



### Fire Districts

#### Public Meetings

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District** Board of Directors  
 Wednesday, June 20, 7 p.m.  
 Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)

**ConFire** Board of Directors  
 Tuesday, July 10, 1:30 p.m.  
 Board Chamber room 107, Administration Building, 651 Pine St., Martinez  
 For meeting times and agendas, visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

## MOFD Station 43 finally germinates



The contractor drilled and poured 36 reinforced concrete piers in May, each pier 20 feet deep and 2 feet wide. In this June photo, workers were placing reinforcing bars – rebar – along the foundation. Next up comes the pouring of the slab.

“Everything is going according to plan and to schedule,” Fire Chief Dave Winnacker said. “The team is executing well, and we look to move in by the spring of next year.”

– N. Marnell

## Time is running out to remove your problem vegetation

By Nick Marnell



Firefighters put out a 5-acre brush fire behind a residence on La Salle Drive in Moraga on June 8. No structures were damaged and there were no injuries. The fire may have been caused by a person using a weed eater in the tall, dry grass. “Residents are reminded not to operate power equipment in dry grass during the heat of the day. It’s safest to wait for high humidity in the early morning hours to cut grass,” said Dennis Rein of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District weed abatement deadline hits June 15, and the district plans to increase the number of property inspections the week following the compliance date.

“The board authorized me to

hire four more code enforcement personnel, and we will be out in full force this year to really enforce the ordinances,” said Kathy Leonard, district fire marshal.

Heavy rains this fall and winter led to an excessive growth of

plants and grasses, which turned from green to brown in very short order, providing plenty of fuel for vegetation fires once the summer heat settles in. And the heat arrived early this year. In the 95-degree temperatures of June 2, Contra

Costa County Fire Protection District crews put out five fires, including a 23-acre vegetation fire – and none of those fires even occurred in Lafayette, the area of the district rated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Moraga and Orinda properties also escaped without major fire damage from the early-season heat wave.

But a long, hot fire season lies ahead. MOFD stresses that all property owners share the responsibility to provide a fire safe environment and maintain their properties free of exterior fire hazards throughout the fire season.

“If properties are inspected and found to be noncompliant, our staff will follow a legal process of notices, which can result in the district contracting to have the work done and a lien placed on the property to recover our costs,” the district states on its website. Violations only occur if the required work is not completed by the June 15 deadline.

“It’s not fair to the majority of the folks who take care of their properties,” Leonard said of those in noncompliance. “We will be out to make sure that everybody does their part.”

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### Clarification

In our May 30 article, “Chief praises firefighters for improved MOFD turnout time,” some readers felt too much credit was attributed to management for district performance improvements, and not enough credit was given to labor. Firefighting is an intensely collaborative profession, requiring contributions from every member of the organization, and the chief wished to stress that district performance would not have improved without the consistently solid work of the rank and file.

## Orinda Starlight Village Players 35th season opens in the park

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The production ran for 774 performances in London’s West End starting in 1954.

Dave Freeman’s “Kindly Keep It Covered” will run Fridays and Saturdays from July 20 to Aug. 11, with a matinee on Sunday, July 29 and an 8 p.m. performance on Thursday, Aug. 2.

A fast, frantic farce, the play focuses on Roland Dickerby, who runs a health farm with his wife Julia, bought with the proceeds of a hefty insurance payout on the supposed demise of Julia’s

first husband, Sidney. Sidney has decided to resurrect himself and turns up at the farm, just as Vanessa, the wife of Roland’s ex-boss from the Kindly Mutual, checks in for a visit.

From Sept. 7-29, the play will be P.G. Wodehouse’s “Good Morning, Bill.” There will be an 8 p.m. performance on Thursday, Sept. 27 and a 4 p.m. matinee on Sunday, Sept. 23. A vacation in Sussex leads to romantic complications for the main character, Bill Paradene. The play is by the author of the famous Jeeves sto-

ries.

ORSVP President Geotty Chapple reminds fans that ORSVP is strictly volunteer and the group receives no civic funding. Ticket sales, program ads, and concessions go to pay for the fees for the use of the stage, as well as publisher’s charges of between \$75 and \$100 per performance. The cost of lumber, fasteners and paint run well over \$1,000, and other props are required. Therefore the group is pleased to accept any donations of cash or materials.

## Orinda Library Bond passes easily

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Last February the city council unanimously agreed to a compromise on the parcel tax to put a straight \$30 per year increase on the ballot, but without automatic hikes to keep up with inflation, which had been considered but fared badly in a public opinion poll.

The vote brings the library parcel tax up to \$69 per year for each property subject to the tax. At that level, the library is expected to be able to continue to maintain the 17-year-old library building for another seven years before having to go back and ask the public for another increase.

With the increase, the library will continue to provide the extended hours currently enjoyed by Orindans. Without it, hours would have had to be cut. Contra Costa County only funds 35 hours per week; the additional 25 hours per week that the library remains open are funded by the parcel tax.

The calculations for the tax were based on the assumption that operating expenses will increase by 3 percent and utility costs will increase by 4 percent annually. A maintenance reserve funded at a level of \$100,000 per year was also counted.

Library Manager Sierra Campagna was very happy with the vote. “I’m really pleased that the Orinda Library will continue to stay open seven days a week and be able to provide the same level of service to the community,” she said. “It’s so important for everyone in our community to feel that there is a place where they can enjoy free cultural and educational programs and have a safe and pleasant space for doing work, reading, exploring new ideas and studying. It feels great to know that Orinda residents value the resources that the library provides.”

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