

# Lamorinda

WEEKLY

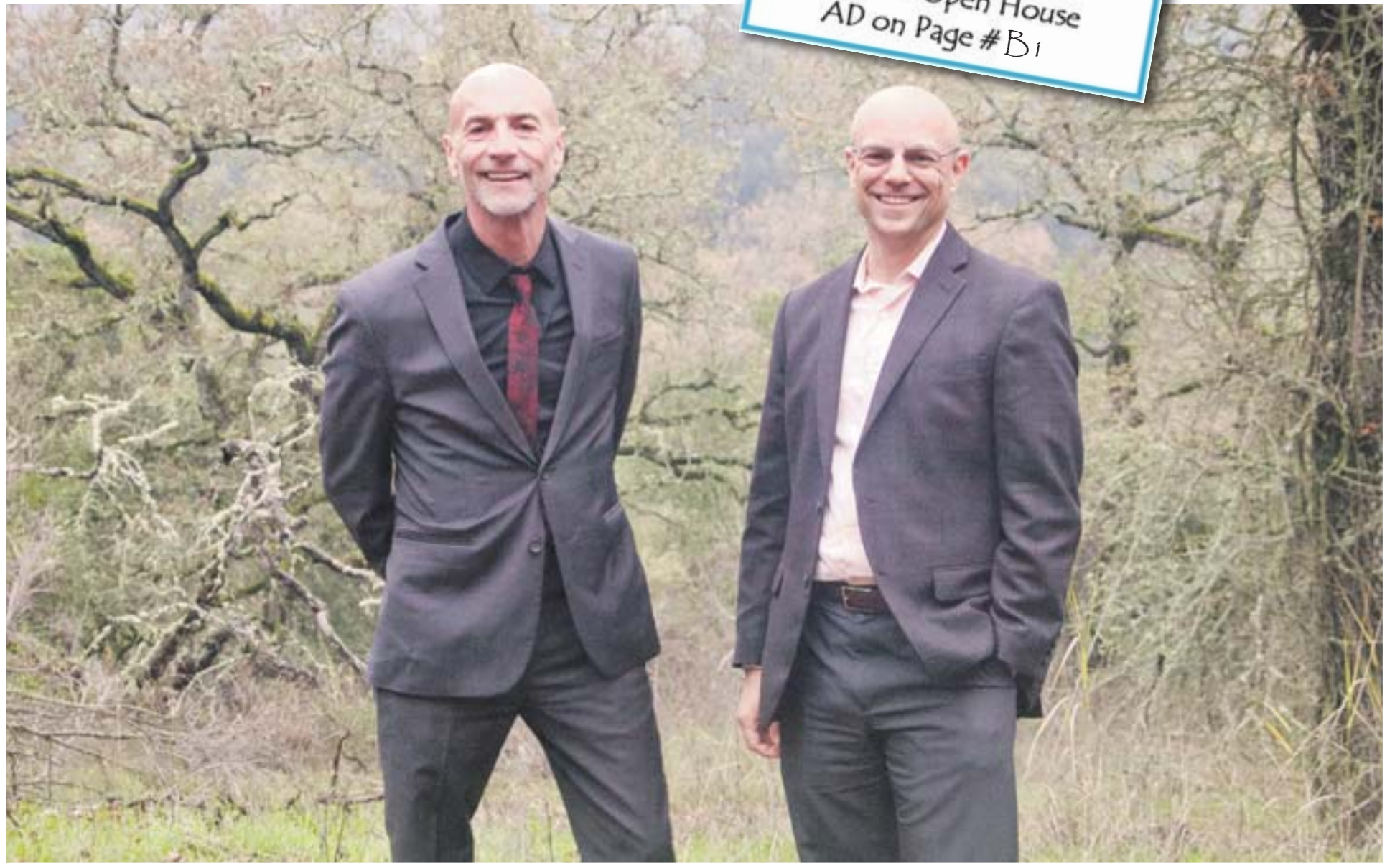
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AD on Page #B1

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CEO Jim Bouquin (left) with Chief Development Officer Peter Dudley stand among the heritage oaks on the hillside that will become a natural retreat behind the proposed Cancer Support Community building. Photo Pippa Fisher

## Cancer Support Community to bring holistic healing to Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher

CEO Jim Bouquin knew as soon as he set eyes on the 5.75-acre parcel of land adjacent to the Lafayette Reservoir that this would be the perfect location for the new Cancer Support Community building and grounds.

Now Bouquin's vision is drawing closer. Bouquin had searched long and hard to find a property that could meet the needs of the nonprofit

CSC, which has been operating out of its current Walnut Creek location for the past 28 years and has outgrown it. In contrast with the residential neighborhood of the existing center, the company was looking for an area of natural beauty with space for community gardens and trails combined with accessibility. Bouquin says that he hadn't found anything that was anywhere near as perfect as this location.

The land, once part of a larger dairy farm owned by Gus Macedo, was sold for what became the Lafayette Reservoir, apart from the almost-six acre

parcel that remained in the family. Although negotiations were underway to purchase the land for \$5 million, the owners, Macedo's nephew and his wife, Ray and Angelina Leal, decided this past fall to gift the land to CSC instead.

Furthermore the fundraising campaign for the roughly \$12 million project is off to a strong start with a generous \$2 million donation from local philanthropists Myrna and Dennis Cheney, for whom the building will be named.

... continued on Page A3

Advertising

Letters to the Editor	A8
Obituaries	B4
Not to be missed	B6-B7
How to contact us	B7
Classified	C2
Shop Orinda	C6

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## PG&E to conduct Wildfire Safety Program in Moraga



Trees growing too close to power lines

By Vera Kochan

Before the next fire season gets underway Pacific Gas and Electric Co. has expanded its Community Wildfire Safety Program to include Moraga within the coming months, depending on weather and other factors. The program is a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of wildfires and keep the community safe.

Moraga is designated as an "extreme fire threat area" due to all of the vegetation in and around the town. Jennifer Shepherd, a PG&E wildfire safety location specialist, said, "Letters will be sent out by mail to inform residents of the upcoming increased activity and presence of PG&E personnel. We want people to be aware that we will be there in a proactive capacity."

The crews will be inspecting transmission towers and lines. This will include both visual and aerial inspections from top to bottom.

The visual inspections will require the ground examination of poles and climbing of towers. The work will be performed by up to four people and take approximately two hours per structure to complete.

Aerial inspections may include flying a drone around the tower for 30-45 minutes depending on the structure. For some tower locations, a helicopter may be required to inspect or to transport crews to remote areas.

PG&E wants to "enhance our routine vegetation management work to meet and exceed state vegetation and fire safety standards, which require clearance of four feet around power lines in high fire-threat areas with recommended minimum clearances of 12 feet or more, at time of trim, to ensure compliance year-round."

The upcoming inspections will allow PG&E to address the issue of overhanging limbs and branches above and around the power lines. They will also conduct targeted removal of dead and dying trees.

Many factors are involved in assessing trees that can cause fire risk to power lines. Oak trees, pine trees, Douglas fir and eucalyptus are just some of the vegetation that are problematic when they are in poor health or dying. Because these trees can grow tall and have outreaching limbs, striking a nearby power line while falling is a good possibility.

Shepherd noted, "If, during the inspections, any of the dangerous trees are located on private property, PG&E will notify the resident through a company representative. If no one is home, a doorknob-hang notification will be placed on the front door with pertinent information and procedures."

Anyone with questions for PG&E can call 1-800-PGE-5000 or email [wildfiresafety@pge.com](mailto:wildfiresafety@pge.com). To learn more about the Community Wildfire Safety Program visit [www.pge.com/wildfiresafety](http://www.pge.com/wildfiresafety).

<b>Civic News</b> A1-A10	<b>Life in Lamorinda</b> B1-B8	<b>Sports</b> C1-C6	<b>Our Homes</b> D1-D16
Lamorinda mayors express goals for new year - Pages A2, A4 and A6	SMC Jan Term course delves into complexities of Rwanda genocide - Page B1	Campo basketball player returns to SMC for final game - Page C1	Homeowners can leverage cloud technology with Jules App - Page D1
<b>Fire Districts</b> A8-A9			
Local fire investigator retires - Page A9			



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## Maintaining local control for land use high on new mayor's list



Photo Pippa Fisher

**Lafayette's new mayor, Cam Burks**  
By Pippa Fisher

This year sees Lafayette coming off a divisive election with two brand new city council members and, as of press time, one yet to be appointed. Without a permanent city manager, it will fall to the experience of the city's new mayor and vice mayor to provide leadership over the coming weeks.

First-time Mayor Cam Burks is optimistic. "For me, 2019 is about coming together and uniting as a community, encouraging even stronger public participation to enable how we govern the city, and to

do so in a civil and respectful manner around every turn."

Burks says that debate and the expression of alternative views are absolutely critical and often result in better decisions. "It's important, however, to do so in ways that do not alienate any element of our community. This is something that I will encourage at city council meetings. My hope is that our entire community provides their views on everything that comes before us."

Burks has defined several goals for the upcoming year, although he is quick to point out that he would like to see any goals be strategic – longer term than just one year. "The foundation of my vision for 2019 rests on taking action that will unify the city, stimulate respectful and civil collaboration and strengthen the community," he says.

Perhaps his number one priority concerns protection of local control on land use and development from what he describes as "Sacramento's overreach." He says the city must be proactive, being prepared to lobby and work with local representatives and the league of cities as well as defensively.

Noting that several

General Plan elements are in need of revision, Burks says that work on this will be critical. "Now more than ever, as Sacramento continues to express a strong legislative desire to strip our local control in the land use and development space, we need robust strategies and tools to protect our city and its special character. While the General Plan won't mitigate all risks in this regard from our state legislature, it's critical that our community, council, staff and in particular, our terrific planning and design review commissions come together and focus on this effort. It's all hands on deck," he says.

Burks says the city is financially stable and well managed and that roads and infrastructure are in superb shape. "Our police department is the best in the Bay Area. They continue to do outstanding work to keep our community safe and plan for emergencies," he says, noting that he would like to see an expanded emergency preparedness focus, particularly in the area of wildfire preparation. "Our senior services commission continues to do great work for the community," he says, adding that he would like to see

development of robust senior community inclusion strategies as the senior population grows, including strategies around emergency evacuation planning such as coupling households with less mobile neighbors.

Additionally Burks wants to foster a strong relationship with both the Lafayette School District and the Acalanes Union High School District, holding public meetings and socials. "While we have a very good relationship at present, a lot of our collaboration is piecemeal and at times, reactive, so perhaps it's time to look holistically at what we can do together," he says.

Burks might be picking up the mayoral gavel for the first time but he is no stranger to public service, serving from 2011 on the Crime Prevention Commission (and elected chair in 2013) prior to being elected to the city council in 2016. He served as vice mayor on the council last year.

Burks is a Bay Area native who worked for many years as a diplomat and special agent in Washington, D.C. and at U.S. embassies around the world. He led U.S. government counterterrorism strategy in multiple foreign countries; managed multimillion dollar budgets; oversaw complex

public programs; and negotiated policies in the best interests of U.S. diplomacy and the national security of the United States. He is now the deputy chief security officer at Chevron Corporation.

He settled back in the Bay Area eight years ago and lives with his wife and two school-age daughters in Lafayette. He has been involved coaching youth soccer and is passionate about the trails, which he walks with his dog. He enjoys fly-fishing with his girls and skiing and backcountry hiking.

Burks says that he is honored to be mayor and sincerely thanks the community and council for their faith in him. "My family and I love Lafayette deeply and I'm committed to helping our community achieve a positive and productive 2019. I feel very fortunate to be on a city council with three other outstanding public servants – colleagues that are profoundly dedicated to our city and have already made a tangible impact," he says.

Among the first challenges for Burks and the new council will be hiring a fifth council member and a permanent city manager.

## New Year, new city council lineup

By Pippa Fisher

Although at press time the city council was still awaiting the appointment of a fifth member, who will fill the seat left by the sudden passing of Council Member Mark Mitchel, right now the lineup

is Mayor Cam Burks, Vice Mayor Mike Anderson, and council members Susan Candell and Teresa Gerringer.

**Vice Mayor Mike Anderson**  
Anderson was elected to the city council in 2004 and has served three terms as mayor in 2008, 2013 and



Photo Jeff Heyman, City of Lafayette

**The 2019 Lafayette City Council, from left: Council Member Susan Candell, Vice Mayor Mike Anderson, Mayor Cam Burks, and Council Member Teresa Gerringer.**

2017. He was chair of the planning commission in 2004, appointed to the commission in 2000. Additionally he was a member of the Lafayette General Plan advisory committee from 1993 to 2002.

Anderson has lived with his wife in Lafayette for 27 years. Now retired, during his 32-year career with the East Bay Regional Park District he planned, designed and developed parks and trails, was responsible for finding funding for such projects, working with residents to get their input through workshops and surveys.

**Council Member Susan Candell**

Candell has been an active resident in the community, attending council meetings for many years, taking special interest in proposed development on Deer Hill Road. She is a big supporter

of the recently passed more rigorous Conflict of Interest policy for the Planning and Design Review Commissions. She was appointed to the Circulation Commission in early 2018. Additionally Candell is president of the Springhill Valley Homeowners Association and is a Lafayette Community Foundation board member.

Candell's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering from UC Berkeley, and master's degree in nuclear engineering from MIT. She works at Carl Zeiss X-Ray Microscopy in Pleasanton, as an image quality engineer developing a world-leading industrial MicroCT device. She spent 20 years as a medical CT engineer for Imatron, General Electric, and Siemens Oncology Care.

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**Lafayette Public Meetings**

**City Council**

Monday, Jan. 14, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**School Board Meetings**

**Acalanes Union High School District**  
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.  
AUHSD Board Room  
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette  
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

**Planning Commission**

Monday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Design Review**

Monday, Jan. 14, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Arts & Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Lafayette School District**

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
District Office Board Room  
3477 School St., Lafayette  
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us



## Greg Wolff appointed acting planning and building director



Greg Wolff Photo City of Lafayette

With Niroop Srivatsa stepping into the city manager's shoes until a permanent replacement is found, Assistant Planning Director Greg Wolff will be at the helm of the planning department, acting as interim planning and building director. With more than 20 years working for the city, Wolff has plenty of experience.

Wolff grew up in Cooperstown, New York. He attended Cornell University to study architecture, landscape architecture and city planning. — P. Fisher

## Cancer Support Community to bring holistic healing to Lafayette

... continued from Page A1

Founded originally in the East Bay as the Wellness Community in 1990, the CSC, as it is now known serves 2,000 people each year, including those going through active cancer treatment, and survivors as well as family members. CSC provides psychosocial care – a holistic approach promoting health and healing in mind, body and soul alongside medical treatment. All services are provided free.

The Lafayette facility will be a state-of-the-art building: a model for cancer centers throughout the nation, offering educational programs, a children and teen activity center, counseling rooms, a social center, a movement studio offering specialized programs including yoga and mindfulness. There will be a demonstration kitchen with oncology dieticians teaching patients and caregivers how to prepare cancer-fighting foods, much of which will be grown on the property in an organic garden located on the premises.

Plans currently show the land will be less than 30 percent developed. Bouquin explains that in addition to creating a beautiful, natural retreat and garden on the hills above the building, they are working with experts to ensure all plantings are native and that they treat the grounds reverentially, cherishing and propagating the land that is healing them. They will be offering weekend classes, engaging the broader community on growing healing food.

CSC is trying to interact as much as possible with the community. "We are working with the city and the community through study sessions," Bouquin says. Using local developers Branagh, they hope to start the planning process with the city early this year.

Bouquin, who has been 13 years in his current role, hav-

Info: <http://cancersupport.net/>

## New Year, new city council lineup

... continued from Page A2

Candell has lived more than 40 years in the Lamorinda area – the last 20 years in Lafayette where she raised her two children with her husband.

### Council Member Teresa Gerringer

Gerringer is, like Candell, an active member of the community. She has served for 18 years on the Lafayette School Board and is a member of the Lafayette Community Foundation. However, unlike Can-

dell, she is not in favor of the new COI policy and considers it to be overreaching.

Gerringer has a bachelor's degree in public administration and an MBA. She works as district director to state Sen. Steve Glazer.

A 22-year resident of Lafayette, Gerringer lives with her husband in the Reliez Valley area. Their two daughters attended Lafayette schools and have both now graduated from college.



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LOWEST PRICE SOLD	\$650,000	\$706,000	\$740,000	\$675,000	\$745,000	\$800,000
HIGHEST PRICE SOLD	\$3,900,000	\$12,250,000	\$6,500,000	\$7,800,000	\$2,750,000	\$3,500,000
AVERAGE SALES PRICE	\$1,617,000	\$1,730,000	\$1,625,000	\$1,737,000	\$1,391,000	\$1,489,000

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Moraga Mayor Roger Wykle looks ahead to 2019



Mayor Roger Wykle

Photo Andy Scheck

By Vera Kochan

Appointed as Moraga's mayor for a second term, Roger Wykle has high hopes for the town's future.

Wykle's first contribution to Moraga was serving on the Planning Commission between 2009 and 2012. He successfully ran for town council in 2012 where he eventually was appointed to his first term as mayor in 2015. Running for town council once again in 2016 brought him another eventual appointment as Moraga's new mayor for 2019.

When Wykle ran for town council in 2012, his personal primary goal was

"to first and foremost always act respectfully to the citizens of Moraga, our dedicated staff, and to my other colleagues on the council." He added, "I also sought to actively listen to our constituents and then make informed decisions while keeping what is best for Moraga in the forefront."

He initially had many goals in mind for Moraga itself, most importantly to protect the remaining hillsides, ridgelines and open spaces. Examining the town's infrastructure and finances, including an unfunded pension liability, was key along with revitalizing downtown. "While mayor in 2015," he said, "I supported creation of a town subcommittee which continues

to review the Moraga Center Specific Plan. Through this process we must strengthen the MCSP to ensure that future infill development blends with our surroundings and preserves our semirural atmosphere."

Looking back, Wykle is proud of the recently adopted policies to protect the hillsides, ridgelines and open spaces for future generations. He stated, "We also established a citizen lead team to look at our infrastructure needs and develop an annual budget requirement for maintenance of town-owned assets. Similarly, we commissioned a Storm Drain Master Plan that also identified funding requirements to address our aging system." In the upcoming year, he hopes the MCSP subcommittee ensures that future projects meet Moraga's needs while remaining viable for developers.

Having served on the town council for so long has made the job itself a little easier over the years, but the recent Rheem sinkhole and Canyon Bridge emergencies, which tapped Moraga's financial coffers, was quite challenging. And, the challenge continues as future funding for the aging systems must be addressed.

Luckily for Wykle, he has a supportive family who understands the demands of a mayor's presence. "While I still hear the question, 'Where are you going now?' they have come to accept my volunteer activities as a way of life."

Wykle's hopes for Moraga's future are to see a revitalized downtown

area, especially near Moraga Ranch, while working with the property owners to make short-term and long-term improvements. Additionally, he'd like to improve communication with the citizens in regards to the town's financial situation by informing them whenever the council, staff, audit and finance committee members have gone the extra mile to save money on projects. "For instance," explains Wykle, "we recently completed a joint paving project with Orinda that saved both municipalities thousands of dollars. We also are extremely fortunate to have a volunteer reserve police officer who constantly looks for free government equipment that the town can use, once again saving the town thousands of dollars."

Another one of his goals for Moraga in 2019 is to review the town's budget to ensure that expenses are being kept to a minimum. While the budget is technically balanced annually, maintenance costs and a growing pension liability bring added pressure.

Wykle stresses the need for citizen involvement in Moraga and asks residents to consider volunteering for the many positions available within the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Design Review Board, the Planning Commission, and even the Town Council.

"I would just like to thank the citizens of Moraga for re-electing me in 2016 and my colleagues on the council for their confidence in me to be mayor in 2019."

New Parks Department recreation supervisor takes over

By Vera Kochan

Jasmine Bateson comes to Moraga as the new recreation supervisor for the Parks and Recreation Department,

having had previous experience in the cities of Dublin and San Leandro, where she managed two facilities.

A graduate of Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, she makes her home with

her family in Castro Valley where she grew up. Bateson is not unfamiliar with Moraga. Her husband, Trevor, attended Campolindo High School and played for the basketball team.

Her in-laws have lived in town for several years, and she got to know the area through the many visits to their home.

... continued on next Page

Table with 4 columns: Town Council, Planning Commission, Design Review, Moraga School District Board Meetings. Includes dates, times, and meeting locations.

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*A snapshot in time*

## Pears or peace? – the United Nations in Lamorinda

By Vera Kochan

Back in 1945, for a brief moment in history, the Moraga Valley was under consideration as the permanent location of the United Nations.

In June of that year, San Francisco held the first meeting of the United Nations in the Memorial Opera House where the U.N. Charter was approved by 50 nations and signed the next day at the War Memorial Veterans Building. The event was attended by nearly 5,000 delegates, aides, interpreters and reporters.

A major topic among attendees was to find a permanent home for the U.N. At that time, San Francisco had a population of less than one million and had put its best foot forward during the festivities, making the Bay Area an attractive possibility. The Presidio was a top choice, but running a close second was the Moraga Valley, the Berkeley Hills or Orinda. News reports at the time predicted that the U.N. headquarters would be “the capital of the world.”

The Bay Area bid was supported by Australia, China, El Salvador, India and Saudi Arabia, to name a few. However, Great Britain and the Soviet Union had objections to San Francisco. While the British delegate, Kenneth Younger, loved the city, scenery and peo-

ple, he didn't like the bridge tolls or the Presidio's architecture. George S. Saksin, the Soviet delegate, felt that San Francisco was too far to fly, “I can't understand the attempt to chase us into this hole.”

Even the Secretary of State, Edward Stettinius, pushed for San Francisco because of “the golden sunshine and the fresh and invigorating air of the Pacific.”

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors thought it was a great idea to bring the U.N. to the Moraga Valley. They created a committee that included real estate developers and local members of Congress who tried to convince the United Nations delegates that while San Francisco was a wonderful city, there wasn't enough room to build a site big enough for the headquarters.

The Moraga Valley, in today's Burton Valley area of Lafayette, could offer thousands of acres to build on, a mild climate, room for cultural development, recreation and close proximity to San Francisco, airports, UC Berkeley and Saint Mary's College.

Fifty cities throughout the United States did their best to attract the U.N. committee, including Boston and New York. Not to be outdone, the Contra Costa Development Association came up with \$2,500 to print an impressive 24-page book show-

ing aerial views of Moraga and the Bay Area.

In the fall of 1946, the U.N. committee announced that they would be coming to the Bay Area to check out the proposed sites, allowing for a restricted amount of time to tour each one. San Francisco's mayor, George Lapham, was criticized for taking up too much of the committee's time, thereby shortening Moraga's presentation bid from 30 minutes to eight minutes. Judge A.F. Bray, acting as spokesman for Contra Costa Development managed to speak for 15 minutes before being cut off. The U.N. committee felt that Moraga was too far from San Francisco and that the Presidio would make a better choice.

According to retired Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School's librarian and former Moraga Historical Society archivist, Elsie Mastick, “It was such a short and disappointing time in Moraga's history. We don't have too much information or any pictures.” She added, “In the end, Rockefeller and his money took the U.N. from California.”

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. offered the United Nations committee \$8.5 million to purchase real estate in Manhattan, while the city of New York donated additional land, effectively dashing the hopes of bringing the world to Lamorinda.

## New supervisor on the job



Photo Vera Kochan

Jasmine Bateson

... continued from Page A4

Bateson received the nod to come to the Hacienda due to her experience working in San Leandro with Breyana Brandt, Moraga's parks and recreation director. She said, “I already knew about Moraga. I love it here. It's great to work in a community that has a lot of pride.”

From the short time that Bateson has been at the Hacienda (she started late November), she has learned that each event is special and makes good memories. Her latest role in venue management was to coordinate a Dec. 29 wedding. “Luckily, the weather was

perfect,” she said. Typically, the Hacienda hosts 75 such special events during the peak seasons between spring and early fall.

Additionally, some of Bateson's responsibilities for 2019 will include Hacienda Nights, Summer Concerts and a Movie Night at the Commons, holiday events such as the Holiday Tree Lighting and many other community events.

The latest upcoming event that she is excited about is the Teddy Bear Tea, formerly known as the Mother-Daughter Tea. This year's tea will offer a special treat for children. There will be a mobile build-your-own-teddy-bear machine for kids to create their own teddy bear to take home. Seating is limited for the Saturday, Feb. 2 event, held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Dr., Moraga. For more information/reservations visit [www.moragarec.com](http://www.moragarec.com) or call (925) 888-7045.

Bateson added, “I'm excited and very fortunate to be here. I look forward to bringing in new events and building onto existing ones.”

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## New Orinda mayor to bring her message to the people



Mayor Inga Miller Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

For new Orinda Mayor Inga Miller, it's all about communication.

Miller, council member since 2016 and selected by the council as mayor for 2019, intends to hold office hours at city hall the second Wednesday of each month to meet with constituents. She

also plans to send out a mayor's newsletter, in addition to holding the monthly mayor's liaison meetings with representatives of Orinda organizations.

Miller is a fan of Orinda's fiscally conservative history. "Fiscal reserves," she notes, "allowed us to have an emergency fund" which enabled the city to move swiftly to fix the Miner Road sinkhole. She'd like to continue that tradition as the city works through its next budget and looks at how to maintain its roads and perhaps to add new facilities.

Miller took part in the recent wild-fire evacuation drill on Moraga Way and found it fascinating. "One cool thing," she mentioned, was that the city was partnering with Google and Apple so that their maps were refreshed every minute. She also cited the involvement of the Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group and the Community Emergency Response Team in the drill that involved some 530 homes in the Moraga Country Club area. "It seemed to work," she said. There will be another drill in Orinda in the future.

Miller is a strong supporter of downtown development. She views the Streetscape Master Plan as very important for recharging downtown. "Our

council has said, 'we're open for business, please come. Our city manager and planning director would love to talk to you.'" This is a change, she believes, adding that the city has been working hard to see that fees for development are reasonable. "I don't think that it is overly optimistic to believe that we'll see some changes," according to Miller, who would like to see façade improvements and more locally serving businesses.

More housing is needed, Miller agrees, but she sees recent state legislation as "arrogant." She has looked at other areas to see how local redevelopment has worked out—or not worked out. To build Dodger Stadium, she noted, Los Angeles used redevelopment funding to wipe out a neighborhood. She is not in favor of allowing BART, which she says is in huge financial trouble, to be in charge of development. She is also concerned about any plan that would allow development without assuring that there are sufficient services, such as schools, streets, police and firefighters.

Miller is very enthusiastic about working with new Vice Mayor Darlene Gee, who takes charge when the mayor is unavailable. Gee was appointed to the council shortly before Miller was elected.

## Master transportation engineer joins Orinda council with an eye on downtown development

By Sora O'Doherty

New Orinda Council Member Dennis Fay says that the city has a responsibility to assist the Bay Area to shoulder some housing needs, but, he adds, "tailored to the needs of Orinda."

"I can't tell you how many people I spoke to during the campaign who want an option to have an 1,800- to 2,000-square foot condo with services." He's not talking about low income options, but of people living in Orinda who want to downsize from their larger homes and who are ready to be close to downtown to enjoy the services available there. He is also concerned about housing for people who serve the community but currently cannot afford to live here. "It would be wonderful to have teachers and city staff living within our community," Fay says.

Fay doesn't believe that the downtown needs multistory buildings, but he supports a maximum limit of three stories at street level, which, he notes, may allow for more stories going



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Council Member Dennis Fay

downhill from Orinda Way. He thinks that what matters is the impression of mass, and supports buildings that step back and also retain the village character. He thinks that Orinda could look

to European villages for inspiration. For example, he traveled through villages in Spain and France and thinks that the use of stone could create a European feel in Orinda. He admits that he doesn't favor the California Spanish look.

Turning to the issue of private roads, Fay thinks that it isn't much of an issue where the roads are maintained by a homeowners association, but notes the concern for private roads not maintained by HOAs. He believes that the public policy should be discussed and believes that the issue will return to the city council. "The big issue is money," he says. Perhaps, he muses, residents of private roads should be exempted from future parcel tax measures. Most of all, he believes that it is important that people feel that they are being heard and thinks that there may be room for some accommodation.

Another issue that concerns Fay is fire safety. "Wild fire prevention really is important to me," he says, and suggests that he'd like to see cities part-

nering with the fire districts." "As an engineer," he says, "I want to prevent things." He talks about how, in the recent Paradise Fire, superheated ash was sucked into attic vents setting homes on fire, and how engineering solutions could prevent that in the future.

Fay was previously a member and chair of the Citizen's Infrastructure Oversight Commission and has been involved in Orinda's effort to repair its roads since the first report on road repair prepared in 2006.

His family has lived in Orinda for more than 20 years, and his children attended Orinda schools. Fay noted that all of his family members have earned master's degrees.

Fay retired from a career of over 40 years in transportation planning and engineering, having served for nearly 20 years as the executive director of what is now called the Alameda County Transportation Commission. Earlier, he was the transportation planning manager for Alameda County.

## New council member Kosla brings development experience to the table

By Sora O'Doherty

Although there have been a lot of negative comments about developers during the current attempt by Orinda to update its downtown, Nick Kosla was very open during his campaign about his experience in development and with developers. He believes that his message resonated with the electorate, which chose him over former council member Eve Phillips, who often expressed doubts about developers during the process of working with the Urban Land Institute and Mainstreet America on the city's streetscape project. Kosla holds a master's in public policy and administration, land use policy.

Kosla said that during the campaign, he often heard, "Nick, our downtown needs a lot of help, not just a little help. It seems like in some of the other communities their property

values are going up because the downtowns are thriving." Kosla's priorities are to take advantage of San Pablo Creek, which he sees as a huge amenity. He wonders, "Can we open it up?" He wants to get more retail in downtown, but to focus on Orinda for Orindans. "If you have the right type of development you can get people out there," he believes.

Growing up in Orinda, Kosla always loved the creeks; he loves to fly fish. He wants the creek to be more accessible for people to walk by, for children to learn from. "Most of what I've worked on are very large, complicated projects, he says, such as Oak Knoll in the Oakland Hills. He also worked on the redevelopment of the Alameda air base and has experience working with the Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife. He is excited to bring his expertise to the city council.

"I feel like our real estate values could be higher than they are," he says. "Lafayette has four grocery stores, including Whole Foods and Diablo Foods, and now has Philz coffee. People aren't willing to pay more for the amenities we have," he adds. Kosla said that he has been told that last year housing prices in Lafayette exceeded those in Orinda, and that this trend is continuing. When people move to Lafayette, he says, they choose Lafayette because it has more amenities, a more vibrant downtown, and they are willing to pay more for that. While he doesn't want Orinda to become Lafayette, and he doesn't believe that Orinda could ever support four groceries, he thinks that there is a happy medium which will bring about a locally sustainable economic engine, and see a revitalization of downtown Orinda. In turn, he says, that will raise real estate values.



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Council Member Nick Kosla

... continued on next Page

# Transportation executive Darlene Gee steps up as vice mayor



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Vice Mayor Darlene Gee

By Sora O'Doherty

Not surprisingly, Darlene Gee's most passionate issue on the Orinda City Council continues to be the roads program. "With good luck and timing, we managed to do an awful lot of repair in Orinda," she says, adding, "But while the condition of residential streets is much better, we still have to find real solutions for longer-term maintenance, as well as addressing the larger roads classified as collectors and arterials, and storm drains. We really need to understand all the financial considerations."

As her second top priority, Gee believes that Orinda has to step up and be proactive about potential redevelopment around the Orinda BART station. She cites multiple actions at state level to take away local control of BART land. "There will continue to be a struggle regarding the balance of power between state control and local control. We need to stop putting our heads under the covers and pretending that the issue will go away. Especially we need to concentrate on the BART area. If we don't do something, the chances are that the state will step in."

Gee was in a minority on the city council this past year on the subject of private roads. "I don't have a preconceived answer and I'm not sure that there will be one, but it is an issue that affects 20 percent of our residents, one fifth of the community."

"I think that a task force was warranted, and I still support that," Gee maintains. "I believe that the topic will come back," she adds, because the private road residents want a better method of communication than what was available, which was written communication to the city council, and public conversations at Citizens' Infra-

structure Oversight Committee. But in Gee's opinion this was not robust enough to fully air the issue.

She remains empathetic to what people living on private roads are facing, and says that she is sensitive to their perception of inequities. They are charged for things that they don't benefit from, like the extra fee on garbage collection. "I understand their frustration," she says. "We all know that life is not fair. You can't make a perfectly fair system." She will continue advocating for their desire to have the task force and a more robust conversation, she says, although she fully comprehends that it is a very complicated issue that doesn't have an easy solution. Still, she supports better public conversation.

Gee's company represents major transportation agencies, including Caltrans and BART, and she is always very mindful of that, she says, adding that it came up during the election. She emphasizes that the transportation consulting business she works for does not do business with Orinda and stresses that if she feels that there is anything that would be a conflict of interest, she would recuse herself. But she believes that her level of expertise is helpful to the community and she tries to contribute the benefit of her experience in dealing with challenges of roads and infrastructure that is subject to hilly terrain, and poor soil. She is also very aware of concerns about fire safety and evacuation capability.

Gee has lived in Orinda since 1989. Because her husband works for PG&E, she recuses herself on energy issues. Gee grew up in Illinois, and moved to the Bay Area in 1980. She has two grown sons, ages 23 and 26. The 26-year-old is an attorney in Union city, and her younger son is in Davis law school.

# New council member Kosla

... continued from Page A6

He also points out that people in Lafayette are beginning to move, to downsize. "It would be great," he says, "if people in Orinda could also downsize but stay in Orinda." Currently, there are not a lot of options, in his opinion. He points to Orindawoods, which has some smaller houses.

Also high on Kosla's agenda this coming year is the issue of fire safety, which

he feels personally as he lives with his family high in the Orinda hills. He is interested in exploring ways to allow Orindans to evacuate in the event of wild fire, such as installing combination locks on existing fire gates.

Kosla's and his wife Larissa have two daughters. The younger one, Grace, is at Wagner Ranch in third grade and her older sister, Audrey, is in sixth grade at Orinda Intermediate School.

## Selling a Home in 2019?

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# Cheers to a great 2018...



1871 Rice Way, Walnut Creek	\$2,020,000	Represented Buyers
486 Fernwood Drive, Moraga	\$1,680,000	Represented Sellers
1873 St. Andrews Drive, Moraga	\$1,537,500	Represented Buyers
857 Las Trampas Road, Lafayette	\$1,511,280	Represented Sellers
777 Reliez Station Road, Lafayette	\$1,275,000	Represented Buyers
1831 St. Andrews Drive, Moraga	\$1,190,000	Represented Buyers
49 Mathews Place, Alamo	\$1,150,000	Represented Buyers
3342 Helen Lane, Lafayette	\$1,105,000	Represented Buyers
17 Allendale Court, Walnut Creek	\$929,000	Represented Buyers
7 Saxton Court, Walnut Creek	\$910,000	Represented Sellers

# ...and an even better 2019



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DRE 01922658

COMPASS



Orinda  
Public  
Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda  
Library, 26 Orinda Way  
Planning Commission  
Tuesday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda  
Library, 26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure  
Oversight Commission  
Wednesday, Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Orinda Union High School  
District Board Meetings

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

## Fire District Public Meetings

### Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 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, Jan. 15, 1:30 p.m.  
Board Chamber room 107, Administration Building, 651 Pine St., Martinez. For meeting times and agendas, visit [www.cccfpd.org](http://www.cccfpd.org)



## MOFD and ConFire promote new operations chiefs



Matt Nichols



Photos provided

Chuck Stark

By Nick Marnell

Two veteran firefighters will run the operations divisions of the Lamorinda fire agencies in 2019, both men having been promoted in the fourth quarter of last year.

Matt Nichols took over as battalion chief, operations division, of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District in October. "I never really aspired to be where I am today," said the 12-year district veteran, who appeared quite at ease in the role he never aspired to. "You see how things go, you see a vacancy, you see a chance to put your own stamp on things." Nichols said he is putting his stamp on the district education policy, working to revise it to offer reimbursement for extra classes to all firefighters, whether they seek a promotion or not.

Nichols offered words of support to district residents and encouraged them to join

together. "It's great to depend on us, and we'll be there when the major disaster hits. But be there for each other," he said.

"MOFD is excited to have Matt Nichols serving as a battalion chief and I believe he hits the sweet spot of enough experience to know the district well, but new enough that he is not wedded to just maintaining the status quo. I have great confidence in his ability and high expectations for the work he will do to develop and refine our operational plans," Fire Chief Dave Winnacker said.

After the retirement of Ed Gonzales in July, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District appointed Chuck Stark as interim assistant fire chief - emergency operations division. In December the district removed the interim tag.

"You get to be a part of things at the lower levels, but as a chief officer, you get to set the direction for the district," said Stark, who started at Con-

Fire in 2003. "I will be able to get more accomplished."

Both chiefs are preparing to reopen and staff rebuilt Lamorinda fire stations in the spring: Orinda Fire Station 43 and Lafayette Fire Station 16. "I remember when it closed," Stark said of the 2012 closure of the Lafayette station by the county. "The station will increase our capacity and lower response times." He added that "the station is going to be beautiful."

"Our assistant chief of operations is among the most critical positions in the district, with responsibility for ensuring our life- and property-saving operations are carried out flawlessly, each and every time our firefighters leave their stations," Fire Chief Jeff Carman said in a district statement. "I couldn't be more pleased to announce the promotion of longtime ConFire firefighter Chuck Stark to this position."

### Moraga Police Department Incident

#### Summary Report

Dec. 18 - Dec. 31

Alarms	19
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	5
Traffic	60
Suspicious Circumstances	8
Suspicious Subject	5
Suspicious Vehicle	20
Service to Citizen	22
Patrol Request/ Security Check	23
Supplemental Report	15
Welfare Check	3



#### Vehicle violations

- Abandoned Vehicle
  - Moraga Rd./Via Granada
- DUI Misdemeanor
  - 700 Block Tanglewood Dr.
- Hit And Run Misdemeanor
  - Moraga Country Club
- Reckless Driving
  - Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.
  - Seven Eleven
  - Moraga Rd./Campolindo Dr.
  - Safeway
  - Sanders Ranch Rd./Camino Pablo
- Tc - Property Damage
  - 1100 Block Larch Ave.
- Traffic Hazard
  - Moraga Way/Viader Dr.

#### Other criminal activity

- Burglary
  - Library
- Fireworks
  - Los Perales Elementary School
- Grand Theft
  - 100 Block Donald Dr.
- Petty Theft
  - 10 Block Corte Santa Clara
  - 50 Block Lynwood Pl.
  - 2100 Block Donald Dr.

#### Nuisance to the Community

- Barking Dog
  - 200 Block Deerfield Dr.
- Disturbing The Peace
  - 40 Block Sanders Ranch Rd.
  - 100 Block Miramonte Dr.

#### Other

- Mentally Ill Commit
  - Campolindo High School
- Prom Shoot
  - Rheem Elementary School
- Unwanted Guest
  - St. Marys College

The Orinda police blotter will be published in our next issue. We are still awaiting reports from the Lafayette Police Department.

## Former MOFD director Steve Anderson has not lost his passion

By Nick Marnell

Always one to willingly speak his mind, Steve Anderson – the district director ousted from the board in the general election – slammed the Moraga-Orinda Fire District board as dysfunctional, may or may not have helped rig its 2019 election of officers and under certain circumstances would again run for a board seat.

Anderson spent six years at the district helm, and though disappointed in the outcome, he understands what he could have done better in the election. "You've got to spend money and you need a campaign organization," he said of two strategies he eschewed.

His change of heart during the recent labor contract negotiations, which resulted in a 13 percent wage increase for the rank and file over three years, Anderson feels hurt him politically. "The pay raise went over what I would have given. I was prepared to vote no. But we would have gone into litigation over an unfair labor practice. It would have taken a year and we would have wasted a lot of money. Voting yes was the right thing to do for the future of the district."

Having learned how to organize a more effective campaign, would Anderson run in 2022? "If Danziger chose to run again, I would not. If he doesn't, I would consider it," he said, speaking of Division 3 Director Steven Danziger, to whom he lost.

Anderson thinks highly of the newly elected board members, and he spent time

mentoring them before they took office. Anderson neither confirmed nor denied that he explained to the three new directors how to disrupt the MOFD election process and secure the board presidency for newcomer Danziger. "I did mention to them how the order of succession works. But that in order to become an officer, you only need to be a director and get a majority of the votes. That's it. Did a light go off for them? I have no idea," said Anderson, barely hiding a smirk.

Anderson's frustration with the five-member board that he termed dysfunctional may have played a part in his mentoring of the new directors. "Two of the board members see MOFD as a commodity. It's not a commodity. It's a service organization that protects lives and property. Two directors do not understand that," he said. "Hopefully the board will not remain that way."

He ranks his top accomplishment as being part of a board that put MOFD on the path to fiscal sustainability. The hiring of Gloriann Sasser as administrative services director, improving the financial reporting and developing a long-range financial plan he calls the highlights of his tenure.

To that list Anderson adds the hiring of Fire Chief Dave Winnacker, beginning his second year with the district. "We gave him three years to bring MOFD into the 21st century. And he will do it. I have a lot of confidence in him. He didn't come on board to be a babysitter. He understands a mission and what it takes to

get it done," Anderson said of the Marine Corps veteran.

Anderson names fire prevention as an example. "The chief has more done in one year than in the five years prior. But fire prevention will always be a problem. Can more be done? Absolutely. Can we reduce the risk to zero? No. I think it's good that they're looking at it, but there are no easy answers."

As for the talk about Fire Station 41 and district headquarters renovation: "Yes, expand the staff work area and add a large conference room, but maintain the fire station. It is more than adequate, and is not in such a sad case of disrepair. Maybe move the training area to the pear orchard," said Anderson, speaking of the vacant lot abutting Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School.

Depending on the agenda, the former director plans to attend future board meetings. "If it's something I'm interested in I definitely will. If tax equity comes up, I'll present an analysis that will destroy the argument," Anderson said, though he did not tip his hand. The 2019 MOFD board meetings should be exciting enough, but if the Moraga-Orinda tax equity topic arises, that meeting figures to be a performance not to be missed.

"In my six years I learned a tremendous amount," Anderson said. "It enabled me to learn what the fire service really is, and it was a privilege to lead the outstanding men and women. To them, I owe a thank you."

## Letters to the editor

### Humility and graciousness lost

As a parent of three children in a community of competitive adults and children, I've tried to be diligent in teaching my children sportsmanship and how to win and lose humbly, graciously and respectfully and to know that winning is only sweet when they've known loss; health is only sweet when they've known sickness; connection is only sweet when they've known loneliness, etc. I've taught them to always remember to "check" their competitive nature, and be mindful and happy for the winner, even when the winner is their competition, because losing that day, was part of a bigger lesson in empathy and humanity which is so much bigger than the actual game.

Lafayette City Council had an opportunity to demonstrate that same grace, humility and wisdom, but the council members blew it. They've all run hard races. How could they not see themselves in Ivor Sampson? How could they not consider how they'd feel if they'd come in third place? What would their expectations and hopes be if the electorate had chosen them? Ivor is a person, a human being, with thoughts and emotions and was a strong third place finisher. His whole being is much more like the other Council members than

different. By not recognizing Ivor as a valid replacement for the late Mark Mitchell seat from a fair electorate standpoint (31 percent ahead of fourth place), it's clear Cameron Burks' harmonious speech at the beginning of his mayorship was only a facade. We should have no hope that the divide will in fact be repaired under his reign. His "new beginning" is lost forever.

Kristen Altbaum  
Lafayette

### A sweet note of thanks

Thanks to the Lamorinda Community for supporting the Holiday See's Candies Shops run by the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley (KCMV). We're proud to offer quality See's Candies in conjunction with easy parking, short lines, customized gift wrapping and easy shipping options. All profits will be reinvested in local community charities, with an emphasis on children and families. This fundraising program, along with the upcoming March 30 Lobster Fest, is a significant contributor to the KCMV contributing approximately \$60,000 annually to local charities, focusing on children and families.

Ian Cook  
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 must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570



# Fire investigator who helped nab arsonists retires



Photo provided

ConFire investigator Vic Massenkoff.

## By Nick Marnell

Vic Massenkoff, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District investigator who sleuthed down the origin and cause of thousands of fires and helped prepare the criminal cases against two serial arsonists in Lafayette, put away his gun, badge and turnout gear in early January after more than 40 years in fire and law enforcement.

### Cal Fire

Massenkoff was studying electronics and computer technology at a junior college when a classmate said he was signing up for a summer job with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. He badgered Massenkoff to sign up with him. "I had no idea what they did, but I took the test. I was intrigued," Massenkoff said. He passed the test and joined Cal Fire in 1976.

He loved the instant camaraderie and being part of a team, but one failing was soon exposed. Massenkoff had no idea what to do when it was his turn to feed 15 firefighters. "Mom, you gotta teach me how to cook," he said and she bailed him out of kitchen duty embarrassment.

Massenkoff later joined the Cal Fire investigation unit, for which he studied at its police academy. "I ate it up. I graduated at the top of my class. Got a perfect score in shooting. I loved it," he said. He loved both fire and law enforcement, but Massenkoff discovered he was having more fun in law enforcement. At 39, he took a job with the Vallejo Police Department.

### Vallejo PD

"Are you crazy? You're going to a place where they have to drive around at night with their lights off?" asked one of Massenkoff's peers when he heard the news. But it was the highest paying police department in the state at the time, and Massenkoff was married with two young children.

Massenkoff brought a trusting firefighter mentality to the job. "I got lied to so many times on the street. Finally one cop talked to me. 'You're not a fireman any more. You're a cop. People are going to lie to you. They're going to try to get away from you. They're not going to like you as you were liked as a fireman. And they will turn on you.' He was right. I was naive."

What Massenkoff saw people do to each other and to themselves, he could never have imagined. But the hunt, the chase after the bad guy – he thrived on it. "We cleaned up chronic problems in that city," he said.

Massenkoff dismissed the pop culture representation of police officers. "Less than 5 percent are bad. Cops don't wake up thinking, 'Whose civil rights can I violate today?' Cops don't like cops who are like that. They have every intention of doing a good job, but especially today, it's a stigma that has to be overcome."

### ConFire

The 2008 Vallejo bankruptcy resulted in major cuts

to city personnel, and Massenkoff moved to ConFire, where he was able to meld his fire and law enforcement backgrounds as a district fire investigator. "I knew how active the district was from my days at Cal Fire," he said.

With his experience tracking serial arsonists at Cal Fire, Massenkoff made an immediate impact in the district. "We weren't identifying the trends and patterns," he said. "We needed to start looking at everything. Every dumpster, every trash can, every vehicle, every grass fire. That's how these cases start out. We see a pattern, then we act on it."

Contra Costa County Deputy District Attorney Devon Bell praised Massenkoff as a knowledgeable, professional partner. "We worked four or five cases together. Between what we could charge and what we could prove, Vic made it simple for me," said Bell, explaining that it is difficult for the state to secure a conviction in an arson case because evidence is often circumstantial.

Bell successfully prosecuted a high-profile case in 2015 when ConFire, together with Cal Fire and the county Sheriff's Office, nabbed James Wilson, a serial arsonist suspected of setting more than 30 fires, including activity in Lafayette and Orinda. As Massenkoff explained, the agencies looked at small fires, and similar incidents began to recur. Officials tracked and mapped the pattern. Once investigators suspected Wilson they followed him, got a search warrant to put a tracker on his car, and set up cameras in the area where they saw his vehicle. "We found traceable DNA evidence on an item left at a fire scene, which was a one-in-a-million shot," Massenkoff said. Wilson pleaded no contest and accepted the court's offer of nine years in state prison.

Massenkoff also aided in the prosecution of James Bishop, a serial arsonist whose crime spree spilled into Lafayette in 2018. According to Andrea Tavernier, deputy district attorney, Massenkoff canvassed a neighborhood during an investigation, found surveillance video of the suspect's car, and was able to connect that car to activity in other areas, including Lafayette. Bishop was convicted of 31 arson-related felonies and awaits sentencing in late January.

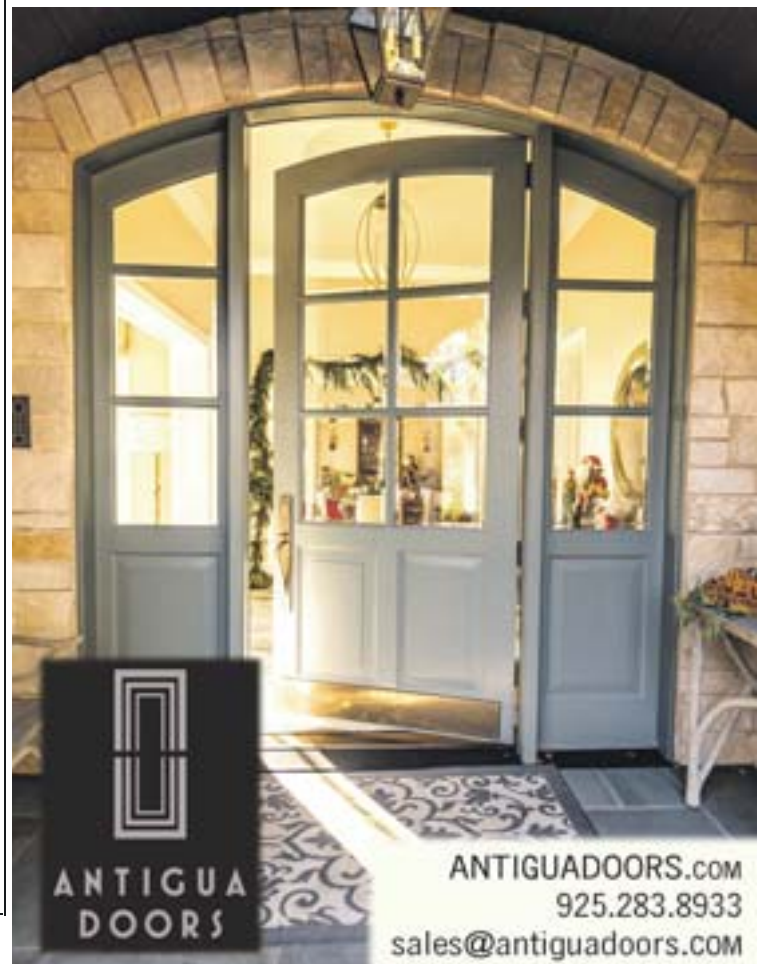
"Vic breaks down science in such an uncomplicated way," Tavernier said. "In the Bishop case, he made things so understandable and accessible for the jurors. Sometimes experts are so uptight; it's rare to find someone like Vic who has so much knowledge and is so approachable. He has complete command of his subject."

Massenkoff walked away from ConFire on Jan. 2. "When I hit 60, I felt old. I thought, maybe I shouldn't push my luck. I also caught myself being the crusty veteran," said Massenkoff, who has not decided what he will do next.

"Vic Massenkoff has contributed immensely to our fire investigation program, significantly moving the bar on how

sage with residents of Lafayette, which considered secession from ConFire six years ago over the closure of a fire station. "This is one of the best run organizations I have

ever been with. Everything is a positive. You've got the best deal around. You won't find a better, more cost-effective fire service. It's something to value and protect."



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# Three generations of dentists serve Lamorinda for 55 years



From left: Al, Mark and Blake Swimmer

Photo provided

By Kara Navolio

In July, Blake Swimmer became the third generation Swimmer to practice dentistry in Lafayette. His grandfather, Al Swimmer, began the general dentistry practice in 1963 when Lafayette's population was only about 7,000. For 38 years he served thousands of Lamorinda residents, the last 12 years, from 1988 to 2001, with his son, Mark. "Those 12 years were the best part of my life," said Al Swimmer.

Mark Swimmer now runs the practice and has taken his own son on as an associate. Although it may appear that a family business was the plan all along, Al Swimmer said, "I never pressured them to become dentists or suggested it, but I think they saw the friendship and support I had with other Lafayette dentists. Being happy in your work is reflected in the home."

In fact, Mark, a 1980 Acalanes High School graduate, went to Cal Poly, San Luis

Obispo and majored in food science. He was not planning to follow his dad into the profession. However, when he saw the types of jobs his classmates were getting in food science, he just wasn't excited about the field. He added one more year in college to take the science classes he needed, then went on to the dental school at the University of the Pacific, the same school his dad attended.

About 30 years later Mark Swimmer's son Blake, a 2011 Miramonte graduate, faced a similar crossroads. The University of Oregon junior, who was majoring in sports marketing, had a change of heart when he discovered his passion lay more in the sciences than in his business classes. Or perhaps there was a bit of a subconscious pull toward dentistry as his mom is also a dentist in Orinda, and he grew up hanging around both offices.

A young woman that Al Swimmer hired when he first started the business, Colleen

McCune Deutscher, became the office manager and was like a second mom to Blake and his brother.

Deutscher spent 50 years with the Swimmer Dentistry practice, starting as a part-time office assistant through high school and college. Her unexpected passing this past September has left a hole in all their hearts. "She was the glue of this place," stated Mark Swimmer.

Blake Swimmer changed his major and also went on to attend UOP's School of Dentistry, graduating this past summer. Patients now have more flexibility as they can see either Dr. Swimmer. Although retired now, Al Swimmer still meets for breakfast with fellow Lafayette retired dentists every week. The group used to have lunch together every day when they were practicing. "It's a dream come true," he reflected, "to have my son and grandson all working in the same profession, in the same practice."

# American Red Cross teaches kids disaster safety with Pillowcase Project



Photo Suzanne Garrett

By Vera Kochan

Does your child know what to do in the event of a natural disaster? The American Red Cross has implemented a program called The Pillowcase Project aimed at teaching children how to get through this type of situation with a modicum of awareness.

The Pillowcase Project was created in 2005 by the American Red Cross in Southeastern Louisiana and first put into effect in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Kay Wilkins, the region's executive, discovered that Loyola University students put all of their valuables into pillowcases when evacuating for Katrina. Wilkins worked with an art therapist to design a pillowcase that children living in post hurricane shelters could personalize and use as an emergency kit.

The New Orleans-based program grew into local elementary school demonstrations and became fine-tuned through time. By 2016, it was so successful it became offered to schools nationwide.

Red Cross Concord representative Suzanne Garrett is the Pillowcase Project lead for Contra Costa County Disaster Services. She explained, "We started out going to schools,

but now we also visit Scout troops, summer camps and anywhere that we can spread the message to kids." Garrett has been running presentations for five years, and in August she took over the Contra Costa area.

It is the Red Cross' vision to empower children in understanding the science of hazards and to share with their family and friends the lessons they've learned. Garrett's most recent demonstration in November was to Springhill Elementary's fourth-graders in Lafayette. "I try to make it very participatory and have them ask questions. Typically the programs throughout the United States are tailored toward regional hazards. In California that usually involves earthquake preparedness." She added, "While at Springhill, the Camp Fire was still burning. It made the home fire safety part of the presentation pertinent. The kids knew about the fires and asked a lot of good questions."

The Pillowcase Project presentation is geared for grades 3-5 (ages 8-11) and lasts about 40-60 minutes. The program meets many performance expectations for the common core math and language arts standards and next generation science standards

for grades 3-5.

Some of the learning objectives are to identify the best ways to stay safe during community emergencies; identify the best ways to prevent and stay safe during a home fire; use coping skills; gain confidence and use their knowledge to help in their homes and communities.

Each child receives a My Preparedness Workbook, a pillowcase to personalize and use as a preparedness kit, and earns a certificate of accomplishment. Each teacher receives a Science of Safety Teaching Kit with additional lesson plans, three classroom posters, an education standards report to match curriculum to common core and next generation science standards and a copy of the students' My Preparedness Workbook.

The Red Cross is also offering free smoke detectors with free installations to homes nationwide. According to Garrett, "It's called the Sound the Alarm, Save a Life Program. The service is ongoing and indefinite at this point." To sign up for an appointment visit [www.redcross.org/sound-the-alarm](http://www.redcross.org/sound-the-alarm) or call (510) 595-4573.

Garrett acknowledged, "The Red Cross doesn't know how many lives have been saved by these and other efforts to prepare people when disasters happen. Unfortunately, you can only compile statistics from worst-case scenarios. We can only hope that we've saved lives through teaching awareness."

To schedule a Pillowcase Project presentation for your school, after-school program, scout troop, summer camp or any other youth-serving site contact Garrett at [suzanne.garrett@redcross.org](mailto:suzanne.garrett@redcross.org) or call (925) 771-8705 or (925) 216-7667.

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# ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

## SMC Jan Term course delves into the rise of women in a country hit hard by genocide



Photos provided

SMC student and Rwandan citizen Shirleen Ruganbura (far left) connected with students at the FAWE School for Girls during 2013 Jan Term class.

By Lou Fancher

Acute listening, deeper learning and broader humanitarianism are lofty aspirations to set for 2019. Nonetheless, these are the ambitious, aimed at outcomes for 18 Saint Mary's College students enrolled in a Jan Term travel course, "Rwanda Rising: Women, Leadership & Peacemaking."

Taught by two staff members of the college's Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action—Ryan Lambertson, assistant director for programs, and Coordinator of Civic Leadership Samantha Coon—the class culminates in three weeks of experiential learning while traveling in the sub-Saharan African country. Prior to departure, the intense scholarship of SMC's annual Jan Term has classwork that began with five two-hour seminars in October and includes study of a course reader and author Swanee Hunt's book, "Rwandan Women Rising," multiple in-class presentations, and pre- and post-trip project papers.

"We take it as our ethical responsibility to provide as much context as possible," says Lambertson about the stringent course requirements. "To get on a plane and go 9,000 miles without significant reading and writing would be a mistake."

Context, in this case, means learning about the genocide in 1994 that decimated the population within 90 days. Among the nearly one million Rwandans who died—approximately 10 percent of the population—men were disproportionately impacted. Women took leadership in the recovery and today, roughly 70 percent of the elected seats in Rwanda's parliament are held by women. Problem-solving initiatives formed post-tragedy and led by women activists address housing, health care, individual and civil rights, economics, entrepreneurship, government, ecology and culture in Rwanda's rural and urban areas. Taken as an example, the women leaders' ownership of civic responsibility in Rwanda aligns in tight harmony with

SMC's Lasallian commitment to further social justice and increase students' community engagement.

Lamberton has previously taught the course three times; Coon experienced the program as a senior in 2012, and four years after graduating, served as a faculty assistant on a return trip.

"I was also just there in September with Zam Zam Water, an organization started by (SMC alumnus) Yusuf Nesary," says Coon. Zam Zam works to eradicate poverty by providing clean water and education in villages worldwide.

Coon's first trip to Rwanda while a student was understandably mind-opening and informs principles undergirding the project's structure. "I came to understand my identity in the world. Now, as an instructor, I recognize the importance of creating space for students to ask questions about who they are in the world. It offers an opportunity to think about purpose, meaning and intentionality. We facilitate and provide prompts to challenge them to think about why they might be reacting in a certain way or feeling a certain way. Learning about themselves is just as important as learning about the world."

Lamberton contributes equally thoughtful perspective. To introduce American students who were not yet born in 1994 to a long ago event in a distant country that might otherwise seem remote, students learn of the history of genocide in the United States. "We remind them of the genocide of indigenous peoples, of Native Americans," says Lambertson. "We study how Rwanda acknowledges its history and found ways that allow the collective to move forward. Students are humbled by the honesty and complexity. Although we as Americans hesitate to make broad comments about Rwandan culture, they set a clear path. There's wisdom in projecting unity. That's a great example for Americans."

As students interact in Rwanda with business owners, educators, artists, scientists and elected officials, Coon

Lamberton predicts he will walk away from co-teaching the course with Coon feeling inspired and deeply grateful for the opportunity. "Every place (in the world) is complex, with multiple layers of history. What would it look like for all voices to be valued, especially voices seeking justice and love?" In Rwanda—and in his "own backyard," he suggests, there is cause to listen, learn and

embrace humanity.

Jan Term includes other imaginative, immersive travel and on-campus courses including "Star Wars and Theology, Analyzing strategic behavior using Game Theory," "The Science of Cooking," "Dance for Camera," and arguably most intriguing in an era of "fake news" and social media disinformation, "Lying 101."



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SMC students participated in the 1 pot, 1-hour activity at the community-based organization Gardens for Health International in the 2016 Jan Term class.

### Documentary Film Presentation:

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This film features interviews with prominent Israeli and Palestinian peace activists and political analysts, as well as Israeli settlers and soldiers, and Palestinian farmers.

Following the screening a discussion will be held with the assistance of Dalit Baum, Ph.D., Director of Economic Activism for Palestine at the American Friends Service Committee.

Baum is the Israeli co-founder of Who Profits from the Occupation, and the Coalition of Women for Peace in Israel. She is a scholar who has taught about militarism and the global economy from a feminist perspective in Israeli and American universities. She has been active with various groups in the Israeli anti-occupation and democracy movement, including Black Laundry, Boycott from Within, Zochrot, Anarchists against the Wall and Women in Black.

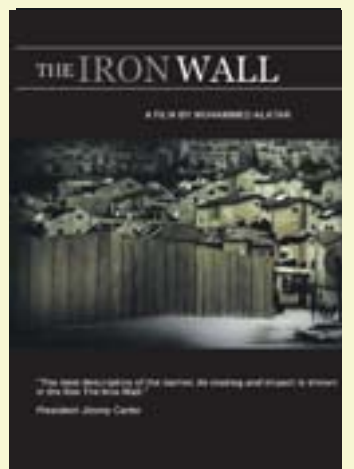
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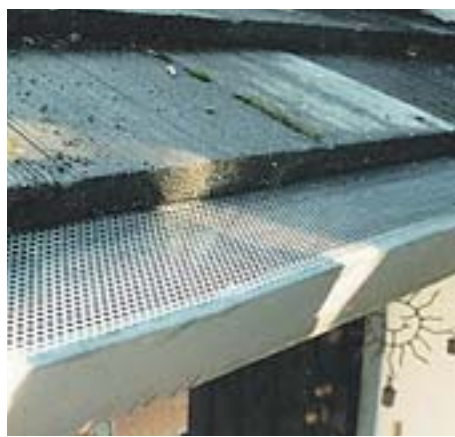
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## LLC Sweet Thursday event features local author, activist



Ingrid Rojas Contreras

Photo: Jeremiah Barber

By Lou Fancher

Consider it progress if a half-constructed small-scale castle or unfinished hand knit project linger indefinitely in the closet of San Francisco-based writer Ingrid Rojas Contreras. When the Colombian-born writer's image-filled, poetic prose is blocked, she flexes her creative muscles by building realistic model replicas of iconic architecture like Shakespeare's Globe Theatre or knitting a first-time-ever blanket. But sidwinding activities are abandoned the moment words resume their customary flow. Channeling her energy into short stories, articles, essays and books like the debut novel, "Fruit of the Drunken Tree," published in 2018, Contreras returns to what she describes as "my obsessive writing process."

Contreras will appear Jan. 17 in conversation with moderator Jeffrey Dieden at Sweet Thursday Presents, supported by the Friends of the Lafayette Library. A brief Q&A with the audience and book signing will follow the one-hour presentation.

"Fruit of the Drunken Tree" chronicles parallel stories of 7-year-old Chula and Petrona, the teenage girl hired by Chula's family to care for Chula and her older sister. Set largely in Colombia during the violent reign of Pablo Escobar, the swift-moving coming-of-age story is imbued with deep research, real life history, Contreras' personal experiences and an overall quality of raw suspense. Guerrilla armies, corrupt governments, bombings and betrayals provide a larger backdrop for the inter- and intra-family conflicts that drive the novel's compelling narrative.

Contreras holds an MFA from Columbia College Chicago and is the 2014 recipient of the Mary Tanenbaum Literary Award in Nonfiction. Her writing has been anthologized in The Los Angeles Review of Books, Guernica and Electric Literature, among others. She is temporarily on hiatus from her position as NPR affiliate at KQED and teaches fiction at the Univer-

sity of San Francisco.

Contreras says reactions to the book have erased fear. "What is most surprising is how the Colombia population in diaspora has reacted. My fear was there'd be anger. Instead, I've heard from Colombians born here in America that they gained a sense of what their parents wouldn't talk about: the family they lost in the 1980s and '90s because of the violence. What happened to cause (their parents) to uproot themselves and flee their homeland? Parents wouldn't tell that story."

On a broader scale, Contreras says authors write to fill artistic and emotional needs for themselves, but learning that a book meets readers' needs is special. "It's beyond someone enjoying the book for the story. It's someone getting life answers from it."

Sweet Thursday and similar events provide firsthand, unfiltered access to authors. At book appearances, Contreras selects excerpts to read aloud that suit the audience. "If there's a mostly immigrant audience I read from the beginning and from the end. It's the immigrant experience and what it means to straddle two cultures. I also read from later in the book when the father is missing and the family is waiting, not sure where he is. It has so much tension and that's been the reality for many Colombians of this time. People, out of nowhere, could disappear."

Of course, rich storytelling provides more than mirror-image characters or familiar plot lines for a single community. Books allow for slow, nuanced experiences. "Books are still a place you can get lost in, experience with your senses. As our social feeds get more overwhelming, it's something we crave. The more we lose ourselves in experiences that are not our own can inform how we judge the world," says Contreras.

Related to judgment are Contreras' writing principles. "I'm aware when I'm writing of my preconceptions. I always dig through that to get

somewhere that feels more complicated and reflects experiences beyond my own." While developing the book's characters who are left-wing guerrilla members, she applied journalistic practices including extensive historical research and interviews with actual guerrilla soldiers about their lives. "It wasn't what I expected. One man joined because his grandfather was killed by the paramilitary. It wasn't political: he was just avenging his grandfather. People joined because the situation - with government army members killing innocent civilians because they had to meet a body count and got bonuses for killing - literally meant the government was attacking people so they could be crossed off as guerrilla members, even though (their victims) were not."

If complex politics inspired Contreras to write about Colombia in the 1990s, the no-less tangled quagmire of the 2016 Presidential election and its aftermath propelled her into real life activism. "I felt when I co-founded the 100 Days of Action initiative that I needed to do something to bring oxygen for myself. After the election, I felt lost. I looked at my community (people of color, immigrants, artists) and felt we needed something to do. I wanted to work with symbols, poetic action, since I'm an artist. I was trying to provide what I needed and what the community needed. Stories nurture me, so that's always my first thought when something goes wrong: This can be fixed with a story, a poem."

The initiative offered opportunity for artists to create and share counter-messages in response to President Donald Trump's 100-day plan. Two years later, Contreras continues to be engaged - and to tell stories. Currently working on a memoir about her grandfather, she says, "I've been working on it for two years. I cannot begin a book without finding the right beginning. I have over 100 pages of beginnings and have finally found the one. To me, beginnings are the first brick that shapes the book, tells me where the story wants to go. It leads a story to its natural end."

Which means a nearly finished blanket remains in need of a first wash and felting, and a folded paper theater awaits completion. No loss, if the result is a second book by Contreras.



## Celebrating the Year of the Earth Pig

By Michele Duffy



Illustration: Jaya Griggs

Chinese New Year starts Feb. 5 and this Earth or Golden Pig year promises to be a more relaxed, easygoing and peace-loving year, with relationships eased. The Earth element rules for the second year in a row, according to the Taoist Five Elements. Celebrations and the good life are abundant and more grounded so remember the importance of yin/yang, and the lessons of balance. Earth curbs Pig's overspending tendency in 2019. Pig year highlights culture, art, music, film all the finer things in life, merriment and culinary gifts. Whether in a cooking class, the boardroom, or at home, people will be more apt to try to work together in harmony.

... continued on Page B5

# Front porch open mic launches in Lafayette



Austin Hurst (left) and Andree Duggan

Photo provided

## By Pippa Fisher

For Lamorinda musicians looking for an opportunity to strum guitars, play their fiddles or hum bluegrass harmonies with like-minded country fans, there haven't been many options locally. Until now, that is, after a couple of Lafayette residents decided to do something about it and launch an open mic event with a kickoff at Lamorinda Music's Big Room on Saturday, Jan. 19.

Lafayette country music bandmates Austin Hurst and Andree Duggan decided to address the need with a "front porch" style evening to be held every third Saturday. "There really wasn't much on this side of the tunnel in the way of open mics for bluegrass, country, and folk music enthusiasts," explains Hurst.

"Freight and Salvage in Berkeley regularly features artists along the musical theme of our open mic such as Sarah Jarosz, Marty Stuart, Ruthie Foster, Bele Fleck, and Abigail Washburn, Peter Yarrow and Paul Stookey (Peter, Paul, Mary), and Richard Thompson," says Hurst, adding, "They also host the Fiddle Summit and the Old Time Festival, which always sells out, so we know this area is a hub for this kind of music."

Duggan says they thought it might be the right time, space and community for such a monthly gathering. Lamorinda Music quickly supported the idea by offering its Big Room.

Hurst says they hope to attract not only local musicians but also those in the area who love this kind of music and just want to come and listen.

Duggan explains, "Many times when you go to an open mic, it's in a bar with people coming and going, drinking, laughing, and not really focusing on who is on stage. Front Porch Open Mic will feel

much more like going to someone's house, sitting on their front porch and playing, singing, and listening – a space supportive of fledgling artists who will no doubt meet there and end up collaborating as well."

Hurst and Duggan who, with their band Lonesome Eddie and the Saddle Sores, play professionally at local East Bay venues and have long been involved in the country music scene.

Hurst grew up on country music in the '50s, folk and rock music in the '60s, and started playing in bands in the '70s. After a brief stint in a bluegrass band in the mid-'70s, he formed a rock and roll band, Soft Touch with whom he performed for 35 years. He and Lonesome Eddie – aka Elliott Aronson who played piano in the Soft Touch band and pedal steel in the current band – then formed the current country band, Lonesome Eddie and the Saddle Sores. Hurst takes a lead role in running the band, singing, playing lead guitar and dabbling in five-string banjo and mandolin. He has written several original songs that the band performs.

Duggan started playing guitar during the '70s folk era. She always loved folk and bluegrass music and during college hosted a bluegrass radio show on WLIR, New York. In 2012, after her son was grown, she started voice lessons, bought a guitar and got back into music by joining a monthly gathering of performance musicians in the Albany area called HOOT. Being somewhat technical, Duggan learned Garage Band and began to perfect harmony singing by layering her own voice. In 2017 she met Hurst and soon thereafter, joined his life and band, Lonesome Eddie and the Saddle Sores, where she sings and plays guitar.

The first open mic night will take place at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 19.

Info: <https://frontporchopenmic.com>

# OIS String Orchestra and Jazz Band make sweet music in Fairfield



OIS Jazz Band

Photo Shweta Thote

The Orinda Intermediate School String Orchestra and Jazz Band under the direction of the school's instrumental music teacher, Greg Mazmanian, "Mr. Maz," performed holiday music at the famed

Jelly Belly Factory in Fairfield on Saturday, Dec. 15. The ensembles have appeared at the candy factory for several years running and relish this "sweet" annual gig!



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## Leo Club offers support to education



Photo provided

From left: Campolindo Principal John Walker, Leo President Eleanor Kim, Leo Advisor Sarah Morgan, and Lion Advisor Bob Murtagh

### Submitted by Bob Murtagh

Each year the Campolindo High School Leo Club, which is a service club sponsored by the Lamorinda Lions, donates a portion of its fundraising activities. This year Leo Club President

Eleanor Kim presented a check for \$500 to Campolindo High School Principal John Walker. This was the 16th year the Leos have given back to the community and their total donation to date exceeds \$4,000.

## Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary visits Guatemala to help build house, distribute donated books



Photo provided

A goodwill delegation from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, led by Skip and Linda McCowan, left, pose with some of the 5,000 books hand-delivered to Guatemalan children.

### Submitted by Thomas Black

A 10-member delegation from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club has returned from a weeklong goodwill mission to Antigua, Guatemala, where, among other things, it helped to build a new house for a local family and to distribute 700 books aimed at children aged 6-17.

The modest house, measuring 12 feet by 24 feet, was for a family that had earned sweat-equity rights by donating countless hours of their own labor at a local family development center operated by Common Hope, a Minnesota-based nonprofit that promotes hope and opportunity for native Guatemalans. It does so by partnering with children and families in advancing education, health care, housing and family development.

Antigua is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Centre founded nearly 500 years ago by Spaniards.

The books, all in Spanish, were purchased for \$5,000. The cost was shared by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary and individual donors. The books will be used in the library at the family development center and in so-called suitcase libraries taken to neighboring villages for the enrichment of families affiliated with Common Hope.

The Rotarians, led by Jack "Skip" McCowan and his wife Linda, who live in Lafayette, also volunteered at a day-

care center, accompanied social workers on their appointed rounds to affiliated families, and experienced a "day-in-the-life-of" by visiting shops of a woodworker and a metal worker.

While there the McCowans witnessed the high school graduation of a young woman whom they had personally sponsored for years. Her class numbered 160. Five fellow Rotarians have since joined the McCowans in becoming official sponsors of individual children. The McCowans now sponsor two children. Monthly donations help to pay school-related expenses until the child graduates from high school.

Sponsored children graduate at a rate three times the national average. Since Common Hope began its outreach programs in 1986, some 2,000 sponsored children have earned secondary school diplomas.

This marks the second goodwill in the past 10 years by the McCowans. Others were participating for the first time.

Asked about the most meaningful aspects of the trip, Skip McCowan answered, "Presenting the newly constructed house to the family and getting acquainted with the children and their families. Rotary clubs worldwide are involved in literacy programs. It was touching to see how far a few donated dollars can be stretched for the common good."

Info: [www.commonhope.org](http://www.commonhope.org)

**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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

### 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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

## 'A Sense of Place' at the Moraga Art Gallery



Photos Wenda Pyman

### Submitted by George Ehrenhaft

Wenda Pyman's latest exhibit of beguiling landscape photographs entitled "A Sense of Place" kicks off the new year at the Moraga Art Gallery. Calling to mind the camera work of Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter, Pyman captures the luminous and timeless splendor of places like Mt. Diablo, Morro Bay, San Francisco's Baker Beach, and the Florida Keys.

Featured as a guest artist, Suzanne Pershing, who heads the Arts Council of San Leandro and also teaches drawing and painting, has created a colorful collection of unique teacups and saucers, some with stylized ceramic florals sprouting from their rims, many decorated with abstract shapes

and lines reminiscent of Miro and Picasso.

The show, which includes paintings, ceramics, jewelry, fused glass, and much more by the gallery's 14 member-artists and several guest artists, runs from Jan. 9 to March 16. The public is invited to a free opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12. Use the occasion to meet the artists, enjoy a glass of wine accompanied by light snacks and live music.

The gallery is located in the Rheem Shopping Center, at 522 Center Street, Moraga. Its hours are Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, visit [www.moragaartgallery.com](http://www.moragaartgallery.com) or call (925) 376-5407.



## In Memory

### Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler



On Monday, November 19, 2018, Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler, loving wife and mother of three children, passed away at age 82.

Pat was born on February 4, 1936 in Fresno, California to Clarinda and William Phillips. She received her BSN in nursing jointly from UC San Francisco and Berkeley in 1958 and was a practicing nurse specializing in public health newborn care for the County of Alameda for many years. On September 5, 1956 she married John Berthold Kessler in Yosemite National Park. They raised one daughter Ellie, and two sons, Bill and Steve.

Pat had many passions not the least of which was being a leader in the community and in business. She was a tireless advocate for women's rights. She was an entrepreneur who started the successful gift store, Lighting Bug Gifts. Pat was a Girl Scout Leader for Ellie thru high school. She was president of the Parent Teacher Associations for Sleepy Hollow School, Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. She ushered in the first on campus Grad Night at Miramonte High School in 1987. She organized and ran the All Orinda Swim Meet in the early 1980's. She was a founder of Lamorinda National Bank and sat on their Board of Directors before it was acquired by US Bank. She was President of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She was a fierce champion of public education and strong supporter of the University of California system. She rose to be the leader of the General Alumni Association for UC Berkeley and eventually became a Regent for the University of California. In her later years, she devoted much time to the Assistance League of Sacramento helping those less fortunate in the community. Her ability to find common ground and solve problems within the organizations she led or in which she participated is the collaborative trait for which she will be remembered most.

Pat's unique upbringing in the Yosemite Valley carried with her throughout her life. Her love of nature and the mountains was strong. She was an avid and beautiful skier. She hiked and fly fished. She doted on her husband of over 50 years until his passing in 2013. She loved to travel and learn about other cultures. Her favorite place, aside from Yosemite, was Lake Tahoe where she enjoyed having a second home for over 30 years. She was adored by all who knew her especially her family.

Pat was preceded in death by her husband, John. She is survived by her three children and six grandchildren. Donations in Pat's name may be made to The Yosemite Conservancy or AAUW STEM program in Auburn CA <https://auburn-ca.aauw.net/>. A Celebration of Life will be held on April 13th at the home of longtime family friend, Barbara Conley. Please contact Ellie Kessler Vierra for further information at 916-591-8771 or [elliavierra@gmail.com](mailto:elliavierra@gmail.com).

Family Focus

# Helping your young child cope with the death of a loved one

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

Happy New Year! I hope this year will be a happy and healthy one for everyone in our wonderful community.

Sadly, some of us experienced loss personally or indirectly during the past year. We've witnessed multiple tragedies in our community, state, country and world. It is sometimes difficult to assess how our children are affected by these events, but we do know that the loss of a loved one can affect them deeply.

My work as a therapist invariably involves helping people go through the mourning process when someone close to them dies. If you have suffered the death of a loved one, it is important to seek support if needed, for your own sake and in order to be able to help your child. Even though it may be extremely difficult, you will need to be able to set aside your own grief at times, since parents are essential in helping children cope with loss.

When a loved one dies, a child under the age of 6 typically will not recognize that this is a permanent situation or have a realistic concept of death. Children this age tend to view death as a temporary condition. A child doesn't like to be separated from someone close to him or her, and this factor may be the extent of his or her grasp of death. Some children will express sadness, while others won't react much at all.

It is important to communicate in ways a child can understand, and at the same time be reassuring. You may say, "I'm very sad to tell you that Grandpa died today. We will miss being with him. You had fun playing with him and going to the park with him. He was such a wonderful Grandpa." If you have religious or spiritual beliefs that can help explain and provide comfort, frame them in the simplest terms possible. For example: "Grandpa is now in heaven with Uncle Steve."

Avoid comments like "We lost Grandpa," or "he died peacefully in his sleep." Young children interpret things liter-

ally, and you don't want to instill fear in your child that you or she may get lost or go to sleep and not wake up.

Rather than giving too much information that may overwhelm your child, wait and allow her or him to ask questions. Your child may ask you if you are going to die too. This is a common reaction upon hearing of the death of someone else. You will want to provide reassurance that you expect to live to an old age like Grandpa and that you will be around to take care of your child.

Explain to your child that she or he may be sad or upset at times when your child is missing Grandpa, and that you and others in the family will also be very sad and may even cry sometimes because you will miss him so much. You need to prepare your child so that he or she doesn't become alarmed or afraid of any emotional reactions to Grandpa's death.

If your child asks a question about Grandpa within the first few weeks or months while you are still in deep mourning, try to answer calmly. If you show intense emotion, he or she will most likely avoid bringing up the subject again and risk upsetting you.

Young children show deep emotions more behaviorally than verbally, so watch for signs of regression such as sleep issues, bed-wetting, heightened fears, or an increase in meltdowns. Keep some photos of Grandpa displayed and share happy memories of him so that your child can gradually come to terms with their loss. Over time encourage your child to draw pictures of him and find age-appropriate books on the death of a loved one to read together.

While you want to help comfort your child, you also want to normalize their life as much as possible. Include activities to help your child feel better such as outings or art projects or cooking together.

Many parents want to know if a young child should attend a funeral or celebration

of life. In general, your child won't be upset if he or she misses out on this event, but may well be upset to see an actual burial or many people crying. If your child tends to be fearful in general, witnessing distraught family members could heighten his or her fears and insecurities. In addition, it will be in your own best interest (and ultimately your child's) if you can experience the ceremony and mourn as you need to without having to be concerned about how your child is doing.

This decision is a personal one. If you are in mourning and it will be more comforting for you to have your child with you, or if you have no one close to take care of her or him while you're gone, you can plan ways to make it work. You can let your child know what to expect ahead of time so he or she will be more prepared. You can bring toys for your child to play with while he or she sits with you. And you can solicit a close relative or friend take her or him to another area to play or have a snack, especially at the grave site.

If you know that your child will be deeply affected by the absence of someone close in his or her life, finding a good therapist who works with young children via play therapy will be invaluable. In my next column, I will discuss how to help your older child cope with the death of a loved one.



Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. Contact her at (925) 376-9323 (phone or text) or margierye@yahoo.com. She is the author of "Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship" and "Appetite for Life: Inspiring Stories of Recovery from Anorexia, Bulimia, and Compulsive Overeating."

# Celebrating the Year of the Earth Pig

... continued from Page B3

Kindness is a central theme in Pig year and acts of generosity and philanthropy will be richly rewarded in 2019. At the office, patience, dedication and reality-based projects or decision making are the successful ingredients in Pig year.

Avoid overpromising or overcommitting for work harmony as well as on the home front. The Earth element will ground nicely with all that is naturally joyful and carefree in Pig year, but remember to avoid risk-taking all year. Pig year is about family and being sociable, but since the Earth element brings stability, balance and overall positive energies all year, you can use a Pig year to be strategic in business.

The 2019 Pig year is yin and so light and convivial, allowing many people to feel joyful and abundant, and so fortunate and lucky. 2019 Pig must also remain guided by a heavy dose of strict budgeting all year. It would be unwise to overspend in Pig year, and then begin 2020 Metal Rat year depleted in any way. Fortunately, the Earth element that balances and grounds 2019 offers intuitiveness, flexibility, modesty and organizing throughout the year. This all blends quite well with Pig's desire to study and learn a wide range of interests. Zodiac Pig is the also the very last of the 12 Zodiac animals and so completes a larger cycle, and within the carefree vibe of 2019, still offers a chance to be reflective about the prior 11 years. Looking

ahead to 2020 and a new cycle, prepare prudently and make depletion to be a thing of the past as one readies for the excitement and career/money activity of the 2020 Metal Rat year.

Health and personal care and well-being in 2019 are focused on a blend of equal parts: healing with nature, and spiritual pursuits. Portioning meals properly will avert the gluttony that is often associated when Pig is out of phase or balance. People born in the year of the Pig may experience deep health afflictions during Pig year, and this challenging energy can also be experienced for Pigs in the Pig month (Nov. 5 to Dec. 5) as well as the Pig hours (9 to 11 p.m.).

Special care should be taken to not be wasteful and keep up with life in a tidy way, including administrative duties and connecting with those on your team. In Pig year we should indulge, yes, but not the the point of recklessness, and again, the Earth element will be supremely helpful in all things to do with restraint. Since family plays a prominent role in Pig year, easygoing Pig supports those who have struggled with work/family balance and finally understand what true balance feels like. There will be more opportunities for human exchanges that are beneficial to everyone.

Before any partnership, friendship or love interest can be fully appreciated, it's wise to practice a "trust but verify" policy and proven, mutual adoration in Pig year, before any deep commitments are

made. We might well see an uptick in family reunions, parties and wedding announcements, birth and baptism celebrations and people getting along at these events. The 2019 Pig year will also favor generosity and giving and deep benevolence to others who might be in need of more gentleness among us. Be sure to balance giving with receiving, as the Earth element will demand. Going with this or any other Pig year flow will be paramount to individual success.

Pig year will be beneficial to a wide range of other Zodiac animals, and the year will be fondly remembered when it concludes on Jan. 24, 2020. The concept of luck is at variance with western held beliefs in that, in Taoist, Feng Shui and even Buddhist canon, we can create our own luck through our thoughts, words and deeds, and ultimately change the course of our fate and destiny.

There is an old saying that contends that a man with riches can end up poor compared to the man who employs Feng Shui, and the greater responsibility taken up in Pig year will center around wisdom and not simply the accumulation of knowledge. Lastly, pick a cause to contribute to and support, to allow the gratitude handshake to be an integral part of your fortunate Pig year. Plan each year with Empowerment Chart readings, which are available upon request by emailing spaceharmony@gmail.com. Happy New Year!

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ART

**The Valley Art Gallery** presents "Wintermission" from Jan. 8 through Feb 2. Wintermission, their show between shows, features selected works by Gallery Artists designed to brighten and warm even the longest winter days. Reflecting a wide range of motifs, styles and media, the show continues a mission to represent the best of the best of more than 100 East Bay artists. [www.valleyartgallery.org](http://www.valleyartgallery.org)

**The Moraga Art Gallery** presents its new show, "A Sense of Place," running from Jan. 9 to March 16 and featuring Wenda Pyman's beguiling landscape photographs, which call to mind the camera work of Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter. Free opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 12. Use the occasion to meet the artists, enjoy a glass of wine accompanied by light snacks and live music. For more information, visit [www.moragaart-gallery.com](http://www.moragaart-gallery.com) or call (925) 376-5407.

**Bedford Gallery**, located in the Leshner Center for the Arts, of-

fers enriching, educational volunteer opportunities. Train to become a docent from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, Jan. 16, 23, 30 and Feb. 6, 13. Docent volunteering is fun and provides opportunities to make friends, learn about art, and help foster the arts in our community. No prior art knowledge is required. To sign up, contact Carmen Kelly at (925) 295-1416 or [kelly@bedfordgallery.org](mailto:kelly@bedfordgallery.org). Learn more at: [www.bedfordgallery.org/support/volunteer](http://www.bedfordgallery.org/support/volunteer)

MUSIC

**Ensemble ARI concert** at 7 p.m. on Jan. 12 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda, featuring music by Bach, Handel, Cassado and living composers Ruviano and Ahn. Admission: Free; suggested donation: \$20. For more info [www.facebook.com/EnsembleAri/](http://www.facebook.com/EnsembleAri/)

**William Feasley**, classical guitarist, performs at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Walnut Creek, in Multi-Media Program "Echos of Goya" at 7 p.m. on Jan. 19 at 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek. A Classical Gui-

tar Master, Feasley is world-recognized as the featured guitarist in the CBS special, "Eulogy of Segovia." Feasley has been the featured artist for numerous prestigious guitar and music festivals around the world. Donation at the door: average \$20, Students \$10 (all are welcome regardless of donation).

**Living Jazz presents** "In The Name of Love," the 17th annual musical tribute honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 20 at the Oakland Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Dr., Oakland. Tickets: Adv. \$25- \$60; Door: \$30-\$65 (discounts for Children 12 and under). All proceeds will benefit the Living Jazz Children's Project. [Livingjazz.org/mlktribute](http://Livingjazz.org/mlktribute)

THEATER

**Diablo Ballet opens** the new year with the second program of its landmark 25th Season, Balanchine and Beyond, Feb. 1 and 2, at the Del Valle Theatre in Walnut Creek. This program features three ballets including the classic masterpiece Apollo by George Balanchine. Immediately following each perfor-

mance, ticket holders are invited to stay for a post-performance Q&A with our dancers, choreographers and musicians followed by a dessert and coffee reception where you can meet and mingle with the dancers. Single tickets are \$15-\$47. For tickets and showtimes, call (925) 943-SHOW (7469) or visit [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org). For more information, visit [www.diabloballet.org](http://www.diabloballet.org).

LECTURE & LITERATURE

**The World Affairs Book Group** will meet at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 15 at Orinda Books to read and discuss "Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence," by Christian Parenti. They meet bi-monthly and welcome new members.

**KPFA Radio 94.1 FM** presents Ha Jin: The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Po from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 23, at Berkeley Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St, Berkeley. Ha Jin will discuss his new book, The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Po, answer questions & sign books. Hosted by Jack Foley. Cost: \$12 advance, \$15 door. For more

info see <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3918550> or call (510) 967-4495.

**Discovering Opera:** Jake Heggie's Moby Dick from 1:30 to 3 p.m. on Jan. 31 in the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Arts & Science Room. Moby Dick is an opera based on the classic novel by Herman Melville. Set in 1820, it tells the story of Captain Ahab of the whaling ship Pequod, who after losing one of his legs to a frightening white whale, becomes obsessed with finding and destroying the creature at any cost. Lecturer Bradford Wade will give a guided tour of the opera, with a description of the plot interspersed with musical examples. This lecture is given in conjunction with Opera San Jose's production of Moby Dick, Feb. 9-24. Free.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

**Lafayette Youth Commission** seventh and eighth grade Tri-City Dance – seventh- and eighth-graders from all three Lamorinda middle schools are invited to the LYC's first Tri-City Dance of the year from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 18 at the Lafayette Community Center. Cost: \$7 per attendee and must be purchased prior to the dance. Dances sell out fast, so reserve your spot today! To reserve your spot or for more info, please visit [www.lafayetterec.org](http://www.lafayetterec.org) or call (925) 284-2232.

OTHER

**Lafayette resident**, Papa John Kiefer, will, again, offer workshops on "How to Raise Your Own Chickens." Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction. Workshops are free and will be held in Lafayette from 1 to 3:30 pm on Sundays, March 3 and 17. Reservations are required. Contact: [chickenspapa-john@gmail.com](mailto:chickenspapa-john@gmail.com). Location provided upon registration.

**Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center** presents The Iron Wall - film and discussion with Dalit Baum, Ph.D. from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 17, at Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center at Our Savior's Lutheran, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Baum is an Israeli Peace Activist/Scholar and Director of Economic Activism for Palestine at the AFSC. Reception 6 p.m., film/Q&A 7 p.m. Cost: \$10 in advance, \$15 at door, Students free. For more info see <http://ourpeacecenter.org> or call (925) 933-7850 or email [margli@ourpeacecenter.org](mailto:margli@ourpeacecenter.org).

**The organizers of Women's March Contra Costa** are pleased to announce the 3rd Annual Women's March from 10:30 am to 1 p.m. on Jan. 19 at Civic Park, Walnut Creek. All community members dedicated to preserving human rights, respect for diversity and compassion for our shared humanity and planet are encouraged to participate and join together. The event is non-partisan and all are welcome to attend. RSVP: [www.womensmarchcontracosta.org](http://www.womensmarchcontracosta.org)

**Lion's Club Crab Feed** with silent auction at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 19 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Tickets for adults are \$55; children 6-12 years are \$27.50. To purchase call (925) 283-1841.

... continued on next Page

Lamorinda's Religious Services

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Dancing ~ music provided by a popular DJ ~ 8:30 - 11:00 p.m.

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For questions, please call or text Thea at (925)890-0918.

## 'Becoming Astrid' (Unga Astrid) opens at Rheem and Orinda theatres



Image provided

By Sophie Braccini

Movie releases at the beginning of the year bring to Lamorinda their load of glossy big productions, heroic tales, bold Sci-Fi releases, all more or less reproducing an expected Hollywoodish format where the storyline could be guessed within a few minutes. Not so with "Becoming Astrid," a breath of fresh cinematic air that will blow into Lamorinda theaters Jan. 11, based on Astrid Lindgren, the 20th century writer, best known for her creation of Pippi Longstocking and other still popular child heroes.

The film shows 10 crucial years in the life of the Swedish author in the 1920s, where her character was put to the test and where she followed her heart and prevailed. There is

nothing very heroic in her story; it is that of an ordinary country girl, raised in a quite rigid and prudish social environment, but animated from the start by an unconventional free spirit, fighting to create a life for herself in her own terms.

Lindgren is not particularly pretty and she does not try to please, but she possesses a wild energy and a talent for writing. Several times during these years where she took risks, she could have sided with convention or chosen an easier path, but she did not, preserving her authenticity and self-worth.

The movie is beautifully shot by Pernille Fischer Christensen, from a script she co-wrote with Kim Fupz Aakeson, which has a strong feminist streak. It was not easy to be a

woman in that time period. In an interview with NPR, Christensen said that her film is also a women's history story, and that a lot of similar stories have not been told because of shame. Lindgren is shown as a feminist precursor, but with no societal or political creed, just a desire to break free with no regard for what is considered "appropriate."

In that same interview Christensen said that later in life Lindgren told about this period of her life that "she might have been an author if this had not happened, but ... she might not have been as great an author." It is the difficulties that forced her to fight and become a unique and stronger person.

It is not necessary to be a fan of, or even know, the mischievous character Pippi Longstocking that Lindgren created in her early 40s, or to relate to Lindgren and enjoy the movie. Though looking at young Lindgren there was a lot of that same mischief in her. Alba August, who plays Lindgren, gives a beautiful and very touching performance. She has no fear of being quite unattractive at the beginning of the movie to becoming pretty by the end.

"Becoming Astrid" will play at the Rheem Theatre in Moraga on Jan. 11 for one week, followed by a week at the Orinda Theatre starting on Jan. 18.

Info: www.lamorindatheatres.com

## ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

### OTHER.. continued

**Many Faces of Leukemia**, Lymphoma and Myeloma from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Jan. 23 in the Lafayette Library Community Room. Patients and caregivers are invited to attend this free educational program focusing on the unique issues of blood cancer patients. A panel of medical experts will discuss current treatments and emerging, exciting breakthrough therapies to treat CLL, ALL, Lymphoma and Multiple Myeloma. Please register by calling (925) 677-5041 x272 or send email to sjung@dvothmg.com

**Join Campolindo's Academic Decathlon team's** "Through the Decades" Trivia and FUNdraising Night from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Jan. 24 in the Campo cafeteria. The evening will feature trivia, raffles, a bake sale, performances by the student music group The Cooks, and free babysitting/activities for young children. Cost: \$10 at the door for raffle and trivia to support the team to make it to the state championship. Please contact CampoAcademicDecathlon@gmail.com for more info.

**Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church's** annual Crab Feed and Dance, 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 2 at 1700 School Street in Moraga. Dinner and Dance

tickets are \$50 and must be purchased in advance. Please call or text Thea at (925) 890-0918. The Dessert Silent Auction is back. Chicken dinner choice available by special advance order request.

**Free Tax preparation** for the 2019 tax season is available starting February 2019 from AARP's Tax-Aide and United Way's Earn It, Keep It, Save It (EKS) programs. Service is provided by volunteer tax preparers who are IRS trained and certified. EKS service is limited to those with incomes below \$54,000, while Tax-Aide does not have an income limit. For Tax-Aide site information or appointments in Walnut Creek call: (925) 943-5851 for the Walnut Creek Senior Center site; (925) 405-6278 for the Walnut Creek Grace Presbyterian Church site; or (925) 979-5013 for the Walnut Creek St. Paul's Episcopal Church site. For information on other Tax-Aide sites, call: (925) 726-3199. For information on EKS sites, call 2-1-1 or visit www.earnitkeepsaveit.org.

### GARDEN

**The Lafayette Garden Club's** first meeting of the new year will be at 10 a.m. on Jan. 10 at the Lafayette Veteran's Hall. We welcome guests to come and hear Nyna Dolby present "What to do with a Safeway Bouquet?"

Nyna is the House Floral Arranger at Filoli and has many years experience. She will demonstrate the basics of flower arranging highlighting the importance of proper mechanics, the role of foliage, and the basic art elements in this ephemeral art form.

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club** meeting begins at 9:45 a.m. Monday, Jan. 14 at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Road, Walnut Creek. David Rust, an expert on mushrooms and president of the Mycological Society, with his slide show, "Know Your Mushrooms," will help us identify the good and the bad and we will come away with a new appreciation of fungi's significant benefits to our ecosystems and human health. Times: 9:45 a.m. - Business Meeting; 10:30 a.m. - Social; 11 a.m. Program. We invite you to attend a meeting. Questions: mslittle44@gmail.com.

**The Moraga Garden Club** will hold its next meeting at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 17, at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. The guest speaker will be Gail Emmons, author of "A Beginner's Guide to Working with Leaves in a Contemporary Way." She will speak on "Leaf Manipulation." Emmons started her flower arranging journey more than 30 years ago while living in Hong Kong

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## Service Clubs Announcements

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<b>January 10:</b> <b>Diana Benton</b> Contra Costa District Attorney	<b>January 17:</b> <b>Mike Anderson</b> Lafayette City Councilmember
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**JANUARY MEETINGS**

- 11:** Common Hope – Members share their recent experience in Guatemala
- 18:** Paul Grinberg, having dined at 99 of the top 100 restaurants in the worlds delights with stories of his culinary adventures.
- 25:** Member Exposé, Fred Steingraf on his life.

**Lamorinda Weekly**  
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and taking classes in Sogetsu Ikebana. Emmons' trademark in flower arranging has been the development of a dynamic sculptural style that mixes the traditions of both East and West in new and daring ways. This event is free and open to all interested parties. Refreshments will be served. For more information, visit moragagardenclub.com.

**The Montelindo Garden Club** will be holding its January meeting at 9:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 18 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall. Presentation: Pruning Tips with speaker Scott Paris. In South Placer County, Scott Paris

started as a Landscape Designer and opened the High Hand Nursery in 2003 to acquire plants for his landscaping business. More recently he became the owner of Maple Rock Gardens, a landscaping gem and year-round farm which is opened to the public a few times a year. Paris will give tips on pruning plants in your landscape. [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).

**Winter Rose Care Workshop** at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 26 at Mc-Donnell Nursery, 196 Moraga Way, Orinda. Email info@mc-donnellnursery.com or call (925) 254-3713 to reserve a seat.

## Set the table with stuffed mushrooms as side dish or appetizer



Joel's Stuffed Mushrooms

Photo Susie Iventosch

### By Susie Iventosch

Back in October when we featured the fig-shallot jam, I mentioned my son's stuffed mushrooms and now it's time to feature them! This recipe calls for a small quantity of a long list of items, because we are trying to replicate a random barbecue seasoning that he happened to have on hand the day he first made up this recipe. We made them

again last week, using this exact list of ingredients and they were fantastic. The thickened juices in the bottom of the baking dish are also really good drizzled back over the top of the mushrooms when you serve them. If you don't have fig jam on hand, try finely smashed fresh or reconstituted dried figs. These mushrooms are great as a side dish or as an appetizer to pass around before dinner.

#### INGREDIENTS

20 medium-large cremini mushrooms  
1-2 large shallots, finely diced (approximately 1/3 cup)  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
¼ teaspoon black pepper  
¼ teaspoon white pepper  
¼ teaspoon smoked paprika  
1/8 teaspoon chili powder  
Dash garlic powder  
¼ teaspoon sea salt  
4 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
2 tablespoons fig jam or fig chutney  
½ cup crumbled blue cheese  
½ cup grated Parmesan

#### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 F. Spray a baking sheet or 9x13 casserole dish with cooking spray. Heat oil in a skillet and add diced shallots. Cook over medium heat, stirring often until caramelized. Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl.

Meanwhile, clean mushrooms with a soft mushroom brush and remove stems. Finely chop four of the mushrooms and add to bowl with cooked shallots. Set remaining 16 mushroom caps (with cavity up) on the prepared baking dish. Add all remaining ingredients to bowl and mix well with a fork until well blended.

Distribute filling among each of the caps. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until cheese is bubbly and tops are getting slightly browned. Serve hot as a side dish or as an appetizer.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://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.

## State's water infrastructure and politics to be discussed during Jan. 10 info session

### By Lou Fancher

Lifetime learners and people who care about California's water supply will not want to miss the OLLI @Berkeley Info Session held Jan. 10 at the Lafayette Library. OLLI, the jolly moniker that's an acronym for UC Berkeley's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, is known to offer unique, rigorous, education courses to people age 50 and older. In eight locations in Berkeley and at the Lafayette Library, 2,800 members join approximately 75 faculty to explore over 100 courses that include modified medical school-level classes on the brain, creative writing, history, contemporary politics, film, music and art appreciation, and more.

During the free information session in Lafayette, staff and faculty will present highlights of the membership program and preview upcoming courses. Feature Speaker Richard Walker, professor emeritus of geography at UC Berkeley and director of the Living New Deal project, will delve into multiple aspects of the state's water infrastructure and politics in a presentation titled, "California Water Ward in the Age of Climate Change."

Expect Walker to set off ideological fireworks. During

a nearly 40-year career at Cal and as author/co-author of six nonfiction books – including his near opus published in 2018 on the environmental impact in the Bay Area of tech-driven Silicon Valley, "Pictures of a Gone City: Tech and the Dark Side of Prosperity in the San Francisco Bay Area" – Walker has developed powerful and arguably, politically volatile perspectives.

"California water has been badly mismanaged for a century-and-a-half," he says. "The system is a total patchwork of water rights all slapped on top of each other. Everybody sticks their pipe in the water figuring they can take as much as they want."

Walker insists the problems existed long before people heard of climate change. California's inflexible water infrastructure doesn't allow adequate adjustments during droughts is one example. Compounding the problem, continued overdrafts drawn from groundwater and rivers is wasted when used on low-value agriculture, like hay, or homeowners' lawns. "I'll start the talk by saying we have the most magnificent water transfer and storage system. But we believe a marvelous physical structure can solve our problems and it can't. We can only do that by wisely allocating and rationing our water."

Walker will conclude with clarification about an issue foremost on people's minds: wildfires. "Water management and wildfires have almost nothing to do with each other," he says. "Trump tweeted during the Camp Fire that if California managed its water properly, it would have less wildfires. The administration is trying to do an end run around state policy and just expand supply." Walker says raising water levels in dams, a solution suggested by the Trump administration and others, can have only trivial effect. "The confusion about water policy is enormous," he adds. "It's a constant uphill battle by sensible people to get California to revolutionize its water policy."

Delivering his message to an army of actual and future OLLI members might be clever strategy. "They're prime material for learning," says Walker, who will during the next semester lead a course, "The Living New Deal: Remarkable Past, Possible Future."

"They have time to take classes, they love to learn and have lively minds. They want more than a passive class. They're lovers of history, politically astute, and want courses that speak to the present."

OLLI Operations Manager

Lisa Hardy says members are curious and appreciate learning in a social setting. Faculty are experts in their fields, able to offer breadth and depth. Courses that limit size to allow greater one-on-one interaction between faculty and members tend to sell out within hours of registration opening. Hardy admits, the greatest challenge other than finding venues is "meeting the incredible demands of Bay Area members eager to learn."

Enthusiasm for hands-on learning explains why among the most popular OLLI courses are writing, international current affairs, history and cultural appreciation. Walker's New Deal class integrates all of those features and offers a citizen science-style opportunity, in addition to the regular classroom curriculum. Students will first study the New Deal that was launched by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, largely in response to the Great Depression. The New Deal continued until America entered the Second World War in 1942 and had four primary components: economic recovery, job creation, investment in public works and active citizenship aimed

at the common good.

During the semester, students will learn about the role they might play in the Living New Deal project, of which Walker is director and a board member. Designed like a scavenger hunt, participants nationwide are invited to document and submit to a growing project database their encounters with New Deal public works, printed materials and photographs. Walker says, "The New Deal built things and employed people from all corners of the country. To lift the country up, it had to do that. Likewise, it's important that our Living New Deal as it is constructed has an economic foundation in terms of training and structure, but also a moral, or ethical, higher purpose. We're sorely lacking the idea that government is meant for everyone and to help the whole country."

Other OLLI classes beginning in January include "The Genius of Bach" with Stephen Schultz; "Our Brains: Molecules to Memory Part 2" with Peter Ralston; "The Silver Age of Russian Culture" with Elena Sheygal-Placzek; "Country Music" with Pete Elman; and more.

Info: <https://olli.berkeley.edu/>

## Classical music concert at St. Mark's on Jan. 12



Ensemble Ari

Photo provided

### Submitted by Jean Ahn

Ensemble Ari, a group of Korean American musicians in the Bay Area who strive to bridge Korea and other communities through western instruments while honoring Korean history and culture, will perform music by Bach, Handel, Cassado and living composers Ruviano and Ahn at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Orinda.

Korean native composer Jean Ahn has been recognized, awarded, and honored by many. Her compositions have

been featured at Aspen New Music Festival, American Composers Orchestra's Ear Shot (by Memphis Symphony), June in Buffalo, Oregon Bach Festival, Etchings Festival, Festival of Contemporary Music, IAWM, Berkeley Symphony Under Construction, Pacific Korean Music Festival, and College Music Society Conferences, among others. Other members of Ensemble Ari include Baritone Joo Won Kang, Pianist Sharon Lee Kim, Violist Jaehee Jeong, Cellist Sarah Hong, and Violinists Ji-won Evelyn Kwark and Heeguen Song.

Info: <http://jeanahn.com/semble-ari/>

## Live at the Orinda announces a stellar artist lineup for 2019 season



Rita Moreno Photo Mark Hill

### Submitted by Derek Zemrak

The Live At the Orinda concert series, which presents world-renowned musical artists at the beautiful art-deco Orinda Theatre, will kick off its 2019 season on Saturday, Jan. 19 with legendary actor/singer Rita Moreno in her first Bay Area concert in many years, followed by a matinee performance on Sunday, Jan. 20.

Moreno was recently

Info: [www.lamorindatheatres.com](http://www.lamorindatheatres.com)

signed by Steven Spielberg to co-star in and executive produce his remake of "West Side Story," which will begin filming this summer. Moreno currently stars in the Netflix reboot of "One Day At A Time." The Live At the Orinda opening weekend performances will also serve as a fundraiser for the historic Orinda movie theater to purchase permanent concert lighting for the venue to enhance the live music experience even further.

The season continues on Feb. 17 with three-time Tony nominated Broadway star Carolee Carmello ("Scandalous," "Mamma Mia!" "Finding Neverland") making her long-awaited Bay Area concert debut. On March 14, Broadway and TV star Telly Leung ("Aladdin," "Wicked," "Allegiance," "GLEE") comes directly from his starring role in Disney's "Aladdin" for his first Bay Area concert in many years. Platinum-selling singer/songwriter Ann Hampton Callaway ("At the Same Time") will reunite with Broadway star Liz Callaway

("Miss Saigon," "Cats") on April 4 for their award-winning show "Sibling Revelry." This also marks the first Bay Area duo concert by the Tony-nominated sisters in several years. Live At the Orinda will celebrate the finale of the first half of the season, before a summer break, on May 2, with Broadway and West End star Brent Barrett. This will also mark the Bay Area concert debut of the Olivier Award nominee and star of "Phantom Of the Opera," "Chicago" and "Kiss Me Kate."

All shows are presented in an intimate 180-seat theater inside the Orinda Movie Theatre complex. All seating is reserved, with most tickets from \$55-\$100 and no ticket service charges, nor food or drink minimums. Subscribers enjoy substantial ticket discounts and first choice of reserved seats for the season. VIP subscribers and donors are also invited to the private post-show receptions with each artist at Ciné Cuvée Wine Bar, adjacent to the theater.

Submit stories and story ideas to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Matt O'Reilly – from Campolindo to Bucknell to Saint Mary's



Photos Jon Kingdon

Matt O'Reilly with his father, Robert, after the game.

### By Jon Kingdon

On Dec. 19 the Saint Mary's basketball team defeated Bucknell 85-59. It was Coach Randy Bennett's 400th victory since becoming Saint Mary's head coach. The statistical highlights for the game included the Jordans, Ford and Hunter, scoring 28 and 15 points respectively, the Gaels shooting 55 percent as a team and outrebounding Bucknell 44 to 26.

However, the outcome of the game was not the top story of the evening. The top story was that this was to be the last game of former Campolindo student and Moraga resident Matt O'Reilly whose four-year career with Bucknell was ending prematurely due to a back injury. It was not a coincidence that O'Reilly was able to play in his hometown in front of family, friends and fans. This final game for O'Reilly was scheduled by Saint Mary's and Bucknell out of respect for O'Reilly and his family through the combined efforts of Bennett and Bucknell's head coach Nathan Davis.

The character and integrity of Bucknell's program were key factors for Bennett: "We always knew that Matt was at Bucknell and I was able to set up this game with Coach Davis. I have a great deal of respect for Bucknell. We have similar programs in that we have players that stay all four years and graduate. I have a lot of respect for them. It was very classy of them to start Matt for the first time tonight."

O'Reilly, who lettered every season but had only appeared sparingly in two games this season, appreciated how special this game was: "It was an amazing evening. It was everything I wanted it to be, to have my family, friends and loved ones here at the game. I knew that Coach Davis and Coach Bennett were working on having us play at Saint Mary's and that was just

awesome."

O'Reilly, who will be graduating with a degree in history and economics, made the Patriot League Academic Honor Roll four straight years. The weather was the main adjustment for O'Reilly: "When it started snowing and kept snowing, that's when I was most homesick." The academics were not as trying for O'Reilly, which he attributes to his excellent preparation in high school: "Campolindo was an amazing school. I was at ease with the academic work at Bucknell and what the professors expected of me. I had an awesome time at Bucknell. The school was great and it was great to be part of a team that had such success and always worked so hard. After graduation, I plan to return to the Bay Area and work in San Francisco in some type of business.

O'Reilly's father, Robert, who played basketball at Princeton, and his mother Sophia made two to three trips a year to watch Matt play. O'Reilly much appreciated that it was just a short drive to his son Matt: "The closest Bucknell had come to the Bay Area had been when they played once in Las Vegas. We had over 250 people that came out tonight specifically to see Matt close out his career."

Jon Terry, the director of Athletic Communications for Bucknell, said the game was a benefit to Bucknell because they originally were scheduled to travel directly to Hawaii for a tournament: "This worked out very well for us. To be able to play Saint Mary's and then leave the next day was far more appealing than flying nonstop from Pennsylvania to Hawaii."

O'Reilly will still be on the roster for the rest of the season, attending and possibly dressing for the games and practices, says Terry: "Matt is still technically eligible to play but it's just very, very doubtful unless his back miraculously feels better."



O'Reilly speaks with family and friends after the game.



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## Lamorinda rugby a sport for all



Photos provided



Alex Cortessis tackles a Danville Oaks player at a game last year.

### By Jon Kingdon

With globalization in so many areas today, sports have certainly not been left behind. As we have exported baseball, basketball and even football to other countries, we have imported a number of sports from around the world. Rugby - which began in England in 1823 appropriately at the Rugby School in Rugby, Warwickshire, England - has grown in the United States from a niche sport to one played by all ages and genders.

The Lamorinda Rugby Club began in 1980. Until 2001, it was strictly for high school players. In 2002, a plan was instituted to begin a youth program to stimulate a greater interest in the sport and increase the flow of players into the high school programs. Under 12, under 10 and under 8 year

old teams were created. This eventually led to the Lamorinda Rugby Team winning the first California Cup in 2012, defeating Long Beach and being ranked No. 1 in California and No. 2 nationally.

The preseason practices started in October and the season began in December with the high school season running through the end of April. Over spring break, the team will make a major trip overseas to tour and compete. In the past, they have traveled to Ireland, Italy, England, Scotland, Argentina and Hawaii. This year the team will be making a return trip to Hawaii.

USA Rugby was founded in 1975. It has been reported that from 2006 to 2016, the number of rugby participants has increased by more than a million. In 2016, USA Rugby reported having

125,000 members playing in 2,673 clubs with over 900 college teams governed by USA Rugby, not the NCAA.

Doug Pearson, who played rugby at Cal and is president of the boys high school team, is witness to the growth of the sport: "We have one of the larger clubs in the country and we have seen a lot of positive growth. Our players begin as young as six, playing a flag type of rugby. One of the cool parts of rugby is that there is a position for every sized player. Anyone will be able to find a spot on a rugby roster."

Still, as in most sports, athleticism, speed and toughness are important for the athlete. Pearson adds a fourth factor: "A key element for the players is fitness. The amount of running is like soccer. Unlike football, there are no long stoppages and you have to be in top shape."

### Rugby's growth

The growth of the sport in the Lamorinda area can be attributed to the proximity and the success of the rugby teams at the University of California and Saint Mary's College, says Pearson: "A lot of former players have settled back in the area. Many of our coaches are parents that bring great experience with them. They get their kids to get their friends to play, which is another reason why we have so many players. At the high school level, many of our players also play football. It's a natural attraction for both sports."

Alex Cortessis, a senior at Acalanes, is hoping to continue playing rugby next year at Cal or UCLA. Cortessis learned from the ground up: "The game was tricky at first, but it's not hard once you get it. The best part of the game is that, big or small, once you learn the technique, you can tackle anyone. The techniques and leverage that I learned in rugby worked well for me on the football team at Acalanes."

Soccer has been called a gentleman's game played by hooligans while rugby has been called a hooligan's game played by gentlemen. Cortessis would agree with that assessment: "The main thing that I love about rugby is that we're one big family. I know all about my teammates. There is great camaraderie. Our team is comprised of players from 12 different high schools. Everyone on the team is equal."

King Matu, a senior at Deer Valley High School, makes the trip to Orinda twice a week for practice and echoes Cortessis' attitude about the team and the game: "Though we come from all different areas, we're all equal on the team. My father played rugby and introduced me to the game. Unlike football, you learn how to see the whole field and everybody gets to run."

Gary Hein, the team's assistant coach, played rugby at Cal and for the U.S. National Team and became the second American to play for Oxford, twice winning the Varsity Blues against Cambridge. All this was accomplished while going to law school. With all of his accomplishments on the field, it's the love of the sport and team unity that Hein feels most strongly about:

... continued on Page C3

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# Lamorinda rugby a sport for all



This year's girls high school rugby team.

Photos provided



Boys high school rugby team from last year.

play rugby and contribute to the game. There is a wide range of girls that join our team: introverts and extroverts, talkative and quiet girls, models and weightlifters – it runs the gamut.”

Still, as gentlemanly a game as it is, contact is a real factor, says Manoa: “The common theme for the girls is the enjoyment of contact. Most play other sports. They can be physical and aggressive and enjoy the competition of hitting and tackling.”

Grace Gitchell from San Ramon Valley also plays soccer and runs track and will be playing rugby at Quinnipiac College in Connecticut next year: “I really enjoy the physical aspect of the game. We have great coaches that have really helped us to learn the game quickly. I love working as a team. Knowing spacing in soccer has really helped me in that aspect of rugby. I learn something new every practice.”

Leila Ofeti, a four-year player from Hayward, enjoys both the game and her teammates: “I grew up with the sport. I really like the contact and the pace of the game. Learning the game took time but you soon get into the pace of the sport. The best part is how you learn to work together as a team. It's been great meeting so many people and making new friends.”

With all of the contact in the game, one would imagine there would be a number of injuries. Fortunately and by design, the majority of the injuries are restricted to bruises and sprains though more serious injuries are not unheard of.

All of the coaches stress the importance of tackling properly in not only getting the opponent down but in avoiding injuries to the tackler and the runner. Says Hein: “Tackling is all done with the shoulders and arms. We teach them to get their head out of the way of contact. One of the reasons that keeps rugby safe is that we don't wear pads for extra protection. Our players are aware that they don't have pads where you can go full force and run into someone.”

Most ironically, it was reported in the New York Times that this past December, the state of Texas, where football is king, is starting a program to familiarize all of their high school coaches with rugby-style tackling, emphasizing the use of the shoulder and not the head in bringing down a player with the ball so as to reduce the number of concussions along with head and neck injuries. Pete Carroll, the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks, has promoted “hawk tackling,” which borrows heavily from rugby.

Pearson succinctly explains what rugby is about: “It is a safe but competitive game. The teams play aggressively and the tradition is that the home team provides the meals after the game for both teams. It creates a rugby community with our competitors and with the national teams.”

... continued from Page C2

“Rugby is unlike any other sport. In other sports, you have teammates; in rugby you have brothers. You run, tackle and never leave the field, which generates a lot of camaraderie. You have an ownership to the team. We preach family as we're working for a common goal. We have a number of football, lacrosse and soccer players. All the players help each other. If there is a player having trouble finishing a run in practice, you'll see his teammates run alongside him, encouraging him to finish.”

### Female participation

As the sport has grown, so has the participation of females in the sport. The girls high school team, the Lady

Longhorns, comprises 25 players ranging in age from 14 to 18 years old. Bob Stephens, the administrator and assistant coach for the girls high school team, is in his sixth-year of coaching. He was exposed to the game when his daughter began playing for a club team in Danville: “It's the most unique cultural and spiritual sport I have ever seen. We constantly talk about family and having each other's backs on and off the field. It's not like basketball or football where size is defined. It's a sport where there is a wide range of sizes among the girls. It is a preparation for life and adulthood.”

Vainga Manoa, the girls head coach, sees the club as more than just coaching players in the sport: “Our culture is not only to play a good game

on the pitch (field) but also for the players to keep up their grades and getting them into college. We've had a number of the girls get scholarships for college. I have had a number of coaches contacting me about my players.”

With the under 10 and under 8 teams, there have been some girls as young as 5 who have started play with the junior teams. Manoa has witnessed the maturity of the girls as they have progressed through the program: “The players appreciate the family atmosphere and confidence that they acquire. As they develop the skills, they begin to realize that they are contributing to a team and earning the respect that comes from that. It's easy to get individuals to learn how to

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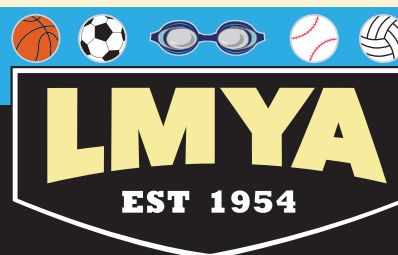
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# Lamorinda swimmers take first place



From left: Sophia Kosturos, Jessica Davis and Shelby Suppiger swam at the 2018 Speedo Winter Junior Championship – West tournament where their team, the Crow Canyon Country Club Sharks, took first place in the women’s team competition.

Submitted by Erik Suppiger

Jessica Davis, 16, from Lafayette, Sophia Kosturos, 18, from Orinda and Shelby Suppiger, 15, from Lafayette represented half of the Crow Canyon Country Club Sharks swim team, which won first place in the women’s team competition at the 2018 Speedo Winter Junior Championships – West tournament.

The Sharks sent a small but elite squad of just six girls to Winter Juniors, which concluded on Dec. 8 and is the championship event for the western half of USA Swimming. The

win was a first for the Crow Canyon Sharks and the first time since 2015 that a Bay Area swim club won the women’s team competition. The Crow Canyon Sharks broke Bay Area records in three relays and one individual event along with setting two Winter Juniors records in individual events.

Kosturos is a senior at Miramonte High School and will swim for the UCLA Bruins next year. Davis and Suppiger are sophomores at Carondelet High School and Acalanes High School respectively. The team is coached by Ethan Hall and Joe Natina.

# St. Perpetua basketball girls team champions



Top row, from left: coaches Jim Smith, John Lyons and Brad Hilsabeck; middle row: Hailey Hilsabeck, Adriana Smith, Julia Oleyar, Natalie Aiken and Katie Kostolansky; front row: Madeline Jerge and Natalie Lyons; not pictured: Jenna Steele, Lulu Levy and Olivia Williams

Submitted by Andrea Hilsabeck

The St. Perpetua seventh grade basketball girls team won the MVP Holiday Tournament.

# Spartans rise to win MVP Flight Holiday classic tournament



Submitted by Tenaya Garrett

The St. Monica’s 7th Grade American Boys basketball team are the 2018 MVP Flight Holiday classic champions after defeating St. Perpetua, St. Francis, and St. Isidore’s. The tournament hosted over 150 local CYO teams (boys and girls 3rd – 8th grade) over the weekends of Dec. 15 and Dec. 22.

Front row, from left: Andy Moon, Colin Spencer, Max Polk; back row: Rylen Salvi, Jake Spencer, JJ Runckel, Kyle Fossen, Daniel Louie

# 12U All-Girls water polo team champions



Back row, from left: Zoe Jimenez, Ally Larsen, Quinn Arroyo, Rosalie Hassett, Sadie Suppiger, coach Robby Arroyo; front row: Nola Kurtz, Molly Stryker, Tess Schirmer, Ella Del Rosario, and Kayden Page.

Submitted by Rhodora Del Rosario

Diablo’s water polo 12U team won first place in the Ventura Cup Tournament held in Oxnard early December. The

all-girl team easily won against SB805 and South Coast, two top tier teams. This win complement’s the team’s strong 10U bronze place finish at the USA Junior Olympics held in August.

# Basketball champions



Back row, from left: Coach Greg Woehrle, Reis Hartvickson, Charlie Anzenberger, Anish Kapur, Blake Frechman, Zubin Krishnan coach Brian Frechman; front row: Nick Zagorov, Brady Salvias, Cash Woehrle.

Submitted by Marty Woehrle

The St. Perpetua third grade American Boys won the MVP Christmas Classic 3rd American/4th national bracket.

# 8th Grade CYO Santa Maria girls champions



From left: Stella Symonds, Grace Liu, Tahra Minowada, Lauren LaCour, Charlotte Forman, Violet Herman, Nicole Lamison, coach Eric Lamison; not pictured: Eva Logan and coach Paul Liu

Submitted by Paradi Mirmirani

The Santa Maria CYO girls basketball team had a decisive 37-12 victory in the championship game of the NBBA Holiday Classic tournament with con-

tributions from every team member. The girls are looking forward to ongoing competition during upcoming league play.

Submit stories to [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

(we prefer to receive your original photo file, minimum size: 200 dpi and 1200 pixels wide)



Photo provided

## Magic 08 Girls win State Cup

Submitted by Megan M. Shields

The California Magic Soccer Club 08 girls took first place in the U11 Girls NorCal State Cup Championship, Gold division, Dec. 9 in Modesto. They defeated Folsom Lake Elite 2-1 in a nail-biting

overtime to win the Cup. Coach Tony Neto said, "I am so proud of the team's progression throughout the fall season. Their determination and focus during the State Cup finals was a testament to their character as a team. It has been a pleasure to watch them grow." The NorCal State Cup is a series of

games that began in August and lasted an entire season, hosting 300-plus teams from across Northern California. Congratulations Magic 08 girls.

## Diablo Athletic League recognitions, boys 2018-2019

Photos Gint Federas

### Boys Cross Country – 2018-19

#### 1st Team All-League

Edward Buckley	Campolindo
Cayden Hein	Campolindo
Dylan Gunn	Campolindo

#### 2nd Team All-League

Dylan Cronin	Campolindo
Cameron Iniguez-Reyes	Campolindo
Riley Noon	Acalanes
Sam Roth	Acalanes
Joshua Starr	Acalanes



Edward Buckley



Soren Jensen



West Temkin



Leo Berkman

### Boy's Water Polo – 2018-19

#### Most Valuable Player – Foothill Division

Soren Jensen	Campolindo
--------------	------------

#### Outstanding Goalie – Foothill Division

West Temkin	Campolindo
-------------	------------

### 1st Team All-League – Foothill Division

Giorgio Alessandria	Campolindo
Leo Berkman	Miramonte
Garrett Dunn	Campolindo
Beck Jurasius	Campolindo
Marcus Longton	Campolindo
Jackson Painter	Miramonte
Narayan Sharma	Miramonte
Max Stryker	Acalanes



Grant Harper



Tyler Lowe



Chris Rogers



Nick Kresnak



Ryan O'Neil



Reed Callister

### 2nd Team All-League – Foothill Division

Mac Darin	Acalanes
Casey Estes	Miramonte
Peter Hillen	Miramonte
Brady Hoover	Miramonte
Jack Larsen	Campolindo
Ryan Lenahan	Campolindo
Tom McGuire	Campolindo
Reid Schioldager	Miramonte

### Honorable Mention – Foothill Division

Robert Bettencourt	Acalanes
Spencer Campos	Miramonte
Brock Zamanian	Campolindo

### DAL All-League – Foothill Division

#### Football - 2018-19

Name	School	Position
<b>First Team – All-League – Foothill Division</b>		
Grant Harper	Campolindo	QB
Tyler Lowe	Miramonte	RB
Chris Rogers	Acalanes	WR
Lucas Allen	Campolindo	WR
Henry Vacakis	Miramonte	UTL/RB/WR
Jeremy Gunderson	Campolindo	OL
Max Schoenberger	Campolindo	DB
Scott Brydon	Acalanes	DB
Ben Schmiedt	Miramonte	LB
Alex Cortessis	Acalanes	LB
Mason Mastrov	Campolindo	LB
Zach Barker	Miramonte	DL

### Second Team – All-League – Foothill Division

Nick Kresnak	Acalanes	QB
Ryan O'Neil	Campolindo	RB
Reed Callister	Miramonte	WR
Lucas Eppinger	Acalanes	WR
Colby Schnayer	Campolindo	OL
Cole McNeil	Campolindo	OL
Eric Heilmann	Miramonte	OL
Keilan Stone	Miramonte	DB
Charlie Hawkins	Miramonte	DB
Tommy Thrasher	Acalanes	LB
Charlie Craig	Campolindo	LB
Will Windatt	Campolindo	LB

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Civic Life Sports Schools Business Food Our Homes Letters/Opinions Calendar Obituaries

**Latest MOFD financial report shows a \$12 million dent in long-term liabilities**  
By Nick Marshall  
After years of negative financial news, including the recent reporting of \$22 million, a fire outbreak, and warnings of bankruptcy and fire station closures, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District presented a rosier economic picture to its board and district residents at its Dec. 3 public meeting. The MOFD Certified Audited Financial ... 12/22

**Volunteers sought for committee and commission vacancies**  
By Jane O'Donoherty  
Perhaps it is your New Year's resolution to volunteer to serve your city or town. If so, the following information will be of interest: Lafayette Lafayette needs volunteers. There are currently openings in the following commissions and committees! ... 12/22

**Teddy bear window display a Christmas toy tradition**  
By Paula Fisher  
It's a Lafayette tradition every Christmas season - the McCaulou's shop window. From Thanksgiving's ornate lights, tinsels and music trailers as the display of cuddly moving teddy bears enchant in a different ... 12/22

**Lamorinda boys soccer preview**  
By Jim Kingston  
Last season, the Lamorinda boys soccer teams played in the Diablo-Foothill League which had six teams. This year they are in the Diablo League which has 13 teams. The schools that have been added are Ygnacio ... 12/22

**Caltrans throws wrench in work on new Canyon Bridge**  
Tampabay Canyon Bridge Photo: Vera Krutchen

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ... read on Page D12

## Meet Jules, a digital butler



Photos provided

Homeowner Lisa Parker looks on as WG tech Tyler Holston uploads data on the Jules app.

By Sora O'Doherty

Longtime tech entrepreneur and Lafayette resident Kent Godfrey today launched Jules, an application designed to help families manage their busy lives by using a cloud-based service to track many aspects of their homes, belongings and personal information.

Godfrey envisaged an application that would help families like butler Alfred Pennyworth helped Batman maintain the Bat Cave so that he could spend his time out crime fighting. He raised \$2 million in seed money, and started his company, HomeIQ, in early 2017. The company is based locally in Lafayette, although the team of programmers who created the application is based in Romania.

Godfrey has a track record in the tech area, having created and successfully sold two companies, including Liverail, a video ad tech startup sold to Facebook in 2015 for \$500 million. The Jules application, which is available from the App Store or Google Play, is a cloud-based database in which many items can be catalogued and which are then available to the user on any device. For example, information on a major appliance might include the date it was purchased, when it was installed, a copy of the receipt, the warranty information, service record or serial number. If the homeowner has a problem with the appliance, this information can be reviewed to see if the appliance is still under warranty, or with a click sent by email to a repair person to see if a repair can be effected. The app will also have the ability to alert the user to upcoming events, for example, when a vehicle is due for service or when property tax is due to be paid.

The app has been in development for about two years, and for the past six months has been beta tested by about 175 clients. As an example of how Jules can be of assistance, Godfrey said that his daughter was planning a trip abroad, but about three months before the event Jules reminded her that her passport was going to expire, allowing her to renew it before her trip.

The Jules database contains over 300 item types, from home appliances to personal items such as cars, jewelry and art. It also covers personal information, keeping track of passwords and important documents such as wills and trusts, in addition to items such as passports, drivers' licenses, social security numbers, and insurance policies. Documents and photographs can be attached. Data can be added to the app by the homeowner or the company also offers a "white glove" service where company staff will input the information for the homeowner.

... continued on Page D4

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# Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	8	\$680,000	\$1,778,000
MORAGA	8	\$525,000	\$1,755,000
ORINDA	10	\$420,000	\$2,560,000

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

- 3714 Highland Road, \$1,420,000, 4 Bdrms, 3077 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$1,020,000, 01-26-06
- 917 Hough Avenue #8, \$680,000, 2 Bdrms, 1038 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 11-20-18, Previous Sale: \$490,000, 09-26-13
- 1748 La Playa Drive, \$1,091,000, 3 Bdrms, 2237 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 11-28-18, Previous Sale: \$652,000, 10-10-12
- 3140 Maryola Court, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2190 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-27-18
- 946 Oak View Circle, \$1,032,500, 4 Bdrms, 2400 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 06-14-18
- 3791 Quail Ridge Road, \$1,261,000, 5 Bdrms, 3381 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 11-26-18
- 3940 South Peardale Drive, \$1,778,000, 2 Bdrms, 2162 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$370,000, 10-01-91
- 1013 Windsor Drive, \$1,525,000, 3 Bdrms, 1756 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 11-30-18, Previous Sale: \$1,000,000, 08-10-18

## MORAGA

- 1905 Ascot Drive, \$800,000, 2 Bdrms, 1379 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$720,000, 05-18-15
- 2129 Ascot Drive #2, \$525,000, 2 Bdrms, 1314 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 11-20-18, Previous Sale: \$415,000, 08-05-16

... continued on Page D10

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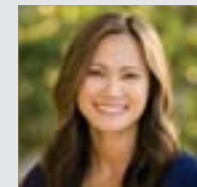
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# Year-End Market Update

Happy New Year! Before we kick off the 2019 Spring selling season it is important to understand how we ended 2018. Our update is a summary of Multiple Listing Service ("MLS") data for Lamorinda detached residential home sales in 2018 compared to 2017. In summary, our overall real estate market remains strong, but the numbers don't tell the full story. The Fall market delivered mostly strong results. Lamorinda average sales price is now \$1.69M, up 8%, average sales price per square foot is \$649, up 6%, and average days on market is down 4% to only 24 days.

Lafayette continues to outpace both Moraga and Orinda. Lafayette's average sales price is now \$1.74M and average sales price per square foot is \$686, up 7%. Average sales price per square foot is \$589, up 4% for Moraga and \$639, up 5% for Orinda.

Certain homes are showing signs of softening. While recently remodeled, commute friendly homes with functional yards continue to push the market to new heights, in late Spring and through the Fall homes that needed updating or homes in less desirable locations took longer to sell and experienced price reductions. With a strong economy and a shortage of quality contractors, homebuyers are still willing to pay a premium for homes that are move-in ready. Rising interest rates, the new Tax Plan and stock market volatility has led homebuyers to be cautious with homes that do not check all their boxes. We expect this trend to continue in 2019 as home preparation, professional staging and a personalized marketing plan are critical for those looking to sell their home.

Our full report can be found at <http://martinhomesteam.com/marketupdate/>. We look forward to hearing from you with your real estate questions.



## ERIN & DARRICK MARTIN

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CalBRE# 01922810, CalBRE# 02006564

# COMPASS

# Meet Jules, a digital butler

... continued from Page D1

While the app provides strong security, using Rock Space for its cloud-based storage, requiring strong passwords and employing sophisticated encryption, users are free to include only so much information as they wish. So, for example, if a user feels uncomfortable providing some information, such as a passport number, the user need not enter it into the database. Of course, only information that is provided can be made available to the user on any device. Still, Godfrey estimates that of the over 300 items catalogued, only about 10 could be deemed sensitive.

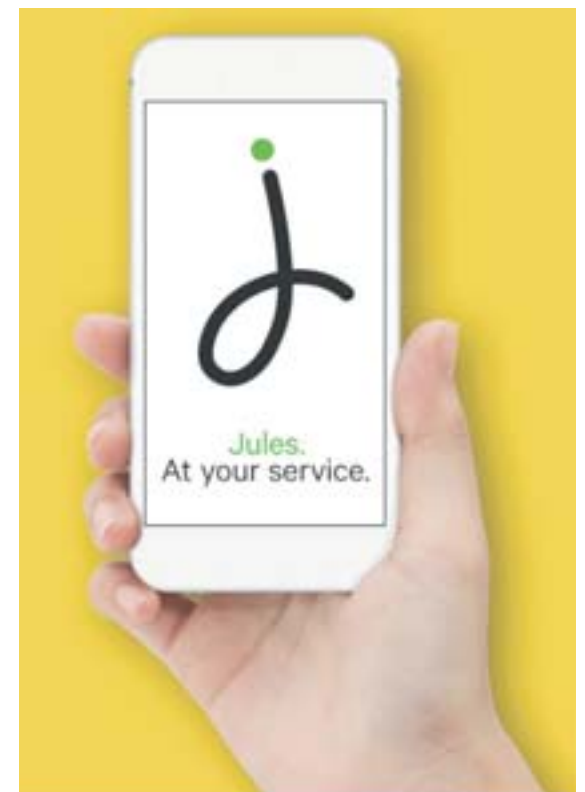
Godfrey says that the app is targeted at higher-end homes, or about 25 million homes out of the approximately 130 million households in America. This means that the homes targeted are 2,500 square feet and above and cost upwards of \$1 million. This demographic also includes larger family size, and they tend to gather in clusters. A good example is the Lamorinda area, and the Highway 680 corridor. Godfrey emphasizes the security that the app can provide to homeowners, especially when there is a growing awareness of the possibility of natural disasters. He points out that the homeowner who loses everything needs to be able to document that the items existed and that it was in the home when it was destroyed. Jules can provide an inventory of home contents, including valuations. He notes that during the trial period, two Jules beta testers did lose homes in the recent fires.

There are plans to use the database to provide further services for the homeowner in the future. For example, a service that will help homeowners objectively determine the proper level of insurance for their belongings, possibly saving them money by eliminating unnecessary coverage. If the owner of a vehicle, for instance, would not make a claim on insurance for any damage under \$2,000, but carries a policy with a \$500 deductible, savings would probably be available if the deductible were raised to at least \$2,000. There will also be a program to explain basic insurance terms in simple

English.

Godfrey believes that most people cannot fully comprehend an insurance declaration page, although all the important information is included, as is required by state law. But the presentation is confusing. The first step in evaluating insurance is to list the details of the policy with pop-up explanations of the terms. The second step would be a list of possible events, which also predicts the likely outcome of such events.

Currently, the base model is available to subscribers. Membership is offered at \$135 per year or \$15 per month for 5G cloud storage of information on unlimited properties. Godfrey says that with only one email sent to the current beta members, he was pleasantly surprised to already have 72 members, 41 who have signed on as payment members and the rest availing of a 90-day free trial.



Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company,

Info: <https://julesapp.com>

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## Happy New Year to our new and all existing clients! 2018 Listings and Sales!

3140 Marolya Ct., Lafayette  
Represented Seller  
17 Saint Andrews Pl., Alamo  
Represented Buyer  
43 Orinda View Rd., Orinda  
Represented Seller  
142 Romero Cir., Alamo  
Represented Buyer  
41 Ascot Pl., Moraga  
Represented Seller  
2631 Danville Blvd., Alamo  
Represented Buyer

1515 Honey Suckle Ct.,  
Pleasanton  
Represented Buyer  
1179 Ford Ln., Lafayette  
Represented Buyer  
288 Lakefield Pl., Moraga  
Represented Seller  
172 Lowell Dr., Danville  
Represented Seller  
1370 Danville Blvd., Alamo  
Represented Seller

1002 Larkwood Ct., Concord  
Represented Buyer  
4 Ramon Ct., Danville  
Represented Buyer & Seller  
357 Harford Rd., Danville  
Represented Seller  
139 Entrada Verde, Alamo  
Represented Buyer  
212 Dorchester, Alamo  
Represented Seller  
21 Gran Via, Alamo  
Represented Seller

560 Oakshire Pl, Alamo  
Represented Seller  
188 Ivy Dr., Orinda  
Represented Seller  
101 Ascot Ct., Moraga  
Represented Buyer & Seller  
464 Saint Francis Dr., Danville  
Represented Buyer  
929 Oak Grove, Concord  
Represented Seller  
1040 Lizann Dr., Lafayette  
Represented Seller

1110 Larch Ave., Moraga  
Represented Seller  
117 Goodfellow Dr., Moraga  
Represented Seller  
3141 Consuelo Rd., Concord  
Represented Buyer & Seller  
2888 Saklan Indian, Rossmoor  
Represented Seller  
10 Creeklodge Ct., Danville  
Represented Buyer & Seller  
222 Via Barcelona, Moraga  
Represented Seller



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3809 Happy Valley Road  
Represented Seller



3394 Silver Springs Court  
Represented Seller



15 Parkway Court  
Represented Seller



43 Crestview Drive  
Represented Seller



16 Deer Trail  
Represented Seller



4030 Tilden Lane  
Represented Buyer



120 Sleepy Hollow Lane  
Represented Buyer



3838 Palo Alto Drive  
Represented Seller



1002 Woodbury Road #302  
Represented Buyer



1006 Woodbury Road #302  
Represented Seller & Buyer



3253 Surmont Drive  
Represented Seller



1 Monterey Terrace  
Represented Buyer



3224 Palomares Avenue  
Represented Buyer



295 Oakvue Lane  
Represented Buyer



854 Revere Drive  
Represented Buyer



928 Oak Street  
Represented Buyer



1794 Douglas Terrace  
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All information is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



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Serene Downtown Beauty, Orinda  
4 Bed | 3 Bath | 3,237 Sq Ft

Idyllic Los Perales Living, Moraga  
4 Bed | 2 Bath | 2,204 Sq Ft

Hidden Valley Modern Jewel, Lafayette  
5 Bed | 3 Bath | 3,055 Sq Ft



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Peardale Drive 3338 Freeman Road 828 Bancroft Road 5200 Grizzly Peak Blvd. 34 Thorndale Place 7 Donald Drive 80 Warfield Dr. 440 Tahos Rd. 28 Tappan Lane 2 El Caminito 40 Charles Hill Ct. 173 Glorietta Blvd. 6 Songbird Ct. 63 Davis Road 36 Los Dedos 27 Rheem Blvd. 115 Crane Terrace 78 Sleepy Hollow Lane 106 Scenic Drive 1847 Reliez Valley Road 3244 Glenside Dr. 11 Orchard Road 10 Dickenson Dr. 5 Charles Hill Place 255 La Espiral 4 Dolores Court 895 Las Trampas 74 La Encinal 136 David Drive 914 Kelley Court 1099 Sanders Dr 221 Erselia Drive 1741 Spyglass Lane 1 Acacia Dr. 95 Warfield Dr. 1725 Spyglass Lane 110 Camelia Lane 38 Mira Loma Dr 136 Manzanita Dr 710 Miner Rd. 76 Tarry Lane 525 Patterson Blvd. 71 Ardilla Rd. 9 La Fond Lane 50 Donna Maria Way 1420 Arbor Lane 120 Via Floreado 1253 Lindell Drive 73 La Espiral 29 Knickerbocker Lane 25 Risa Court 3959 Cowan Rd 63 El Gavilan 41 Vista Del Mar 121 Lombardy Lane 1014 Regio Court 108 Sleepy Hollow Lane 649 Miner Rd. 484 Dalewood Dr. 908 Chantilly Ct. 1 Middle Road 341 Camino Sobrante 867 Acalanes Rd 3242 Glenside Dr. 7 Charles Hill 5 Charles Hill Road 323 La Espiral 151 Cypress Point Way 70 Monte Vista Road 38 La Cuesta 5 Woodcrest Road 361 Tahos Road 875 Camino Ricardo 855 Mountain View Rd. 21 North Lane 23 Sessions 539 The Glade 3875 Quail Ridge Rd 1930 Ascot Drive 15 Norman Ct 55 Mozden Lane 112 Via Floreado 16 Valley View Lane 47 El Gavilan 37 Camino don Miguel 62 Hacienda Circle 19 Glorietta Ct 68 Southwood Dr 111 Bear Ridge Trail 60 Muth 130 Camino Sobrante 30 Tiana Terrace 56 Davis Rd 27 Wilder Road 245 Overhill Rd 23 Ivy Drive 33 Overhill Rd Springhill Rd 3434 Little Ln 3369 Mildred Lane 13 Bates Blvd 516 Miner Road 144 Las Vegas Rd 61 Muth Drive 99 Somerset Rd 91 Coral Drive 412 Camino Sobrante 244 El Toyonal 3 Dollis Park Rd 5 Oak Arbor Rd 590 Silverado Drive 220 Camino Sobrante 23 Via Hermosa 37 Southwood Dr 1168 Glen Rd 41 Longridge Rd 4122 Canyon Rd 32 Coachwood Terrace 17 Tarry Lane 3364 Betty Lane 529 Silverado Drive 260 Camino Sobrante 260 Caldecott Ln, #302 11 Las Palomas 45 Don Gabriel Way 6 Irvine Drive 1 Kittiwake Rd 751 Miner Rd 3484 Hamlin Rd 5 La Noria 13 Sally Ann Road 29 Tappan Lane 10 Las Palomas 8 Charles Hill Place 411 Camino Sobrante 11 Orchard Road 3945 Woodside Ct 86 Hillcrest Drive 176 Camino Don Miguel 1954 Joseph Drive 2724 W Newell 173 Glorietta Blvd 10 Bobolink Rd 14 Van Tassel Ln 3374 Sweet Drive 1 Hidden Lane 42 Irving Lane 26 Van Ripper Lane 3 Duarte Court 151 Canon Drive 541 Banyan Circle 2345 Parish Drive 9 Valley View Road 44 Knickerbocker Ln 328 Village View Ct 22 Van Tassel Lane 49 Sanborn Rd 76 Miramonte Dr Camellia Ln 318 Elati Ct 134 Ardith Drive 35 La Cuesta Rd 346 First Ave. South 115 Crane Terrace 326 La Espiral 134 La Espiral 1218 Jillian Ct. 56 La Vuelta 66 Sleepy Hollow Ln 41 Van Tassal Lane 13 Sleepy Hollow Ln 134 La Espiral 208 Villa Nova Dr. 635 Augustine Ln 1340 Reliez Valley Rd 873 Solana Dr. 5 Brookbank Rd 5 Brookbank Rd 201 Ivy Drive 9 Sleepy Hollow Ln 95 Diablo View Dr. 33 Bates Blvd 1165 Nogales 15 La Cuesta Rd 3152 Somerset Place 37 Sleepy Hollow Ln 3987 Campolindo Dr 244 The Knoll 126 Miramonte Dr. 3971 Campolindo Dr 10 Las Cascadas 100 Ivy Drive 27 Rheem Blvd. 2043 Bush St., #2 50 El Castillo 831 Acalanes Rd 110 Crane Terrace 15 Van Tassel Lane 14 Cascade Lane 5 La Noria 45 Tarry Lane 234 La Espiral 70 Sleepy Hollow Ln 9 Vida Descansada 1 Gardiner Court 907 Augusta Drive 51 Los Altos Road 3959 Cowan Rd 33 Las Cascadas 49 Rheem Blvd 3364 Carlyle Terrace 5117 Lawton Ave 16 Valley View 1075 Upper Happy Valley 1415 Eagle Point Ct 899 Augusta Dr 5 Thune 1004 Howard Hills Rd 45 Robert Rd 3007 Hudson Ave 3025 Bradbury Dr 207 Rheem Blvd 378 Camino Sobrante 145 Danefield Place 8 Sessions Rd 3826 Quail Ridge Rd 36 Linda Vista 1218 Jillian Ct 119 Via Floreado 136 Amber Valley Dr 4 Patrick Lane 17 La Campana 90 Warfield Drive 1879 Joseph Dr 20 Los Cerros 3049 Bryant Place 1541 Moraga Way 197 Miramonte Dr 56 Via Floreado 16 Shangri la Ct 5 Thune 21 Topper Court 17 Shadow Creek Lane 217 Village Gate Rd 65 Coral Dr 1743 Spyglass Lane 3 Fleetwood Ct 1 Estates Ct 34 La Vuelta 63 Ardilla Rd 26 St Stephens Dr 21 Greenwood Ct 1106 Upper Happy Valley 8 Southard Ct 18 Charles Hill Pacific Ave, #302 18 Mira Loma Rd 1229 Rose Lane 14 Silverwood Ct 25 Monte Vista 17 Tappan 1879 Joseph Drive 484 Dalewood Drive 945 Mountain View 8 La Campana 4 Las Cascadas Rd 89 Tarry Lane 137 El Toyonal 528 Tahos Rd 67 Ardilla Rd Ranch Rd 16 Fenway 3 Canyon View Rd 5 Valley View 45 Don Gabriel Way 25 Las Vegas 54 Diablo View Rd 1408 Meadowlark Ct 18 Monte Vista Rd 176 Lombardy Ln 50 San Pablo Court 112 Amber Valley 36 Linda Vista 2 Los Altos 33 Augusta Drive 259 Kingston Way 19 Via Hermosa 3023 Rohrer Drive 641 Cross Ridge Ct 3147 Windsor Court 35 La Cuesta 27 Rheem 37 Sleepy Hollow Ln 7 La Encinal 410 Wovenwood 18 Ichabod Lane 19 Mira Loma 4018 Tilden Ln 1907 Marin Ave 92 Sandhill 5 Corliss 23 Woodland Rd 57 Davis Road 9 La Sombra Ct 169 Overhill Rd 3 El Verano 1430 Finley 588 Silver Lake Dr 6164 Bullard Drive 62 Van Tassel Lane 1529 Ranch View Drive 10 Tarry Lane 134 Crestview Drive 87 Tara Lane 9 La Fond Lane 755 Miner Rd 4161 Coralee Lane 41 Van Tassel Lane 10 Dickinson Drive 401 Miner Rd 103 Glenbridge Ct 3716 34 La Vuelta 63 Ardilla Rd 26 St Stephens Dr 21 Greenwood Ct 1106 Upper Happy

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\*\*Partial List of Homes Sold\*\*



DRE# 00903367

## Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page D2

### Moraga ... continued

- 117 Goodfellow Drive, \$1,230,000, 3 Bdrms, 1768 SqFt,  
1966 YrBl, 11-26-18, Previous Sale: \$982,000, 04-03-18
- 27 Harrington Road, \$1,740,000, 4 Bdrms, 2959 SqFt,  
1985 YrBl, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$1,510,000, 05-03-05
- 40 La Salle Drive, \$1,755,000, 4 Bdrms, 3215 SqFt, 1962 YrBl, 11-28-18
- 1096 Sanders Drive, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 2641 SqFt, 1961 YrBl, 11-30-18
- 100 Via Joaquin #1, \$775,000, 2 Bdrms, 1354 SqFt,  
1980 YrBl, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$371,500, 07-26-00
- 62 Warfield Drive, \$1,290,000, 4 Bdrms, 2038 SqFt,  
1964 YrBl, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$1,355,000, 04-30-18

### ORINDA

- 1 Arbolado Court, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1917 SqFt,  
1958 YrBl, 11-30-18, Previous Sale: \$800,000, 02-22-13
- 73 Brookwood Road #42, \$420,000, 1 Bdrms, 673 SqFt,  
1962 YrBl, 11-28-18, Previous Sale: \$397,500, 07-06-07
- 24 Calvin Drive, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2260 SqFt, 1964 YrBl, 11-27-18
- 226 Hall Drive, \$1,200,000, 1 Bdrms, 2030 SqFt, 1953 YrBl, 11-27-18
- 19 Hilldale Court, \$2,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 3552 SqFt,  
1979 YrBl, 11-21-18, Previous Sale: \$1,745,000, 05-05-11
- 1 La Senda, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 3968 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 11-28-18
- 15 Parkway Court, \$1,124,000, 3 Bdrms, 1816 SqFt, 1954 YrBl, 11-28-18
- 16 Rabble Road, \$2,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 4718 SqFt,  
2016 YrBl, 11-30-18, Previous Sale: \$750,000, 06-25-15
- 74 Scenic Drive, \$2,560,000, 4 Bdrms, 3201 SqFt,  
1956 YrBl, 11-29-18, Previous Sale: \$1,950,000, 06-20-07
- 18 Whitehall Drive, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 1834 SqFt,  
1959 YrBl, 11-19-18, Previous Sale: \$305,000, 02-01-88



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## Coming Soon

We are excited about our upcoming listings in Happy Valley, the Trail Neighborhood, Lafayette Estates and Orinda Downs. Details and photos coming soon.

Thinking of selling your home? Schedule your free sales preparation inspection. Our proven property preparation model has given us unbeaten results in 2018 and we're here to help you in 2019.

The reviews speak for themselves. Paddy Kehoe is the #1 Lamorinda agent on Yelp in 2018.

## The Paddy Kehoe Team



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DRE 01968517



## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

# Garden trends for 2019, Part 2

*“We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology.” – Carl Sagan*



Pepper berries can be ground into soups and stews.

### By Cynthia Brian

As we enter 2019, we have to ask ourselves if we have become indoor creatures addicted to technology? While adults are spending over 11 hours daily with their devices, the American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that teens spend over seven hours a day with screen time, ‘tweens spend four and a half hours a day, and even children to age 8 are engaging in 48 minutes daily.

Pruning technology screen time is definitely an important trend for this year. What can we do to cut back? Get thee into the garden!

Gardening teaches so many critical skills including patience, responsibility, trust, love and gratitude. Gardeners are stewards of the earth. When we spend time in the dirt, we can’t be hooked up to computers or looking at screens. We could listen to music, but, wouldn’t



Photos Cynthia Brian

Calendula flowers are edible and also great made into a winter salve to hydrate, soothe, and nourish dry skin.

it be better to listen to the songs of the birds and the breeze blowing through the trees?

Children are natural lovers of nature. When we encourage kids to be outside, they will naturally choose outdoor activities over plugged-in connectivity. Show kids a seed catalogue and let them choose a few packets of seeds. When they choose their favorite flowers or vegetables, they will be excited to care for them. By watching their plants grow, children learn respect and understanding for the cycles of life.

It is estimated that in winter over 10 million Americans experience seasonal affective disorder. Don’t get disconnected from your natural rhythms. Spending 15 to 30 minutes outdoors in the daylight will help eliminate the blues. Take your coffee break outside, walk around the block, or sweep your porch. Move and get outside.

Sustainability is a trend that is becoming

the style and the norm. It is estimated that one third of all food is wasted each year globally and that Americans throw out 4.4 pounds per day. The movement is toward zero waste. Recycling, upcycling, eliminating, and renewing are the key actions we need to employ to address the waste issue. Composting can reduce household waste by 40 percent. Build a compost bin, buy a tumbler, use a bucket, but whatever you choose, start composting today to help Mother Nature endure the onslaught of destructive behaviors.

Insects and pollinators are disappearing. The United Nations warns that 40 percent of bees and butterflies risk global extinction.

We can help by eliminating pesticides and insecticides while planting flowers and plants the pollinators love. Attract ladybugs, beetles, spiders, bees, hummingbirds, butterflies and other beneficial insects by establishing friendly, inviting habitats.

Here’s a short list of plants attractive to pollinators:

... continued on Page D15

Anise	Jupiter’s Beard
Aster	Lantana
Beebalm	Lavender
Bergenia	Lilac
Black-eyed Susan	Lupine
Blanket Flower	Marigold
Butterfly Bush	Mexican Heather
Candytuft	Milkweed
Calendula	Nicotiana
Cardinal Flower	Penstemon
Catmint	Phlox
Coneflower	Rose
Cosmos	Sage
Daisy	Salvia
Dill	Scabiosa
Fennel	Verbena
Gerbera	Yarrow
Globe Thistle	Zinnia

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### **1 White Diamond Lane**

4 Bedrooms | 3.5 Bathrooms | 3,054 SqFt  
Den | Breakfast Nook | 2 Car Garage



### **3 White Diamond Lane**

4 Bedrooms | 2.5 Bathrooms | 2,647 SqFt  
Den | 2 Car Garage



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93 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA



## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for January

**BOOST** your vitamin C with fresh fruit from citrus trees. Ripening for the next two months you will enjoy sweet navel orange, lime, lemon, grapefruit and Clementine.

**PULL** weeds as they sprout. With the rains, weed seeds are prodigious. It's best to dig them while they are tiny.

**FERTILIZE** and **PRUNE** deciduous trees and shrubs, including apple, pear, apricot, peach and plum.

**DEEP** root feed crape myrtles.

**APPLY** sulfur to acid loving plants to lower the pH of the soil.

**SPRAY** deciduous fruit trees with dormant spray, making sure to soak the branches, trunk and soil around the tree to suffocate over wintering insects including mites, aphids and scale.

**FRESHEN** dry interior air with a sail plant/peace lily.

**ADD** zing to your savory dishes with fresh pepper berries.

### DISCOUNTS FOR YOU

**GET** 15 percent off orders of David Austin roses through March 8 with offer code UCA by calling (800) 328-8893 or buying through the website at [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com).

**USE** code **STAR20** to order grass seed or other products at [www.pearlspremium.com](http://www.pearlspremium.com) through Jan. 16. You can reseed a lawn now, or buy seed to plant in the spring.

Free shipping with a minimum order of \$50 until Jan. 25 from [sowtrueseeds.com/collections](http://sowtrueseeds.com/collections) open-pollinated, GMO free, untreated with code SHIPFREE19. Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



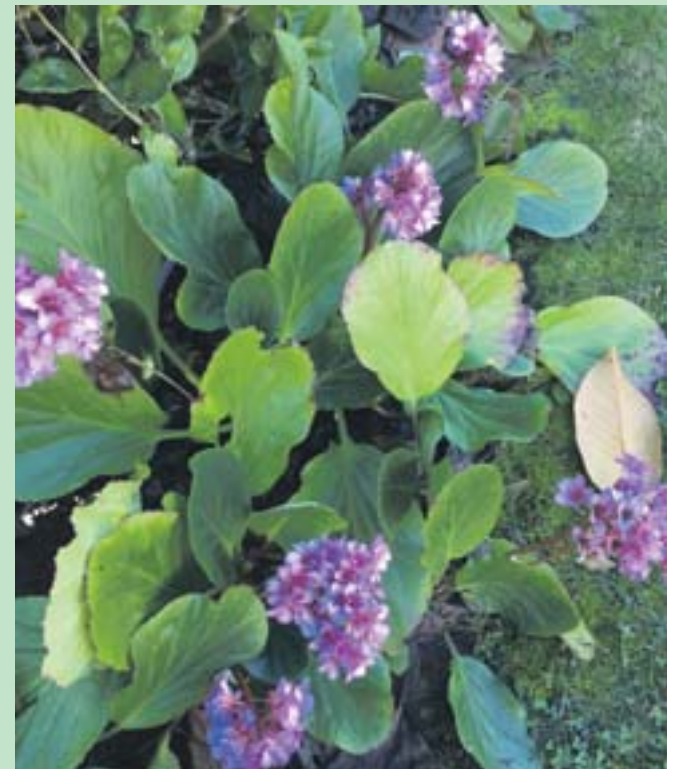
**Pull weeds as they sprout.**



**Prune fruit trees.**



**Persimmons**



**Bergenia makes a long-lasting cut flower and pollinators are attracted to their pink petals.**



**Peace lilies or sail plants purify the air.**

## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

### Garden trends for 2019, Part 2

... continued from Page D12

For optimum impact, plant in drifts or clusters. Pollinators seek fragrance and bright colors. By incorporating these flowers into your landscape you'll help save the beneficial bugs. Without them, the invasive, detrimental insects threaten our species.

Circling back to technology, artificial intelligence is taking root in the garden. Robotic mowers, drones that pollinate and "read the weeds," and wireless irrigation sensors are already in use. Walmart filed patents for drones to identify pests attacking crops. With these trends, it may not be long before we'll be able to instruct our smartphones to start the engines of a new tech device that will weed, seed and feed. Until then, let's unplug, go outside, and dig deeper!

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing!



**Cynthia Brian surrounded by snow-clad branches**

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 Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com).

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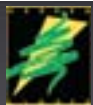
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# Looking Forward. Together.

The beginning of a new year brings with it new possibilities. For more than eighteen years, home buyers and sellers throughout Contra Costa County have relied on the consistent reliability of the team at Village Associates to help navigate our changing local housing market. As Lamorinda's leading independent Real Estate firm, we thank the community for your continued overwhelming support.

Best wishes to our families, friends, and neighbors for a happy, healthy, and safe 2019.



## Your Village Associates:

Top Row: John Nash, Ignacio Vega, Carol Stevenson, Linda Ehrich, Hillary Murphy, Ashley Battersby, Lynda Snell, Emily Estrada, Amy Rose Smith, Meara Dunsmore, Angie Traxinger, Alex Rabe, Erika Kossut, Maria O'Connell, Steve Stahle, Altie Schmitt

Bottom Row: Dexter Honens II, Margaret Zucker, April Matthews, Joan Evans, Shannon Conner, Sue Layng, Karen Murphy, Ann Ward, Judy Schoenrock, Patricia Battersby, Molly Smith, Charles Levine, Clark Thompson

Not Pictured: Linda Friedman, Anne Knight, Ann Sharf, Jeff Snell, Jenny Lyons Wilhite

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