, Former Planning Commission
Karen Maggio, Former Planning Commission
Dino Riggio, Former Chair, Circulation Commission

Bart Carr, Co-Founder, Sustainable Lafayette
Amanda Walter, Board, Sustainable Lafayette
Donn Walklet, Vice Chair, Lafayette Open Space
Janet Thomas, Board, Lafayette Community Garden
Dan Horowitz, Crime Prevention Commission
Dan Ventrelle, President, Lafayette Little League
Doug Pearson, President, Lamorinda Rugby
Kathy Merchant, President, Lafayette Chamber
Jenny Kallio, President, Lafayette Homeowners Council

(partial list—titles for identification only)

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Paid for by Yes on L, a coalition of Lafayette residents, business and community leaders for Deer Hill plan and park; Committee major funding from Dennis O'Brien, including O'Brien Land Company.

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Lafayette activist continues personal battle for an assault weapons ban

By Nick Marnell



Steve Sposato and daughters Danielle, left, and Jenna at the Walnut Creek march against assault weapons

Courtesy Steve Sposato

Steve Sposato lost his wife on July 1, 1993 when Gian Luigi Ferri, a disturbed loner, stormed the law offices of Pettit and Martin at 101 California St. in San Francisco, carrying semiautomatic weapons and hundreds of rounds

of ammunition. Ferri killed eight and injured six. Sposato has spent the past 25 years on a mission to outlaw the sale of military-style assault weapons in the United States, goading politicians, marching against the National Rifle Association and speaking out at anti-assault weapon rallies.

The agony

A bulletin flashed across the TV screen at Sposato's Pacific Bell office in San Ramon: a mass shooting in San Francisco. Sposato's wife was in the city, giving a deposition, and he dismissed the frightening possibility. "But in the back of my mind, I had a sense that it was something bad as I left the office." Sposato turned on the television when he got to his Lafayette home and saw a Financial District crime scene. He tried to call his wife; no answer. He tried the office of the law firm where she was being deposed; no answer. He called San Francisco General Hospital; no one knew anything.

Sposato tore into the city and pressed for answers. When an officer told Sposato that he should go to 850 Bryant St. and talk to the people in the homicide department, his ill feelings soared. When officials asked him to accompany them to the morgue, Sposato knew.

Jody Sposato was 30.

Sharon O'Roke, the Electronic Data Systems lawyer who took Jody's deposition at the law firm, was Ferri's first victim. "I was handing Jody documents for her to review, and I thought a light from the ceiling had broken and fallen and hit my head," said O'Roke, who took eight gunshots to the right side of her body. "The shooter had kicked in the door to the office and fired 30 rounds of ammunition, targeting who he thought were attorneys, because he ignored the court reporter. After he thought he had killed us all, he left." Jody and lawyer Jack Berman were dead, with O'Roke lying on the conference room floor, unable to move, hearing screams and gunfire in the hall. Ferri killed himself in a stairwell as police honed in.

Early activism

His life shattered, Sposato went home in a daze and hugged his 10-month-old daughter Meghan. He read about the firepower that Ferri carried into the building: the ammunition, the handgun and the two TEC-DC9 semiautomatic pistols - the same weapon use by Dylan Klebold in the 1999 Colum-

bine High School massacre. "That's legal? In America? In 1993? And then I got angry. Probably the most deep-seated anger I've ever felt in my life."

He fired off a letter to President Bill Clinton. "What are you going to do about it?" But Sposato did not want his letter to die in the White House mailroom, so he called Senator Dianne Feinstein. She said she would be happy to deliver the letter to the president, but before she hung up, Feinstein mentioned to Sposato that people react to situations like his in one of two ways: those who want to shield themselves, and those who want to make a change. "It was my ah-ha moment. I decided then to do what I could to get these assault weapons off the street."

Two days after the phone call, the senator asked Sposato if he would testify before a Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington on Aug. 4. Feinstein told Sposato that it was his opportunity to push for change, to push for an assault weapon ban. And though Feinstein helped frame his remarks, she never told Sposato what to say.

Sposato took Meghan along. "We were supposed to go on at 11, but things went three hours late. I ran out of food. Ran out of diapers. Meghan was crying, she didn't want to be there. I thought, well, I had my moment, I blew it. But at least I tried." Finally, the doors to the chamber opened, Sposato walked to his seat, Meghan settled down, and as he faced the Senate panel he delivered an authentic, riveting performance.

"The image of Steve Sposato testifying before the Judiciary Committee in support of an assault weapons ban with his daughter Meghan on his back has never left me," Feinstein said. "Steve's testimony was incredibly powerful and helpful in moving the ban forward. Here was a man who had the perfect family - a beautiful wife and baby girl - and he told senators how a gunman with easy access to military-style weapons robbed him of that life."

Sposato suppressed nothing as he confronted the committee, with Meghan inserting whimpers and wails at seemingly rehearsed moments. "You're looking at what's left of my family. The sight of our 10-month-old daughter placing dirt on her mother's grave is a sight I pray no other person has to experience. ... continued on page A14



Steve Sposato speaking at a 1994 press conference in the Rose Garden

Courtesy Steve Sposato

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Lafayette activist

... continued from page A12

You can't imagine the pain unless you've been in this seat."

Nor could Sposato have imagined the effect of his testimony. The media bombarded him. "I learned how Congress is controlled by the NRA, and the means to beat that is through the media. I relentlessly went after the politicians."

Sposato did the national talk show circuit. He spoke at a press conference with Clinton in the Rose Garden. He hammered politicians every chance he could, and his efforts paid off.

Feinstein's assault weapons ban - part of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act - passed narrowly in the Senate. With Sposato standing behind him at the White House ceremony, Clinton signed the bill, which he dedicated to Jody and two others.

"You opened your remarks at the White House by saying that though you were honored to be there, you would rather not have been called to speak under such circumstances. I honor you now for a different reason - your incredible courage. This country cannot thank you enough for the contribution you have made," Clinton wrote in a letter to Sposato.

The activism continues

The ban expired in 2004, but Sposato's intensity has not. "I'm

still angry. My wife took five in the back. Weapons of war are available in the U.S. and to buy these things doesn't require a background check. It's a failure of government. They're supposed to protect us and they aren't doing it. It's pathetic."

It's not as if Sposato, a lifelong Republican and gun owner, is anti-gun. "I have no interest in getting rid of the Second Amendment. You want to own a rifle, own it. You want a gun for self-defense, ask the police how to use it." But he insists that assault weapons have got to go.

Remarried and now with three daughters, Sposato, president of a high-tech consulting firm, said he has faith in the students who are disrupting the establishment after the Parkland, Florida high school shootings, driven by their own anger and the absurdity of seeing their friends getting killed. "They can move CEOs with their vast buying power. And they can make changes in this election. Make guns a pivotal issue, demand universal background checks and an assault weapons ban. Do not stop until you get what you want." He recently delivered the same message to students at Acalanes High School.

The public appears to be listening. American voters support stricter gun laws 66 - 31 percent, the highest level of support ever

measured by the independent Quinnipiac University National Poll, taken after the Parkland shootings. Support for universal background checks was itself almost universal, at 97 - 2 percent.

The lingering effects

With every Virginia Tech, every Columbine, every Sandy Hook, every Parkland, the images return. "Absolutely, the wounds reopen," O'Roke said. "I feel fearful, I withdraw and I have problems with short-term memory." Now an activist living in Oklahoma City, O'Roke said she experienced years of guilt over Jody's death, feeling that no deposition would have been necessary had she been able to convince her boss to settle Jody's EDS employment claim. "If we had, she would have been alive," O'Roke said. Sposato heard about O'Roke's tortured feelings through a CNN producer he knew. "Steve called me and said that I was only doing my job, and that I had nothing to do with Jody's death. The one responsible was Ferri," said O'Roke, who has never met Sposato. "It was a gesture I will never forget."

Sposato agreed that the surreal images remain forever. "I had to tell a 10-month-old that mommy was dead. I'd like to say I've gotten over this, but you never get over it."



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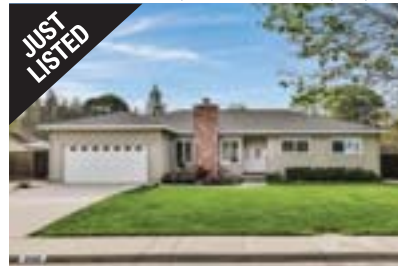
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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Local musicians to showcase talents at upcoming community music event

By Pippa Fisher



Garageland Rodeo, Reminisce and Dream Posse play together at the finale of a previous year's community music festival. Photo provided

Once a year Lafayette's Town Hall Theatre hosts a truly unique singer-songwriter music experience. It takes the best part of a year to bring it all together, run as a fundraiser for the theater and organized by Lafayette residents Tom and Kiki Stack. All the musicians are local and all perform for free.

This year's eighth annual Lafayette Community Music Festival is scheduled for Saturday, April 28.

Stack says this community is fast becoming a destination now for music, with people attending this festival from as far away as Hercules.

As a real estate agent Tom Stack understands the community. He says families who are moving into the downtown area value being able to walk to restaurants and entertainment. "Town Hall Theatre is at the heart of the community," he says, going on to point out that people can walk from the restaurants to the show. Once at THT, music lovers can relax with drinks in the plush seats of the theater. This year the bar will feature a host of discounted craft beers.

After seven years of running the show, Stack says they continue to tweak things and make it better each year. And Stack knows a thing or two about production, having spent 20 years working with the Grateful Dead in licensing and merchandising. He says he studied Bill Graham's big productions. "I watched how he thought outside the realm of normalcy," he says explaining

that the experience should always be more than the audience expects.

Stack says he loves to connect people to the music. At this event particularly he says it is about a connection between the musician and listener.

"Kiki's idea was that once a year we feature local singers and songwriters who otherwise would not get to play in such an intimate room with such an attentive audience," says Stack. "This is a departure from the tribute band model that has become so popular here and in the area. We hope to honor them and allow these musicians, some who make their living performing, to showcase their talents to a new crowd, and ideally grow their fan base."

There will be a wide variety of music – something for everyone. Stack explains the audience will discover new music as well as some old favorites.

"There is amazing talent right here in Contra Costa County," says Stack.

With bands such as the Orinda/Lafayette-based Alley Kats, whose members have fronted or played with several big bands including Boston, Night Ranger and Tower of Power, to the Moraga-born Elmwoods, led by brothers Glenn and Alan Macomber, and Frankie G, there is a lot of talent this year too.

Stack recalls that Glenn Macomber was in a band that opened for the Grateful Dead when they played at Campolindo High School May 16, 1969.

Stack is excited to introduce

The Muted Jewel Tones, too – three singers he describes as having angelic voices. He says Sin Silver, a young Irish keyboard player is captivating with her Irish brogue.

"It's such an eclectic variety of music," says Kiki Stack, whose own band Dream Posse has played in previous years. "Something for everybody. I'm so excited to produce this show because every year is different. This is our very own music community, and that's important. It also brings together the veterans and the youth," she says.

"There's a common thread of love for great heartland, blues, and folk music," adds Kiki Stack. "Every year people say, 'How did I not know about this?' We're trying to make sure people do."

The show takes place on Saturday, April 28. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the music starts at 7:30 p.m. All attendees will receive a free poster. Tickets are \$30 on the night of the performance or can be purchased in advance online for \$25 at <https://www.townhalltheatre.com/music-comedy/>.



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Photo Rupert Coles



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1 Bates Blvd., Suite 200, Orinda**River of Words – young Orinda poet honored**

By Sophie Braccini



Sarah Inouye

Photo Sophie Braccini

There is something delicate about Sarah Inouye, something of a rosebud about to bloom, shyly sensing, but not yet completely acknowledging her own power. Inouye, who is 15, just won in her age category the River of Words international contest as a poet. ROW is an environmental art and poetry contest for children ages K-12 that was cofounded in 1995 by writer and activist Pamela Michael and then-U.S. Poet Laureate (and Saint Mary's College alumnus) Robert Hass.

The ceremony for the winners, including Inouye, will take place at the college from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 29 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Activity Center.

This year ROW received entries from 13 different states, and from Canada, China, India, Germany, Bulgaria, Taiwan and South Korea. The program that first resided in Berkeley has now merged with SMC's Kalmanovitz School of Education, within the Center for Environmental Literacy.

Inouye is a student at the Oakland School of the Arts where she transferred after attending middle school at Orinda Intermediate School. She remembers how her love of writing started to flourish in middle school. Her core teacher in seventh grade, Eric Page, encouraged reading and writing and was a big influence. Then she joined Elizabeth Perlman's Intuitive Writing Project and started a journey of self-discovery through writing. Perlman mentioned the Oakland school to her, and Inouye decided to sign up for a curriculum where three hours in the afternoon are entirely dedicated to one's art

of choice. For Inouye, it was clear that this art would be writing.

At OSA Inouye discovered poetry. Her talent and attraction until then had been taking her to writing fictional stories. At age 12, she had three of her stories published in Perlman's yearly collection. The precocious yet careful student tiptoed into the world of poetry at OSA. She is quick to indicate that she first listened to her talented classmates and started reading a lot of poetry. Inouye says that Vietnamese poet Ocean Vuong has been an inspiration for her. She is also very much attracted to spoken poetry and listens to the YouTube channel Button Poetry.

OSA provides students with

'Atlas' – by Sarah Inouye

the place where the spine meets the skull
is called the atlas
did you know that the earth's map
is a place within the hollows of your body?
you need to protect this planet's form
as she protects yours with hers

water resurrects itself
from the underbelly of my tongue
you can be a spitfire girl
with the swell of every ocean between your teeth
you can possess every kind of ferocity and peace
this world has to offer

a tunnel of cypress trees
teaches me to speak their language
they commune in undaunted honesty
and when my voice reaches them
a single truth escapes
i am the love of my life

how could you not fall
for a body that is so similar
to that of this planet?
how could you not want to heal
a planet that is so similar
to that of your body?

information about all possible avenues to challenge themselves and get their name out there. The young woman was attracted to the River of Words challenge because she says that she gravitates toward the natural world for her inspiration, and she cares about being a good steward of our world. She was happily surprised to discover that ROW's headquarters is located next door, on the Saint Mary's College campus.

The poem she wrote for ROW is an evocative interlacement stitching the relationship between the body and the natural world. She shows with a few stanzas the intimate link between beings and their environment. Inouye says that the prompt given by ROW was such an inspiration that she wrote the poem very quickly and did not rework it at length. She explains that the critical work she has learned at OSA has given her tools to challenge her own writing and track usual clichés, but it was not necessary this time; the poem came out of her in its final form.

Maureen Esty who coordinated the program at SMC was delighted to see that one of the winners was a local teen. She adds that she would like to reach out more to local schools and encourage Lamorinda students to participate in the ROW contest. The international competition was born in the East Bay; it is the largest international youth poetry and art contest in the world. It encourages students to explore the watersheds where they live.

On April 29, Inouye will read her poem and other students will present their art. The public is invited to come. For more information, visit www.stmarys-ca.edu/row.

Political scholars address 'Bridging the Political Divide' at SMC

Submitted by Mike McAlpin

Saint Mary's College will offer a timely forum, "Bridging the Political Divide," April 19 featuring two nationally recognized analysts of the country's fractured political landscape who will lead a free public conversation with audience members about their research and the prospects of finding common ground at a time when many in urban communities of color and rural white communities find themselves at opposite ends of the political divide. Colgate Political Science Professor Nina Moore has examined the root causes of the over incarceration of people of color, and UC Berkeley Sociology Professor Arlie Hochschild has explored the rise of the Tea Party and anger in conservative white rural America.

Hochschild is a professor


emerita of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the recipient of many academic awards and has authored 11 books, including "Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right." A 2016 National Book Award finalist, the celebrated work features intensive interviews with Tea Party enthusiasts in rural Lake Charles, Louisiana. The National Book Foundation said of the celebrated work, "Hochschild draws on her expert knowledge of the sociology of emotion to help us understand what it feels like to live in 'red' America."

Moore is the author of "The Political Roots of Racial Tracking in American Criminal Justice" and a professor of political science at Colgate University.

Her 2015 study explores how the unequal policing, prosecution, and over incarceration of black people has resulted from misrepresentations of criminality in the media, and misguided laws supported by the public, and both Democrats and Republicans. The Princeton Review recently named Moore among the top 300 professors in the U.S.

"Bridging the Political Divide" will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 19 in the Saint Mary's College Soda Center. Presented by the Roy E. and Patricia Disney Forum through Saint Mary's Department of Communication, "Bridging the Political Divide" is part of an ongoing series exploring contemporary politics and communications.

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First poet laureate wants Lafayette and Orinda to resonate with this art form

By Sophie Braccini



Amy Glynn

Photo provided

The Lamorinda Arts Council poet laureate committee recently announced the selection of Amy Glynn as the first Lafayette/Orinda poet laureate. Glynn, who is a Lafayette resident and published poet, is full of ideas to make poetry an accessible and popular discipline in Lafayette and Orinda, and thus contribute to the artistic vibrancy of the area. The cities of Lafayette and Orinda have entrusted LAC to fund and manage this program.

Glynn sees poetry as one of the art forms that can give sense to the chaotic world where we live. "Whether it is in a formal way or not, poets write poetry for the same reason scientists conduct experiments, to test hypothesis," she ventures. "You think that an idea might be true, and writing a poem about it is a way to figure out if it is." Reading or writing poetry is her way of observing and explaining the world. She believes that this art form is accessible to all, and that the poet laureate program is going to be a way to develop it in Lafayette and Orinda.

Words, written or told, in the form of stories or poems, have been a part of Glynn's world as

far as she can remember. The young mother of two daughters always knew that writing would be what she would do. After studying at Mount Holyoke College, Emily Dickenson's alma matter, she went to Lancaster University in England for her master's degree in creative writing. She has worked in all kinds of different jobs, from paralegal to teaching English as a Second Language, while always finding time to advance her writing.

Measure Press Inc. published her first book of poetry four years ago, "A Modern Herbal," and will publish her second collection when it is completed. Glynn has been a James Merrill House Fellow, a Bread Loaf Orion Environmental Writers' Conference Scholar, and a Mona van Duyn Scholar at the Sewanee Writers' Conference. She and Robert Pinsky co-curated the "Favorite Poem Project" reading at the Robert Frost Library at Amherst College in 2015 and the Head-Royce School in Oakland in 2017.

She is a staff journalist for Paste Magazine and is freelancing as a wine writer.

LAC president Lawrence

Kohl explains that a committee independent from the LAC board selected the poet laureate. He explains that it included several former poet laureates from other cities such as Connie Post, former Livermore poet laureate. LAC received six applications and Glynn was selected after several rounds of interviews. LAC has secured the funding for the poet laureate, a \$3,000 annual stipend.

LAC has formed a poet laureate committee that will manage the program, with Glynn at its center, but Kohl believes that there is more to do than one person can handle. He would like members of the community, including the schools, to join the committee. He notes that this program is somewhat unusual since Glynn is expected to support poetry activities in two cities rather than just one, as it is usually done in larger communities.

Glynn is already full of creative ideas. Besides writing poems, giving classes or organizing events, she has participated in the creation of ekphrastic poetry – often a vivid description of a piece of art – with her friend, painter, and gallery owner Jennifer Perlmutter, and now she imagines more. She thinks of multidisciplinary events, of poetry readings in different places, of open mics for new poets, of master classes in schools, in addition to the official duty a poet laureate is usually expected to perform to celebrate local events. She feels ready to serve the diverse communities' needs.

The libraries in Lafayette and Orinda are also engaged in promoting poetry with the program and the first events with Glynn will happen at the two libraries at noon on April 26 in Orinda and at 7 p.m. April 30 in Lafayette, including poetry readings and light refreshments.

OIS spring production opens April 26

Submitted by Jeanette Lipp



The Jukebox cast and crew of "All Shook Up Young@Part Edition" during one of the rehearsals. Photo provided

Orinda Intermediate School's Bulldog Theater will present the musical, "All Shook Up Young@Part" April 26-28 at OIS. "All Shook Up" tells the story of an unexpected small town romance through classic rock 'n' roll music. Tomboy Natalie, who runs the local mechanics shop, dreams of life beyond her dull little hometown. The whole town

is shaken up when a cool, motor-cycling, leather-jacket wearing Chad drives in and changes everything and everyone he meets in this musical fantasy. And to her own surprise, Natalie finds herself falling for Chad most of all.

There are two casts, comprised of approximately 80 OIS students along with an additional

15 OIS students serving on tech crew. Performances will run April 26-28 at the OIS Bulldog Theater. The performance lasts approximately 90 minutes, with one intermission. For show time information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.showtix4u.com. Tickets are also available at the OIS Theater one half hour prior to show times.

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POETRY

BILLING BLUES
by Resident Don Maynard

My bill arrived by mail on time,
It didn't show the right amount.
We don't agree, I told my wife,
I'll phone them now and get it right.
I dialed the store, I heard two rings,
Recorded voice came on the line.
Thanks for shopping at our store
---and
We are pleased to serve you.
If you know your invoice number,
Please Press 8, the voice went on.
Otherwise Press 5 again
If your bill is not correct.
Unless this call is to complain
Then Press 3 to follow 6,
For Visa bills or Master Charge
Except for checks, Press 2
---and
We are pleased to serve you.
Enough, enough, I cried aloud,
Confused by all I heard.
I closed my eyes, I took a chance
And pressed at random number 4.
Please hold the line, was all I heard,
I did for twenty minutes.
But just before the call cut off
I thought I heard a faint voice say
---and
We are pleased to serve you.
I dialed once more right from the start,
Again I heard the message,
You must first make a valid Press,
I'll take a chance with 2.
With toll call charges mounting
It's hard to concentrate.
Despite my frantic futile search
They said, You are in Lingerie
---and
We are pleased to serve you.
They then connected my next call
Right to the billing office.
A real live human voice came on.
I told them of the error.
You should have called this morning
The accounting clerk was here.
She left at noon for parts unknown
On her two week vacation
---and
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AAUW Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette STEM Conference at SMC

By Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen



Participants at the March 17 STEM Conference at Saint Mary's College. Photos provided

Examining a sheep's brain, noting the differences from a human brain, making slime, and getting creative with coding. These are but a few of the hands-on workshops that 200 middle school girls attended at the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Conference at Saint Mary's College on March 17. This was the third year the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch of the American Association of University Women presented the conference.

"It is important for young girls to meet other girls who have similar interests and passions. Together they can encourage each other and build a support network," Stacia Cragholm, conference co-chair explains. "The STEM conference is an opportunity to help middle school girls follow their dream by providing a sense of encouragement and empowerment to pursue their interests in science. I think by starting at this early age they might follow their passions and not get sidetracked."

To this end, 19 workshops were available to the girls, who attended three during the day. Along with the ones already mentioned, some of the others were: Minimizing the Effects of Climate Change, Learning to Design and Build Bridges, Field Day in the Fourth Dimension; Bottle Rockets: An Introduction to Aerospace Engineering; and one with the intriguing title, Affordable Housing for Gummy Bears.

While Audrey said she wanted to learn how to design a suspension bridge, Larkin thought that learning to disassemble and assemble a computer sounded like a good, practical skill. Rosie liked getting to act in the short film her group made.

Girls from 29 schools participated. Almost 60 girls attended from the Antioch School District. Ana Castro, adult supervisor said, "I enjoyed the opportunity to expose the girls to the college campus environment and have the opportunity to attend a wide variety of STEM sessions. It was an amazing trip. It was the first time for our district to attend this event. It is definitely something we will do again." One of the Antioch students said, "I liked the ability to choose different classes. It gave me the opportunity to explore several subjects to see if I liked them or not."

High school aged girls and young women from Saint Mary's College were engaged in the conference. Enthusiastic and dedicated young women involved in the branch's high school ambassador program develop their

leadership skills by assisting with conference planning, volunteer training, and coordination of logistics on the day of the conference. High school volunteers also serve as workshop aides at the conference. The high school girls have been past participants in the local branch's AAUW STEM-oriented Tech Trek summer camp (<https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/stem-education/tech-trek/>), the Sister-to-Sister program, or have expressed interest in a leadership role. Isabelle, who volunteered in this capacity, said it was fun to see the day from a different perspective and she was glad to give back as she felt she gained so much from the STEM conference last year.

Orinda Council Member Eve Phillips gave the keynote address, with inspirational words about some of the personal stories that have helped shaped her life. Her example provided a success story of women in the world of science. Phillips is a Group Product Manager at Google, leading product strategy and development for its Chrome products in the workplace. Previously, she cofounded and served as CEO of Empower Interactive, Inc., a digital health company. She is a graduate of Miramonte High School, Stanford University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Phillips was elected to the council in 2014 and served as mayor in 2017.

The event was hosted by Saint Mary's College and its School of Science. Generous sponsors were Chevron, Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary and Rossmoor Rotary Foundation. A conference of this magnitude required over 100 volunteers, including workshop leaders who are STEM Professionals, AAUW OML members, students from Saint Mary's College and local middle and high schools.

Parents were provided with a morning workshop with the theme, "Negotiating the Maze: How to guide your daughter through choosing her academic electives in high school and college to ensure academic and professional success in the pursuit of her dreams." The presenters included a STEM professional, a social worker, one of the high school ambassadors, and a Saint Mary's student intern.

The AAUW Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch is committed to STEM programs, and to developing the interests and self-confidence of young women. See the OML-AAUW website for more information: <http://oml-ca.aauw.net/tech-trek/>.



Kicks4Kids Athletic Shoe Drive to help 200 local under-resourced youth

Submitted by Christine Ayers



Photo provided

Level Up Sports Academy, a nonprofit youth development program in Contra Costa County, has launched its Kicks4Kids Athletic Shoe Drive, serving under-resourced youth ages 5-13 in Contra Costa County. Level Up is currently collecting new or gently used athletic shoes, as well as financial donations to purchase new shoes. More donations are needed to reach the goal of collecting and distributing 200 pairs of shoes to local kids in need.

Research shows that with good shoes, kids are healthier, attend school more often, and are more confident. "Having a good pair of shoes that fit right and look good not only boosts a child's confidence, it also removes one of the most visible signs of poverty", said Bill Flitter, Founder of Level Up Sports Academy. "This is a high impact

project that we're proud to lead for our local community."

Level Up created the Kicks4Kids campaign to provide much needed athletic shoes to youth in need. There will be a free shopping event for pre-registered youth on April 28 hosted by New Hope Community Church in Concord. Shoes will also be delivered to partnering agencies including Monument Crisis Center, Contra Costa Kops for Kids and more.

To schedule a pickup of athletic shoes or provide a financial donation, go online to <https://levelupsportsacademy.org/shoe-drive>. A Level Up athlete will contact you to schedule a convenient pickup time. For questions regarding the Kicks4Kids Athletic Shoe Drive, contact Christine Ayers at (510) 295-7298 or levelupsports2018@gmail.com.

Sharon Reichow Memorial Scholarship offered for middle school students

Submitted by Christine Kuckuk

For the 2018-19 academic year, The Saklan School is offering a \$20,000 scholarship to new middle school students in good academic standing who demonstrate a commitment to Saklan's mission of Thinking Creatively, Acting Compassionately and Living Courageously. This scholarship was

created in memory of Sharon Reichow, a Saklan teacher who inspired a generation of students to follow the school mission and who gave each of her students a solid foundation upon which to build a successful academic future. See saklan.org for details. Deadline for applications is Friday, April 27.

In Memory

Jay Milton Puckett

March 16, 1946 – March 10, 2018



Jay Milton Puckett, a real estate broker and longtime resident of Moraga, passed away on March 10, 2018, following a battle with Prion disease.

Jay is survived by his wife, Judy Puckett; his children, Jason Michael and Jennifer Elizabeth; and his brother, Wayne Gordon.

Jay was born in Hollywood, California, on March 16, 1946, the son of Margaret and Milton Puckett. He spent most of his childhood in

Oregon, where he attended University of Oregon. He was drafted and served in Vietnam, earning the rank of sergeant in the United States Army. Upon returning he worked for the Treasury Department as a sky marshal. Eventually, he enrolled at Southern Oregon University and graduated with a business degree.

Jay married Judy Rau on Aug. 17, 1975. They first lived in Northern California and later settled in Moraga to raise their children, Jennifer and Jason. Jay worked in both commercial and residential real estate. He enjoyed playing tennis at Moraga Country Club, where he met some of his dearest friends. He and Judy were able to travel often and enjoyed seeing new places. Jay was adept at befriending new people anywhere he went. As an avid cook, he loved to welcome people into his home for get-togethers and celebrations. Above all, Jay's focus was his family, and he raised his children in a home filled with love and compassion. His kindness, his sense of humor, and his spirit will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

A Celebration of Life in honor of Jay is to be held on April 21, at 4 p.m. outside the tennis lounge at Moraga Country Club. The address is: 1600 St. Andrews Dr. Moraga, CA 94556. The dress is casual.

Donations can be made to: "UCSF Foundation," on Check Memo Line: "CJD-MAC 7001950, in Memory of Jay Puckett." Mail to UCSF Foundation, Box 45339, San Francisco, CA 94145-0339.

We look forward to seeing you on April 21st to celebrate a wonderful, giving man, who loved his family, his friends, and life.

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.

Community Service: We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Efforts to build an orphanage in Sierra Leone

By Sophie Braccini



Photos provided

Dianne Wilson, Moraga Royale executive director and current president of the Moraga Rotary, recently went to Sierra Leone in West Africa to get field knowledge of the area where her club is sponsoring the construction of an orphanage. The 10 days she spent there turned out to be a rich, even if sometimes heartbreaking, human experience that renewed and enhanced her commitment and determination to see this project to fruition.

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest African countries. It suffered a devastating civil war from 1991–2002. This was followed by an outbreak of the Ebola virus in 2014 that claimed thousands more lives. In the town of Makeni, Wilson’s sister, Becky Becker, on a Christian and humanitarian mission met Bambay Savaneh, a young man who is a double-hand amputee maimed by rebels in the civil war and who had created a faith-based soccer team to bring discipline and fun to the lives of children. Ebola, which claimed the lives of the healthy adults, left many children in Makeni orphans.

In a country where people have difficulty feeding themselves, the insecurity of the situation of orphans is daunting, with many still living on the streets, resorting to all kinds of activities to survive, and being subjected to abuse and crime.

Beker and her group continue to help Savaneh and the 21 orphans that have found refuge with his family. She also had involved Wilson from the start, helping with the soccer equipment and such, but Wilson now feels that much more is needed.

The Moraga Rotary is now committed to help build an orphanage for Makeni’s children, under Savaneh’s leadership. During Wilson’s recent voyage in West Africa with her sister, an award-winning filmmaker Paul Freedman and translator Angela Geer produced a documentary showing the precarious, though hopeful, life of the children.

Savaneh is Sierra Leonean and studied abroad. His goal is to put the



Dianne Wilson with some of the orphans she met during her trip to Makeni. Photos provided



children through school; they started coming to his door because the children understood that there they would get some food and would not be bitten. Wilson was impressed by Savaneh’s dedication and that of his wife, who works from dawn to dusk to feed and clean everyone.

Wilson reports the joy and positive attitude of the orphans as they now feel safe and have the prospect of a future. But she also witnessed firsthand the more than simple conditions in which they live, with no sanitation on the premises.

The Rotary project consists of

building an orphanage on a large lot that has its own water supply. All the work will be done by local labor, using local material and techniques. Wilson explains that half of the money has already been raised – \$23,000 was recently raised for the orphanage at the Night at the Races Rotary fundraiser – and is confident that the rest will be collected as people understand what is at stake.

The documentary should soon be available on the Moraga Rotary website: www.moragarotary.com.

Lynn’s Top Five

Spring into financial fitness

By Lynn Ballou, CFP®

When I think about spring it’s the warming weather and beautiful gardens that come to mind. I also believe that it’s a fantastic time of year to challenge ourselves to a Fiscal Fitness Test and where we come up short, make changes now. Here are five areas to focus on:

1) Exercise those budgeting skills. Is your budget bloated because of overspending? Examine the parts of your spending that are discretionary and see if you really need to buy all those things and if not, cut 10 percent out as a good start toward healthier fiscal behavior. Reboot with the notion that you should shop with a list and if it’s not on the list, step away from the purchase. If one month is out of control, cut back on all spending in other months until you are back at your baseline budget.

2) Get your family support group set up! Living with a fiscal plan is a challenge when we don’t have each other’s back. Gather your family and friend team around you and set course together on your goals. Have your kids and even grandkids participate so they develop excellent long-term money management skills of their own. That will pay dividends of a fiscally healthy life for generations to come. Get your friends on board, too. If everyone in your life is focused on fiscal health, you can be there for each other and there’s less of a chance for inadvertent sabotage and derailment.

3) Time for a retirement plan scan. Are you fully participating in all your retirement plans at work? Are you leaving money on the table by not fully qualifying for any available company match? Do you know how much you need to invest systematically and which plans are best for you? Whether you are self-employed or receiving W-2 income, there are many different types of retirement plans you can set up. If you are overwhelmed by the choices, don’t faint! Work with a Certified Financial Planner™ and your tax advisor to help you narrow the list and weigh the pros and cons of each.

4) Shed the weight of risk! Insurance is an important part of a well-crafted financial plan and rather than tossing and turning all night and losing sleep, meet with your CFP® and your Insurance specialists to figure out what you can afford to self-insure and what risks you can transfer to others. Don’t spend money on the wrong insurance and coverages! Instead design an insurance portfolio that works perfectly into your plans

and covers your needs. Here are some of the coverages you should investigate and review: health, disability, life, long-term care, home, auto, liability, earthquake and perhaps business insurance, rental properties and even board of director’s insurance if you serve in that capacity. Sounds like a lot and at first, it can be daunting. Tackle these different types of coverage one by one and educate yourself about what is needed and what isn’t in your own situation. Your pros are there to help you.

5) Take your investment portfolio’s temperature. Do you know what you own? Is your portfolio working the way it should to get you where you want and need to go? Do you have upcoming cash needs and no liquidity to handle them? This is the perfect time to evaluate your holdings with respect to your financial planning goals and objectives. As part of that process, be sure you understand your risk tolerance and use that as one measurement to see if your asset mix is appropriate for you and your own situation. An overheated portfolio may look exciting on paper, but when markets cool, you want to be sure you can handle any volatility that comes your way. Work with your Certified Financial Planner™ to review all the aspects of your portfolio, making warranted changes but only after a comprehensive review that includes issues such as costs, fees, liquidity, risk and tax implications.

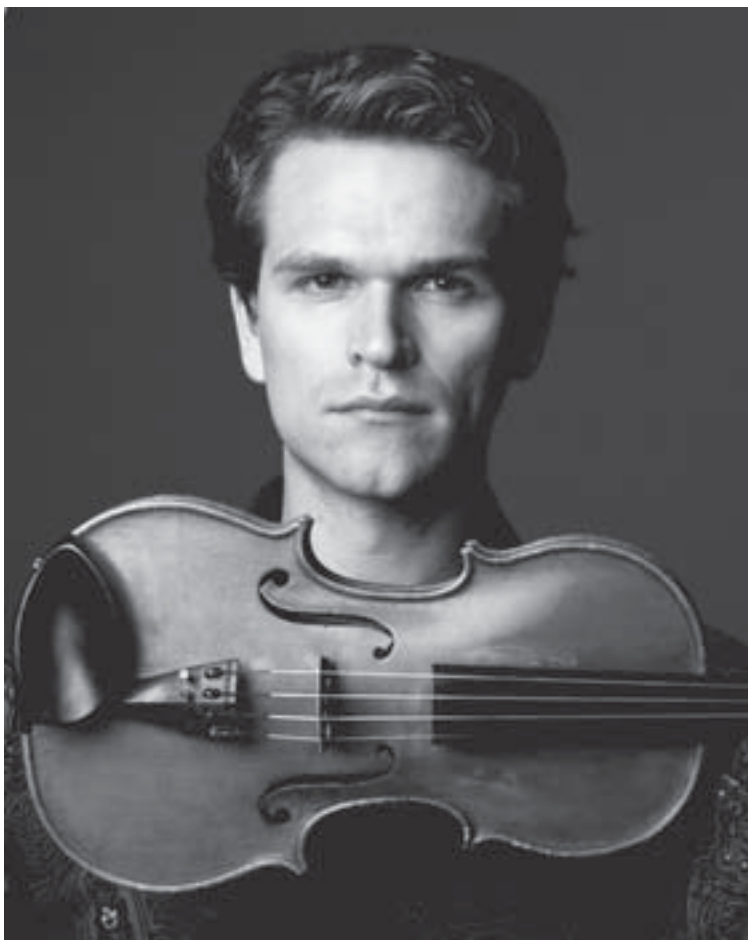
Remember that as with all fitness challenges, your fiscal fitness test will need some review and redesign as the goals and objectives of you and your family change over time. And like all challenges, it might sound overwhelming, but the gain is worth the energy you’ll expend. Get the team in place and go for the win! Happy spring!



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional and Regional Director with EP Wealth Advisors, a Registered Investment Advisory Firm in Lafayette. Information used in the writing of this column is believed to be factual and up-to-date, but we do not guarantee its accuracy and it should not be regarded as a complete analysis of the subject(s) discussed. All expressions of opinion reflect the judgment of the author as of the date of publication and are subject to change. Content is not intended to be interpreted as tax or legal advice. Always consult a tax and/or legal professional regarding your specific circumstances.

‘American Radio Hour’ concert program offers a musical trip back in time

Submitted by Lawrence Kohl



Two-time Grammy winner jazz violinist Mads Tolling Photo provided

Pacific Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Maestro Lawrence Kohl, will take audience members back to 1944 – before the internet, computers, even television, when the radio was king – to enjoy an “American Radio Hour” concert program at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 21 at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church at 49 Knox in Lafayette and at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 22 at the Bankhead Theatre at 2100 First Street in Livermore.

Audience members will serve as the live studio audience for Scott Joplin’s delightful ragtime hit “The Entertainer;” George Gershwin’s sweet “Lullaby for Strings;” Charles Ives’ amusing “Three Short Pieces” and Aaron Copland’s masterful “Appalachian Spring.” Copland focused this well-known, beautiful piece

on the heart of American values as expressed in the Shaker melody: ‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free.

Two-time Grammy winner jazz violinist Mads Tolling will also premiere a concerto for violin and chamber orchestra, “Yggdrasil,” commissioned by the Pacific Chamber Orchestra. Yggdrasil is the holy giant ash tree in Nordic mythology that is center to the cosmos. Its branches extend far into the heavens and its roots go deep in the earth, connecting the nine Norse worlds. Part of the concerto will be based around the oldest written Scandinavian song, “I have dreamed me a dream,” found on a piece of wood written in Runes around 1300 just after the Viking age. As befitting our diverse America, Tolling’s “Yggdrasil” connects

classical and improvisational jazz, old time fiddling and Latin styles into a complex and new musical universe.

Tickets are \$10 - \$59 and for both locations may be purchased through the PCO website: PacificChamberOrchestra.org or for Livermore the Bankhead Box office, by phone at (925) 373-6800 or online at BankheadTheater.org.

The professional musicians of the Pacific Chamber Orchestra have performed in the San Francisco Symphony, Opera, Ballet and Theatre Orchestra; perform for feature films recorded at Skywalker Ranch; tour internationally in chamber groups and appear as soloists. For information and videos about PCO, visit pacificchamberorchestra.org.

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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Not to be missed

ART

The Moraga Art Gallery presents an international exhibit, "Impressionism Times 2," featuring the work of lifelong friends: ceramicist Jacqueline Proulx of Walnut Creek and the celebrated French-Canadian expressionist painter Rita Rodrigue, a resident of Quebec. The show, which also includes the gallery's 13 member artists and several guest artists, runs through June 2. For more information, visit www.moragaartgallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.

Campolindo Arts Festival "Explorations in Identity and Self-Expression" runs April 19 through 20 in the Campolindo High School Library. There will be an opening reception from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on April 19, and performances and a film screening from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. Free.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance presents Artist Talk: Joani Share and the Wood Carvings of Oaxaca, Mexico at 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 2 at the Lafayette Christian Church, 584 Glenside Drive. Share will present a slide show and talk about the wonderful wooden creatures of Oaxaca called "Alebrijes." Share will bring examples from her collection and share information about the arts in the villages surrounding the city of Oaxaca. Free. www.joanishare.com

MUSIC

Pacific Chamber Orchestra director Lawrence Kohl presents "American Radio Hour" starting at 7:30 p.m. on April 21 at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church 49 Knox, Lafayette and at 2 p.m. on April 22 at the Bankhead Theatre 2100 First Street, Livermore. You will be the live studio audience for Scott Joplin's delightful rag-time hit "The Entertainer"; George Gershwin's sweet "Lullaby for Strings"; Charles Ives' amusing "Three Short Pieces" and Aaron Copland's masterful "Appalachian Spring". Tickets are \$10 - \$59 and for both locations may be purchased through the PCO website: PacificChamberOrchestra.org.

Voci Concerts Celebrate the Elements at 2 p.m. on April 21 at St Paul's Episcopal Church, 114 Montecito Avenue, Oakland. The concert will feature beautiful and dramatic choral music about Earth, Air, Fire and Water from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Tickets: \$25 at the door, \$20 advance, \$15 students, free for children 6 to 12. Available at the door or online at www.vocisings.org.

The Founder's Day Concert celebrates the anniversary of the creation by Rosamond Davis of the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society (www.ccpas.org) in 1974. This free concert features 10 different groups of performers and covers the spectrum of musical styles from classical, jazz, modern, and new compositions by members of the CCPAS. The concert will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 21 in the Sanctuary of Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek.

Mindful Littles presents A Heartful Earth Day Celebration with live music from 1 to 3 p.m. on April 22 at Just Be Yoga, 2333 Boulevard Circle, Walnut Creek. This is a free event, but tickets are being sold as an RSVP. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-heartful-earth-day-celebration-with-live-music-from-empty-hands-music-tickets-44057100975>

8th Annual Lafayette Community Music Festival Saturday, April 28 at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street in Lafayette. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The show is modeled around Neil Young's famous Bridge School Benefits, with each musician or

band performing a 25-30 minute set of songs in a more "stripped down" acoustic format. Tickets are available at www.townhalltheatre.com: \$25 advance; \$30 at the door.

All are cordially invited for a first-time happening to attend Saint Mary's College Guild's Spring Concert, featuring a delightful celebration with pianist, professor of music at Saint Mary's College, Lino Rivera, D.M.A. He has been featured on radio and television broadcasts, and performed live in concerts and symphonies on three continents. The concert will run from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 28 at Saint Mary's College Soda Center. \$45 per person includes a delicious lunch, wine can be purchased.

SAGE (Students for the Advancement of Global Education) Club at Acalanes High School will be hosting its annual Benefit Concert from 7 to 9 p.m. on May 4 in the Performing Arts Center at Acalanes High School. The acts will feature students showcasing their talents in support of Trust in Education, an organization that promotes education, specifically women's, in Afghanistan.

Musicians In Concert (MIC) is having its inaugural fundraising event from 7 to 9 p.m. on Saturday May 5 at the Veterans Memorial Hall in Lafayette. The benefit will generate funds for educational scholarships and grants to assist young musicians and underfunded Bay Area music programs. The live performance will open with a world-class jazz set followed by a 90-minute tribute to the late great Bay Area performer Mic Gillette. Tickets are \$35 and are available at www.MusiciansInConcert.org.

THEATER

Saint Mary's College proudly presents "Impure Thoughts (without apology)," the College's latest collaboration with celebrated playwright Ken Prestinzi. The award-winning play is inspired by the true story of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, a 17th century brilliant poet and scholar who lived as a nun in Baroque New Spain (colonial Mexico). The production opens Thursday, April 26 for a one-weekend run in the intimate LeFevre Theatre at Saint Mary's College, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Tickets are available online at stmarys-ca.edu/impure-thoughts or at the box office. Show times and prices are online.

Orinda Intermediate School Bulldog Theater stages "All Shook Up Young@Part Edition," April 26 through April 28 at Orinda Intermediate School, 80 Ivy Drive. This musical production tells the story of an unexpected small town romance through classic rock and roll music that will have you jumping out of your blue suede shoes! Tickets are \$3-\$10. Visit www.showtix4u.com for show times and tickets. Tickets are also available at the door.

DVC Drama presents a new musical "Godspell" running May 4 through 20 at 321 Golf Club Rd., Pleasant Hill. A small group of people help Jesus tell different parables by using a wide variety of games, storytelling techniques, and a hefty dose of comic timing. An eclectic blend of songs, ranging in style from pop to vaudeville, is employed as the story of Jesus' life dances across the stage. The messages of kindness, tolerance, community, and love come vibrantly to life. Show times are at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and at 2:30 p.m. on Sundays. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or go to our website at www.dvcdrama.net

LECTURE & LITERATURE

The Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center presents an "Evening

with Mark Dubois, Environmental Activist" beginning at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 19 at 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, California. There will be a reception at 6 p.m., followed by a presentation by Mr. Dubois at 7 p.m. on "50 years protecting rivers and helping give a voice to the communities that depend on them." Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door. The event is free for students and \$5 for center members. Pre-register at www.ourpeacecenter.org. For more information call (925) 933-7850.

Orinda books presents "Sisters-in-Crime" with Simon Wood, Janet Dawson, Glenda Carroll and Wendy Hornsby at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 21 in a discussion of their latest mysteries: "Saving Grace" (Wood), "The Ghosts in Roomette Four" (Dawson), "Drop Dead Red" (Carroll), and "Number 7, Rue Jacob" (Hornsby). RSVP at (925) 254-7606.

Orinda Poet Laureate Reception at noon on Thursday, April 26 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Join us to welcome Orinda's very first Poet Laureate, Amy Alysia Glynn. We will celebrate with poetry readings and light refreshments. The inaugural Poet Laureate Program is presented by the Lamorinda Arts Council.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Engender Playgroup for gender variant kids and their parents. Join us for a spring activity and playtime from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 28 in Orinda. For location, please email Sandra at sandra@engendermow.org. For more information about the Engender organization, visit Engendermow.org.

Engender Playgroup for gender variant kids and their parents. Join us for a spring activity and playtime from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 28 in Orinda. For location, please email Sandra at sandra@engendermow.org. For more information about the Engender organization, visit Engendermow.org.

OTHER

Grand reopening celebration at Sanctuaire Spa in Lafayette (formerly Marilyn Monroe Spa) from 4 to 8 p.m. on April 18 at 3589 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Explore the spacious 2,000-square-foot spa equipped with a relaxation lounge, sauna and steam rooms, single and couple treatment rooms, a hair and blow dry salon, and pedicure and manicure room. The first 70 attendees will receive a free swag bag from Jan Marini Skin Research.

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church invites you to "Remember, Renew and Refill—a Journey Through Grief," a workshop and luncheon to honor our lost loved ones from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 21. The event is free to high school and adult participants, however please RSVP by April 18 online at mvpc.today.org or by calling Colleen Giovanni: (925) 376-4800 x285. 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga.

Lamorinda Music in Lafayette is hosting a restring and recycle event Saturday, April 21 to celebrate Earth Month. Musicians can bring in their old strings for recycling, as well as get their electric or acoustic guitars restrung with new strings, furnished by D'Addario, for free. Event details about the instrument string recycling program can be found: <http://www.terracycle.com/en-US/brigades/daddario-playback>

... continued on next page

Please submit events:
calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com

Broadway Icon Andrea McArdle at 'Live at the Orinda Theatre' May 3

By Derek Zemrak

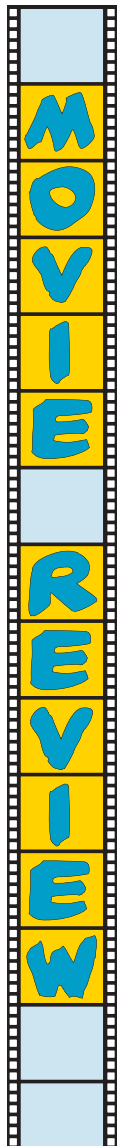


Photo provided

Andrea McArdle rocketed to stardom as Broadway's original "Annie," for which she was the youngest performer ever nominated for the Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical, winning both the Theatre World and Outer Critics' Circle awards for her performance. On Broadway she originated the roles of Ashley in "Starlight Express" and Margy in "State Fair" and was seen as Belle in "Beauty and the Beast" and as Fantine in "Les Miserables." On tour she starred in "Jerry's Girls," "Les Miserables" as

Eponine, "The Wizard of Oz," "Cabaret" and "Peter Pan." McArdle has performed in concert halls from Carnegie Hall to the best showrooms in Las Vegas to the Metropolitan Opera House in New York as well as The White House.

McArdle's show, "'70s and Sunny," is a look at the music of the '70s. The voice that helped define a decade pays tribute to the music that helped define her as an artist and singer. From Broadway to Billy Joel, from disco to Motown, McArdle explores her musical roots and reveals how the girl who danced at Studio 54 evolved into the woman and show business legend she is today. McArdle's cabaret show has received rave reviews across the country.

"We are excited and proud to bring Andrea McArdle to the stunning Orinda Theatre for her first Bay Area appearance in five years," said producer Michal Williams. "The audience will be blown away by Andrea's voice."

Every performance at the Live at the Orinda is different, but the one thing that each show has had in common is the creation of an amazing evening.

The Live at the Orinda Concert Series brings the best of Broadway, jazz and pop artists to the historic Orinda Theatre. This inaugural season has brought sold-out shows by Tony winner John Lloyd Young ("Jersey Boys"), Golden Globe winner Amanda McBroom ("The Rose"), and cabaret/jazz star Amanda King.

Tickets for Live at the Orinda Concert Series sell out fast, so buy your tickets online at www.lamorindatheatre.com or at the Orinda Theatre box office.

Not to be missed

OTHER ... continued

On Saturday, April 21 come and enjoy a walk in the woods with a forester! On behalf of the Bay Area Chapter of the California Society of American Foresters, you're invited to a day at the University of California's Russell Research Station in the hills north of Lafayette (4927 Happy Valley Road, Lafayette). Come anytime, the Station will be open from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. There will be demonstrations by the student's Logging Sports Team and a hike through the forest led by a forester. Learn what a forester does. Learn about the trees, the forest, the wildlife, and the plants.

Mountain Shadow Film Society presents "Arrangiarsi: Pizza...And the Art of Living" at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 21 at Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N. Broadway St, Walnut Creek. The filmmaker, Marco Troncone, will be present to introduce the film and take questions. \$12 admission. <http://mountainshadow.org>

The Orinda Community Foundation in partnership with the City of Orinda will be holding its 10th Anniversary Orinda Action Day from 9:30 a.m. to noon on April 21 at the Orinda Library and Community Center. All ages and community groups are welcome to participate in a variety of projects to clean parks, trails, walkways and creeks, and more. The public can sign up to become part of a team at www.OrindaFoundation.org under the volunteer tab.

Wildlife Earth Day at Wagner Ranch from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Orinda on Sunday, April 22. Several community organizations will also present earth-friendly endeavors. Cynthia Brian will be autographing her newest book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener" as well as talking about trees, flowers, and other botanicals. For more information on this nature-lover's event organized by the naturalist guru, Toris Jaeger, visit <https://fwrna.org/wildlife/>.

Come to the Friends of the Moraga Library's annual spring book sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on April 28 for some of the biggest bargains in Lamorinda. Books, CDs and DVDs of every category will be sold at prices ranging from 25 cents to \$3. Beginning at 1 p.m. a bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with all the books it can hold. All proceeds from the sale go to fund library materials and programs, in addition to paying for staffing of the library's Sunday hours. The sale will be held at the Moraga Library

1500 St. Mary's Road.

Sam and Susan Sperry will be honored as the 2018 Moraga Citizens of the year at a celebration dinner 6 to 9 p.m. on April 28 at St Mary's College Soda Center. This fun event is a great opportunity for socializing over drinks and a tasty dinner with your Moraga neighbors, many of whom are community volunteers, as well as some of the past year's winners and community and county leaders. You may purchase tickets at www.moragachamber.org. Cost is \$55.

The annual Wine and Dine tour will be happening this year from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 1 in and around Theatre Square in Orinda. The very fun event includes sampling foods from new and long standing restaurants, a free glass of wine from the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association, live music with Lamorinda Idols, Sunjams, school groups and more. Tickets are \$40 at OrindaChamber.org, or, to support Orinda schools at OrindaEFO.org.

Humanities West Fireside Chat at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1 at the Orinda Library. Join George Hammond of Humanities West for a fireside chat exploring the historical lives and influence of The Borgias. More information about Humanities West and other events at www.humanitieswest.net.

The Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) will hold its 43rd annual Spring House Tour and Garden Reception from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 6. This year's house tour takes us to Berkeley Woods, the bucolic hilltop tract adjoining Tilden Regional Park. Tour map, illustrated guidebook, and refreshments will be provided. General admission \$45; BAHA members \$35. For tour information and reservations, visit the BAHA website <http://berkeleyheritage.com>, email baha@berkeleyheritage.com, or call (510) 841-2242.

The 2018 Moraga Community Faire and Car Show will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 12 at the town's Rheem Valley Shopping Center - offering a wonderful opportunity for a "family fun day." Kid's Zone activities include pony rides, climbing wall, bounce house and basketball shoots. Grab a quick lunch at the food trucks, relax with a glass of local wine or beer and check out the over 70 amazing classic cars. Introduce yourself to over 50 local artists, business and organizations. Live entertainment

Not to be missed

will be presented all afternoon from the Saint Mary's Jazz Band to local Battle of the Bands winners. For more information, visit www.moragachamber.org/faire.

Taste of Lafayette 5:30 - 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 15 begins at the Bank of the West building with more than 20 restaurants participating for the stroll. A hosted wine and beer reception starts at 5:30 p.m. and the "stroll" begins at 6:30 p.m. when ticket holders head out at their own pace with friends to stop at any or all of the participating restaurants for sampling. Tickets available at www.lafayettechamber.org.

POLITICAL GATHERINGS

Lamorinda Republican Women Federated monthly luncheon from 10:15 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on April 19 at the Orinda Country Club. The speaker is Timothy Donnelly, who is a Republican Candidate running in the primary for Congressional District 8. He has served as an assemblyman in the California State Assembly and has written for Breitbart. Cost of event: luncheon and speaker \$31; speaker only \$15; speaker only student discount \$5. For information please contact Elsie Euing at ejewing@comcast.net.

GARDEN

Montelindo Garden Club March Meeting (third Friday of every month, September through May) will be at 9 a.m. Friday, April 20 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Presentation: The History of Mt. Diablo and its Open Space Preservation by Seth Adams, the Land Conservation Director at Save Mount Diablo. Since 1988, Adams has contributed to SMD's growth into a major force for conservation in the East Bay. Everyone is welcome.

The Lafayette Garden Club will hold its first garden tour in many years from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 12, at a series of five unique, private gardens in Lamorinda. The tour, Artful Gardens, also will include a pop-up market and a plant sale. The tour can give you good ideas of what you might want to do in your garden, to learn about new plants, and to have a fun day out with friends and family. The pop-up market, will offer a wide selection from local artisans featuring jewelry, ceramics, botanical art and specialty food items. The plant sale will include specimens propagated by club members. Tickets cost \$40 or \$35 each when four or more are purchased. lafayettegardenclub.com.



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Service Clubs Announcements



Breakfast, Friday mornings at 7:00 am at The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Check us out at www.lamorindasunrise.com or email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

April 20

"Operation Babylift" - BILL YALEY describes the rescue of 2,500 war-torn children from South Vietnam in 1975 to the U.S.

April 27

Our very own, **CLAIRE ROBERTS** shares her family history. The good, the bad and the...!

Join us, there's a project happening that needs you!

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

April 19:
Dave Baker coming; about Deer Hill development

April 26:
Bernie Rosner
A Holocaust Survivor

www.rotarylafayette.org
www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-Ca-197392963631366

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Events: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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Lamorinda Weekly

is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, CA 26,600 printed copies, delivered to homes & businesses in Lamorinda.

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School stories/events: storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Sport events/stories/pictures: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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A taco twist to the breakfast burrito

By Susie Iventosch



Breakfast tacos

Photo Susie Iventosch

My son and I love to have breakfast for dinner on occasion, and this dish is one that lends itself well to that. It's also a great meal for a Sunday brunch gathering. Breakfast burritos are all the rage, so why not breakfast tacos? This recipe has tons of flexibility, in that you can cook your eggs any way you like them, or you can even use egg whites or egg beaters. Also, you can choose bacon, sausage or no meat at all and add the grated cheese of your choice. And, finally, whether you like corn or flour tortillas, either work just fine.

I prefer eggs scrambled, and then I add grated cheese, finely chopped poblano peppers and sautéed onions to the eggs before cooking them. As a final touch, fresh salsa made from poblano peppers, jalapeños, diced fresh tomatoes and cilantro gives a little zing.

Hash browns go well in or out

of the taco as do refried beans. Actually, this is not so much a recipe, as it is a fun idea. You can literally serve up a smorgasbord of options and let your guests create their own, as they roll through the serving line!

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.





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For 6 Servings (2 tacos per person)

INGREDIENTS

Tacos

- 12 taco-sized flour or corn tortillas
- 2-3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 12 eggs (or equivalent)
- 2 Tbsp. butter (for cooking eggs)
- 1 cup grated mixed Mexican cheese, divided
- 1 poblano pepper
- 1 onion, chopped and sautéed
- 12 strips bacon, cooked, or
- 12 breakfast sausages, cooked and sliced
- 1 recipe salsa (below)
- Fresh sprigs of cilantro for garnish

Salsa

- 1 poblano pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, finely diced
- 6 tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- ½ bunch cilantro, leaves only, stems removed
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Mix all and store in refrigerator until ready to use.

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in pan and cook tortillas until heated through and beginning to brown, flip to other side. Fold in half and place on a baking sheet in a low-temperature oven, 200 F, until ready to serve. Meanwhile, cook bacon and/or sausage and keep warm in oven along with tortillas. When all of that is ready, start cooking the eggs with ¼ cup cheese, peppers and sautéed onions, and give the 5-minute warning to everyone. As soon as the eggs are cooked, place them in the serving line with the tortillas, breakfast meats, grated cheese and salsa and have everyone come and make their tacos exactly how they like them! Garnish with sprigs of cilantro.

You can find most of the recipes published in the Lamorinda Weekly on our website. Click Food tab.
www.lamorindaweekly.com/html2/food1.html

www.Lamorindaweekly.com
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 - MOFD firefighters share their passion for serving their hometowns
 - Lafayette has a new sheriff in town
 - Letters to the Editor
 - Lafayette crosses landowner allowed lot line revision
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Orinda's Restaurant Tour a feast for the senses on May 1

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo provided

Perfect for hungry locals or for foodies who fancy jumping off BART for a leisurely ramble through Orinda's Crossroads District in and around Theatre Square, sampling food and wine while being musically entertained, the 2018 Restaurant Tour, Wine & Dine, will be held Tuesday, May 1 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The popular annual event is organized by the Orinda Chamber of Commerce.

Patrons will check in at 51 Moraga Way, a shaded off-street area close to Peet's Coffee. On check in, each guest will receive a free glass of wine from Lamorinda

Winegrowers Association sponsored by PG&E. Appetizers will be provided at the check-in location by several local restaurants including Genuine Goodness. Entertainment will be provided by the Miramonte Jazz band at check-in, and another jazz group will perform near the fountain. Orinda Idol competitors will be singing across the street from Piccolo Napoli.

Patrons will receive tickets to sample food at 14 different restaurants just steps away. Participants include Casa Orinda, Fourth Bore, Cine Cuvee, Republic of Cake, and Taverna Pelligrini. Joining up this

year is Saffron Indian Restaurant and Bar, opening soon in the space formerly occupied by Magnolia. Saffron is a family-run business; the family had two restaurants on the East Coast before moving to Orinda.

If people want to support the Educational Foundation of Orinda, they can buy their tickets on the EFO website, and \$10 will go directly to the EFO. Tickets cost \$40, the same as last year, and can be purchased online at either www.orindachamber.org or www.orindaefo.org.

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Lamorinda boys lacrosse

By Jon Kingdon



Diego Jenab

Photo Gint Federas



Jake Landry

After a successful 2017 season, Acalanes boys lacrosse team continues to be a force with a 9-3 record and 5-0 in league play so far. Head coach Brent Ringwood has found much to appreciate about this team: “They are resilient and the kids have a strength that I did not know that they had. They have all been willing to put themselves in uncomfortable positions.”

With injuries to key players, midfielder Matt Mariani (knee) and leading scorer Colin Jeffries (ankle), Ringwood has been forced to use players at different positions than originally assigned: “We’re working through the injuries and asking players to fill different roles. Our younger players have been asked to do things sooner than we anticipated.”

The Don’s captains, Jake Landry, Fynn Chorak and Jeffries have taken on the role of leadership which has been crucial as the team has been forced to call upon the younger players to step up.

Joey Gladden and Nick Schirmer have played better than anticipated. With an inexperienced defense, the key to holding it all together is goalie Parker Henderson. Says Ringwood: “Parker is a great communicator. He talks to the defense and tells them where they should be. He makes some impossible saves. You really have to beat him. If you are nonchalant, Parker will make the stop.”

Besides Landry and Chorak, Reed Watson, Avery Howell and Jack Wickline have been very effective as a group on offense averaging 12 goals a game.

Ringwood is still looking for improvement down the stretch: “We have had to change our offense around due to the injuries and are still looking to find our rhythm offensively. We need to clear the ball better (getting the ball into the offensive side of the field) and improve our riding (forcing the other team to turn the ball over after a missed shot).”

This along with the potential return of Mariani and Jeffries from their injuries should go a long way to help the team enter the playoffs with great momentum.

After a three-year run with a 45-15 record, capped off by winning the NCS championship last

season, Campolindo graduated 12 seniors that were very much responsible for the success of those teams. With only one win (and a couple of one goal losses) so far this season, first year head coach Colin Knightly knew this year was going to be a challenge: “We have a whole new cast of characters playing roles that they are just learning but we are gaining experience. It is a rebuilding and regrouping year for us. We are building a long-term sustainable program. It’s exciting to have so many young guys getting experience on the varsity level that will help in the future.”

With only seven seniors on the team and asking nine sophomores and freshmen to step up, the team is still searching for its identity. Inexperienced teams are susceptible to committing turnovers and the Cougars have been particularly vulnerable in this area. Taking on the leadership role is senior Foster Jones on the field and vocally.

Without a JV team this year, the underclassmen have taken advantage of the opportunity to play more than anticipated. Says Knightly: “We have two freshmen playing key roles. Sam Rack has been a consistent scorer and Cam Reath has shown great potential on defense.”

With an injury to incumbent goalie, Brian Gross, junior Matt Gagan has been converted into a goalie. Says Knightly appreciatively: “Matt is growing as a goalie. He is really stepping up.”

Knightly is optimistic about the team’s potential in the near future: “As soon as we cut down our mis-

takes and play more confidently with the ball in our stick, teams will be afraid to play us and we should soon have some big wins. With our underclassmen getting such great experience, the future is bright for our team.”

Miramonte’s head coach Byron McGovern has a situation opposite to Campolindo, which graduated a great number of seniors last season. The Matadors, much improved from an 8-11 season in 2017, have a 7-2 record so far this year. Explains McGovern: “Last season we had three seniors and 12 juniors. We have been able to build off what we did last year. Plus, this year we have a JV team as well.”

McGovern appreciates the consistency Miramonte has shown this year with only one lopsided loss. Ironically McGovern took great satisfaction in a loss to Davis: “After being down 5-0, we fought back to only lose 9-7 to a good team on the road. This team really sticks together. The players pick each other up. They are a great group of friends off the field and they play like that on the field. It’s an extremely resilient group. They keep each other positive. I’m just trying to set up the system to work with what we already have.”

With the bulk of the team’s seniors on offense and a very young defense, Miramonte has come to rely heavily on senior goalie Diego Jenab who has committed to Colorado State next year. Jenab has been making as many as 16 saves a game, many in close victories. Says McGovern: “Diego has to be our MVP. He has carried us through some rough patches making the saves a goalie wouldn’t normally make. He is athletic and explosive to the ball. He covers the inside shots and makes the secondary saves after the initial stops. He commands our defense.”

The team starts two sophomores on defense, Jamie Richardson and Carson Essabhoy, both of whom have not been intimidated being starters. Says McGovern: “The way they play, you wouldn’t know they were sophomores.” Junior Jake Ortiz has filled many roles for Miramonte according to McGovern: “Jake is a top athlete and very aggressive. He is willing to play wherever he is needed.”

Leading the team on offense has been senior Sawyer Essabhoy (Carson’s older brother) and junior Charlie Hawkins. McGovern speaks highly of their skills: “Sawyer is the ultimate team player. He makes decisions to make the right pass and he leads the team in possessions. He is a great leader. Charlie has been a real force on offense.”

McGovern is still looking for improvement by the team’s offense as the season winds down: “We are looking to improve our face-off percentage and to not waste any possessions. We need to make it a team effort rather than just relying on our goalie making so many saves.”



Fynn Chorak

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Lamorinda girls lacrosse

By Jon Kingdon

In her second year as the head coach at Acalanes, Courtney Neff, an Acalanes graduate herself, has set a goal for her lacrosse team: "It's about having fun and growing as a team. That's my main priority, everyone enjoying the sport and happy to be on the team." An 11-3 record certainly facilitates the process.

Neff shares the credit for the success of this year's team with her assistants: "I have an attack mind and work with Mark Rurka in developing our offensive game plans and with Mary Doyle in developing our defensive game plans. I like to hear all their ideas."

Senior co-captains Susie Bush, Jenna Kisner and Katrina Lee are the leaders on a team that Neff feels has a great, natural chemistry: "Everyone gets along. The upper classmen have been so welcoming to the young players. Everyone brings something unique to the game."

The Dons have been averaging 13 goals per game. Leading the offense has been Bush, Lauren Westergren and Emma Workman.

On defense, Acalanes has been limiting their opponents to only 7 goals per game. Protecting the goalie so effectively has been Isabel Rurka, Coco Fellner, Cate Goodman and Lee.

Jamie Wendt has been a force in goal. Says Neff: "Jamie has stepped up her game to a whole new level this year having put in a lot of time. She is fearless and does everything in her power to stop the ball."

Neff appreciates that this is "a team of fighters. They want to win and are willing to do anything to win the game."

Still there is room for improvement, particularly in closing out games. Says Neff: "We have to work remaining calm in close games, playing the way we know how to play and to not get emotional in a tight game. It's easier to make a mistake when your mind is thinking about the score and not focusing on our game. Our losses have been learning experiences."

Despite losing two key players to injuries, Miramonte head coach Jackie Pelletier has led her team to a 12-3 record this season. Captain and defender Olivia Gittings, who will be playing at Occidental next year, suffered a knee injury prior to the season and sophomore midfielder, Boo Dewitt was also lost to a knee injury suffered last week. Working with assistant coach Michaela Guerrero, they have had to do much shuffling of the team's personnel to be so successful this season.

Pelletier appreciates the depth and character of her team: "We have a deep roster and the kids have stepped up. We play as a family and it's the closest team I've ever had. They all have each other's backs. The adversity has made the girls work harder."

When Pelletier refers to the team as a family, she means it literally as well as figuratively. The Matador roster has four sets of sisters – Alex and Alyson Eversole, Shaun and Perrie Lundstrom, Grace and Macy Mills and Sally and Kat Peterson. To carry the point further, freshman goalie Mina Jenab's older brother is the goalie on the boys' team.

With 11 freshmen and sophomores on the team, many of the seniors have taken on the leadership role necessary for a team with so many young players. Co-captain and four-year starter Perrie Lundstrom, a 4-year player, has been a force on the field. Says Pelletier: "Perrie is a workhorse. She provides the spark when needed. She will carry the team on her back, making defensive plays and finishing."



Susie Bush



Grace McCauley

Leading the defense is Maisey Mills, the team's defensive quarterback who Pelletier describes as both "tenacious and strong." Freshman Libby Hawkins has been effective in filling in for the injured Olivia Gittings with toughness and tenacity. Despite being lost for the season, Gittings has not forfeited her role as a leader says Pelletier: "Olivia is at every practice helping out with the goalies and the defense. She is a special person who really cares for the team."

The goalie position utilizes two players: senior Brianna Fick and freshman Mina Janab. "Our goal play is coming together," says Pelletier. "They work together very well pushing each other in practice." Goalie coach Mike Gittings (Olivia's father) gets much of the credit for the play of Fick and Jenab, holding their opponents to an average of 8 goals per game.

On offense, senior attacker, Frankie Veverka has been a force, utilizing her ability to play several positions. When Dewitt went down with her injury, freshman attacker Alex Eversole became the starter and despite her youth, has

brought lot of toughness to the field. Pelletier is particularly excited at the ability displayed by freshman Emerson Bohlig: "She is the fastest player I have ever coached. She is very young and is going to be great as she develops."

Pelletier still sees room for improvement by "just getting the young players more field time."

Coming off a championship 2017 season, Campolindo head coach Jess Mucci has not found similar success this season. Even with a mature team of 14 seniors and juniors, the Cougars bring only a 7-5 record into the heart of the season though a 4-1 record in league play should still lead to the playoffs.

The Cougars have been scoring 15 goals per game and giving up 9 goals per game, the numbers somewhat inflated with league wins over Clayton Valley (20-0), Las Lomas (16-5), Northgate (14-1) and Ygnacio Valley (22-0).

With a nonleague record of 3-4, the tougher competition should provide Campolindo with valuable experience once out of league play if they are able to make it to the NCS playoffs.

DAL lacrosse teams participate in league championship series

By Jon Kingdon

For the first time, the Diablo Athletic League boys and girls lacrosse teams are going to participate in a league championship series. Because of this change, the schools are no longer playing a home and home series with the schools in their league, playing each other school once in the regular season.

This change allows for each of the schools to play more non-league games with the option of playing against tougher or more equal opponents. At the conclusion of the season, the top four seeded teams will play against each other (1-4; 2-3) leading to a championship game. The ultimate winner will automatically go to the NCS playoffs though there will still be at large bids available.

With the Miramonte, Acalanes and Campolindo girls teams ranked 1-2-3 in league standings, and the Acalanes and Miramonte boys teams ranked 1 and 3 in league play, playoff anticipation is readily evident in Lamorinda.



Photo Gint Federas

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7-year-old signs Letter of Intent with Saint Mary's Soccer

By Jon Kingdon



Photo provided

There are numerous rules regarding signing a letter of intent to be on a college's athletic team. However, the one constant for every school is that the signee be at least a senior in high school.

The Saint Mary's soccer team clearly and proudly violated that rule April 4, having Quentin Rios sign his letter of intent in a room full of family, friends, well-wishers, the entire team and the press. Despite violating this rule so

openly, Saint Mary's has no worries about the NCAA placing the Gaels on a future suspension.

Quentin is a bright and dynamic 7-year-old who lives in Oakley, Calif. Thanks to the mutual efforts of Saint Mary's head coach Adam Cooper and Team IMPACT, Quentin is now officially a member of the Saint Mary's soccer team.

Prior to Quentin's third birthday, he was diagnosed with a

juvenile pilocytic astrocytomas brain tumor, undergoing 87 weeks of chemotherapy and soon after, 60 more weeks of chemotherapy. Quentin has chosen to wear number 87, signifying his completing the 87 weeks of treatment. Things have improved, says Quentin's mother, Mary: "This past year has been one of stability. The team has been phenomenal in welcoming him from day one to be a teammate."

Team IMPACT is a national nonprofit, whose purpose has been to connect children facing serious or chronic illnesses with college athletic teams. Since its inception in 2011, Team IMPACT has matched over 1,400 children with more than 500 colleges and universities.

Cooper was very enthusiastic about the latest addition to his team: "Quentin has a vibrant personality and a great smile. He is the epitome of charisma. He has strength and courage. We learn a lot from him. Several weeks ago, a few of the players and I drove out to Quentin's house and we were greeted with such warm smiles and enthusiasm. Not long after, our guys and Quentin were having this big nerf gun fight, were just hanging out."

As an official member of the team, Quentin will attend Gaels practices, games, team dinners, events and more surrounding the program.

Steve Dougherty, a midfielder on the Gaels soccer team, shares Cooper's feelings: "We can tell how strong Quentin is. We can learn so much from him on how he deals with adversity and push-

es through things."

In 2017, Team IMPACT opened a Northern California Regional office overseeing a number of Western states. Regional Director Kathleen Pedrosa says that the connection with the team helps young people like Quentin: "Their affiliation provides a motivation for them to push through their issues. They learn that 'My teammate has my back.' The children and the athletes form life-long bonds and life-changing outcomes."

Camile Triebesh, the regional program coordinator and a Campolindo graduate, has the responsibility of connecting the team with the children: "We reach out to the athletic departments and will go with whichever coach is most interested. Though Quentin lives in Oakley, he undergoes his treatments in Oakland which is much closer to Saint Mary's, so that is how we were able to connect Quentin with Saint Mary's."

Standing at the front of the room with Coach Cooper and his mother, Quentin was asked if he would like to say anything. He summed it all up very simply with two words: "Go Gaels!"

Lamorinda Rugby Team goes 3-0 in Ireland

Submitted by Doug Pearson



From left: Orinda residents Jen Tejada, Tighe Tejada, Eric Tejada after the New Ross RFC match.



The Lamorinda boys high school rugby team spent their spring break touring Ireland.

The 26 players, three coaches and about 20 parents traveled to Dublin, Cork, Galway and New Ross. Along the way

they experienced a sold-out 51,000-person stadium cheer on local Leinster RFC to a victory over Saracens RFC in the quarterfinal European Cup match, toured the Guinness Factory, kissed the Blarney Stone at Castle Blarney, played the

traditional Gaelic sports of Hurling and Gaelic Football, viewed the Cliffs Of Moher, and experienced the international rugby experiencing of competing on the field and then sharing a meal together after the match. The tour was championed

by Orinda resident Jen Tejada who was born in New Ross, Ireland. Her son Tighe started in the match against New Ross and in a made-for-TV moment scored the first try of the match.

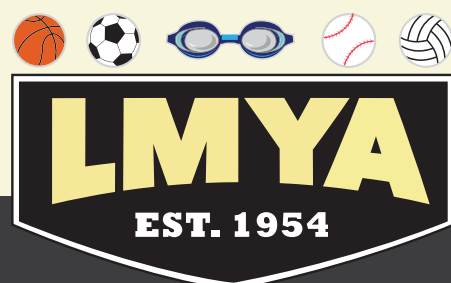
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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 12 Issue 4 Wednesday, April 18, 2018



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

...read on page D14

Bringing back the natives - plants and art in Lamorinda gardens and beyond

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

Each year, the Bringing Back the Natives organization opens amazing gardens planted mostly with native plants to inspire and delight. This year music and visual art is included in the presentations on Sunday, May 6. As usual the self-guided tour is free, though a contribution is appreciated.

For those new to native gardening the first stop must be Al Kyte's garden in Moraga. The decades-old garden is fully mature and Kyte is an endless source of knowledge and advice.

Several new gardens are added this year. Martha and Kerwin Lee's garden in Lafayette includes an attractive rain garden that collects rainwater from the roof and allows it to slowly seep into the soil, thus protecting Las Trampas Creek, which flows through the rear of the garden, from scouring. The rain garden also provides a deep drink to the garden's plants after the rains have stopped. There will be music in the garden from noon to 1 p.m. with a performance by the award-winning Stanley Middle School "Jazz Messengers" and art in the garden from the Coyote Brush Studios, which will sell handmade zipper pouches made of cloth with native plant designs, as well as native plant prints, cards, and more.

In Orinda, Elizabeth O'Shea and Richard Howard's garden has been conceived to attract wildlife. Forty species of birds, including quail, cedar waxwings, yellow-rumped warblers, acorn, downy, hairy, and Nuttall's woodpeckers, and Cooper's, red-shouldered, and red-tailed hawks, are frequently seen in or above the garden. Bluebirds and ash-throated fly catchers have used the nest boxes and acorn woodpeckers raised their young in a snag. Great horned owls swoop overhead. Bats flit by in the evening. A barn owl box waits hopefully for inhabitants. Butterflies, including pipevine swallowtail and monarch, flutter about. Foxes and skunks, king and garter snakes, and lizards pass through the garden.

There is also art in the garden with evocative and whimsical sculptures created from organic and reused materials nestled comfortably throughout. The large metal palm provides focus in the central area; Ozzy the ostrich rocks gently when birds light upon it. Admire and purchase Melissa Snider's beautiful illustrations of native plants, butterflies, moths, waterfowl and more. Native plants will be for sale.

Many more Lamorinda gardens and beyond are featured in the tour. For information and tickets, visit www.bringingbackthenatives.net.

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City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	12	\$700,000	\$2,015,000
MORAGA	5	\$1,120,000	\$1,800,000
ORINDA	10	\$965,000	\$3,325,000

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

- 3346 Betty Lane, \$801,000, 4 Bdrms, 2537 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 3-15-18
 630 Burton Drive, \$1,230,000, 3 Bdrms, 1567 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 3-9-18;
 Previous Sale: \$91,500, 12-01-76
 561 Francis Drive, \$866,000, 3 Bdrms, 1548 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 3-9-18;
 Previous Sale: \$794,000, 09-27-17
 3110 Gloria Terrace, \$1,230,000, 3 Bdrms, 1757 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 3-16-18;
 Previous Sale: \$812,000, 11-21-17
 3342 Helen Lane, \$1,105,000, 3 Bdrms, 1291 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 3-9-18;
 Previous Sale: \$870,000, 07-14-16
 1116 Hillcrest Drive, \$1,260,000, 3 Bdrms, 1637 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 3-9-18;
 Previous Sale: \$553,000, 07-12-00
 105 Marsha Place, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 1720 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 3-15-18;
 Previous Sale: \$818,000, 09-10-04
 1309 Martino Road, \$2,015,000, 5 Bdrms, 4114 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 3-16-18;
 Previous Sale: \$775,000, 03-25-97
 793 Moraga Road, \$700,000, 2 Bdrms, 1057 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 3-9-18
 681 Old Jonas Hill Road, \$1,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 2553 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 3-9-18
 1084 Sierra Vista Way, \$1,377,000, 3 Bdrms, 1713 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 3-13-18;
 Previous Sale: \$825,000, 10-27-04
 3328 Stage Coach Drive, \$1,875,000, 3 Bdrms, 3144 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 3-19-18;
 Previous Sale: \$670,000, 08-17-92

MORAGA

- 1170 Alta Mesa Drive, \$1,120,000, 3 Bdrms, 1954 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 3-15-18;
 Previous Sale: \$475,000, 08-25-00
 415 Belfair Place, \$1,780,000, 4 Bdrms, 2774 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 3-9-18
 714 Camino Ricardo, \$1,215,000, 3 Bdrms, 1546 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 3-15-18;
 Previous Sale: \$380,000, 09-29-94
 1206 Rimer Drive, \$1,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 3228 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-16-18;
 Previous Sale: \$884,000, 06-21-02
 20 Tia Place, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1910 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 3-16-18

... continued on page D12

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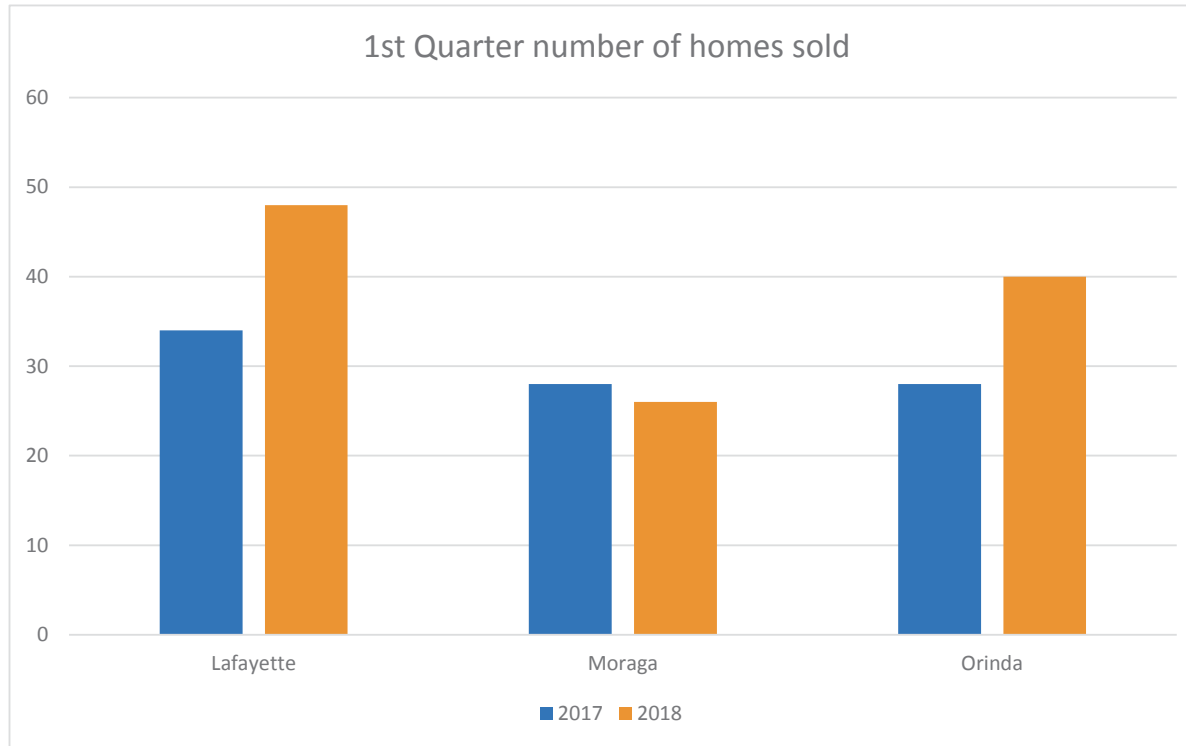


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The real estate quarter in review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T



The first quarter of 2018 showed a continued fast pace in activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate. Supply remains low, so the resulting sales quantities remain low. The average sales price continues to increase in Orinda and Moraga but not in Lafayette, versus this time last year. The days on market remain short and the homes that have multiple offers are increasing.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from Jan. 1 through March 31, 48 single-family homes closed in Lafayette, up from 34 that closed in the same quarter of 2017. Sales prices ranged from \$675,000 to \$3.6 million and the average number of days on market was 13. The average sales price was \$1,469,744, which was the lowest since 2015 when it was \$1,411,281. In the year ago first quarter it was \$1,622,848 and in 2016 \$1,570,712.

This more reflects the first quarter closings of lower priced homes versus a downturn in average values.

In Moraga the number of single-family closings was at 26, similar to the 28 in 2017 and 20 in the first quarter of 2016. Prices so far this year ranged from \$890,000 to \$2.55 million. The average sale price was \$1,534,007, the highest it has been in a first quarter

ever. A year ago it was \$1,381,452, and in 1Q2016 it was \$1,278,575. In 1Q2015 it was \$1,195,451. The average marketing time was 16 days ... far below the 36 days of a year ago.

This was the first time in recent years that the aver-

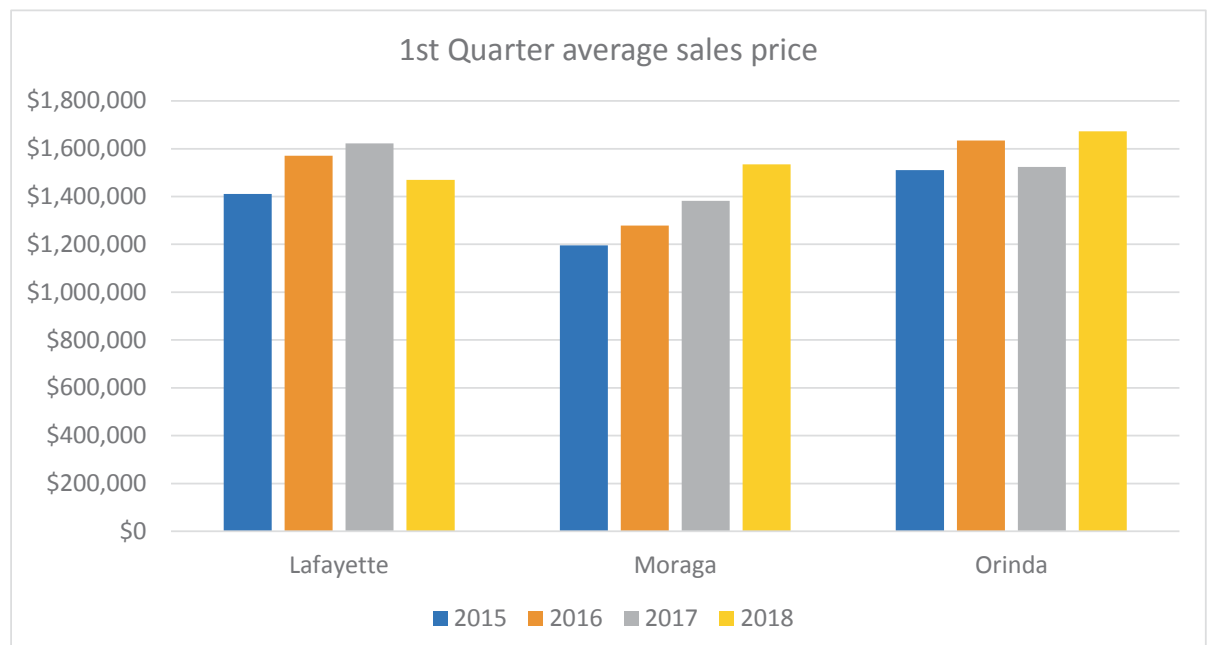
age sales price was higher in Moraga than Lafayette.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings was 40; a year ago it was 28. Sales prices ranged from \$850,000 to \$4 million with an average price of \$1,673,088. In 2017 it was \$1,523,767. In the 2016 first quarter it was \$1,634,327. In 2015 it was \$1,511,044. It took an average of 43 days on the market to sell a home in Orinda where a year ago it took 24 days.

In the first quarter of 2018, Lafayette homes sold at an average of \$683.73 per square foot, up from \$645.43 per square foot up in 2017 and from \$615.46 per square foot in 2016. Moraga came in at \$607.64, about a 10 percent increase from 1Q2017 when it was \$552.98 per square foot. Orinda was consistent at \$616.89, compared with \$625.23 in the first quarter of 2017 and up from \$581.86 in 2016.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had three closings reported to the MLS and all were resales. They ranged from \$875,000 to \$2.4 million. Moraga had 13 ranging from \$360,000 to \$1.12 million with the highest one being on Alta Mesa. Orinda had one – on Village Gate Road that traded at \$1.1 million.

As of April 9, there were 95 homes under contract per the MLS in the three combined communities (a year ago there were also 95) with asking prices of \$419,000 to \$16.5 million. ... continued on next



Inventory is at 95 as of April 9, versus 96 on the same date a year ago.

There are 34 Lafayette properties currently on the market versus 39 properties on the market in April last year. Asking prices in Lafayette currently range from \$741,946 to \$5.695 million. In Moraga, buyers have their choice of 18 homes, up from 16 homes at this time in 2017.

In Orinda there are 43 homes on the market. A year ago there were 42. The list prices range from \$749,000 to \$4.75 million.

There is only one distressed (bank-owned or a short sale) sale available in Lamorinda.

As is the case nearly every quarter, the most active price range is in the more “affordable” price ranges. At the high end, 21 homes sold above \$2 million in the three communities combined. A year ago there were 13. There are 43 currently available above this amount in Lamorinda.

Interest rates have risen slightly but this has not seemed to slow the migration of families to the area. Lamorinda continues to be attractive and many corporations continue to relocate families both into and out of the area. The real estate markets in San Francisco, the Peninsula, and the other side of the hill in Oakland, Berkeley and Piedmont have been even more active, so there has been some spillover effect where buyers are willing to make longer commutes in order to find more “affordable housing.” Of course, Lamorinda and affordable housing are seldom mentioned in the same breath.

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. We also are seeing more homes listed well below true values so that it may encourage bidding wars that might generate a higher overall sales price. In the first quarter of this year many homes have had multiple offers and have sold at or above the list price.

Of the 48 single-family home sales that closed in Lafayette in the first quarter of 2018, 40 sold at or above the list price. In Moraga, 17 of the 26 sales were at or above the asking price and in Orinda, 31 of the 40 sold at or above the final listing price. In the detached home category in the first quarter of 2018, the average sale price in Lafayette was 105.75 percent of the asking price. In Moraga it was 102.6 percent and in Orinda it was 102.8 percent of the final asking price.

This will typically happen when a house goes pending in the first two weeks on the market. Of the 95 currently pending sales in the three Lamorinda communities combined, 54 went pending in 21 days or less. The actual average days on the market would be markedly lower, but many agents are setting up marketing plans where they hold the home open to the public and to brokers and follow with an offer date in a week or so after exposing the property to the market – pointing to a high likelihood of a continued trend in homes selling above the asking price.



148 Donald Drive, Moraga
Listed for \$1,495,000
Sold for \$1,575,000

Multiple, multiples in Moraga



351 Calle La Mesa, Moraga
Listed for \$1,450,000
Sold for \$1,605,000

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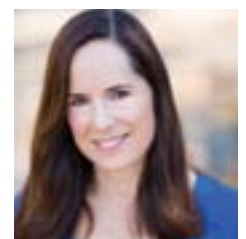
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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

ORINDA

- 69 Barbara Road, \$1,238,000, 3 Bdrms, 2216 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 3-14-18;
Previous Sale: \$706,500, 08-15-03
- 22 Coffee Berry Lane, \$2,095,000, 4 Bdrms, 3461 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 3-15-18;
Previous Sale: \$24,440,000, 12-30-15
- 115 Coral Drive, \$1,310,500, 3 Bdrms, 1340 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 3-15-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 07-13-15
- 9 Las Mesas Path, \$965,000, 3 Bdrms, 1144 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 3-13-18;
Previous Sale: \$920,000, 11-15-17
- 11 Los Cerros, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2959 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 3-19-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,187,000, 04-02-14
- 119 Melody Lane, \$3,325,000, 5 Bdrms, 6844 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 3-14-18
- 726 Miner Road, \$1,995,000, 4 Bdrms, 3109 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-16-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,001,000, 09-12-00
- 14 St. Stephens Drive, \$1,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 3808 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 3-19-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,155,000, 04-13-06
- 24 Warford Terrace, \$2,365,000, 3 Bdrms, 2760 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-12-18;
Previous Sale: \$395,500, 04-27-94
- 18 Wilder Road, \$2,330,000, 4 Bdrms, 3940 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 3-15-18



959 4th Street, Lafayette | Offered at \$1,095,000

New Listing! Old world charm meets new world amenities in the sought after trail neighborhood. This 1938 home has tons of character, updated with quality finishes and has been lovingly maintained. Step inside to an open living/dining/kitchen combination with vaulted beamed ceilings, large fireplace, and french doors to the patio and yard. The home offers 3 bedrooms, plus an office nook, and 2 full bathrooms. The renovated 2-car garage even has HVAC, and could be a perfect artist studio! Located in a private and serene creekside setting with low maintenance landscaping, just minutes to Downtown Lafayette, BART, and top schools.

959FourthStreet.com



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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

The language of trees

By Cynthia Brian

"The ax forgets, the tree remembers." African Proverb



A flowering cherry thrives next to California redwoods and golden poppies.

Photo Cynthia Brian

Do trees have feelings? Do they communicate with one another? As I watch the leaves unfurl and the blossoms bursting on the trees in my landscape, I have a sense that my trees are talking and communing with one another. With the celebration of Earth Day on the horizon, this was an opportune moment to research the language of trees.

At the insistence of his wife, German forester Peter Wohleben authored an accidental bestseller, "The

Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate." The two of them live in a cabin in the remote village of Hummel where Peter manages a nature reserve. He has become a spokesman of sorts for protecting and respecting the rights of trees.

Although trees don't form words as humans do, they do communicate, and are more alert, sophisticated, and social than we expected. Trees form alliances with other trees of both their own species and others

to survive and thrive. They connect via underground fungal mycorrhizal networks, a symbiotic relationship between tree roots and fungi. As they scavenge for nitrogen, phosphorus, and other nutrients, the fungi consume 30 percent of the sugar photosynthesized from sunlight then feed the trees. This fungal internet of thin threads known as mycelium can also transport toxins to keep competing plants from establishing nearby. Eucalyptus and sycamore commonly exhibit this behavior. Biologists have termed fungi-to-tree communication the "wood wide web," showcasing how interconnected and interdependent nature is.

Using pheromones and scent signals, trees also talk through the air. Research was done several years ago with acacias on the savannas of Africa. When giraffes began chewing on the leaves of the thorny acacia, the tree sensed the wound sending a distress signal in the form of ethylene gas to neighboring acacias. The trees receiving the message of imminent danger pumped quantities of tannins into their leaves, which can kill an herbivore.

Trees differentiate between an animal attack and a human cutting a limb. When a branch breaks or is sawed off, the tree sends chemicals to heal the wound. And trees remember.

Trees also have a sense of smell and taste. When an elm or pine is attacked by leaf-eating caterpillars, the affected trees detect the saliva. Pheromones are released to attract parasitic wasps. The wasps lay eggs inside the caterpillars, and the wasp larvae eat the caterpillars from the inside out.

Dr. Suzanne Simard, a forest ecologist with the University of British Columbia is renowned for her extensive scientific research into mycorrhizal networks and "hub trees" or "mother trees" as she prefers to call the biggest, oldest forest trees. Mother trees are not necessarily female but they do have the most fungal connections to nurture and support the saplings. Their deep roots suck up water and send it to fellow trees along with other nutrients and distress warnings. Her lab studies found that defense signals traveled between a diversity of trees within six hours. Not all scientists agree with Simard and Wohleben that trees are sentient beings.

... continued on page D16

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

The language of trees

... continued from page D14



A beautiful birdhouse nestled next to the heavenly bamboo attracts residents for spring.



Loquat fruit and wisteria form a bond.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Several scientists have countered that plants and trees do not possess intelligence and are instead genetically programmed by natural selection to do a job automatically.

Being the nature aficionado that I am, I vote for team Simard and Wohleben. Over the past few years I've been carefully studying my hillside pine trees as they twist to be closer to each other. Although each tree was originally planted to give a wide berth for each

canopy to grow straight and tall in an effort to reach optimum sunlight, as the trees matured they tended to gravitate toward one another, mingling their branches. The pine that was planted furthest away from its siblings actually lurched sideways forming an arch until its branches touched the closest pine. I can't help but think that this small group considers itself a forest family or at least very dear friends. When my "mother" Japanese maple leafs out, the other two develop their

leaves within two days. My fruit trees of the same species always bloom together as if on orchestral cue. The willows in the creek appear to be supporting the oaks and bays with a communal sharing of resources.

Simard detects a spiritual expression in the forest and Wohleben has been accused of being a tree hugger, although he states that he doesn't believe trees respond to human hugs.

... continued on next page





The Japanese maples show their leaves as the freesia and woodland hyacinth fill the landscape surrounding the green grass.

Photo Cynthia Brian

We do know for certain that trees provide beauty while cleaning the air, combating climate change, and absorbing CO₂. They provide oxygen, keep us cool, prevent erosion, supply us with food, offer playtime for kids, and help us heal faster. Trees furnish us with wood for homes, furniture, and warmth while allowing wildlife to flourish and reside in their branches. An

area without trees feels arid, vulnerable and ugly.

Trees are our allies and they are definitely talking to us. Clear cutting and climate change will kill our trees and our forests. We need to plant trees to capture carbon and encourage kids of all ages to climb big trees. We need to acknowledge that global warming is real and that our trees are desperately warning us of

the disasters to come if we don't create a movement for change. We need to listen to our vegetation as their memories are living, long, and lasting.

We are all one interdependent, interconnected community. Stop. Look. Listen. Learn the language of trees and celebrate Earth Day with me.

... continued on next page



Cynthia Brian's mid-month gardening guide for April

- **VISIT** Wildlife Earth Day at Wagner Ranch in Orinda on Sunday, April 22 from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Several community organizations will also present earth-friendly endeavors. I will be autographing my newest book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener" as well as talking about trees, flowers, and other botanicals. For more information on this nature-lover's event organized by the naturalist guru, Toris Jaeger, visit <https://fwrna.org/wildlifefest/>.
- **ENJOY** the lilacs and wisteria in full bloom.
- **WATCH** the leaves unfurl on your deciduous trees and become more aware of how different species of trees support one another.
- **REMOVE** old foliage around the new growth of perennials.
- **PREVENT** disease and rotting by keeping mulch several inches away from stems of plants and shrubs.
- **CREATE** a habitat for birds that prefer staying close to the ground by making a small pile of twigs and clippings in your side yard. You'll attract white-throated sparrows and dark-eyed juncos.
- **ADD** a clean birdhouse to your landscape for birds to make their nests. You'll be the beneficiary of joyful tweets and twerps.
- **UTILIZE** the monthly gardening tips in the book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener" available with free seeds, herbs, and more from <http://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>.
- **FERTILIZE** fruit trees with a high nitrogen organic fertilizer. Best time is right before the bud break, although trees that need food can be fertilized through June. Don't fertilize in summer or fall.
- **PICK** tulips for indoor vases.
- **BUY** discounted baseball tickets to the June 15 Oakland A's versus Los Angeles Angels directly at <https://groupmatics.events/event/Bestar> with a portion of proceeds benefitting the 501 c3 charity, Be the Star You Are® <http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org>
- **SCATTER** pollinator friendly wild flower seeds to celebrate Earth Day.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



This pine tree is stretching to be with its other pine family of trees creating an arch.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Blue, purple pink, white, and green are all part of one hydrangea.



A look inside the face of a yellow tulip!



Pretty in pink, Cynthia Brian loves her purple African daisies.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, 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 Are1® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at www.StarStyleRadio.com.

Buy a copy of the new book, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store.

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71 Camino Don Miguel
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\$1,525,000

ORINDA



New Listing

24 Camino Sobrante
Luxury appointments w/ comfortable charm! 4 Bed/2 Bath, remodeled kitchen & delightful outdoor living.

\$1,565,000

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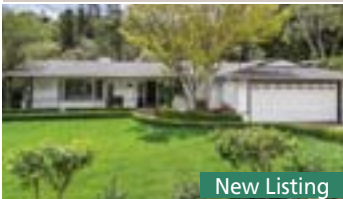


New Listing

188 Hall Drive
Spacious, sun-filled home on private acre lot. Walls of windows! Charming patio & lawn. Enjoy top schools.

\$1,695,000

ORINDA

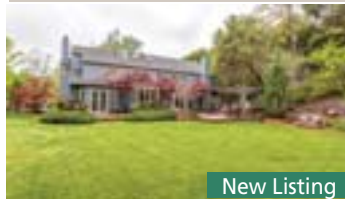


New Listing

112 Sleepy Hollow Lane
Sleepy Hollow Splendor! Gorgeous single story with stunning backyard. 5Bed/2.5 Bath/3166 sq.ft.

\$2,550,000

ORINDA

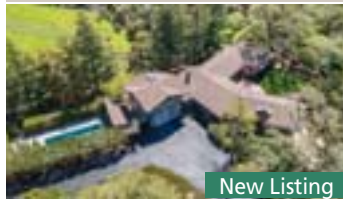


New Listing

14 Valley Court
Stunning custom built 3950 sq.ft. home. Gorgeous ½ acre private knoll. Walk to Glorietta Elementary, Swim/Tennis.

\$2,595,000

ORINDA

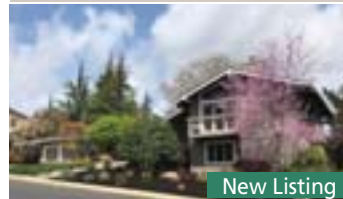


New Listing

2 Modoc Road
Enchanting, private 8.9 acre Orinda estate. +/- 3500 sq ft/ 5+ Bed/4.5 Bath with 930 SqFt detached barn.

\$3,195,000

MORAGA

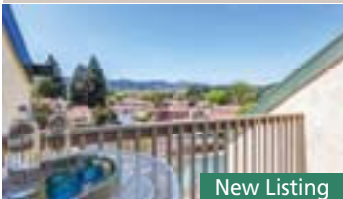


New Listing

501 Fernwood Drive
Turnkey Rheem Valley Manor 5bd/2.5ba 2,757 sq.ft. executive rancher with level lawn, pool and views.

Call For Price

MORAGA

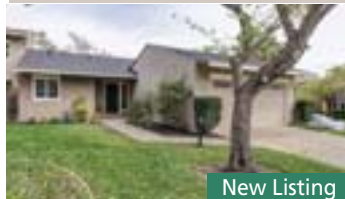


New Listing

1043 Alta Mesa Drive
Fully updated town home with modern flair. Vaulted ceilings, attached garage. Bonus office in Master Suite

\$865,000

MORAGA



New Listing

2 Baltusrol Street
Favorite Single-Level Plan 2 in MCC. Updated throughout- kitchen & baths, new roof, & floors!

\$925,000

MORAGA



New Listing

56 Sullivan Drive
Gorgeous, updated with spectacular yard. 5Bed/ 3Baths, beautiful kitchen, separate outdoor bonus office.

\$1,625,000

LAFAYETTE

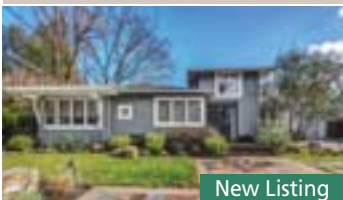


Coming Soon

3519 S. Silver Springs Road
Classic rancher in coveted Silver Springs neighborhood.

Call For Price

LAFAYETTE

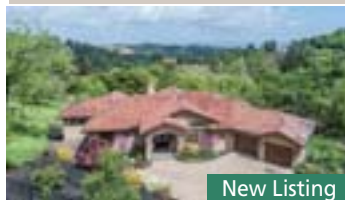


New Listing

860 Broadmoor Court
Truly special one level living. 5Beds/3.5Baths, modern kitchen, fabulous backyard, bonus in-law/ nanny unit!

\$2,479,000

LAFAYETTE

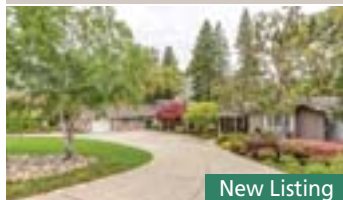


New Listing

1740 Toyon Road
Modern Mediterranean Elegance. 5 bed, 4 .5 bath, 4,306 sqft. Incredible views& open floor plan for entertaining.

\$2,499,000

LAFAYETTE

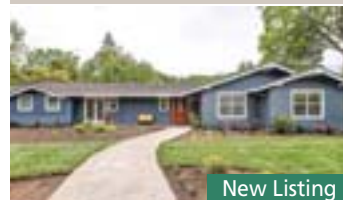


New Listing

3512 S. Silver Springs Road
Fabulous home in coveted Silver Springs neighborhood. 6+ Bed/4 Bath. Indoor/Outdoor living.

\$2,750,000

ALAMO



New Listing

21 Gran Via
Amazing home and location! 5 Bed/4.5 Bath updated ranch. Park like lot with pool, sport court, patio.

\$1,995,000

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