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Fire at Sanders Ranch in Moraga; lines for gas in Lafayette; shuttered shops in Orinda; refrigeration trucks at Whole Foods Market. Photos courtesy MOFD; J. Wake; Pippa Fisher; Sora O'Doherty

Fire and fury experienced in Lamorinda

By Nick Marnell, Jennifer Wake, Sora O'Doherty and Pippa Fisher

In an effort to reduce the risk of a catastrophic wildfire event, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company Public Safety Power Shutoff left millions of people without power across 35 counties in Northern and Central California last week, beginning in the Lamorinda area at 11 p.m. on Oct. 9.

Not long after power was cut, a 50-acre vegetation fire in the Moraga hills caused the evacuation of 140 homes in Sanders Ranch early in the morning of Oct. 10. The fire, reported at 12:54 a.m., burned 50 acres near Merrill Circle North and Sanders Ranch Road, south of Saint Mary's College.

"Because of the PG&E power shutoff, we had resources already staged," said Dennis Rein, spokesman for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. "We were as prepared as we could have been." Due to adverse weather

conditions forecast, fire agencies predeployed extra resources in order to respond to potential catastrophic wildfires.

At the height of the incident, 150 firefighters fought the blaze, including five engines from the state Office of Emergency Services, a state strike team from the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and a Cal Fire crew from Humboldt County.

The fire burned down a hillside to the backyard of many of the homes on Merrill. ... continued on Page A8

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Private roads workshop facilitator reports back to Council, where now?

By Sora O'Doherty

At the Oct. 1 Orinda City Council meeting Jim Bourgart, a former California assistant secretary of transportation, listed 17 "ideas for possible exploration" suggested to him during a workshop on private roads. After many public comments and a wide-ranging city council discussion, the council decided to await further information from its subcommittee and the Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Committee before moving on to polling public opinion and conducting further studies of private roads as well as both public and private sewers and drains. The Aug. 27 workshop explored the issue of Orinda

taking over responsibility for upgrading and maintaining private roads, Bourgart said. The workshop provided substantial time for the residents to make their case and explore the issues in depth, plus time for city staff to present information on the subject. The workshop included formal presentations by a private road residents group and by members of city staff, including the public works director, city attorney and finance director. The residents' presentation was made by six spokespersons. Bourgart summarized the key points from the workshop. The public works director presented data regarding public and private roads and outlined the different categories of private roads. He

described the funding of public roads and the work that has been done in the past several years. He also explained the additional risk and extra cost incurred when road maintenance is deferred for too long. The city attorney explained the legal complexity involved in acceptance of private roads by the city, possible city maintenance of private roads and possible city funding toward private road maintenance and assumption of liability. All would involve substantial legal work. She cited the "public benefit" test that would be applied. Drainage law is related and is also complicated. The finance director explained the options for securing additional funding through a variety of potential ballot mea-

asures, such as a general tax versus a special tax and their different voting requirements. The private road residents group made the case that the treatment of maintenance of their roads is unfair, in that they are paying taxes and fees without deriving the same benefit as public road residents. Private roads and public roads have similar physical characteristics. There is a need for condition surveys of private roads and drainage. Bourgart suggested that the council may choose to give direction to staff to pursue research and/or undertake additional analysis of any of these ideas and options identified at the workshop, including maintaining the status quo, with the city re-

maining responsible only for roads formally accepted into the public system; modifying Resolution 59-18 to ease standards for consideration for private road acceptance; conducting condition assessment surveys of private roads and/or private drainage, to at least the level of specificity used for the public roads and drainage, and estimate costs to do the condition assessment; or accepting all private roads unconditionally. (See link below for a full list of discussion points.) Questions from the workshop included: Could the City, through its buying power, cover—or obtain a better rate—for insurance paid for by private individuals or associations? ... continued on Page A9

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Moraga Road second right-turn lane pilot program continues to end of year



Photo Pippa Fisher

Pedestrians now have to cross at three places with the closure of the crossing by the Plaza, as part of the traffic pilot program.

By Pippa Fisher

The two-lane right-turn from Moraga Road onto Mt. Diablo Boulevard pilot program is set to continue through the end of the year. Such was the unanimous decision of the Transportation and Circulation Commission Oct. 7. The pilot's future will be reassessed at that time.

The city council approved the project in May 2018, but although slated to begin at the end of July 2018 and last 90 days, delays receiving necessary tracking system equipment and complications arising from that delay resulted in changes not being implemented until mid-November. A new controller was installed in mid-December. The project involved allowing a second right-hand turn from the center lane and of necessity closing the crosswalk to pedestrians with a barricade on the east side of the junction by the Plaza.

The commissioners heard a detailed report on the project from Transportation Planner Justin Horng. He explained that traffic had big sea-

sonal variations but that it appeared overall throughput did increase as a result.

Engineering and Public Works Director Mike Moran said that feedback received on the pilot was largely negative, noting that children walking to and from the school as well as older individuals from senior housing on Moraga Boulevard all use the east side of Moraga Road and do not appreciate now having to make three crossings where it could be one. He noted that the throughput is less than optimal because the middle lane is shared with others going straight or turning left, so unless the driver is at the front of the lane, they could be stuck waiting anyway.

Moran also pointed out that closing the crosswalk goes against General Plan goals and Downtown Specific Plan Objectives of encouraging a pedestrian-oriented downtown. Because of this, staff recommended ending the pilot study and restoring the pre-study crossing.

However, the two members of the public who spoke at the meeting were both in favor of continuing the two

right-hand turn lanes and keeping the crosswalk closed, citing the danger to pedestrians of crossing there.

"The trellis is in the way," said Lafayette resident Cheryl MacDonald. "If you can't make eye contact with the driver, they can't see you."

Lafayette resident Adele Connor, who has previously shared her vision for improving traffic on Moraga Road with city leaders, said that this pilot study jumped the gun and that in or-

der for it to be successful it would have to be implemented in conjunction with several other measures further back along Moraga Road during shared commute hours.

All commissioners agreed to give the study more time and to allow for consistent traffic reporting through all months of the year, until the end of December when they will bring the issue back for further discussion.

Witches got rhythm



Local witches brush up their broom dance on the Plaza Oct. 5. Photo Pippa Fisher

Halloween got off to an early start this month with a coven of witches expressing their spooky style as they rocked the broom dance on the Plaza Oct. 5 before heading out for a walk through town.

Organized by Susan Chritton, the annual stroll this year included stops

at Postino, Pizza Antica, Zoonies, Lafayette Beauty, and Amphora for treats before heading back to Sideboard. All proceeds this year benefited Planned Parenthood.

It was a BYOB (bring your own broom) event.

- P. Fisher

Mayor recognizes 75 years of THT's contribution to community



Photo Pippa Fisher

Town Hall Theatre staff and board receive a proclamation in honor of their 75th anniversary at the Sept. 23 city council meeting.

Town Hall Theatre received a proclamation recognizing its 75th anniversary at the Sept. 23 city council meeting.

Mayor Mike Anderson thanked the staff and board members in attendance for all the theater has done for the community through the years.

Artistic Director Susan Evans' enthusiasm was evi-

dent as she explained that since 1944 Town Hall has been providing theater for the community. "We are so excited to be celebrating our 75th anniversary which, in theater terms, is like 10,000 years," she said.

The theater will be holding a masquerade gala celebration Oct. 26 (see related story on Page B5). - P. Fisher

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<p>Lafayette Public Meetings</p>	<p>Planning Commission Monday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>
	<p>Design Review Monday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Arts & Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>
<p>City Council Monday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>	<p>School Board Meetings Acalanes Union High School District Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m. AUHSD Board Room 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette www.acalanes.k12.ca.us</p>
	<p>Lafayette School District Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m. Regular Board Meeting Stanley M.S. Library 3477 School St., Lafayette www.lafsd.k12.ca.us</p>

Lafayette kicks off park refurbishment with a cool \$300K



Photo Pippa Fisher

Smiles all around as Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan presented a check for \$300,000 to the city of Lafayette for the new ADA playground on Brook Street.

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette's only downtown park is about to get a huge boost thanks to the efforts of Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan who, working with the city and Park, Trails and Recreation Commissioner Lauren Herpich, secured funding to the tune of \$300,000 for the refurbishment of Brook Street Park.

City Council Member Teresa Gerringer accepted the check from Bauer-Kahan at a presentation in the park attended by city leaders, commissioners and playground supporters Oct. 2.

The original pirate ship play structure was removed earlier this year when it was found to be unsafe. The city hopes to install the new structure – a “Lafayette Airlines” helicopter, airplane and swing set – in spring 2020. The American with Disabilities Act-friendly facilities will be designed for children younger than 5 and for those with special needs and will feature both traditional swings and a unique “expression swing” which has been shown to enhance the so-

cial, emotional and cognitive well being of children and adults. The new playground will also include a spinning gravity seat, additional fencing and more picnic tables.

Mayor Mike Anderson expressed the city's gratitude. “We are grateful to Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan, and our parks, trails and recreation commissioners and staff, for working together to find this funding,” he said. “With it, Lafayette's Brook Street Park will be a safer and much more fun destination for our children and their families to enjoy.”

Bauer-Kahan says she values local parks as an opportunity to foster a love of the outdoors in children.

“Securing much-needed, accessible and modern outdoor space for recreation for our community's children of all abilities is a priority for me,” Bauer-Kahan said. “I am delighted that the governor saw fit to include this worthy project in this year's state budget. I am thrilled that my office, the city, and the parks, trails and recreation commissioners were able to forge such a successful partnership.”

Run, Lafayette, run!



Photo provided

Lafayette Parks, Trails and Recreation Director Jonathan Katayanagi gets a little help at a previous Res Run.

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette is gearing up to host the traditional Reservoir Run Oct. 20. The event is always popular and this year has seen a big increase in preregistration, according to Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jay Lifson. The Chamber is expecting more than 4,000 people of all ages and athletic abilities to attend this year's run.

Fall's cooler temperatures make for perfect running weather and the event, now in its 27th year, attracts both serious runners and recreational runners from all over the Bay Area. The event is hosted by the Chamber of Commerce together with the city of Lafayette and sponsored by Oakwood Athletic Club and Sutter Health.

Proceeds benefit local schools. Last year the Lafayette Chamber raised \$24,548.35 from the Res Run alone, and a total of \$41,000, including \$16,400 from the Art and Wine Festival, for schools.

The event has something for everyone, from the fast 5K race, to the challenging 10K course that goes around the reservoir. There is also a two-

mile fun run/walk. Strollers and dogs are welcome for the 10K and two-mile runs only. According to the chamber, this event provides “the fastest 5K and the toughest 10K in the land.”

Although runners do come for this event from far and wide, it has a definite community feel as residents run it year after year with their neighbors and friends. And this year, says Lifson, all the local school principals are participating.

This year will also see newly designed medals for all category winners and unique, red carpet-style photo ops.

As well as the runners, the event attracts hundreds of spectators who cheer on participants and can also take advantage of the Healthy Lifestyles Fair, located next to registration and the start/finish line on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Oak Hill Road. Musical entertainment will be provided by the Stanley Middle School Band.

The 5K, 10K and two-mile races begin at 8 a.m., 8:15 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. respectively. Participants can preregister with the chamber. Same day registration will also be permitted.

Further information can be found at www.lafayettechamber.org/resrun



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Hacienda could finally see a restaurant in its future



Photo Vera Kochan

From left: Jasmine Bateson (seated), Breyana Brandt and Cynthia Battenberg discuss restaurant options at an Oct. 3 community meeting.

By Vera Kochan

Before presenting a request to the town council regarding the possibility of locating a restaurant at the Hacienda de las Flores, Moraga Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg, Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt and Recreation Supervisor Jasmine Bateson held an Oct. 3 community meeting to discuss

ideas and receive feedback. Built in 1916, with the intent of becoming an orphanage, the Hacienda later became the home of the Donald Rheem family and the Christian Brothers of Saint Mary's College. In 1973, it was purchased by the Moraga Park and Rec Authority. Looking forward to a new incarnation for the nine-acre property, officials hope that a restaurant would increase

public access and reduce town costs associated with its day-to-day operation. Brandt informed the community attendees that "we've had interested folks reach out to us already." Parks and Rec would continue to have its offices at the Hacienda for the time being. The most common community thread of thought was for a unique experience in dining to hold the town's in-

terest and not detract from long-standing businesses already established within the Lamorinda area.

According to Battenberg, "It's going to take someone who can think outside the box. Moraga is underserved. It's got to be someone who sees the possibilities."

A week later, Brandt presented a request to discuss the release of a Restaurant Operator Request for Proposals at the town council's Oct. 10 meeting. The desire is to locate a casual fine dining restaurant at the Hacienda with or without a full bar. The town would continue to book special events on the property, and the restaurant could act as an on-site caterer.

With the October request for proposals, the town hopes it can have a restaurant lease in place by November 2020.

The actual restaurant space contains approximately 2,250 square feet of inside area and 2,758 square feet of outside patio area. The lease agreement starts at a five-year term with two options to extend and an additional five years each.

The tenant would renovate the kitchen as necessary to comply with Contra Costa Health Department and Moraga-Orinda Fire District

regulations. They would also be responsible for installing a bar and other improvements on the Space Plan.

The minimum hours of operation would be five days a week between 5 and 9 p.m. Lunch would be served three times a week with hours as yet undetermined.

Minimum base rent would be \$6,750 per month (increased annually due to the Consumer Price Index) plus 5% of net restaurant, on-site catering and event alcohol sales (gross receipts less taxes and gratuity) above \$100,000 in any calendar month. A security deposit would be \$50,000 (\$25,000 upon lease execution and \$25,000 on commencement date).

The town currently pays \$246,000 in annual net operating costs for the Hacienda property. The restaurant plan is expected to reduce those costs by an estimated \$75,000 or more.

During the meeting the council directed staff to release an RFP for a restaurant operator at the Hacienda de las Flores. They also agreed to allocate \$10,000 from the Town Manager's contingency fund for professional support in RFP marketing and operation selection assistance.

CCTA requests additional half-cent sales tax

By Vera Kochan

In 2004, voters approved Measure J which provided funding to cities and towns for the maintenance of local streets and roads within the county. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority was also able to utilize those funds toward major infrastructure projects

including Bay Area Rapid Transit and the Caldecott Tunnel's fourth bore. Planning Director Derek Farmer and Senior Planner Steve Kowalski's staff report was reviewed during the Oct. 10 town council meeting. It explained the reasoning behind CCTA's request for a sales tax increase of one-half of one

percent to be used for transportation purposes for a period of 35 years beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2055. According to CCTA the population is expected to double by 2035, allotting for more people using highways, roads and transit systems. As such, CCTA will need to step up its goals to reduce congestion,

manage growth impacts and expand alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle. The proposed Transportation Expenditure Plan has gained support from Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Clayton, Brentwood and Hercules with the proposed sales tax measure expecting to generate \$3.6 billion (in current dollars) annually of the sales tax revenues over that period.

The plan, if enacted, could provide smoother flowing traffic; better road/pavement conditions; reduced vehicle emissions; more bicycle lanes and free or reduced transit fares for students.

Additional improvements could provide increased bus

services; accessible transportation for seniors, veterans and people with disabilities; and cleaner and safer BART stations.

The Planning Department's recommendation to the town council was to support the countywide imposition of a one-half of one percent sales tax to fund transportation improvements in Contra Costa County and adopt the proposed TEP. Before the sales tax can be imposed, the County Board of Supervisors would have to place the measure on the March ballot for voter approval.

The town council made it clear that while it does not take a specific stand on the tax issue, it agreed that voters should have their choice.



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Moraga rejects switch to “Deep Green”



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MCE Solar One in Richmond, the Bay Area’s largest public-private solar partnership powers 3,900 homes annually

By Vera Kochan

In August the town council asked staff to research the possibility of enrolling Moraga’s electricity accounts with MCE’s 100 percent renewable energy option known as “Deep Green,” thereby attempting to reduce the town’s carbon footprint.

During the Oct. 10 town council meeting, members reviewed a staff report by Planning Director Derek Farmer and Senior Planner Steve Kowalski. In compliance with the town’s 2014 Climate Action Plan, previous projects included the installation of new water bottle refilling station/water fountains at the town offices and council chambers; lighting and HVAC systems received energy efficient upgrades throughout town-owned buildings and soon to be installed electric vehicle charging stations at Moraga Commons Park.

MCE was contacted to provide estimated costs to the town for enrolling in the “Deep Green” plan option.

According to MCE, the town would pay an additional \$5,666 per year, or \$472 per month. This switch from “Light Green” 60% renewable resource energy to 100% renewable resource energy is expected to result in a 29 metric ton reduction of carbon dioxide emissions or the equivalent of removing six cars off of Moraga roads.

The town’s annual budget for electricity costs is \$205,000. Sixty percent of the town’s electricity costs are attributed to streetlights and are paid for from Fund 500 – Lighting Assessment District and Fund 140 – Property Tax Lighting Assessment District. There is sufficient funding in both accounts to cover the additional cost.

The remaining 40% of electricity costs are charged to Street Maintenance for traffic signals, town offices, chamber/corporate yard, Hacienda, library and parks/open space. There is a projected \$2,350 annual increase to the General Fund’s

electricity costs, which could be offset in the future if the town decides to pursue additional energy efficient upgrades resulting in approximate annual savings of \$11,000.

The public comment portion of the meeting drew many impassioned pleas in favor of the Deep Green switch. However, members of the council could not be convinced to opt for Deep Green when statistically less than 2% of residents themselves have made the move.

Additionally, the town council felt that Moraga is not comfortable fiscally to warrant the extra costs when the Deep Green impressions would not be substantial, suggesting instead a less expensive solution such as LED lighting. The motion failed 2-2, with Council Members Mike McCluer and Renata Sos voting yes, and Steve Woehleke and Vice Mayor Kimberleigh Korpus voting no. Mayor Roger Wykle recused.



Town Council
Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission
Monday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Park and Recreation Commission
Tuesday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Moraga School District Board Meetings
Thursday, Nov. 12, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium, 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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Orinda Chamber of Commerce to become 'virtual'

The Orinda Chamber of Commerce board of directors announced Oct. 1 that the chamber will transition over a few months to a more virtual organization structure and will rely upon volunteers rather than paid staff. The changes came about as a result of the chamber's annual review and planning process.

The chamber will no longer be employing an executive director, the position currently filled by Cindy Powell, and will cease to lease office space in the Orinda Library building. According to a chamber press release, the vast majority of interactions with members, the business community, partners, and

local government are accomplished through internet-based services and electronic means. This will continue unchanged, and the chamber will continue to monitor inboxes for voicemail, email and social media.

Chamber functions such as newsletters, event announcements, website, advocacy communications and social media will continue to be powered by low-cost or no-cost digital services such as MailChimp, EventBrite, GMAIL, and WIX and carried out by volunteers. Occasional needs for specific technical assistance such as service problem resolution and graphic design will be handled through help

desks or on-demand task services available from numerous digital providers.

Board members and volunteers will provide in-person representation to the chamber's community partners, such as the city of Orinda, Chambers of Lamorinda, Lamorinda Presents, East Bay Leadership Council, elected representative forums, and nonprofit partners.

In making the announcement of the changes, the chamber board thanked all of the chamber's members, volunteers and past executive directors for their service.

-- S. O'Doherty

Orinda will watch the kids so you can go out!

By Sora O'Doherty

Once a month during the school year, Orinda Parks and Recreation hosts a Kids' Night Out where children ages 4-11 can play games, make arts and crafts, watch a movie, and have dinner treats with friends. The meal is prepared by trained Summer Camp staff. For parents, it's a very affordable childcare option if you need a date night, or just

some time off on your Friday night. Kids Night Out is \$30 for one child for three and a half hours of supervision from 6 to 9:30 p.m. There is also a sibling discount of \$15.

The next Kids' Night Out will be held at the new Art and Garden Center at Wilder Park on Friday, Oct. 18. This Kids' Night Out will be a Halloween celebration and will include trick-or-treating, crafts, and the movie, "Coco."

Kids are invited to dress up in their favorite costumes for a spooky and fun night with friends. The Art and Garden Center is located near the top of Wilder Park between Fields 4 and 5 (20 Orinda Fields Lane).

For any questions, please contact Daniel Buckingham at dbuckingham@cityoforinda.org.

There is limited availability, so parents are encouraged to sign up early. To register use this link:

<https://secure.rec1.com/CA/orinda-ca/catalog>, click on "Youth/Teen Classes" near the top of the white box, then click on "Kids Night Out"

Orinda Library Gallery exhibitions and new gallery hours at Wilder Art and Garden Center



"Ghost Boats" 48"x 37" by Sydney Chaney-Thomas Photo provided

By Sora O'Doherty

The October exhibition in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library features artwork from five members of Three-Eight Art Studio: Doris and Wang Hai Chen, Celia Huddleston, Beichen Li, and Lucia Tsang during the month of October.

Doris and Wang Hai Chen are displaying paintings and Chinese ink drawings on rice paper. Doris' "Dahlia Flowers In a Vase" will appeal to gardeners everywhere and Wang Hai's "Yaya's First Astonishing" pulls the viewer into the world of a very young girl discovering something wonderful.

Celia Huddleston works as a Chinese brush painting teacher and is showing her watercolors and Chinese ink drawings on rice paper. Her "Dominica Republic" portrays a North American wilderness

scene seen through a traditional Chinese aesthetic.

Beichen Li is a prolific acrylic painter. Her portfolio includes a variety of series: musical instruments, abstract works, portraits, architectural and travel works. She often uses photographs from her travels as a source for her paintings and likes using vibrant colors. Check out her work at www.beichenlifineart.com.

Lucia Tsang creates both utilitarian and artistic ceramics. She states, "Art has nourished me at every stage of my life. I am inspired to make sculpture moments in life that move me including the birth of my grandchildren, the death of my father, and the internal life of trees." Tsang has "translated whimsy into art."

The Art Gallery at the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda

Way, is open during normal library hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Featured artists will also display work at the Wilder Art and Garden Center. When the Art and Garden Center at Wilder opened, the new gallery space there was only open to the public for the opening art reception each month, by appointment or when other events happened to be going on at the center. However, beginning Nov. 5, the gallery will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 8:15 p.m.

For the remainder of October, the gallery at Wilder will be available by appointment only or during scheduled events. Currently on view there is featured artist Sydney Chaney-Thomas' exhibit, "Natural Beauty."

Chaney's work has been described as "a lyrical representation of natural phenomena swirling about the land and sea, reflecting her background growing up on a horse ranch surrounded by fields of wheat, orchards, and rolling hills." The natural world is where Chaney is most comfortable and, according to the Lamorinda Arts Council, the style brings forth a sense of carefree serenity whether amidst the pine trees in Tahoe, or on a sailboat in the San Francisco Bay. Chaney's work is both Impressionistic and abstract, filled with emotion and color, allowing the "Natural Beauty" to rise to surface.

Appointments to visit the gallery at the Art and Garden Center can be made at wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org.

Orinda library welcomes new interim manager



Michael Beller

Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

Michael Beller, the new interim Orinda library manager, was warmly welcomed at the Mayor's Liaison Meeting on Oct. 8. Beller, who was resplendent in a colorful striped shirt and bow tie, was all smiles as he greeted the assembled representatives of Orinda's community groups. He announced that he loves cooperation, collaboration and programming, and is eager to work with the local community. He feels quite connected, he said, as his wife is a graduate of Glorietta Elementary School and Miramonte High School and his in-laws are Orinda residents.

Beller comes to Orinda from Walnut Creek's Ygnacio

Valley Library, where he held the top job for two years. Prior to that, he spent nearly 15 years at Mills College, where he directed library services with such superlative excellence and joy that colleagues nominated him for a New York Times "I Love My Librarian" Award, which he won. According to the Friends of Orinda Library, Beller brings vision and creative programming ideas to Orinda. Beller stepped in to fill the post vacated by Sierra Campagna, who left this summer for a job in Alameda, closer to her home. For the moment, Beller's new gig is an interim posting, but his plan is to stay, and the Friends of the Library say, "Consider our fingers crossed!"

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Czech visiting student enjoys his time in California



Erik Stoklasa

Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

Sixteen-year-old Erik Stoklasa applied to the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation to be this year's visiting student at Miramonte High School because he sees it as a great opportunity to experience staying in a foreign county for a semester, which he is

finding to be a really intensive experience, taking Mandarin, photography, computer science, public speaking as well as U.S. History and English. His previous experience was last summer in Cyprus, at the Lyons Club youth exchange, where he spent two weeks with 20 people from different countries, visiting the cities around Cyprus and learning about Cypriot cultures. Stoklasa knows former visiting Czech students Karel Balogh 2015, Adam Kraus 2016, and Marak Vybiral 2017.

Although he lives in Tabor, Stoklasa attends Gymnázium Jana Keplera in Prague where he is in his second year of the four-year high school. He spends most of his time living in a dorm in Prague, returning to Tabor on weekends. He wants to major in computer science. "It's a really great subject that develops over time a lot," he says. "It's not static, you have to learn new things over time, and it's a great way to create new things." Stoklasa says he programs a lot and that there is a growing tech sector in Prague. He does want to go to university, but is keeping his options open. He will consider attending an American university.

Stoklasa is only here until December; he'll be home before Christmas. He is excited that his host family, Maya and Daniel McBride and host brothers Kieran and Liam, is taking him to visit Silicon Valley

in a week. "It will be one of the highlights of my tour," he exclaimed. He will also visit Los Angeles and New York City with his host family.

At home Stoklasa has two older sisters, one of them studies in Prague and their other is working at marketing in another Czech city. His mother is a nurse at a doctor's office and his father is a manager at a firm that sells tires for agriculture equipment.

An injured knee has kept Stoklasa from running cross country at Miramonte, but he has joined the computer science and astronomy clubs. One of the differences he finds between Czech and American schools is that a lot of people here want to do extracurricular activities. "We don't have many clubs at our high school," he says, but really likes the idea of being able to meet people who are interested in similar things as you.

What does he miss? His family and friends, he says, but adds, "I definitely don't miss the weather! At home now it is about 8 C, about 46 F. It rains a lot and snows in the winter." In San Francisco you can get a lot of types of food, he thinks. "At home we have a lot more bread and dumplings." But just in case he missed it, his host family took him to a Czech restaurant in Concord.



Orinda Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m. Regular Meeting
Library Auditorium, Orinda
Library, 26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 7 p.m.
Library Auditorium, Orinda
Library, 26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

Orinda Union High School District Board Meetings

Monday, Nov. 4, 6 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

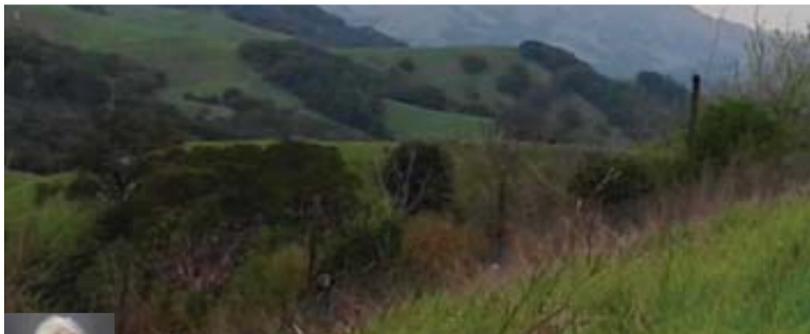
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Peer support team helps firefighters cope with stresses of the job

By Nick Marnell

Acknowledging that a cultural shift is necessary, and encouraged by the firefighters union, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District has instituted a peer support group to help suppression personnel deal with the unique struggles and traumas they experience on the job.

"Firefighters are human and not immune to things they see in their career," said Anthony Stephens, MOFD firefighter and executive vice president of United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, Local 1230. Firefighters deal with potential life endangering emergency calls daily, and witness things that a local firefighter once said "people should never see." The peer support

program is a concerted effort on the part of the membership to look out for one another.

Stephens said that in addition to taking care of each other on the local level, the aim of the support program is to eliminate the stigma of asking for help in the first place. "I've seen progress in the nature of social acceptability. Firefighters are excited that these programs now exist," Stephens said. "But it takes time."

Capt. Jon Bensley is the peer support team coordinator for MOFD. "I too have got to change the stigma that I've grown up with in the fire service," he said. "Define and identify the problem and see what resources are available to ourselves, and how self-care can help us not carry the problems home with us."

Sometimes to tragic levels. According to a study conducted by the Ruderman Family Foundation, a philanthropic organization that fights for the rights of people with disabilities, 103 firefighters nationwide died by suicide in 2017, compared to 93 firefighter line-of-duty deaths.

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District has had its Critical Incident Stress Management program in place for five years, and Contra Fire group coordinator Chris Hummel, also a member of the Local 1230 executive board, is helping MOFD implement its own program. "We do a great job of helping strangers but a poor job of taking care of ourselves," Hummel said.

After a particularly emotionally wrought incident,

such as a pediatric death, or a long, one-on-one victim interaction that ends in death, Hummel said that the membership knows to expect a call from the peer support group. "It's easier to talk to a person who has experienced a similar situation," Stephens said. And though the peer support team can provide critical stress reduction, and immediate decompression, Stephens emphasized that the team role does not supersede the work of a professional therapist.

Slowly, the stigma of dealing with emotional injuries in the fire service is disappearing. On Oct. 1, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1116, which establishes statewide standards for local and regional peer support and crisis referral programs for firefighters. The

bill provides for a network of available peers who can discuss emotional or professional issues, including substance abuse, grief support and workplace issues.

"We're ahead of the game," Hummel said.

The CISM program has the total support of Fire Chief Dave Winnacker. "MOFD is proud to partner with Local 1230 to develop a peer support network. We ask our firefighters to respond to difficult situations in our time of need and this is one of the ways we can build their resiliency to help them deal with the long-term effects of repeated exposures over the length of their career."

"This generation is ready for it," Bensley said.

Fire and fury experienced in Lamorinda



Orinda PPS Resource Center



Empty parking lot at La Fiesta Square in Lafayette

Photo John Fernbacher

... continued from Page A1

"The firefighters were waiting for it when it got there. There was a fire engine in practically every driveway," Rein said.

Rein praised the residents, who evacuated in the middle of the night despite no electric power, and headed to an evacuation center at St. Monica Church, which also had no power. "No whimpering or whining from anyone," Rein said.

By 7:30 that morning, most of the residents were back in their homes, except for the homes on Merrill, where fire engines remained to ensure containment, which occurred at 11:15 a.m.

No injuries were reported, no structures were damaged and the college was not threatened. Though the fire remains under investigation, Rein said that the fire was definitely not caused by PG&E power lines, as the lines are underground in that area, and the utility had cut off power to Moraga earlier that evening as part of its PPS program.

Communication regarding

the PG&E outages had begun earlier in the week, with the initial information stating power shutoffs would begin at midnight on Oct. 9, causing some city offices to close, council meetings to be canceled, and local churches and schools to cancel community events. Mauro Cazarez, owner of Baja Cali in Orinda, said that he was closed on Oct. 9 because he was told there would be no power at midnight, then at noon that day. If he cooked, he would not have been able to serve lunch, he said. The restaurant was closed with no power on Oct. 10. Cazarez said he was trying to transfer some food to his father's restaurant in Hercules because he was told by his insurance company that he would not be reimbursed for food loss since he "had notice." He said he could possibly get something for loss of business, but he wasn't sure of that.

Many local residents heeded the call on Oct. 8 to fill gas tanks, causing long lines as folks queued up for gas at the Chevron station on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Lines at the Moraga Safeway for ice were long

as well, as customers purchased supplies due to information from PG&E stating that the potential outage could last from two to five days. Three refrigeration trucks were parked outside Whole Foods Market in Lafayette Oct. 10 to keep food from spoiling, and generators were used to keep doors open at the Lafayette Trader Joe's and Diablo Foods.

The city of Orinda operated a PPS Resources Center, where citizens could power their devices, stay cool, and avail of hot and cold drinks. Cindy Powell of the Orinda Association provided a microwave oven so that people could heat up food. City of Orinda Facilities and Parks Supervisor Steve Ehrhardt was happy that The Guzzler was on site Thursday evening for the food truck event. John Holtzer of Steel Smokin BBQ food truck

said they didn't have a problem with power because they run on a generator; however, without internet, they could not accept credit card payments.

Lafayette resident Marilyn Finn, 81, cooked meat from her freezer, and returned it to freeze, and made plans to ensure her food did not spoil once the power went out. Since she is hard of hearing and uses a CPAP machine at night to treat sleep apnea, she was frustrated with the confusing information coming from PG&E since she needs electricity to operate the machine as well as devices designed to help alert her in emergencies due to her hearing loss. Her frustration was shared by many other Lamorinda residents, who vociferously expressed their displeasure with PG&E on social me-

dia prior to the shutdown. Lafayette City Council Member Cam Burks said in an Oct. 11 social media post that his "primary concern over these past few days has been the public safety of our community. Lafayette Police and city staff/leadership have done a superb job. However, Pacific Gas and Electric Company negligence has cost our city major tax dollars, placing our residents at risk, and impacting our public education, transportation systems and local businesses."

Gov. Gavin Newsom blasted PG&E for the planned outage, saying at an Oct. 10 press conference, "What has occurred in the last 48 hours is due to decades of neglect. We should not accept the false choice between public safety and hardship." He made sure to compliment Cal Fire and local fire agencies, noting that the Moraga fire benefited from prepositioning of assets.

PG&E President and CEO Bill Johnson, when asked at a subsequent press conference if this is the new normal, said, "The goal is to reduce wildfire risks and prevent catastrophic events like we had in the past two years." In the days before the planned outage, PG&E call centers were overwhelmed and its website crashed. "We were not adequately prepared for this event," Johnson noted, "and this needs to improve in the future."

Finn said she plans to sign up for Nixle (nixle.com), which provides information from local public safety departments about important events.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors
Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas.
Visit www.mofd.org



ConFire

Board of Directors
Tuesday, Nov. 12, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber Room 107,
Administration Building
651 Pine St., Martinez.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



Public Safety

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Emergency: 24 Hours 911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours
925-284-5010

Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com
Lafayette Police Department:
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt
925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line
94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues
94549Traffic@gmail.com

Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049
Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, David M. Cook
925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

Sept. 22 - Oct. 5
Alarms 29
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 9
Traffic 84
Suspicious Circumstances 0
Suspicious Subject 22
Suspicious Vehicle 14



Service to Citizen 25
Patrol Req./Security Check 14
School Assembly Check 5
Vacation House Check 1
Supplemental Report 12
Welfare Check 8

Vehicle violations
Auto Burglary
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. (2)
3300 Block Springhill Rd.
Carol Ln./Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
900 Block Acalanes Rd. (3)
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Petty Theft From Veh
3200 Block Elvia St.
Reckless Driving
Moraga Rd./Moraga Blvd.
Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Happy Valley Rd./Rose Ln.
Tc - Property Damage
Pleasant Hill Rd./Greenvalley Dr.

Other criminal activity
Commercial Burglary
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Fraud False Pretenses
3600 Block Madrone Dr.
20 Block Sanford Ln.
3100 Block Somerset Dr. (2)
Identity Theft
Police Department (3)
Misc Burglary
900 Block Condit Ct.
Panhandling
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Petty Theft
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
900 Block Hawthorn Dr.
1400 Block Rancho View Dr.
1100 Block Camino Vallecito
Petty Theft Other
1100 Block Garden Ln.

Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Threats
3600 Block Brook St.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
Stanley Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Laurel Dr./Deer Hill Rd.
Disturbing The Peace
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Sessions Rd./Northridge Ln.
900 Block Almanor Ln.
Drunk In Public
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd., Lap
Loud Music
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Loud Noise
3200 Block Acalanes Av
3300 Block Springhill Rd.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
Loud Party
Kincheloe Ct./Reliez Valley Rd.
Moraga Rd./Rowe Pl.
Public Nuisance
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1000 Block 2nd St.
Solana Dr./Hamlin Rd.
Other
Accident Property
1st Street/Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Ordinance Violation
1000 Block Dewing Ave.
Hilltop Dr./Hastings Ct.
Public Assembly Check
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
Trespass
800 Block Broadmoor Ct.
3000 Block Brohrer Dr.
Unwanted Guest
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Violation Custody Order
Police Department
Police Department

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report

Sept. 24 - Oct. 7

Alarms 15
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 12
Traffic 47
Suspicious Circumstances 16
Suspicious Subject 5
Suspicious Vehicle 7
Service to Citizen 48
Patrol Req./Security Check 21
Supplemental Report 11
Welfare Check 4

Vehicle violations
Excessive Speed
Moraga Commons
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
St. Andrews Dr./Moraga Way
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr.
Canyon Rd./Country Club Dr.
Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way (2)
Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd. (3)
St. Marys College
Corliss Dr./Woodside Dr.
Reckless Driving
St. Marys Rd./Rheem Blvd.
Tc - Property Damage
2100 Block Ascot Dr.
Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses
1000 Block Country Club Dr.
Identity Theft
Police Department
Police Department
300 Block Birchwood Dr.
Petty Theft
Starbucks
Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.
Rape
Campolindo High School



Warrant Arrest
Moraga Way/Camino Ricardo
Nuisance to the Community
Loud Music
Moraga Royale Retirement Home
School St./Country Club Dr.
Canyon Club Brewery
Hacienda
1500 Block Canyon Rd.
Donald Dr./Moraga Rd. (2)
Loud Noise
800 Block Camino Ricardo
Loud Party
2000 Block Ascot Dr. (3)
Phone Harass
1900 Block St. Marys Rd.
Public Nuisance
10 Block Camelford Ct.

Other
Battery
20 Block Birchwood Pl.
Harassment
St. Marys College
10 Block Camelford Ct.
Mentally Ill Commit
Campolindo High School
Public Assembly Check
Rheem Valley Shopping Center
Safeway
Violation Restraining Order
1900 Block St. Marys Rd.



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report
will be back next time

One Minute to Evacuate: a personal perspective from the Oct. 10 fire

By Cynthia Brian

When it's 2:15 in the morning, the power is out, the air smells of smoke, yet you are fast asleep, then you realize that firefighters are pounding on your door shouting, "Evacuate Now," what do you do? I thought I was very prepared for an emergency with packed Go Bags in our vehicles and one in our hall closet that had a list in large letters of what to grab. But when my husband and I were given exactly one minute to get out because the fire was only 100

feet from our house, there was no time to gather items. In the dark, with a flashlight leading the way, there was just enough time to throw on clothes, grab my computer, purse, phone, keys, and Go Bag. Outside the front door, I put on my garden clogs and off we went as two trucks of firefighters battled the blaze. Here are the Cliff Notes of what I learned that frenzied and frightful morning that could have improved our one-minute evacuation.

1. Put keys, wallet, handbag, phone, glasses, and

- other essentials in the same place every time. (My husband left without his wallet and glasses.)
2. Everything on your list should be stored near your Go Bag. On my list, I had written: computer, back-up discs, passports, insurance papers, family DVD's, and my first-edition books that I wrote. (There was time to only get my computer.)
3. Have duplicate keys to homes, offices, or other keys you may need in your Go Bag. We were allowed to only evacuate with one car. (My

- car had everything we needed in it, but we were directed to take my husband's car that had nothing.)
4. Keep a pair of shoes near the front door. (Check!)
5. A headlamp is the best flashlight option when you are searching in the dark and attempting to find things. (Two hands are better than one when you can take only what you can carry.)
6. Bring a warm coat, blankets, socks, and maybe your pillow. (It was cold and the two thin blankets in my emergency bag were not suf-

ficient. I wish I had stuffed my pillow in my bag.) Today I've amended my emergency Go Bag. This may be the new normal. The firefighters were calm, professional, and truly heroic in saving lives and homes. Our sincerest gratitude to all these brave men and women from many fire districts who orchestrated a successful save. Bravo! All is well that ends well. *Cynthia Brian is the columnist for Digging Deep with the Goddess Gardener. www.CynthiaBrian.com*

Private roads workshop facilitator reports back to Council, where now?

... continued from Page A1

And, could the city assist with making private road residents eligible for federal or state emergency funds?

The council is expected to have further deliberations about how to frame future funding measures, according to Bourgart, and what to include in them. The citizens of Orinda will likely be asked to provide more resources to address infrastructure needs.

The presentation by the facilitator was followed by public comments and council discussion. A few members of the public expressed negative views about the city taking any further action concerning private roads, but more speakers reiterated their concerns about the burden of private roads on the residents.

The main argument from

the private road advocates was presented by Steve Cohn, who has been at the forefront of the private roads movement. He made four points, which he considers essential for the city to resolve before it can move ahead. His first point was that the private road advocates will continue to push for some resolution of the problem, and that Resolution 59-18 did not solve the problem. But he argues that the problem is not as large as some say, and can be solved. And, he said, the risk that might be associated with accepting liability for the private roads needs to be quantified. His last point was regarding the storm drain issue, which involves private property and private drains having to deal with water coming off public lands. Kathleen Finch agreed with Cohn, saying it was so important to get some relief from

the burden.

Karen Lum-Nackley and her husband John Nackley, 20-year Orinda residents, spoke against the private roads issue. Karen said, "the issue of fairness doesn't quite fit; to demand, blackmail, badger seems not right." She urged the council to take the issue of fairness off the table, while her husband expressed concerns about rising property taxes. Daniel Gutu spoke of the problem he had accessing his property from the rear entrance, which was on a private road. Steve Westfall raised two questions: the legality of gift of public funds, and the amount of money spent to date on this issue.

Other speakers in favor of doing something about the private roads and drains pointed out that if a street is impassible, it doesn't help the community, that some private roads provide access to

pedestrians who wish to walk to downtown or to PG&E for essential maintenance of their facilities.

The council discussion was wide-ranging, including questions from newer Council Member Nick Kosla about the private roads, with explanations being provided by city attorney Osa Wolff and Director of Public Works Larry Theis. It was generally agreed that the situation regarding private drains may be significantly affected by public streets and drains and should be studied. All council members acknowledged that further funding is required to complete even the task of maintaining public roads, the repair the public arterials and collectors, and to fix and maintain public sewers and drains, and that that funding will need to be raised by some form of tax or bond that will need to be ap-

proved at an election.

There was general agreement to some form of polling of public opinion to see what ballot measure should be pursued in the future, as well as a further survey of private roads to evaluate the costs of fixing them and maintaining them. Theis suggested that this would best be done by a contractor, and pointed out that time will be needed to produce a request for proposals and hire a contractor. Theis also made note of the fact that, should the city accept more responsibility for private roads, the city would require additional staff. Theis also agreed that Street-saver had been a pretty good barometer of the public roads and the predictions were relatively close to final costs.

To view all the "ideas for possible exploration" in the facilitator's report, see <https://www.cityoforinda.org/DocumentCenter/View/2603/Orinda-Workshop-Report---by-Facilitator-Jim-Bourgart>

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Chabad Center opens in Lafayette



Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

The Chabad Jewish Center of Lamorinda hosted a grand opening ceremony on Sept. 19 to welcome the community to their new premises at 3574 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette.

The center is under the spiritual guidance of Rabbi Yisroel Labkowsky. The rabbi and his wife, Tzipora, are emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson.

Labkowsky hails from Brooklyn, New York, and his wife, the rebbetzin, is from Israel. They married two years before coming to Lamorinda, and spent a year in Israel, then a year in Brooklyn. They have five children, and the oldest is 5 years old (no twins).

The Chabad center will consist of a Judaica Center where you can buy any Judaic item. For example, kiddush cups, tallit, menorahs, Mezuzahs and other Jewish items, all in different styles

are available. There is also a Jewish art gallery featuring Jewish art from around the world.

A Jewish library/bookstore features a lounge area where visitors can sit and read or purchase an array of all different styles of Jewish books and cookbooks. Refreshments, including coffee and wine, are offered free of charge.

There are a number of other Chabads in the Bay Area, including one in Danville, a new one opening in Concord, two in Berkeley, and others in San Francisco and Oakland. The approach they practice is that Torah must be presented and experienced in a modern, relevant context and made available to each individual on their own level. The center's philosophy is in keeping with the Chabad-Lubavitch approach of joy, scholarship and unconditional acceptance and love for every Jew.

Chabad of Lamorinda has been in existence for about four years, during which time Labkowsky says that they have connected with over 800 local Jewish families.

Labkowsky says that they have had one or two programs at Temple Isaiah in Lafayette and he had found it to always be a good mutual relationship. The Chabad center seeks to serve Jews of all backgrounds who want to learn more about their Jewish roots. Chabad offers a wide variety of educational and spiritual opportunities, including Torah classes and lectures, Shabbaton dinners and an array of family and social activities. Everyone is welcome regardless of their personal level of religious observance. Traditional Jewish values are brought to life in a joyous, nonjudgmental

atmosphere.

All the activities offered by Chabad of Lamorinda are free, and the organization is funded wholly by donations from the local community. An important part of the community is the weekly Kiddush Luncheon that follows Shabbat morning services. The Hebrew School Program is under the leadership of Tzipora Labkowsky. The children are taught, in addition to Hebrew reading and writing, the meaning of the heritage and the joys of being Jewish. Outings, contests and celebrations add further dimensions to the program. The Shul provides a full Bar/Bat Mitzvah program.

Religious services at the center are traditional, and are conducted in a casual atmosphere. Children are included and most welcome. Many of those who attend cannot read Hebrew, yet, according to the rabbi, everyone feels at home. The prayer book is bilingual and various English readings are included in the service. Song and commentary add meaning and participation to the prayers.

Chabad of Lamorinda's mission statement says that the organization serves the Jewish communities in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, and is dedicated to providing every Jew regardless of background, philosophy or level of commitment, an open door environment for strengthening and enhancing Jewish family life. Chabad serves individuals and families looking for an anchor and nonjudgmental, accepting, personalized Jewish experience. According to their website, Chabad offers "Judaism with a Smile," and a home away from home for everyone who walks through its doors.

For more information or to arrange a meeting with the rabbi, call the office at (925) 384-7242 or email: Info@ChabadofLamorinda.com.

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Letters to the editor

The facts on Orinda's Private Roads

I read John Nackley's "warning" of the danger being posed by Orinda's Private Road owners with concern. We do not need this kind of fact fabrication.

The facts are:

- Orinda voters have approved \$76 million in new taxes to repair the 64 miles of public residential streets that 4,200 families live on: \$10 million in sales tax over ten years and \$66 million to repay two road bonds over 20 years. A benefit of \$18,000 for each family on a public residential street.
- 29 miles of those streets (40%) are cul de sacs and loops used solely by the residents of those streets and their service providers. Not by the residents of private streets (or anyone else).
- The remaining 35 miles are through streets feeding the public and 50% of the private cul de sacs.
- The other 50% of private streets feed directly into Orinda's 29 miles of arterials and collectors, bypassing the residential streets. The arterials and collectors are funded separately by State gas tax revenues; County sales tax revenues; and garbage impact fees which we all pay.
- The 1,500 families living on Orinda's 30 miles of private streets will be paying about 20% of the sales tax and 25% of the road bond tax, a total of \$12,500 per family, for roads they do not live on and most of them never use
- There are more taxes coming for the public residential streets as City needs another \$1.6 million per year to maintain them; \$230 annually for each of Orinda's 7,000 homes.

What are the "private" street residents looking for? To be treated equally in return for opening up their streets to anyone who wants to travel on them; which most are anyway. This would cost about \$800,000 a year; 30 cents a day per household. We would then have one Orinda and one street system.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Private Roads and the 20%

John Nackley's letter (Private roads' impact on city) states "... Their cry rings hollow as the remaining citizenry does not appreciate benefit from their 'private roads' at all." This is factually incorrect, as the remaining 80% of Orinda's citizenry, who live on "public" roads enjoy the benefits of paying lower taxes for road maintenance at the direct expense of the "private" road residents/taxpayers that make up approximately 20% of Orinda who effectively subsidize the maintenance and repairs of essentially identical "public cul-de-sacs" while receiving nothing for their equivalent "private" roads. More importantly, for decades private road residents have been paying to maintain and replace expensive drainage culverts and pipes under their roads that directly drain large amounts of water from public roads.

For example, "private" Canyon View Drive (which is longer, wider and better maintained than many "public" cul-de-sacs) receives millions of gallons of water each winter from "public" Diablo View Drive above, some gushing in through thick downhill pipes, and some by direct gutter-to-gutter flow. In 2004, residents of Canyon View had to personally pay over \$12,000 to replace an underground pipe carrying some of this water – money that "public" road residents would have never have had to worry about, and money that taxpayers never had to pay, because it was subsidized by private residents.

Residents on private roads pay the same taxes and garbage vehicle impact fees and are members of the public. They did not pay any less for their "private" houses, their roads provide identical public circulation and drainage benefits (virtually all

are fully open to, and used by, members of nearby public roads as walking cut-through routes, and dog-walking routes, etc.) and they should receive equal benefits in return – It's really that simple.

The City is depriving the "private" 20% of services, and exposing them to liabilities that "public" residents are protected from, enabling the "public" to enjoy lower taxes. And the real travesty is that many public road residents clearly do not appreciate this, and are ardently committed to continuing to receive subsidies and lower tax rates on the backs of the "private" road residents.

Joel Libove, Ph.D.
Orinda

Fulfilling household employer obligations

If you live in Lamorinda, chances are you're not able to maintain your home, yard and/or children by yourself. Of course you need hired help, but are you fulfilling your employer obligations?

The link www.IRS.gov/taxtopics/tc756.html provides a comprehensive list of domestic workers who fall under the classification of employee; which means that you may or may not have employer responsibilities. If you pay an employee more than \$2100 per year (\$175 per month), you may need to withhold and pay social security and Medicare taxes, pay federal unemployment tax, or both.

At this point, you might find yourself rethinking your decision to be an employer. An unfortunate option that many homeowners choose is to pay their employees "under the table"; however, this undermines the reasons for which the protections were established.

Everyone agrees that all employees deserve a livable wage in California. Along with this wage, employees must be protected in the event of a work-related injury: medical treatment and/or disability income needs to be provided.

I don't believe that these issues are in the forefront of most household employers' minds.

In fact, in over 34 years of business in Moraga, I've heard of just two homeowners who were fulfilling their employer obligations. Someone has to take care of these employees, will it be you?

As my business provides domestic service to homes, I am occasionally asked why there is a price disparity between the cost of my service and the cost of hiring an independent worker.

Providing protection for each and every one of my employees, year after year, is a huge financial burden, but it's worth every dollar I spend.

Kimberley Winter
Owner, Total Clean (Moraga)

Remembering the Native Americans' plight

There is lots of news nowadays about how men and whites have badly treated women and blacks even up to today. I want to add native Americans to that list. I have 5 native American charities but see no mention about them. A quote from a Nes Perce – remember your father never sold his country – in a few years white men will be all around you. Never forget this, this country holds your fathers' body. Never sell the bones of your father and your mother.

Richard Smith
Lafayette

Deep Green goes down

Last night at the Moraga Town Council, 10 people,

including three students, spoke to the Council asking them to move their electricity to a program called Deep Green that would mean we operate our Town from clean, renewable energy. The funds were there according to the Town Manager. The cost was low, around \$5,000 a year, but its impact would have been far reaching. Walnut Creek, El Cerrito, San Pablo Richmond and Lafayette have already voted to support clean energy in their towns. We are facing a climate crisis whose impacts are beginning to be seen as we break records for hottest year ever, as we face extreme wildfire risks and as we face rising, unhealthy air. Local physicians are banding together to help the public understand that our climate crisis is a public health emergency. Last night we asked our Town Council for leadership on this issue, to take a stand that was forward looking, perhaps a bit out of character for this fiscally conservative community. Leadership is the ability to see when an issue calls for action because the values embedded in the action are more important than competing values. The way we act defines who we are. Last night, our Council proclaimed they stand for business as usual as we face an existential crisis that is asking all people and all towns to do their part.

Marti Roach
Moraga

How Dare You Moraga

How Dare You. The words of 16-year-old climate activist and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee Greta Thunberg to the leaders of the world at the United Nations. How dare Moraga's elected officials sit at the dais at the end of a clear climate crisis day and vote against an easy \$5k contribution to be part of the solution? Moraga residents suffered through the toll of our climate crisis with a day of rolling blackouts and evacuations from a 60-acre wildfire: while our elected officials refused to spend 55 cents per Moraga household to slow this impact of fossil fuel burning by choosing 100% renewable energy for our town operations. Some electeds tried arguing for just changing out street lights and light bulbs that should have been replaced in the 1980s and upgraded in 2008 when the then sitting mayor insisted on Energy Efficiency during review of the lighting district upgrades. Now as we suffer through the hottest September in the world's history, every elected official should rise to combat this challenge and not look for an excuse or start choosing one or the other. In fact, a choice for one or the other was not even on the Agenda for public input. The room was packed with residents, experts, scientists and the youth from nationally recognized local EarthGuardians, who all spoke in favor of the small but important and impactful expenditure. Thirteen-year-old Rio even offered to raise the \$5k money for us—for his future and future generations. How dare our leaders refuse this offer and this cry for help? Yes Moraga needs to do both. Change those damn light bulbs, and get off of old technology. Some electeds tried arguing that they are followers and not leaders and rather than join the other 8 Contra Costa cities who have already voted for this 100% and now advocate and inform their community; Moraga would prefer to just see residents do the work. Yes, every Lamorinda resident can do their part by calling and converting their own homes to 100% renewable energy for just a few pennies more; mcecleanenergy.org and be sure to let Moraga know how you feel manager@moraga.ca.us and townclerk@moraga.ca.us

Lynda Deschambault
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 for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Public Forum

Lafayette Councilmember Candell can vote on Deer Hill Apartments Project

Lafayette voters have watched in recent months as lawyers for Deer Hill developer O'Brien Land challenged the right of Lafayette Councilmember Susan Candell to deliberate and vote on the controversial 315 apartments project O'Brien resubmitted last year after defeat of Measure L. The project proposes 315 apartments at the gridlocked Pleasant Hill and Deer Hill intersection by Acalanes High School.

Councilmember Candell took public positions on traffic and air quality issues on the application in 2012, and during the Measure L and City Council campaigns. She received the most votes in the November 2018 election.

O'Brien Land claims that the Councilmember's positions impact the developer's right to a fair and impartial hearing before the city. To be sure, all applicants and opponents of land use projects have a Due Process right to fair and impartial decision-makers. But do positions taken by elected officials prior to or during campaigns disqualify them from

voting on the very issues the voters chose them to decide?

The California Supreme Court resolved this issue in a 1975 case involving the City of Fairfield and councilmembers elected after campaigning against a commercial development with traffic and pollution issues. The developer filed suit charging bias and denial of a fair hearing after the new councilmembers declined to disqualify themselves.

Dealing with a discovery issue, the California Supreme Court rejected the challenge. Agreeing with the high courts of other states, the Court ruled:

"A councilman has not only a right but an obligation to discuss issues of vital concern with his constituents and to state his views on matters of public importance.... Campaign statements, however, do not disqualify the candidate from voting on matters which come before him after his election...[I]t would be contrary to the basic principles of a free society to disqualify from service in the popular assembly those who had made pre-election commitments of policy on issues involved in the performance of their sworn...duties. Such is not the bias or prejudice on which the law looks askance."

The Supreme Court stated further: "No member of the city council was disqualified because he had expressed an opinion or taken sides on the merits

of the [development] whether during an election campaign or at any other time...the voters were entitled to know the views of the candidates, who had a right, and perhaps a duty, to state their positions."

The Court disapproved a lower court's contrary ruling which "effectively thwarted representative government by depriving the voters of the power to elect councilmen whose views on this important issue of civic policy corresponded to those of the electorate."

In 2018, the First Appellate District ruled "The City Improperly Interfered with the Referendum Process" involving Deer Hill, a position the 2016 city council took with O'Brien Land's support. Now O'Brien Land is attempting to silence any Councilmember that disagrees with it, even challenging Councilmember Candell's right to speak as a private citizen.

City Council should support Councilmember Candell's right to vote. The California Supreme Court has decided the issue.

Scott Sommer is a Lafayette citizen, environmental attorney, and former member and president of the Lafayette School Board. The City of Fairfield decision can be found at 14 Cal.3d 768, quotes from pp. 780-782.

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Feral pigs dig up the dirt on the community playing fields



Photo Pippa Fisher

Feral pigs did significant damage to local playing fields in their recent hunt for food.

To a feral pig, a community playing field or a neighbor's backyard are fair game when it comes to finding dinner. But they leave quite a trail of destruction behind them in the process as they rip up landscaping and, in this recent case, the ball fields on St. Mary's Road.

City workers have put up a temporary fence to deter the porkers. According to a sign

on the fence, "Given the importance of security until further notice access will be restricted to permitted sports teams." Lamorinda Weekly hopes the pigs can read.

The city says that staff are working on a long-term solution and hope to restore access to all very soon.

- P. Fisher

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"the preservation & enhancement of the semi-rural character of the community."

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- Protect residents, students and schools from health/safety hazards
- Support the right housing in the right locations
- Balance local housing with local jobs/locally owned businesses
- Ensure adequate open space and recreation
- Hold the City accountable for its actions

Since 2016, Save Lafayette has focused on local government activities: transparency, ethics and the residents' right to vote on local issues.

We have added wildfire evacuation planning, traffic-related health and safety, and the balance of local jobs, businesses and housing.

We will review these latest activities in The Lamorinda Weekly of October 30.



www.SaveLafayette.org

Visit our website to learn more or to find out how you can help. To donate, please send a check to: Save Lafayette, PO Box 1183, 3641 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette CA 94549

~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Navy officer, optometrist, professor ... turned chestnut farmer?



A carpet of chestnuts

Photos Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

There is a saying, "If you want something done, ask a busy person." Weylin Eng seems to be proof that this is true. At 77, the Orinda resident is currently in his fourth successful career. He has been an optometrist and local business owner, a captain in the U.S. Navy, a professor and Special Assistant to the Dean at UC Berkeley, and now with his wife Rose he is the owner and operator of Winters Chestnuts, a chestnut farm in Winters, California.

Eng says, "People are always amazed that we can grow chestnuts in California; actually we are the primary supplier of locally grown chestnuts in the Bay Area from Vacaville to San Francisco, Oakland to Fremont." The Engs harvest their Italian Colossal Chestnuts in the fall, and deliver them personally to gourmet markets such as Berkeley Bowl, Monterey Markets, to Chinatown shops in both San Francisco and Oakland, as well as to Korean markets and to Japantown.

"Unfortunately, we are too busy to do the local farmers' market anymore," Eng says. "That really was a lot of fun, meeting many people from all walks of life." He adds, "Also, we are not set up to sell roasted chestnuts on the sidewalks at SF Union Square and Ferry Building, which are so popular in the East Coast and Europe." When the Engs retired from their professions in optometry and education in 2004, they started farming. They have operated their 18 acres of chestnut trees since 2008. Their trees were planted in the late 1990s under the supervision of the late Professor Kay Ryugo from UC Davis.

The farm also produces prunes and plums for Sunsweet, as well as a variety of produce, from peppers to tomatoes, figs to tomatillos. They run the farm with the help of Arturo Marischal, their full-time supervisor. Eng says they are trying something new this year: freezing chestnuts. One of their biggest customers is Berkeley Bowl. The owner told them he was going to freeze the chestnuts. Eng would love to capture the market for the Christmas holiday, so they are currently doing research.

Weylin Eng was born in Oakland, to a Chinese family that had been in the United States for many generations. His great-grandmother was an orphan, who was found alone at 4 or 5 years old in a Chinese camp that had burned down. She knew her family name was Yee, and was taken to a family outside Marysville with the same surname. Eng's grandfather was born in 1884 in Marysville, and his grandmother was born in 1867 near Nevada City. His father was born in 1911 and became the first Chinese-American elected to high office, serving four

terms on the Oakland City Council in the mid-1960s. Rose is from Hawaii, a third-generation Japanese-American. The couple have four daughters, all born and raised in Orinda.

In his career choices, Eng has been influenced by the effects of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was enacted in 1882 and repealed in 1943. In 1942, after Pearl Harbor, Eng's uncle went to join the Navy, but he was turned down because he was Chinese. His name was Timothy Lennoy Eng, but, determined to succeed, he changed his name to Timothy Lenneau and grew a mustache. Returning to the enlistment office, he said he was French. This time he was accepted. For the next 37 years, Eng recalls, he was a chief petty officer nicknamed "Frenchy."

Eng's older brother followed their uncle into the Navy, and so did Eng in 1965. Both brothers rose to the rank of captain, which in the Navy is just below admiral. Eng served 30 years of total active and reserve service in the Navy, including Desert Storm, and considered it a fantastic career. He was recalled to active service when he was in his 50s. A full-time professor at Berkeley, he was at the State University of New York on business, when he was summoned to a telephone call. Although no one there knew about his Naval career, a staff member came into the room and asked him, "Are you Captain Eng? You have a telephone call." He was given 48 hours to report for duty. He served about six months on the admiral staff in Desert Storm, but was never in harm's way. One of his duties, he recalls, was to estimate the number of body bags needed for the hospital ship, the USS Mercy.

Eng is very connected to his family's long and colorful history in America. "My two daughters," he notes, "received college grants to Wesleyan and Carlton. Because it was unusual that there were so many generations of their family in America, they studied their family history. Eng has a collection of articles that helped them trace the family. "In 1882," Eng explains, "my great grandmother, at the age of 14 or 15, was married to this rich merchant Lennuey, also spelled Lennoy. The Marysville Record said they had the biggest marriage reception the town ever had, spanning four or five restaurants." The bride had bound feet and was carried on a sedan chair. In 1884 Eng's grandfather, James Lennoy Eng, was born.

"I feel that we are American, like my grandfather," Eng says. "He was accused of being a banana: yellow on the outside but white on the inside." Eng feels strongly that his children should be good Americans, but shouldn't be

ashamed of their heritage.

Eng always wanted to buy farmland. One of his Lennoy ancestors was a merchant who went into farming but was not allowed to buy the land, Eng guesses, because of the Chinese Exclusion Act, so he leased it. Because of that, Eng bought a walnut farm in 2004, and two years later the chestnut farm came on the market and he bought that too.

Eng also followed in his father's footsteps. In the 1930s, he says, "Dad was the only Asian in the Cal Marching Band." Since Cal was a land grant college, his father was in the ROTC, but because he didn't want to carry a rifle, he played the drums in the band. Eng was very active in the Cal band during his student years, playing the clarinet. He also followed his father and his aunt into optometry. His brother followed their grandfather into den-



Chestnuts are poured into the sorting machine.

tistry, but the path for Chinese dentists hadn't been smooth. Eng's grandfather graduated from dental school, but was not allowed to take the boards because he was Chinese. He then went to Portland, Oregon, and obtained a law degree in 1908 or 1909. He then returned to California and

threatened to sue the State Board. They settled and gave him his license.

If four careers aren't quiet enough, Eng has plenty of other interests. He is a Mason and rides in the mounted patrol. His latest hobby, Eng says, is philanthropy.

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Town Hall Theatre celebrates 75 years



Town Hall lobby from years past

Photos provided

By Adam Blake

Throughout its rich history, many community members of Town Hall Theatre have stepped up to preserve the 104-year-old landmark. The late Wirtabel Harris played an instrumental role in saving the building back in 1964 by spearheading the "Save Town Hall" campaign, after it had failed to meet new building and fire regulations.

The 185-seat theater was originally constructed as a meeting space and town hall for the local farming community in 1914 and was in dire need of renovations. It likely would not exist today if it weren't for Harris' relentless efforts to raise \$50,000 from the community in order to bring the building up to code.

Harris moved to the area in the 1940s and quickly became an integral member of the Dramateurs, which was all-female at the time. The group formed in 1944 and their first production was "Catching up with Christmas" at the Orinda School PTA. They moved to the "barn" on school street 10 years later and eventually reorganized themselves as the Town Hall Theatre Co. in 1992. Over the years Harris acted, made costumes, and served as president of the company twice.

Today, Harris' daughter, Rebecca Mallon, has carried on her mother's legacy by frequently volunteering at Town Hall Theatre over the past 15 years. Her favorite spot is behind the bar where she can converse with the attendees.

Mallon was quick to point out that despite her mother's passion for the stage, she was never one to bask in the spotlight.

"My mother was always very humble about recognition. She didn't go out of her way for recognition and praise. She did what she did because she loved it," Mallon said.

Nevertheless, Harris' lifelong commitment to the theater has been memorialized with the "Wirta-bell" mounted in the theatre's foyer. It is rung at every show to signal attendees to take their seats at the beginning of a performance and after intermission.

Of course, Harris and Mallon are just one example of the hard work and dedication it takes to keep the theater thriving. From building sets, to cleaning the seats, to maintaining the landscaping around the building, it takes a village, to say the least.

"Town Hall Theatre runs on volunteers and in the last three years we have had tremendous re-growth in our corps of volunteers," Shepard said. "Our volunteers don't just



Wirtabel Harris rings the "Wirta-bell"

keep this historic building running, they also take care of it and become part of our family."

Mallon, who grew up in the early days of the Dramateurs, says her mother would be thrilled to see how far Town Hall Theatre has come today. This includes recent updates to the theatre's technical capacity with new LED lighting and an updated sound system, in addition to expanding community outreach and educational programs.

Education has always been central to the Town Hall Theatre's mission, but they recently have been able to expand and deepen how they reach students in Lamorinda. In addition to serving Spring Hill, Lafayette, and Burton Valley elementary schools, the theater runs an Adult Education class that has toured around the elementary schools and built interactive programs for middle school classrooms.

With help from The Lafayette Community Foundation and The Bill Graham Foundation, Town Hall Theatre has also been able to offer student matinees for select shows with free tuition to under-served schools. They have also created countless opportunities for high school and college students to gain first-hand theater experience, both on stage and behind the curtain.

... continued on Page B3

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New Art Moves Project installation planned for this weekend



Photo provided

Submitted by Dina Bogan

Art Moves Project continues to create new forms of public art for the Lafayette community by commissioning California-based artists and choreographers from varying disciplines and backgrounds, using non-traditional and socially relevant themes.

The result is a temporary outdoor multisensory experience.

AMP will present its third annual public art installation, "You Me Us: In Community," with dance on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18 and 19, at

Plaza Park, which includes two free performances at 5 and 6:30 p.m. each day. "You Me Us: In Community" is a study of how dance, film, music and sound converge to create a unifying community experience.

This year's installation explores us as a community: our stories of arrival, the assumptions and views we brought with us and how they change over time. "You Me Us: In Community" delves further into these questions through an exploration of native versus non-native plant ecosystems.

What can we learn about

ourselves as individuals and ourselves in community through the flowers and trees in the hills that surround us, or from the weeds in the cracks of our sidewalks? How do their stories reflect our own? How do these non-native plants arrive, assimilate, integrate, resist and persist?

How do they change the existing native plant community? How did we arrive here?

"I'm so excited and grateful to be working with AMP on such a meaningful project. They have a true spirit of exploration and an openness to experimentation that I haven't always encountered elsewhere," says Charmaine Koh, visual artist on "You Me Us: In Community." "Working with them has helped me push my own limits, and to experience the amazing things that can be achieved in community."

Adults and children alike will have the chance to experience the result of this unique Art Moves Project collaboration and will be invited to participate by sharing their thoughts on "You Me Us: In Community" by writing on an interactive installation.

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SMC Student Recital Series open to community



Music fills the Saint Mary's College Chapel at a previous recital. Photo provided

Submitted by
Renée J. Witon

Musicians at Saint Mary's College will perform in the first of five Wednesday Student Recital Series concerts at 1:15 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 23 in the Saint Mary's College Chapel. Featured performers include the Flower Duet from the opera "Lakme" performed by Madeline Vine and Mylan Biltz, and baritones Ian Robertson and Ryan Ford performing classical and Broadway selections. Violinist Emma Weyrauch and pianist Lino Rivera will perform the JS Bach/Gounod arrangement of "Ave Maria." Pianists Jas Chok and Samuel Doby will perform music of Copland and Dello Joio. The finale of the program will feature the SMC Chamber Singers and Glee Club. Donations are welcome.

Art about the community, by the community



Lara Dutto poses with some of the young artists responsible for the mural. Photo Pippa Fisher

By Pippa Fisher

A new, colorful and eye-catching mural is now gracing the old ATM niche on the side of the Jennifer Perlmutter pupop gallery at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. And it truly belongs to the community.

Inspired and led by local architect and artist Lara Dutto, the mural installed on plywood board was unveiled Oct. 5 at a well-attended reception to celebrate the teens that worked on it.

Dutto explained how she got a group of more than a dozen local kids of different ages together to create the

mural. During four workshops they talked about scale and about how they perceive Lamorinda. She challenged the students to come back with images and poetry, asking them what they thought was the best of the area. With comments on the beauty of the hills, trees and wildlife and how people take care of one another and feel safe, and what they value in the community, they set to work on the mural. Dutto says the mural also depicts their wishes and ideas for moving forward. "And there are secrets," she said, encouraging everyone to enjoy the mural.

Village Associates underwrote the project. Perlmutter appreciates the support: "They felt it was a strong way to convey their support of community and local business in Lafayette."

Crediting the thinking from urban planners, and Perlmutter as an amazing businesswoman, Dutto observed, "People come out for art."

Town Hall Theatre celebrates 75 years



Town Hall early days Photo provided

... continued from Page B2

Shepard looks forward to expanding community partnerships with more local non-profits that have themes related to the art they produce. In December, the theater will work with The John Muir Land Trust Foundation during "Cinderella, A Fairytale" and Center for Elders' independence during "The Cherry Orchard." Shepard says nonprofits like these pair well with the themes in the shows of the upcoming season.

On the production side, artistic director Susan Evans

hopes to continue putting on high-quality shows, while attracting artistic talent and welcoming new audiences from the greater Bay Area. Since space is a limiting factor, she plans to explore putting on shows off-site, bringing productions into new spaces in the community.

Town Hall Theatre will host a masquerade gala fundraiser in honor of its 75th anniversary and 300th production on Oct. 26 at the Lafayette Veterans Center. "I think the longevity of Town Hall Theatre is a result of the support of the

community, the warm and welcoming spirit of the Town Hall staff and volunteers, and the diversity of what we have to offer," said Managing Director Dennis Markam, who has been with the theater for over 13 years.

The upcoming celebration will be emceed by local DJ ryanO and include a cocktail hour with live music, dinner, dancing, and the original cabaret "Coming Home - Town Hall Theatre Through the years" directed by Glen Riggs. The show will feature Main Stage and Education alums, highlighting the important role the theater has played in so many lives across generations.

"We are a place for the community to gather together, in person, and create memories and have shared experiences," said Shepard. "There are a dwindling number of spaces where people can gather in person and experience stories and performances so close to home with their friends and family."

Tickets for the gala are available through the Town Hall Box Office at (925) 283-1557 or online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.



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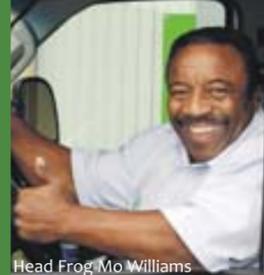
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AAUW Tech Trekkers thrilled by experiences at Grace Hopper STEM Camp



Photo Jan Cushman

Back row: Madeleine Termondt, Michelle Chen, Nicole Hui, Eden Hall; front row: Angela Kohr, Bella Stratford, Zoe Seaman

Submitted by Jan Cushman

The seven enthusiastic eighth-grade girls who attended AAUW (American Association of University Women) Tech Trek camp at Stanford in July were honored at a reunion and reception hosted by the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch of AAUW on Sept. 6. Eden Hall, Bella Stratford and Madeleine Termondt from Stanley Middle School, Nicole Hui and Angela Kohr from Orinda Intermediate School and Zoe Seaman and Michelle Shen from Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School shared their experiences with AAUW-OML members and parents. The girls were delighted with their special experiences bonding with "like-minded girls" who love science and math and seeing their future in a variety of possible STEM careers. Molly Mudgett, a former 2013 Tech Trekker and three-time camp counselor, joined the reunion. She is studying engineering at Northwestern.

This year, core classes at camp included App Developer and Cyber Sleuthing, as well as marine biology, forensics, and engineering. At camp, the girls took apart computers and servers, dissected fish, learned the physics of hand-made cars and built and programmed robots. They went on field trips to Symantec, a marsh, Knightscope and the Santa Clara County Crime Lab. They stayed up to midnight looking through a variety of telescopes, talking with engaging amateur astronomers and observing Saturn, the moons of Jupiter, nebulae and the International Space Station. They "speed dated" to learn about the STEM careers of 10 professional women. They learned about structural engineering and built structures using rolled up newspapers. They learned to solder and made flashlights. And much more.

AAUW-OML members Gail Chesler, Sara Lautenbach and Jan Cushman were dorm moms at camp.

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

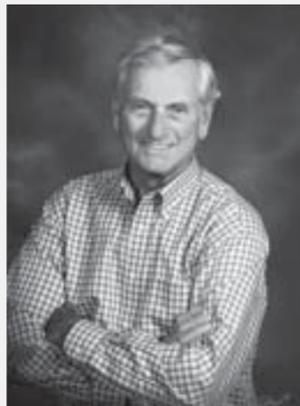
Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

In Memory

Donald Clyde Drennan

February 19, 1934 - October 3, 2019 50 Year Resident of Moraga, California



Born to Gladys and Valla Drennan in Peoria, Illinois, Don was an alumnus of Oakland Technical High School, Berkeley High School and University of California, Berkeley.

In 1948 he met his love and life-long companion Marilyn Drennan. They were married on December 26, 1955 at the Chapel of 1st Methodist Church in Berkeley, CA. After 53 years of marriage, Marilyn passed on January 16th, 2009. Don found happiness with Joan Bellows, whom he married on February 10th, 2018.

Don is survived by his wife Joan of Rossmoor, CA and three children: Julie Drennan Nelson (Reed) of Santa Cruz, CA, Carol Lyons of Elk Grove, CA, John Drennan (Stacey) of Moraga, CA; 7 grandchildren: Dustin McCord (Shanna)

of Lafayette, CA, Christina Lynch, of Pleasant Hill, CA, Jason (Kandice) Lyons of Sacramento, CA, Jessica Lyons of Rocklin, CA, Jordan Lyons of Elk Grove, Spencer and Laine Drennan of Moraga, CA; 7 great grandchildren; Gracie and Liberty Lynch, Bodhi, Eden and Wyla McCord, Justin and Joshua Lyons. Don had one brother, Gerald Drennan (1932-2019) of Redding, CA.

Don served in the United States Navy as Lieutenant Commander of Class 27 - 1954. He was in Squadron VA- 155. He flew the Sky Raider as a carrier pilot on the USS Hancock and later flew as a commercial pilot with Pan Am.

He was a devoted Christian and a longtime member of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church and most recently Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. He was deeply involved with Troop 212 of Moraga; CA. Don was on the Camp Timberwolf Board for 25 years and served as the President of the Board for 14 years. He volunteered nearly two weeks a year at the camp. He also volunteered with inner city youth organizations in Oakland to develop camping programs for disadvantaged youth.

He was an active member of Kiwanis for over 25 years. His passions included: flying, sailing, backpacking, skiing, traveling and taking long walks. He was known for always lending a helping hand or shoulder to lean on. He had a beaming smile, zest for living life to its fullest and sharing friendship. He continues to be an inspiration to family and friends and those whose lives he touched.

There will be a Celebration of Life at MVPC on Friday, October 25th at 2:00pm. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Camp Timberwolf, P.O. Box 134, Moraga, CA 94556, a wilderness Scout Camp.

Chapel of the Chimes

Trends for the Class of 2020 to consider

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

Understanding the reality of today's college application process is an important element in managing expectations. One trend that we advisors have observed has made an even greater impact on this past admission cycle. Great grades and top test scores will not guarantee entrance into top colleges. These credentials will certainly open the doors at the vast majority of schools, but colleges ranked in the top 25 or even 50 expect more: a compelling uniqueness as well as a true connection to their mission. So you need the numbers and the other factors to boost your chances.

Below are other trends worth mentioning, as they will impact your experience applying to college this fall:

- Applying early action is losing some of its luster. Whereas in the past students were given a significant advantage if they applied this way, quite a few schools this year elected to defer students into the regular pool instead of making a quick decision. If you lack top grades and test scores or the 'uniqueness' referred to above, early action may not buy you as much as it did in past cycles.

- More colleges are going to allow self-reported grades and test scores, only asking for an 'official' report if you choose to attend. While this will require more effort on the student's part, it will also save the family money.

- Offering a student admission in the spring instead of the fall is gaining momentum as an enrollment management tool for colleges. This option comes as a surprise to most students who never knew it was a choice. Don't let the possibility throw you. Instead, look at the advantages of taking a break between high school and colleges. Think about advantages associated with planning a trip or securing a job or an internship.

- The list of test optional schools is growing. With 1,000 schools on board, it is possible to apply to college without ever taking an ACT or SAT. (Visit www.fairtest.org to see colleges on the list.)

- Colleges that offer merit aid tend to award money to students who take advantage of the early action and priority dates. Research

each college website carefully to find these dates and then adhere to them; be sure to complete any required financial aid materials by the colleges' deadlines.

- The University of California campuses now routinely deny or waitlist smart and highly qualified California students. If you need public in-state options, be sure you apply broadly to UCs and California State Universities. In addition, expand your college list to include public out-of-state choices for lower price tags. You will still pay out of state tuition and fees, but these are still likely to be lower than some private college options.

Every college admission cycle is different and having an experienced college advisor in your corner who knows the trends can be very beneficial. I hope the Class of 2019 benefits from reading and adhering to these important trends and tips for success.



Elizabeth LaScala, PhD personally guides each student through each step of selecting and applying to well-matched schools for undergraduate and graduate school study. Over the past two decades, Elizabeth has placed hundreds of students in some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the U.S. The number of clients taken is limited to ensure each applicant has personalized attention. Contact Elizabeth early in the process to make a difference in your outcomes. Write elizabeth@doingcollege.com; Visit www.doingcollege.com; or Call: 925.385.0562.

Imperfect produce put to good use



Photos provided

Students prepare salads for Housing Consortium of East Bay

Submitted by
Cathy Harrison

At the beginning of this summer harvest season, a local volunteer-run farm in Moraga was looking for channels for imperfect and ripe produce so the produce would not go to waste. Camino Pablo Elementary School second-grade teacher Margaret Coughlan, who was looking for service projects for her class and the school PTA's community services committee, decided to turn these amazing produce into healthy vegetable sides for the 40 residents at Housing Consortium of East Bay's Community Cabins

program by Lake Merritt (9 10th E Street, Oakland).

Coughlan's class prepared fresh salad in the school kitchen with the teacher and parent volunteers' help. The class also made a giant, colorful poster for the Community Cabins program. The residents don't get fresh vegetables regularly and, therefore, every bite counts. With support from the school principal, Chris Reddam, and the successful pilot with Mrs. Coughlan's class, five more classes have participated in preparing healthy vegetable dishes on Fridays for the Community Cabins' residents. The classes have made salsa, salad, sandwiches, chilis, vegetable stew and rice sandwiches.

A colorful posters added more energy to the Community Cabins' site. The food and posters were delivered fresh by parent volunteers on the same day. This initiative has brought parent volunteers, students, teachers, and Moraga volunteer-run farm together. It also connects the two communities.

Although the seasonal Friday food initiative at Camino Pablo Elementary School has ended in early October this year when the volunteer-run farm's summer harvest season came to an end, the Community Cabins program by Lake Merritt will continue to receive Friday meals through the "Feasting with Friends" program (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/feasting-with-friends-tickets-60915267204>). Camino Pablo PTA Community Services Committee creates and promotes volunteering opportunities for elementary school students throughout the school year.

For information about the Community Cabins program by Lake Merritt, visit <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2019/04/04/oakland-to-invest-millions-in-tuff-shed-program-to-help-house-homeless/>
For information on Moraga School District's Volunteer Service Award Programs, visit www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1314/Moraga-students-honored-for-volunteer-service.html

Comestible Fine Catering's delectable short ribs



Photo Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

My niece Dori (Lubliner) Jacob, grew up in Lafayette and attended Campolindo High School before heading off to Santa Cruz for college and New York University for grad school in performance studies — the theory of performance. Today, she is the casting director for San Francisco Playhouse. (You are probably thinking, “this is a nice story, but what in the world has it got to do with food?” I promise, there is a connection.) She is also the president of Comestible Fine Catering and Supper Club, an Oakland-based catering company, co-owned with her husband Noah Jacob. This fun story has its origins back at New York City, where she met Noah, also a graduate student elsewhere in the city for film production, but truly a chef at heart.

Noah says that when he was a youngster living in Portland, Oregon, he got into trouble a lot. When he was just 14, his father sent him to work at a local restaurant doing dishes to keep him busy and out of trouble. The thing is, Noah really enjoyed working at the restaurant and in short order, he graduated from dish duty to prep cook. Equipped with this experience, he was later hired by a family friend to work for Elephants Delicatessen, a pioneer in the specialty foods market where everything was made from scratch – European style.

Noah and Dori got married and thoroughly enjoyed the New York scene surrounded by fabulous dining options, but eventually they moved back to San Francisco for Dori's job and to be closer to family. Together they decided it was the right time to

owners that catering is where they should focus because of the financial reward and the more flexible hours, but they wanted the glory of having brick and mortar restaurants. Noah left the deli and his culinary dreams sprouted into supper club events that he and Dori held in their very own house, often for 60 people over the course of two nights, where local chefs would “compete” and where diners would vote on their favorite dishes. It was from these events that they gained notoriety and, more importantly, clients for both private and corporate events, cooking for as many as 80 people from their own kitchen at home.

“This business was 100% grass roots, built by the seat of our pants,” Dori reflected. “Besides doing all of the paperwork, I did all the dishes and helped in any way that I could, while Noah did the meal planning, client relations and cooking. Even though we started out small, as a result of our supper club

dinners we landed an opportunity to book an 800-person corporate event.”

Today the Jacobs, through Comestible Catering, employ 25 people and prepare 2,000 to 3,000 meals per week in their professional kitchen in Oakland. We are lucky because they also manage to prepare most of the meals for our own big holiday gatherings! This is where I first tasted Noah's amazing lamb and short rib recipes.

As a result of this grass-roots business and “fly by the seat of your pants” ingenuity and drive, Dori and Noah are able to spend time with their 3-year old son, Oscar, and have another baby boy on the

way! They have also been so gracious as to share Noah's Short Rib recipe with all of our readers. I've made it several times, now and it's become one of our family favorites. It is fabulously delicious and I like to serve it with mashed yams for the beautiful color combination. It's a perfect fall recipe as the days begin to turn chilly.

For more information about Comestible Catering, or to book an event, please visit: www.comestibleoak.com, or call: (917) 514-2678

Noah's Short Ribs

(Manischewitz-braised short ribs)

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 pounds boneless short ribs (can use bone-in, but takes about 20% longer to cook)
- 1 bottle Manischewitz (750 ml)
- 1 jar Asian garlic and black bean sauce
- 2 yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 1 bunch fresh thyme, roughly chopped
- 1 handful garlic cloves
- ½ cup pomegranate molasses
- Garlic salt

DIRECTIONS

Portion and sear off short ribs until browned. Place short ribs in a large roasting pan with onions, the black bean garlic sauce, thyme, raw garlic and the whole bottle of Manischewitz. If meat is not completely covered with wine, add water until covered. Cover pan tightly in foil and braise at 325 F for about 2.5 to 3 hours. You will know when the short ribs are done as they should be able to be pulled apart by forks, but not completely falling apart.

When done, remove meat from braising liquid and set aside. Place braising liquid in the blender, and blend until very smooth. Add the pomegranate molasses and continue blending. Depending upon how fatty the short ribs are, this sauce may be perfect as is. If the short ribs are super lean, it may still be a little bit tart. If it's too tart, add about half a stick of butter to it and continue to blend. Clean roasting pan for use again later.

Season to taste with garlic salt. If you want to be fancy, you can run the sauce through a chinois, to make it super smooth, but it's not strictly necessary for everyday presentation. (Susie's note: I don't blend the sauce at all, because my family loves the chunkiness of the onions in the sauce.)

Add the sauce back over the short ribs in the same roasting pan. At this point, they can hold for up to three days. If you are going to serve them day of, put them back in the low oven, uncovered at 325 F for another 30-45 minutes until you are ready to serve. If you are reheating from chilling them in the refrigerator, they will probably need about an hour at 350 to get yummy!

Smashed Sweet Potatoes

(Note- this is how I make them, but Noah makes a much fancier version which is below)

- 2 large sweet potatoes (I use the brighter orange ones that we call yams in the stores)
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon salt

Bake sweet potatoes in 350 F oven for approximately 45 minutes, or until cooked all the way through and soft. Cool until able to handle. While still warm, remove meat from skins and place in a bowl. Smash with potato masher or with an electric beater. Fold in butter and season with salt.

Noah's Whipped Sweet Potatoes

Noah peels and boils the sweet potatoes until tender and then whips them along with butter and salt, until they are super fluffy like a mousseline. He also does several different versions of these which include black truffle butter, or fresh truffles if you can find them, or maple syrup, or mild red peppers such as Aleppo or Espelette. He makes a bed of the potatoes and serves the short ribs on top of them.



Dori and Noah Jacob

Photo Kathryn Rummel

“My pants could stand up alone at the end of each day from so much salt, sugar and blood,” he said, “but I moved up the ladder to become the catering chef, and I got paid!” He tried to convince the



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com.

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

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ART

Lamorinda Arts Alliance announces "Keep It Local" at Lafayette Bank of America at 3530 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. The exhibit features local scenes by local artists, including George Ehrenhaft, Judith Feins, Debby Koonce, Jill Landau, Margaret Lucas-Hill, Judy Bolef Miller, Wenda Pyman, Sheila Reid, Adrienne Rogers and Maria SantoStefano. The show will run through Oct. 30.

Art Moves Project (AMP) is proud to present "You Me Us: In Community," its third annual public art installation with dance, taking place at 5 and 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 18 and 19 at the Lafayette Park Plaza. "You Me Us: In Community" is a study of how dance, film, music and sound converge to create a unifying community experience. Adults and children alike will have the chance to experience the result of this unique Art Moves Project collaboration and will be invited to participate by sharing their thoughts by writing on an interactive installation. www.lamorindaarts.org/arts-incubator-projects/

Dee Tivenan in "Women Artist Series" from 4 to 8 p.m. Oct. 17 at Eileen Fisher, 1182 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek. For one day only there will be a solo exhibit of work by LAA member Dee Tivenan. Dee will have on display 20 gorgeous small paintings made of Yupo paper on panels. Christian Ehrhorn Fine Arts gallery grand opening and reception from 5 to 9 p.m. Nov. 1 at 39 Moraga Way in Orinda. The October exhibit at the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library features the Three-Eight art studio which includes five Chinese women who paint together. The exhibit will run through Oct. 31 at 26 Orinda Way.

MUSIC

Devil Mountain Coffee House announces North Country Blue show at 8 p.m. on Oct. 18. At Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. North Country Blue (www.northcountryblue.com) established itself as one of California's freshest and finest bluegrass bands. The band combines fresh takes on the traditional bluegrass canon,

thoughtful covers of challenging modern material, and a number of startlingly mature and well-crafted originals. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 students and \$5 children. Sliding scale is also available at the door. Tickets are available at: www.eventbrite.com/e/north-country-blue-tickets-72433533649?aff=ebdssbdestsearch

Gold Coast Chamber Players will present culturally distinct music with a journey from the USA to China. "Pairs" - music featuring pairs of string instruments performing together at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 19 in the Don Tatzin Community Hall, Lafayette Library. Tickets are \$45- \$40 Senior (65+), \$15 Student. Discounted season tickets are available. For more information, call (925) 283-3728 or visit GCCPMusic.com.

Crowden Music Center presents Crowden Community Music Day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Oct. 20 at Crowden Music Center, 1475 Rose Street, Berkeley. Crowden's Community Music Day is a free musical carnival, with Instrument Petting Zoos, San Francisco Chamber Orches-

tra, face painting, prizes and more. For more info see www.crowden.org/concerts-and-events/community-music-day

THEATER

Town Hall Theatre opens its milestone 75th "Transformations" 2019-20 Season with Matthew Lopez's comedy "The Legend of Georgia McBride," a celebratory piece about a young man discovering his inner drag queen through Oct. 19. For tickets and showtimes: BOX OFFICE: (925) 283-1557; www.townhalltheatre.com

DVC Drama presents "Seussical, the Musical" at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 p.m. on Sundays, Oct. 18 through Nov. 3 at 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or visit www.dvcdrama.net

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Sweet Thursday Presents: Dave Newhouse on Slip Madigan from 7 to 8 p.m. on Oct. 17 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall. Slip Madigan was a football coach like no other - a vi-

sionary, raconteur, and entrepreneur who brought the sport into the modern age. His Saint Mary's College teams in the 1920s and 1930s travelled more miles, dressed more flamboyantly, and scored more upsets than any other team in the land.

Diablo Writers' Workshop is excited to present "Launching" - a creative writing reading program from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17 at Orinda Books. Eight local writers will share debut stories developed with the Diablo Writers' Workshop. The reading is being held in conjunction with San Francisco's annual literary festival - Litquake - and hosted by DWW founders and teachers Janine deBoisblanc and Andrea Firth. Come out for refreshments, great storytelling, and a fun evening.

Orinda Books presents Marty Glick at 2:30 p.m. on Nov. 2 at 276 Village Square, Orinda. Marty Glick, a litigator with the international firm, Arnold & Porter, will read from and discuss his book, "The Soledad Children: The Fight to End Discriminatory IQ Tests." He documents California Rural Legal Assistance court battles to achieve equity for minority youngsters in California education.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

"Love & Logic - Parenting Made Fun." For parents of children of all ages. Learn simple and proven techniques that teach responsibility and character, lower your stress level, and have immediate and positive results. Taught by Connie Kellaher, director of MVPCC Nurture Preschool, and Love and Logic independent facilitator. Join us for any or all of 7 sessions on Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Moraga Valley Pres Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. Oct. 16, 23, 30 and Nov. 6 and 13. Each session stands alone, so come when you can! No charge, and no pre-registration needed. Free childcare is available by emailing ckallaher@mvpctoday.org at least one week in advance. For more info, visit www.thenurturepreschool.com/programs/parenteducation/

Bay Area Kids' Book Fair - East Bay Edition from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Oct. 20 at Acalanes High School, 1200 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lafayette. Free event with authors, illustrators, publishers, booksellers, educational programs, toys, comics and games. Meet and greet Pete the Cat, Elephant and Piggie and Spider-Man. Storytelling, free LEGOs play and free activities presented by Kumon. Free Admission and Free Parking. www.BayAreaKidsBookFair.com

Mindful Littles and White Pony Express volunteer opportunity from 4 to 5:15 p.m. Oct. 22 and from 1 to 2:15 p.m. Oct. 27 at White Pony Express 3380 Vincent Rd #107/ Pleasant Hill. Mindful Littles will be facilitating family volunteering projects at White Pony Express. Each project will be a unique, highly-engaging experience for families with children under 12 - grandparents welcome! This is an opportunity for children to engage in service in fun ways and for families to spend quality time together, including learning more about empathy and mindfulness. Please wear comfortable clothes. Register at: <https://whiteponyexpress.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=41555>

Trunk-or-Treat at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church from 4 to 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 26 at 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. Trunk-or-Treaters come in costume and have a blast going from trunk to trunk in our church parking lot collecting candy, playing games, and visiting with our costumed volunteers who have decorated their vehicles to serve as a backdrop for this 'spooktacular' alternative Halloween celebration! This annual community event is a fun, safe, family environment and there is no cost to attend. For more information visit our website at www.mvpctoday.org.

... continued on next Page

Lamorinda's Religious Services

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OTHER

The giant fall book sale sponsored by the Friends of the Moraga Library will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 19 at the Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road. Books, CD's and DVDs in all categories will be sold at prices ranging from \$0.25 to \$3. Beginning at 1 p.m. a bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with all the books it will hold. Proceeds from the sale go to fund library materials and programs in addition to paying for staffing of the library's Sunday hours.

The Saint Mary's College Guild presents "A Night in Italy" from 5 to 9:30 p.m. on Oct. 19 in the Saint Mary's College Soda Center featuring Delizioso Cuisine - Bella Muscia by the Joe Simoni Duo featuring opportunities for dinner, wine, entertainment and more! Proceeds benefiting student financial aid scholarships. \$49/per person, including parking. Make check payable to: SMC Guild and mail to: Karen Cain, 1835 Joseph Drive, Moraga, CA 94556.

Mountain Shadow Film Society presents "Balloon," chronicling an escape from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1979 at 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 19 at the Walnut Creek Library, 1644 N. Broadway St., downtown Walnut Creek. General admission tickets are available on a first come, first served basis for \$12 to non-members. More information: <http://mountainshadow.org>.

Pick a purrfect pussycat for your family at Community Concern for Cats adoption event from 1 to 4 p.m. this weekend, Oct. 19-20 at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Petco in Walnut Creek, and Pet Food Express locations in Pleasant Hill (Saturdays only) and Concord (Sundays only). For more information, visit www.communityconcernforcats.org online.

Lafayette Res Run begins 8 a.m. on Sunday, Oct 20 in downtown Lafayette. Race Starting Location is on Mt. Diablo Blvd. at Oak Hill Road. There will be staggered

start times: 5k Certified Run 8 a.m., 10k Certified Run 8:15 a.m., 2mi run/walk 8:45 a.m. Register at lafayettechamber.org.

Practical Advice for Those with Osteoporosis and Osteopenia at 7 p.m. Oct. 22 with Valerie Watase, PT, Co-Owner and Ambassador of Lafayette Physical Therapy at 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite B110 in Lafayette. This is a free event, but space is limited, so please sign up at lafayettept.com/events or call (925) 284-6150.

Pivotal Twist Presents - Improv Your Intro: A Fun Way to Craft Your Personal Introduction from 7 to 10 p.m. on Oct. 23 at JPG@The Bank, 3525 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Expect good energy, a fun group, and a non-judgmental playground where you can try new ideas. Led by Sean Perlmutter and Henry Caplan of Pivotal Twist, Improv Your Intro is built on their background as actor/writer/directors, speaker coaches, and brand consultants. Limited to 30 participants. \$45 registration includes light snacks and soft drinks. <https://improvyourintro.eventbrite.com>.

The Lafayette Community Garden is offering a free movie, "The Biggest Little Farm," which will be shown at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 24 in the Live Oak Room at the Lafayette Community Center. Women's Spiral Dance - A Multicultural Celebration of Our Beloved Ancestors and Crones from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. on Oct. 25 at the Orinda Masonic Temple, 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda. Tickets: \$23 in advance by Oct. 23; \$29 at the door. During this multicultural and intergenerational ritual, led by Kahuna Leilani, and accompanied by spiritual elders of different traditions, we come together to honor and celebrate our loved ones who have passed away. Tickets and questions: Leilani@DaughtersoftheGoddess.com. www.DaughtersoftheGodess.com

Trick or Treat Street from 4 – 6 p.m. on Friday Oct 25 Downtown Lafayette for a fun, safe Halloween. Children and their parents are invited to Trick-or-Treat

at participating merchants along Mt. Diablo Blvd. from First Street to Dewing Avenue, Lafayette Circle, La Fiesta Square and the Shops at Plaza Center. This event is free for everyone and recommended for children 9 and under. Come in costume! Don't forget to bring your Trick-or-Treat bag. All participating businesses will display a "Trick-or-Treat Poster."

Bay Area nonprofit OneJustice will host a Together for Justice fundraiser at Metro Lafayette from 4-6 p.m. on Oct. 26. The event will be held on the patio at Metro, which will donate seasonal hors d'oeuvres and wine and will feature Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, who will speak about his actions in Congress to protect immigrant rights and his recent visits to the US-Mexico border. Funds raised will support Bay Area Rural Justice Collaborative Clinics, which deliver legal aid to rural Californians who have limited access to these services. Tickets at www.onejustice.org/togetherforjustice

Many Faces of Brain Cancer from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Oct. 29 at Cancer Support Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek. Join an engaging panel of medical experts as they explore key advances in neuro-oncology. The panel will offer insight into latest treatments including magnetic resonance thermography, laser tumor ablation, brain mapping, immunotherapy, tradition radiotherapy and stereotactic radiosurgery. Speakers include: Maxwell Merkow, MD - James Rembert, MD - Gigi Chen, MD. RSVP to sjung@dvothmg.com or (925) 677-5041 x272.

Youth Mental Health First Aid event, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 3 at Don Tatzin Community Hall at the Lafayette Library, will teach a five-step action plan to offer initial help to young people showing signs of mental illness or crisis, and connect them with appropriate professional, peer, social and self-help care. Ideally for adults who work with young people, ages 12-18. Register at <https://forms.gle/6WNp0s>

V8iFTFCVE29

The Festival Weekend of All Saints and All Souls Oct. 27 through Nov. 3 at St Stephens Episcopal Church, Orinda, with special events at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 2 and at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Nov. 3. This is an opportunity for church members, friends, and neighbors to remember and honor our departed family, friends, and holy saints and ancestors, in community, with music, food, stories, and prayers. RSVP for Saturday's supper by Oct. 31: (925) 254-3770 ext. 10 or office@ststephensorinda.org. Choral Evensong and Litany of the Saints: send the names of those departed that you wish to be remembered to office@ststephensorinda.org by 5 p.m. on Nov. 1. These will be read aloud as part of the Litany of Saints during the Evensong service on Sunday Nov. 3. All are welcome to attend, and a reception follows the service.

The Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW-OML) will host a Game Day fundraiser from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 14 at the Miramonte Gardens Clubhouse, 1 Miramonte Drive, Moraga to fund AAUW-OML scholarships awarded to local young women. Attendees can play mahjong, bunco, dominoes (Mexican Train), or bridge and enjoy a catered lunch. Reservations are open to the public, \$40/each and due by November 1, 2019. See AAUW-OML's website <https://oml-ca.aauw.net> for the reservation flyer.

GARDEN

Moraga Garden Club monthly general meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. Oct. 17 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street. Toni Gattone of Adaptive Gardening will speak about "Gardening for Life in Comfort, Safety & Joy." General meetings are free and open to the public. We always welcome new members including men. Refreshments provided. For more

information see: www.moragagardenclub.com.

The Montelindo Garden Club October meeting will be at 9:30 a.m. on Oct. 18 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd. Everyone is welcome. Presentation: Bulbs, Bulbs, and More Bulbs! Speaker: William Welch, a.k.a. Bill the Bulb Baron. Bill has been growing and hybridizing bulbs his entire life and has bred and named several new varieties. He grows all of his bulbs organically, and will be bringing with him a wide selection of bulbs for sale after the talk. www.montelindogarden.com

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting beginning at 10 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 11 at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, in Walnut Creek. The topic of the presentation will be, "The future of our open space," presented by Executive Director of Save Mount Diablo since 2015, Ted Clement. Ted has worked in the conservation field for over 30 years. You do not need to be a gardener to join the Walnut Creek Garden Club.

The Montelindo Garden Club meeting will be at 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 15 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall. Presentation: Floral Creations, Speaker: Nyna Dolby. A floral designer at Filoli for more than 10 years, Nyna transforms supermarket bouquets into stunning floral arrangements. www.montelindogarden.com

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com

Independent animated film to screen at Orinda Theatre

Submitted by Derek Zemrak After 14 years in the making, the independent animated film "Bongee Bear and the Kingdom of Rhythm" will be shown for one week beginning Oct. 25 at the Orinda Theatre. Produced by Derek Zemrak and Leonard Pirkle, the film features the voices of many well-known actors, including the late Dom DeLuise, Rob Paulson, Ruth Buzzie, Richard Van Vleet and June Lockhart.



In a land known as The Kingdom of Rhythm, a young orphan bear, Bongee (voiced by Emmy winner Paulsen), becomes the life-long friend of the young Princess Katrina (voiced by Debi Derryberry) and vows to protect her with his life. When the evil witch Bandrilla (voiced by Golden Globe winner and multi Emmy nominee Buzzi) casts a spell on the people of the kingdom, Bongee sets out, with the aid of his wacky friend Myrin (voiced by Golden Globe and two-time Emmy nominee DeLuise) and the wise owl Mindy (voiced by two time Emmy nominee Lockhart), to break the spell and return singing and dancing to the land while Bandrilla and her henchmen, Barnabas and Ivan, do all they can to stop them.

"Making an independent film is a slow process for anyone, but an animated independent film is even more daunting," said writer and director Brian Zemrak. "Many

would think that the best thing about the movie for me would be seeing it on the big screen and making people smile, which is quite a thrill admittedly. But for me, the best thing has been to work with my brother and both my daughters on this lifelong project. Mindy, who is now the head of casting for the hit TV show 'Shark Tank' on ABC, worked with me when we did the voice over recordings in Burbank, Calif., in 2005 and Katrina, who graduated with a master's degree in composing music for TV and film, is the composer for 'Bongee Bear and the Kingdom of Rhythm' and co-wrote the songs with me for the movie. A story that started as a simple bedtime story for my daughters is now, after all these years, an animated movie!"

Brian Zemrak will be in attendance on opening night as well as at the Oct. 26 showing. Van Vleet will also be attending.

Haunted Galleries exhibit planned Oct. 30-31 at SMC



Photo provided

Significance Machine "Kay Miller" by artist Kal Spelletich

Haunted Galleries will feature the eerie unpredictable robots of "Kal Spelletich: Significance Machines and Purposeful Robots" in the dark cloak of Halloween. Be cautious as you move through the spine-chilling galleries, as Spelletich's aura induced robots are quick to react and respond in unpredictable ways! Open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 30-31. Supporting programs include a reading by author Norman Partridge from his award-winning book "Dark Harvest" at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 30 and a Spooky storytime for little ones (1-5 years) at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 31. Admission and programs are free and open to all.

Service Clubs Announcements

Lafayette Rotary Club
 Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting. Thursday at noon Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.
October 17: Travel for business and pleasure. Speaker: Paul C Jackson DM, PE
October 24: Tech industry and trends. Speaker: Steven King
www.rotarylafayette.org
www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-CA

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Lamorinda girls tennis dominant as a group



Photos Gint Federas

By Jon Kingdon

There are positives and negatives to having the Lamorinda girls tennis teams being so talented. It makes for very competitive matches but it will also make it difficult for all of the teams to thrive record wise.

Campolindo

After the Cougars compiled an 8-7 record last season, Campolindo head coach Steve Robinson has seen his team take the next step into being a top team this season after having defeated Miramonte and College Park in their opening matches: "It's going well. We have a very good group of girls that are serious about their tennis and they're working hard. We're getting better every week and we're looking forward to see how the season turns out for us."

The Cougars are a team with more depth than any one outstanding player, says Robinson: "The girls are fairly even from top to bottom and we are working really hard at doubles where we have had a lot of success. Even at times with three girls out with illness, we have had strong backups to step up and do well."

Isabelle and Francesca Restrepo, a senior and sophomore respectively, who played together as a doubles team last season, are no longer one doubles team with Francesca playing No. 1 doubles with Julia Barlier and Isabelle playing No. 3 with Alex Bonardi. Both pairs are playing well with great results. Sarah Vranesh and Sarah Warner moved up from last year's JV team and have been the No. 2 doubles team.

With seven seniors on the team, it has made for a good mix with the underclassmen. "The seniors have shown a lot of leadership and good mentorship for the girls," says Robinson. "They work hard in practice and compete as a coach would want them to. They show great sportsmanship and battle to very end, win or lose, supporting each other."

Kate Brown is playing No. 1 singles and Claire Ross is No. 2. "Kate is always facing the top players but she is enjoying it and fighting hard," says Robinson. "Claire has been very solid for us and is having a good campaign." Paige Davis, the only freshman on the varsity, has played No. 6 singles at times along with being an effective doubles player.

Robinson is very confident in approaching the rest of the season: "We just need to keep doing what we're doing. It's exciting for the team. I want to have the girls be confident at all times, whether there are good or bad results."

Acalanes

In his second year as the head coach at Acalanes, Drew Diefenbach has found it to be an easier situation for the players and himself as they are now familiar with each other. After a successful 16-5 record in 2018, the Dons have picked up where they left off.

Besides the talent on the team, Diefenbach speaks most highly about the quality of the players: "No matter what happens this season, we're going to end up a great team, regardless of what the finals results are. The character of the team is important. We're very unified and supportive of each other. Overall, team atmosphere is very positive, so everybody is working hard and we understand how to be a team."

The singles players are led by juniors Eliza Bates, Jasmine Toni and senior Zoe Cate. After graduating seven seniors, the Dons have received a real boost from their underclassmen, with three freshmen filling out the singles roster – Analese Ruczynski, Martha Burns and Kate Condy – which has been a pleasant surprise for Diefenbach: "I did hear about some of them through the grapevine but you don't know for sure how good they can be until they come out. They have done phenomenally well and they've picked up on the culture of the team right away, so there haven't been any issues with the new freshman."

The doubles team has been led by senior Madi Price along with a number of girls from last year's JV team.

Diefenbach is taking nothing for granted with the successful start to the season: "You can start well but we want to play a complete season this year and if we can do that, we should do really well but I just like to play as a team the way we have been since we started this year. So far so good."

Miramonte

After his team dominated in 2018 with an undefeated regular season, Miramonte head coach Mike McCollum has not found that type of success so far this year, having already lost to Acalanes and Campolindo: "Every year is a new

year. Sports has never been easy. If it's easy, I don't want to be involved. We've fought hard every match and we'll try to figure out how to beat these teams the next time we face them. We had a great team last year and we have fabulous kids and a number of those players have returned, but injuries and life gets in the way. The results have been just a little less than we dreamed they'd be."

Junior Amber Lee, clearly the number one player on the team has not always been unavailable and Macey Dowd, normally the No. 2 player has been asked to play number one and has not missed a beat, says McCollum: "Amber is a brilliant player and student and has been going to national tournaments. Macey has played No. 1 for me all year and has only lost two matches and that was at the Stanford Tournament against the best players in California. Valerie Swe has been playing No. 6 singles and has been coming on like gangbusters."

Leadership when things are not going well is crucial and the co-captains, seniors Payton Smith, Anna Hyman and Shaili Lakhotia have stepped up to keep the team focused, says McCollum: "Our captains and the assistant coaches have done a great job in trying and finding new goals and places to go. It's an academically brilliant bunch and they are competitive. We're trying very hard. Most every

match, we've had to make a shuffle move to someone not being there whether they were sick or hurt and it's one of those years."

McCollum has not given up on the season but can't help looking for better times: "With our league the way it is, with only 10 matches, you get a couple of losses and it's pretty hard to find a way back from it but it's not impossible. It's a

challenge in front of us and that's what sports is supposed to be about. We have a good team and they'll be better next week and we'll be better next year. I told the kids that expectations often get in the way of success. You're better trying to find the way to stay focused on the challenge in front of you, not what you thought was the challenge. Be here and be present."

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LamoRugby.com

We have a lot of fun events on the calendar this season for kids and adults.

Teaching football players yoga ... and so much more



Photo Diane Claytor

Michelle Brown leads Miramonte's varsity football team in their weekly Stretching, Mobility and Breathing class.

By Diane Claytor

Twenty minutes after the last bell of the day has rung at Miramonte High School, 30 young men, all varsity football players, begin sauntering into the gym. There's bantering and fist pumps as they warmly greet one another. One by one they pick up a yoga mat, lacrosse ball and foam pads and find a spot on the floor. At 3:30 p.m., the lights are turned off and other than the voice of Michelle Brown, standing in the middle of the gym, barely a peep is heard. This is how it remains for the next hour, with the exception of the occasional groans.

Brown, a 2001, 2002 and 2009 Kung Fu Full Contact National Champion, a 2009 Full Contact World Champion and

a Second Degree Black Belt, is leading the varsity football team in a Stretching, Mobility and Breathing class. What began five years ago as an idea from Jack Schram, head football coach, to start a yoga program for his players, has evolved into much more. "We do some yoga, but focus more on stretching, breathing and myofascial release for an hour every week during football season," Brown explains.

Myofascial release, Brown describes, deals with the fascial network – the "place where the body tends to hold more tension and where there is more tension imbalance. MFR allows those areas to spread out through pressure, rehydrate and get more circulation. When you suffer an injury," Brown continues, "your body has mechanisms to heal

itself. But sometimes scar tissue develops and breaking up that scar tissue can be very beneficial."

Coach Schram reports that when he was playing college football years ago, he took two years of ballet, which, at the time, was recommended by the NFL. "It really helped my flexibility," Schram said. "I thought that incorporating yoga, stretching, and working out the muscles would be beneficial to the kids and teach them something useful.

"Michelle was the perfect fit for what I wanted," Schram remembers. "She fully understood that I didn't want a typical yoga class but something more personalized for football players." The class includes a lot of warming up of the muscles using blocks and lacrosse

balls to loosen them. "I think it's worked out great," Schram said proudly. "The kids seem to enjoy the class and I think they genuinely see the benefit."

Brown agrees. "Allowing your body to rest is so undervalued, especially with athletes," she notes. "They feel like they have to go all the time and if you want to perform well, rest and recovery are essential at any age." Her goal is enabling these young men "to get the best out of their bodies."

Educating the players about their bodies is an important part of Brown's class because, as she notes, "Most people know more about their cars than their own bodies. I talk to them about muscle groups and why things do what they do and feel like they feel." She happily finds that the boys are very respectful and "eager to learn."

Brown, an Alamo native, knows football. She is a lifetime 49ers fan and wished she could have played the sport herself. Instead, she became a high school cheerleader and now attends at least one Miramonte game each season.

More than 20 years ago, Brown was living in San Francisco and decided, at the urging of her father, to learn self defense. She signed up for a kick boxing class at a local YMCA and, as she remembers, "when I threw my first martial arts kick, I realized that

this is what I'd been missing. I felt an immediate connection to it. The whole mind body spirit aspect became the real reason I wanted to do it."

Martial arts, Brown explains, is very psychological and actually more about the mind than the body. "You have to learn to control your mind before you can learn to control your body and then your spirit," she says.

Brown developed her own self defense class – Hit with Power – where she teaches mostly young women, many going off to college, how to make smarter choices, avoid risky situations and how to deal with an unsafe situation should they be confronted with one. "We talk a lot about using your voice because, after all, that's really our most powerful weapon," Brown states. "It's an intense class and these young women go away feeling very empowered."

In addition to her passion for the martial arts, Brown is a medical exercise specialist and health coach; she oversees three Gumsaba outdoor boot camps and owns a personal training gym in Alamo – Gumsaba Custom Fitness Programs – where she is a personal trainer for 60 clients.

Brown loves what she does and is quite proud of the fact that she is able to help people feel better and get the most from their bodies.

Basketball Tournament Champions



Aiden Wong, Blake Frechman, Channing Stewart, Chase Nickens, Hudson Luenigo, Julian Arrigotti, Julian Jilokovic, Lane Dalton, Michael Fagundes, Michael Vallas, Miles Cooper, Rhys Robinson; coaches: Brian Frechman and Mark Robinson

Submitted by Jon Nickens

Lafayette-based Bay Area Blitz 2028 Boys Team (fourth grade) won the Select Fall Classic in Hayward over the Sept. 21-22 weekend. With victories

over Prime Gold 10u, OC Elite 10u and the No. 1 ranked team in Northern California, SF Rebels, the Blitz displayed great team work and defense. The boys will continue their Fall AAU Season in the weeks ahead with multiple tournaments around the Bay Area.

Cal Magic 2005 girls take 2nd in Nevada Cup



Submitted by Lynn Barney

The Cal Magic 2005 girls went to Reno to compete in the Nevada Cup soccer tournament. They placed second overall, having to overcome a 0-2

deficit in their final game; coming back to win 3-2 in the final minutes. Their coach, Luis Pinto, said "The girls showed heart! They relied on their training and kept pushing, never lost faith and all that hard work paid off."



LMYA SOCCER Meet Our Commissioners

L to R: Judy McNeil - LMYA Executive Director/Treasurer, Hillary Johnston - LMYA Secretary/Registrar, Erin McCoin and Matt Helder - LMYA Soccer Commissioners



Erin McCoin

Lafayette Soccer Commissioner

Erin has lived in Lafayette for 10 years with his wife Mikelle and their 3 kids. When not coaching and running LMYA Soccer, he works in real estate.

What is one thing you love about where we live?

The access to trails and open space is one of the things that drew me here and every time I find a new trail or quiet spot near a creek or the top of a hill it reminds me why I still am.

How many years have you been involved in LMYA?

I began coaching LMYA soccer in 2011 when my son and daughter were in kindergarten (team Brazil!) and have been coaching ever since. I joined the board in 2017 and have been the Lafayette commissioner since 2018.

How many LMYA sports have your kids played/have you coached?

My kids have played soccer (obviously), basketball and volleyball and on every team they have met new friends which is the great benefit of LMYA. This year I am coaching my 10th team. I have coached all my kids at one time or another.

What's your favorite thing about being involved with LMYA?

The unwavering commitment to the success and joy of the kids. The board members and people who run the organization never, even for a second, lose sight of that mission. It's no doubt why it's been so successful for so long.

What do you wish other people knew about LMYA?

Much of the success of LMYA and the great value LMYA provides for this community and for thousands of children is due in large part to a very small handful of dedicated and selfless people, especially Hillary and Judy. Many people know them only from emails but they are two amazing women who are responsible for keeping this organization going.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about volunteering or coaching for LMYA?

We need you, we love you! Without you there would be no LMYA. Yes we have a dedicated board and leadership but without the volunteers, especially the coaches who give so much of their time and energy to LMYA, it would not exist, you make this organization what it is.

Matt Helder

Moraga Soccer Commissioner & LMYA Vice-President

Matt grew up in Moraga and attended Rheem, JM and Campolindo. Go class of '92! He has now lived with his family in Moraga for 9 years. When not coaching his two boys in soccer, Matt teaches technology at Camino Pablo. His wife Stephanie teaches Kindergarten at Sleepy Hollow and is coaching his daughter's LMYA soccer team.

What is one thing you love about where we live?

Love the sunsets over the hills of Moraga and the fog in the valley in the mornings. It's a little hidden gem that feels so removed from the busy urban life just over the hills but is yet so close to the amazing opportunities available in the Bay Area cities.

How many years have you been involved in LMYA?

Coached my youngest son for three years and have been a commissioner for six years.

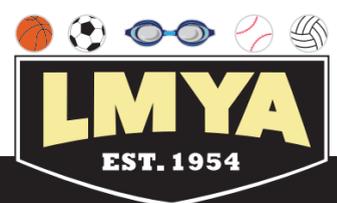
What's your favorite thing about being involved with LMYA?

The community. No other organization is as connected to the towns of Lafayette and Moraga that spans ages and genders. Everyone has a story about playing some sport with LMYA...even me 38 years ago. My friends

from that time still tell stories about our experiences with LMYA and love seeing our children have similar experiences today.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about volunteering or coaching for LMYA?

It may be cliché, but you get back so much more than you put in. Magical moments happen with kids in sport. They may be infrequent and inconsistent. Sometimes they are lost in challenging seasons where it feels like the whole league is stacked against your team. But, in 10 or 20 years no one will remember the scorelines or the standings. What will remain and will travel with the you is that player who had a magical moment that warmed your heart, challenged your preconceptions or inspired you. Children are amazing and if you are not involved then you may miss your chance to experience something special.



www.lmyasports.com

Thank you from LMYA!

~ Healthy Lifestyle ~

Signs of stress and its management for middle school students



Photo Bigstock images

By Vera Kochan

According to a stress management forum conducted at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School by Paul Espinas, a practicing pediatrician at the Kaiser Permanente Medical Clinic in Hayward, there are many factors attributed to middle school stress.

On an academic level, good grades, homework and test scores all contribute to anxiety. Other factors involve the transition from elementary school to middle school, sports (competition), friends (peer pressure) and future worries about high school and college.

Stress can also come from at-home situations. Espinas stated, "At-home stress can be the toughest, because we'd like to see the home as a source of rest and strength for the family."

Espinas' wife, Juliana Damon, a practicing pediatrician at East Bay Pediatrics in Orinda/Berkeley said, "A lot of the time, I see kids

affected by parental pressure [and] expectations, family dynamics, illness in the family, financial stress, over commitment or hyper focus on one activity."

Some of the immediate health effects of stress include stomachaches, headaches and sleep issues. However, stress can manifest itself in emotional and academic ways by causing anxiety, depression, unhappiness, agitation, frustration, negativity, body language and disrupting cognitive functions. Espinas said, "I see a lot of stressed out kids who present to the clinic with non-specific symptoms, like headache and stomachache. I usually tell families that if we don't do a good job of managing stress it can manifest in many different ways."

When asked whether kids are aware that their symptoms are stress-related, Damon responded, "For kids that come to the office, lots are afraid they have a medical condition, but many have an inkling that they are related." Es-

pinas added, "I think the older kids do have a sense of the link between stress and their overall health, but some definitely need to hear it from a doctor."

Both Damon and Espinas feel that severe cases of anxiety may require medication. "When appropriate, anti-depressants or anti-anxiety medications are used to help treat kids," explained Espinas. "In our system, psychiatrists usually prescribe these."

Sadly, diagnosed cases of stress are increasing. "I refer kids to child psychologists and psychiatrists every day of the week," Damon said, and Espinas agreed, saying, "I feel the number of kids that need referrals is rising. I've heard that from school districts, too. They are seeing the demand for mental health services go up."

Many JM students find ways to cope with stress levels by watching television, spending time with family and pets, listening to music, taking breaks from homework, and finding a quiet place to work, and most importantly, talking to parents about stressful situations

It is important to develop good habits such as getting a good night's sleep, having healthy social connections, eating right, maintaining a sensible schedule, taking a break from social media and learning to have fun.

Damon and Espinas encourage parents and families to play a big part in the stress management process. "Parents should model how to help themselves, practice self-forgiveness, giving yourself time to think things through, talking to kids about their own challenges and modeling resilient behaviors," Damon explained. "We can normalize how we struggle and deal with life's challenges. Everyone assumes that people in

our community are doing better than themselves, but mental health issues are unfortunately very common. In this age, it's important to have good connections with kids so that they don't feel detached or alone. There are so many things that we can offer to help ... but what all of us need and want, whether anxious or depressed or neither, is connection ... with our family and friends and the greater world. This is not something that happens overnight but is a life approach that we all can cultivate together."

Espinas stressed that it's important to recognize when kids need more resources. "I think some parents would hesitate to utilize these out of embarrassment, shame, etc. Part of dealing with these issues is having open honest and vulnerable conversations. Start with your doctor if you have concerns. It's also important for families to put effort into prevention - we all want our kids to be successful, but we should do so in a way that promotes their emotional health and resilience."

Tips Espinas recommends are to get sleep, since it is fundamental to emotional and physical health and definitely helps mitigate stress, have a schedule that includes time for play, downtime, fun and family, limit screen time - "Increasing amounts of screen time and social media have been linked to anxiety and depression," he says - and get outside. "Take advantage of the nature around us! Time spent in green spaces has been shown to decrease stress and build resilience."

Finally, Espinas says to model behavior. "Julie has a great line she tells to her parents: 'Your kids deserve to see you happy.'"

Do You Have a Breast Cancer Risk?

By Michelle Frankland, NP

My mom was 42 years old when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, her sister (my aunt) was 42 years old when she was diagnosed with breast cancer and their brother (my uncle) was in his 50's when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I am 42.

Working as an Oncology Nurse Practitioner with Diablo Valley Oncology for 15 years, I casually knew that I had more than average risk of breast cancer. My concerns were pushed further into the back of my mind once my Mom's genetic testing came back negative for the BRCA 1&2 mutation. Having said that, the combination of turning 42 and helping to run our Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinic prompted me to seek further screening.

I requested a screening breast MRI and anxiously awaited the results. The MRI showed that I have two suspicious areas requiring biopsy, which they proceeded to obtain. I received a phone call with my results, "you don't have cancer but you do have a high-risk lesion so surgery is recommended." I was not prepared for that, I was prepared for cancer or no cancer! Approximately 10% of breast cancers are hereditary, 65% are considered sporadic and the other 25% are familial, which is the category I most likely fall into, assuming genetic testing does not show a BRCA mutation, or any of the other genes known to be associated with breast cancer (like PTEN, PALB2, CHEK2, and others). One quarter of all breast cancers have some sort of familial link and this is the group that really needs to understand their risk.

The first step in understanding risk is talking to your family. Find out if parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., have had cancer and if so what kind. Next, talk to your health care provider who orders and reviews your mammograms. Ask if you have dense breast tissue and if there are any areas the radiologists are monitoring. Third, initiate a conversation about cancer risk with your gynecologist or primary care provider. Ultimately, the best and most comprehensive way to understand risk is to talk to a genetic counselor, and then, if recommended, undergo genetic testing.

Of all the appointments and procedures I've gone through over the last month, I dreaded the meeting with the genetic counselor the most. Being the mother of two young children, I always hope that I have passed on the best of me to them, not a genetic mutation that increases cancer risk. Having said that, I am so very thankful to have met with the genetic counselor. She brought me back to my logical/practical self, the one that now understands that my genetic test may very well show a mutation, most likely not BRCA since my Mom tested negative, but a mutation that falls into a category of VUS, "variants of unknown significance." If you have a VUS, the genetic testing labs and geneticists will follow the mutation as scientists seek to understand if it does in fact increase cancer risk - 98% of VUS are ultimately found to be benign. Therefore, instead of worrying or being disappointed that I may have passed on a genetic mutation to my kids, I can focus on the fact that understanding my risk will aid in seeking appropriate and necessary screening and surveillance for my kids.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This month, make it a goal to learn more about your family history and tell your friends to do the same. If you have had breast cancer and not had genetic testing, talk to your providers to understand if you would benefit from it. If you have not had breast cancer, talk to your provider to see if you should be referred for a genetic risk evaluation. I feel fortunate that I knew to ask for additional screening and to have that conversation with my healthcare provider. In each step of this process, my emotions have fluctuated from fear and anxiety to gratitude.

In my years of oncology work, I have seen so many cancer patients find a 'silver lining' in their journey. My silver lining is "now I really get it." When patients talk to me about the stress of scheduling the never-ending list of necessary appointments, the anxiety and fear of waiting for test results, or the utter discomfort of a breast MRI, my empathy is real and sincere. Soon I will also know the emotions that come with surgery, the post-operative pain and recovery, and the impact a big surgery has on me, my family, my friends and my career. While I had several options, I have decided to have a double mastectomy with reconstruction. This is a decision made with confidence and certainty after truly coming to understand my risk.

Michelle Frankland is an Oncology Certified Nurse Practitioner with Diablo Valley Oncology & Hematology Medical Group. She is also the Nurse Navigator for the Women's Cancer Center of the East Bay, both located in Pleasant Hill. Michelle can be reached by calling 925-825-8878.



 **WOMEN'S CANCER CENTER
OF THE EAST BAY**

~ Healthy Lifestyle ~

9Round Kickboxing Fitness Center opens in Lafayette



Photo Jon Kingdon

By Jon Kingdon

There's not a lot you can do in three minutes besides boiling an egg and getting into a ring to box and dance while trying to avoid being hit. Multiply those three minutes by nine and you will be able to get a complete workout at the recently opened 9Round Fitness Gym located at 3561 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette, which is bringing a new perspective to conditioning and working out.

The philosophy of 9Round is to have "nine rounds" of a kickboxing-themed fitness program that incorporates a functional, interval, cardiovascular and circuit training regimen. Each round is three minutes, like in a boxing match, and is completed in 30 minutes. Though proper punching and various kicks are taught, the emphasis is on strength, conditioning and cardiovascular work.

This is very much of a drop-in business designed to allow the individual to show up at any time to work out without an appointment, says Vladimir Volkov, the proprietor of the gym: "The big thing that we pride ourselves on is that no one has to have a scheduled time. When you have 30 minutes, you can show up and there will always be a trainer on site. It's our belief that quality is better than quantity. We feel that people should be able to work out whenever they want. The most someone will have to wait to begin their workout is three minutes. Thirty minutes - you're in and out with a killer workout."

The programs are designed for males and females ranging in age from 14 to 72, but Volkov is willing to consider those younger than 14: "If a younger person comes in and can handle the workout and has fun, they can be accepted."

With each three-minute period, there is a new exercise from jumping rope to punching a speed bag, performing shin kicks, leg kicks and side kicks, throwing jabs and crosses, working every part of the body. It all comes together for the complete body workout, says Volkov: "It can be a very long three minutes. The workouts are scaled for all ages and levels of skill and conditioning with everyone able to work out alongside each other. We start slow and then build up the workouts. Everyone wears a heart rate monitor to determine how hard they are working and we, along with the individuals, are able to see it up on a screen. If people

are working too hard, if their heart rate is too high, we will step in and see that they scale down their efforts. With our program, people will be able to see the results in a short while."

Volkov, who came to the United States from Kazakhstan 25 years ago, has a background in judo, free style wrestling and kickboxing, joined the 9Round family, going back to their headquarters and became a certified trainer and franchise owner of one of the 700 9Round gyms around the country. Living in Walnut Creek, he was attracted to Lafayette: "It's a nice family, fitness-oriented area. I love the location and the people are great. We have been welcomed into the neighborhood and our new customers have enjoyed what we have been offering."

9Round is not a big gym but it is set up so that there is room for nine people to comfortably work out simultaneously at each station under the direction of Volkov and other trainers: "It's a small boutique so you will come to know the other people working out."

The gym does not have a locker room but does have a changing room and a place for people to put their valuables. All that is required is to bring running shoes and workout gear with the studio providing boxing gloves, hand wraps to protect the wrists and knuckles and a heart monitor.

Lexi Smith, a senior at Saint Mary's College, has been a regular at 9Round: "I have a friend who was working out here and she said it was the best workout she had ever done. I came in and it was the best workout I've ever done. I was sore, but in a good way. I felt like I got my butt kicked, but I have been coming here for over a month and I feel really strong and have a bunch of energy. Vladimir is like having a personal trainer."

9Round has a set fee of \$138 per month. The members are able to work out as many times a day as they want Monday through Saturday, with the only proviso that one cannot do two circuits consecutively.

Volkov appreciates how the studio looks from the outside: "It may look intimidating so we offer a free workout for people to come in and go through our workout. If they like it, we welcome them and if they don't, we're not forcing anyone to stay. My goal is to make it fun and to create challenges every week so those who start on Monday and finish on Saturday will see the progress they made during the week. We'll make you strong both physically and mentally. I want people to have fun when they're here."

9Round is open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 4 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, they open at 6 a.m. and on Saturdays they are open from 8 a.m. to noon. They are closed on Sundays.

Free parking is available behind the gym.



Dr. Sophia Scheffel, L.Ac has received both her masters and doctorate in acupuncture and Chinese Medicine. Dr. Scheffel has expertise in treating chronic pain; allergies, asthma and immune disorders; sleep, anxiety, depression and other mental emotional imbalances as well as oncology support.

She's a Lamorinda native, having graduated from Miramonte in 1998 and wanted to bring her practice back to the area in which she grew up to help her community attain optimal health.

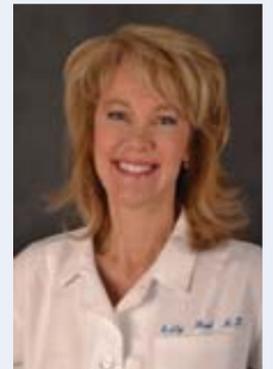
Consider acupuncture and working with Dr. Scheffel to bring yourself into optimal health.



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Kelly Hood, M.D. DERMATOLOGY

"Check your skin today. Come see me if you have concerns or want to be certain. As a board certified Dermatologist and Lafayette resident I'm here to help." Kelly Hood M.D.



1. CHECK YOUR MOLES AND BUMPS

Looking at your skin and noticing changes in your moles and bumps is very important. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S. - but it is treatable if detected early.

- Self examination each month will help you detect changes. Warning signs include asymmetry, irregular borders or colors, a diameter greater than a pencil eraser or an increase in size.
- If you have a new lesion or changing growth, have it checked by a board certified dermatologist.

2. WEAR SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen can help reduce the risk of skin cancer and early skin aging caused by the sun. Picking the right sunscreen for you is important as it needs to be worn everyday on the face. 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.

- Wear broad spectrum sunscreen that protects against Ultraviolet A (UVA) and Ultraviolet B (UVB) rays, both of which cause skin cancer and photoaging.
- SPF30 or higher helps protect you from sun damage. An ounce of sunscreen, enough to fill a shotglass, is considered the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of the body.

3. PROTECT THE SKIN FROM OUTDOOR COLD AND INDOOR HEAT

Winter itch is commonly caused by dry skin. Be good to your skin this winter by protecting and moisturizing.

- Moisturize daily.
- Choose a moisturizer that suits you and makes your skin feel comfortable. Avoid fragrance.
- Be gentle with the largest organ in the body and prevent dry, itchy, irritated and flaky skin.

4. SKIN CONDITIONS SHOULD BE EVALUATED AND TREATED BY A BOARD CERTIFIED DERMATOLOGIST

- A dermatologist is a medical doctor with 4 years of medical school, one year of internship and 3 years of residency consisting of intensive training in the medical science of the skin, hair and nails.
- 50 continuing medical education hours per year are required after residency.
- This depth of knowledge can not be acquired any other way.

If you have a skin condition of concern, contact Dr. Hood.
Dr. Hood accepts most PPO insurance.
Initial office visits \$150, follow up office visit \$75.

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

Does your home truly reflect you?



Photos provided

By Amanda Eck

In today's world we are constantly bombarded with images of beautiful spaces, from Instagram, Pinterest, magazines, home décor TV shows and don't get me started on the inundation of local home décor retail catalogs (some weighing more than my first born). We live in a world of information and visual overload and that can feel overwhelming. There is no faster way to make a mistake with interiors than to start ordering furniture inspired by a recent trend or some pretty pictures you just saw in a catalog.

Your home is your sanctuary, your private retreat from the world's ills. Your home should be a place of restoration, not anxiety. To decorate

like you and create a home that will make you happy, you need to first turn the outside world off.

1) Get quiet. Before you do anything, turn off the phone and get off social media. Remember that comparison is the thief of joy. I notice a pattern when I am feeling down or not quite enough; it is because I have spent too much time looking at others' lives and not living my own. Find a quiet spot in your home or get out in nature. Take some time to just be still. Have a pen and paper on hand to jot your thoughts. Ask yourself these questions:

- What do you really love? What inspires you? What makes you feel happy?
- Where have you visited (hotels, cities,

restaurants, shops, spas, etc.) that inspired you or made you feel welcomed?

- What hobbies or traditions do you and your family love?
- How do you want to feel when you are in the room? It can be a different feeling for each room in the house. The more detail the better.
- Suspend disbelief for a moment. If you had unlimited funds and time, where would you live and why?

Write it all down, even if it's silly or doesn't make sense, just get your thoughts on paper.

2) Put it into words. Now look through your list and find three to four words that represent how you'd like your home to feel (i.e. cozy, casual, sophisticated, bright, fun, relaxing, etc.).

3) Ask a friend or two. Now here is where you have to get a little vulnerable. Take some photos of your current space and show them to a friend. Ask them if the words and feelings you wrote down represent your home's current state. Ask your friends to show it to someone who doesn't know you, and describe the person they think lives there. Does it match who you are?

4) Shop the house. Now before you torch the whole space, take a moment to see what's in the room that you do love and that lines up with your top four words. The best interiors have every aspect of you in them, and that includes your history. Don't run out and buy all new things (yet). Grab a pen and paper and the list you wrote down and walk through every room in your home and see what matches your notes. Decide what pieces and items you are going to keep, sell or donate. Look to see if you can repurpose some pieces. Maybe move that table from the living room to the bedroom, or switch out the artwork from the dining room to the living room. Do you have quality pieces of furniture that could use reupholstering? Adding some of your history in your interiors not only helps the budget, it will add character that is uniquely you. Every day that piece will remind you of something in your life story.

... continued on Page D13

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	12	\$925,000	\$2,163,000
MORAGA	4	\$580,000	\$1,276,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,400,000	\$4,850,000

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

- 11 Amber Lane, \$1,876,000, 4 Bdrms, 4739 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 08-28-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 02-12-15
- 3328 Betty Lane, \$1,515,000, 4 Bdrms, 2519 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-03-19,
Previous Sale: \$970,000, 09-25-14
- 3651 Boyer Circle, \$2,163,000, 5 Bdrms, 3996 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 09-03-19
- 1000 Dewing Avenue #301, \$925,000, 1 Bdrms, 1220 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 08-28-19,
Previous Sale: \$864,000, 06-07-18
- 953 Hawthorne Drive, \$1,470,000, 3 Bdrms, 2390 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 08-27-19
- 46 Knox Drive, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1926 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$910,000, 07-25-13
- 3170 Lucas Drive, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 1995 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 08-29-19
- 20 Northridge Lane, \$1,979,000, 5 Bdrms, 4075 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,080,000, 08-25-02
- 2466 Pebble Beach Loop, \$1,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2714 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,149,000, 07-24-06
- 3163 Plymouth Road, \$1,010,000, 3 Bdrms, 1540 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$970,000, 03-30-15
- 24 Prado Way, \$1,871,500, 3 Bdrms, 2722 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 08-30-19
- 1242 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3615 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,495,000, 01-12-06

MORAGA

- 2129 Ascot Drive #9, \$585,000, 2 Bdrms, 1332 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$445,000, 09-15-04
- 1476 Camino Peral #C, \$580,000, 2 Bdrms, 1279 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 08-30-19,
Previous Sale: \$405,000, 06-10-13
- 15 Fieldbrook Place, \$1,276,000, 4 Bdrms, 2279 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-03-19
- 1724 Saint Andrews Drive, \$853,000, 2 Bdrms, 1464 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-03-19,
Previous Sale: \$775,000, 04-26-16

ORINDA

- 14 Albo Court, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 2208 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 08-27-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,145,000, 07-20-05
- 19 Brookbank Road, \$4,850,000, 7 Bdrms, 5430 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 09-03-19,
Previous Sale: \$3,020,000, 06-29-18
- 8 South Point Road, \$1,445,000, 5 Bdrms, 2800 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 08-30-19
- 59 Tomcat Way, \$2,367,500, 4 Bdrms, 2020 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 08-29-19,
Previous Sale: \$24,440,000, 12-23-15
- 71 Windy Creek Way, \$2,319,000, 3 Bdrms, 3643 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 08-28-19,
Previous Sale: \$23,750,000, 03-06-15



DRE#01882902

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DANVILLE

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DANVILLE, CA 94523
925.800.3510

BRENTWOOD

60 EAGLE ROCK WAY, #B
BRENTWOOD, CA 94513
925.420.5717

ADAM HAMALIAN



925.708.5630
DRE# 01917597

CHRISTINA LINEZO



415.425.3085
DRE# 01964989

JOHN FONDAZIO



925.817.9053
DRE# 01938194

JULIE DEL SANTO
BROKER/OWNER



925.818.5500
DRE# 01290985

LISA TICHENOR



925.285.1093
DRE# 01478540

MATT MCLEOD



925.464.6500
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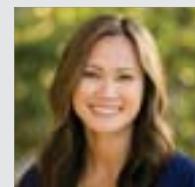
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DRE# 01426129

VALERIE DURANTINI



415.999.6116
DRE# 01376796

22 TOLEDO COURT, LAFAYETTE \$5,795,000



BRYAN HURLBUT/JULIE DEL SANTO 925.383.5500

5 HEATHER LANE, ORINDA \$3,998,000



MARY PISCITELLI/PETER GILLIS 925.765.9095

319 VERONA AVENUE, DANVILLE \$1,300,000



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1837 CHAPARRO CT., WALNUT CREEK \$1,695,000



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4 DALE COURT, ORINDA \$1,185,000



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MATT MCLEOD 925.464.6500

125 HAZELWOOD PLACE, MORAGA \$1,270,000



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Compass Bridge Loan Program

In many instances our clients selling their home are faced with the challenge of being able to purchase their new home before they sell their existing home. Often Sellers need the equity out of their existing home as down payment on their new purchase or lenders will count both mortgages against their income making qualifying for a new loan challenging before they close on the sale of their existing home. While too often the case, Sellers would prefer not to hassle with finding a short-term rental while searching for their dream home. Contingent offers are a potential solution to this problem but are challenging and often unsuccessful in competitive situations. Very few commercial lenders offer bridge loan financing and for the private lenders that do it is often cost prohibitive. Compass understands the difficult situation that Sellers are often faced with and will soon introduce a short-term loan program to bridge the time period of your new purchase and the sale of your existing home. Similar to how the Compass Concierge program removed the constraint of financing pre-sale home improvements, Compass's new bridge loan program will once again transform the real estate industry. Compass will be the first real estate brokerage firm to offer this product to their clients. Martin Homes Team was selected to participate in the beta testing for the new program and we are excited to continue to share details as this program rolls out in the coming months. We

look forward to hearing from you with your real estate questions.



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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T

The third quarter of 2019 showed solid activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate versus the year ago quarter. This activity continues to be based more upon a short supply of available properties than on a significant change in the market.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from July 1 through Sept. 30, 73 single-family homes closed in Lafayette which was a small decrease from the 76 that closed in the third quarter of 2018. Sales prices ranged from \$818,000 to \$4.475 million. The average number of days on market was 30 versus 22 for the same period in 2018. The average sales price was \$1,716,517. In the same period a year ago it was \$1,696,918. In 2017 it was \$1,713,249, in 2016 it was \$1,565,394 and in 2015 it was \$1,462,872.

In Moraga, there were 38 single-family closings, slightly above the 31 in 3Q 2018. Prices ranged from \$1.04 million to \$1.969 million. The average sales price was \$1,443,253 – down from one year ago when it was \$1,509,248. In 2017 it was \$1,386,634, and in 3Q 2016 it was \$1,245,605, which was actually below the \$1,281,936 in the third quarter of 2015. The average marketing time was 25 days, up from 16 days a year ago.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings was 74, a slight decrease from the same period a year ago of 83. Sales prices ranged from \$715,000 to \$4.85 million with an average price of \$1,651,117 – a decrease from \$1,777,666 in the year ago third quarter. In 2017 it was \$1,601,869 and in 2016 it was \$1,558,244. It took an average of 37 days to expose a home to the market this last quarter. A year ago it was 33.

In the third quarter of this year, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$607.09. A year ago it was \$638.11. Moraga homes sold for \$607.47. In Orinda it was \$617.98 – about the same as \$622.76 a year ago.

In Lafayette, the average sales price was right at 101.1% of the final asking price. In Moraga, it was just under 101% of asking and in Orinda it was just over 100%. In many cases, there were still multiple offers on homes and the result was a closing price above the asking price.

In Lafayette, 42 of the 73 closings sold at the list price or above. In Moraga, 23 of the 38 sold at or above asking and in Orinda it was 38 of 74.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had five resale closings. They were priced from \$719,000 to \$925,000; Moraga had 17, down from 25 a year ago and from 19 in the

same period two years ago. Sales prices ranged from \$512,000 to \$1.035 million. Moraga Country Club had five attached home sales from \$845,000 to \$1.035 million. Orinda had one townhome sell at \$1.1 million in Orindawoods and one BMR (Below Market Rate) property sell on Citron Knoll for \$459,941.

As of October 10, 2018, there were 69 pending sales in the three communities combined. A year ago there were 78 pending sales per the MLS. The asking prices for the pending single-family detached homes range from \$780,000 to \$3.495 million. It should be pointed out that there are no "Potential Short Sales" that are currently pending and subject to lender approval. There is one pending foreclosure.

It is interesting to point out that of the 69 pending sales in the area, 12 received acceptable offers in the first week of October. That is an average of nearly two per day. Usually many of the sales are completed prior to the start of school. Depending upon how many of the homes are being purchased by families with children who are new to Lamorinda, it may impact certain grades at the elementary level.

Inventory, however, continues to remain low when looking at the available homes in Lafayette where there were 53 on the market as of Oct. 7 and there were 61 at this time one year ago.

In Moraga buyers have their choice of only 24 properties, up from 21 properties a year ago.

Orinda inventory has increased to 56 currently available from 48 one year ago.

Current asking prices range from \$398,000 for a condominium in Moraga to \$18 million for a Lafayette property.

At the high end, 36 homes closed above \$2 million in the three communities combined during the quarter. In the year ago period there were 31.

There are 56 currently available above this amount – 21 in Lafayette, 31 in Orinda, and four in Moraga – and these four are new construction.

Interest rates have crept up a little but for those who can afford Lamorinda, it does not seem to have been much of a deterrent. Going forward through the end of the year, activity will likely remain strong. Continued office building in the East Bay and a low supply and high demand should continue to push the market higher.

One other factor will be to see how well the two new developments in Moraga sell and how that affects values. There are the 36 townhomes on Moraga Way that start at just over \$1.2 million and the others on Rheem Boulevard that are for the most part over \$2 million.

Coming Soon



2 Roxanne Lane, Lafayette

Call for Price and Details
5 Bed | 3.5 Bath | 3,615 Sq Ft

Stunning custom home with spectacular views of Mt Diablo and the surrounding valley. This 5 bedroom 3.5 bath home includes an in-law unit on the lower level, 3-car garage and elevator. Large master suite with fireplace 2 walk-in closets and hot tub on a private deck. High ceilings and sliding glass doors in the family and dining rooms lead onto a large deck perfect for entertaining. Conveniently located close to trail and downtown Lafayette.



Pending



10 Van Ripper Lane Orinda

Offered at \$1,395,000
3 Bed | 3 Bath | 1,928 Sq Ft

Sold



1198 Pleasant Hill Circle Lafayette

Offered at \$2,495,000
5 Bed | 3.5 Bath | 3-Car Garage | 3,230 Sq Ft

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//JUST LISTED



Mid-century magnificence!

163 Moraga Way, Orinda

3 Bedrooms	2 Baths	Walking distance to downtown, BART
1,610 Sq. Ft	Large, level front area	.53 Acre

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This wonderful home was built in 1948 and possesses all the charm of that memorable era while having been updated with today's conveniences. Situated on a .53 acre lot with lovely creek side setting in the back yard which offers privacy and tranquil views from your lovely deck plus a large level area for a great basketball court, bike riding, hopscotch, and tons of other fun. The home is set back from Moraga Way and provides a large level front yard.

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SOPHISTICATED AND SWANKY - *A home totally transformed*



257 Overhill Road, Orinda

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LOVING LAS TRAMPAS - *Updated trails home*



871 Las Trampas Road, Lafayette

± 2201 sq. ft, 4 beds + office, 3 baths, .81 acres

Welcome to this Sea Ranch inspired custom contemporary home near the coveted "trails" neighborhood of Lafayette. With just over 2200 square feet of indoor living space, it feels like SO MUCH more as the main living area opens to a new expansive deck with sweeping and unobstructed views of Mt. Diablo welcoming the outdoors in and offering convenient indoor/outdoor living.

OPEN SAT AND SUN 1-4PM | CALL FOR PRICING | www.871LasTrampasRd.com



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New This Week - Open Sunday 1-4pm



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3 bd | 2 ba | 1564 sqft | .46 ac
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LISTINGS FROM THE OLSEN TEAM

1 Peralta Court, Moraga



Gorgeous Sander's Ranch home is updated throughout and offers 2,800+ sq. ft. of living space with 4 bedrooms and a loft/office.

Unwind into the quiet and the views from the top of the hill. A great option for those moving up, down or over. Owner is willing to consider contingent offers.

Offered at \$1,350,000



Virtual Tour

1003 Woodbury Rd. No. 207, Lafayette



Urban living in Lafayette. Close to downtown Lafayette, restaurants, shopping and Bart. Built in 2015 with upgrades including Thermador, Bosch, Kohler, Andersen and more. Two-car parking in garage. Great quality and great feel. A must see!

Offered at \$995,000



Photos/Info

147 Donald Drive, Moraga



Wow! 2.23 acres on a quiet cul-de-sac with privacy, and space for a vineyard. Vaulted ceilings add to this home's spacious feel. This centrally located property is move-in ready with an updated open kitchen and baths. Close to Rheem shopping and Moraga Commons Park.

Offered at \$1,595,000



Virtual Tour

105 Devin Drive, Moraga



Charming single-level 4 bedroom home in sunny Moraga. A great floor plan, lots of hardwood and room to expand. The beautiful flat and grassy yard is great for BBQs, volleyball or outdoor dining.

Super close to The Hacienda Park, transit, local eateries and the Donald Rheem Elementary School.

Offered at \$1,195,000



Virtual Tour



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SUE OLSEN

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PROPERTIES



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Private & Serene, Chic & Cool

9 Vida Decansada, Orinda

4 Bed | 3 Bath | 3272 SqFt | 0.98 Acre

\$2,235,000



Call me for details and a private showing

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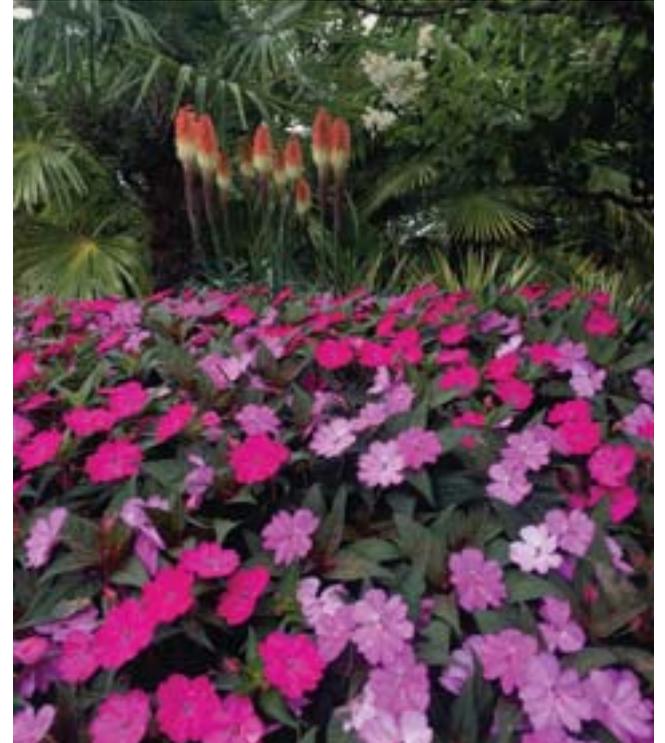
Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Back to work!



Marigolds, sweet potato plant, coleus, and verbena are perfect in the autumn yard.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Bring the tropics to your landscape with New Guinea impatiens, red-hot poker, and palms.

By Cynthia Brian

"Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." – F. Scott Fitzgerald

The recent Pacific Gas and Electric Company Public Safety Power Shutoff due to high gusty winds and dry conditions didn't make me happy because if there is no electricity, there is no internet connection on my computer. Without an internet connection, I can't submit my articles and photographs to the newspaper. I'm not one to use my cell phone for my writing or photography assignments, thus, this announcement meant that I had to stop my autumnal garden cleanup to write and publish.

The silver lining to potential future shutoffs is that you, my dear readers, will get a jumpstart on your fall chores. Yes, it is time to get back to work in your yard.

The next 30 days are the optimal time to get your landscape prepared for the winter sleep and the spring awakening. Before the rains come, harvest your grapes, take away the trash, tidy up the vegetable patch, clear away the dead stems. Over-wintering pests and diseases will take refuge in the hideouts of debris left in the garden. Corn

stalks must be cut (use them for Halloween decorations). Pick the ripe apples, figs and Asian pears. Leaves from deciduous and evergreen trees may be raked into the compost pile. Or, if you have space, stack leaves separately to create a rich leaf mold that can be used next season as a valuable ingredient in your potting soil.

Most garden projects are best begun in autumn when the soil is still warm with cooler evenings. Create new paths, add a rock garden, terrace a hillside, plant a fern grotto, sow a new lawn. If you have a greenhouse, start bringing frost tender potted plants into the structure. If you don't have a greenhouse, identify plants that need protection and if they are in containers, move them closer to the house, preferably under an awning. For plants growing in your garden that will be susceptible to winter's chill, wrap them in burlap. I am currently covering my bougainvillea and blue flowering Birds of Paradise.

With the change of seasons, our houseplants require a bit of TLC. For all of the smaller, movable plants, bring them outdoors for a final refreshing shower to remove built-up dust. Give

them a deep drink on a warm, but not a hot day, and let them dry in the shade before returning them to the house. For large plants such as fiddle leaf fig or philodendron, take a damp cloth and wipe each leaf, top and bottom, as well as the stems. With shorter days, less intense light, and a different indoor atmosphere, our houseplants may suffer. Make sure to keep the soil evenly moist without being soggy. If you want your Christmas cactus to bloom for the holidays, keep it in a cool room without watering so that it can rest.

Red flag days will be more common through November as winds kick up and the heat of fall keeps the thermometers rising. If you pruned your begonias and roses in the last few weeks, you'll enjoy bountiful flowers until the downpours begin. I am truly enamored with begonias, both the tuberous and the wax leaf or fibrous. In some areas, the wax leaf begonia is an annual but in our warmer Mediterranean climate, they are perennial like their sisters, the tuberous begonias. Don't make the mistake of pulling them out when they die back. Just cut them to the ground to allow them to overwinter and you'll be rewarded with even a fuller plant next blooming season.

Does your home truly reflect you?

... continued from Page D1

5) Step out of your comfort zone. Everything you surround yourself with in your home has an effect on you. Every piece of furniture, art or textile in your home can make you feel a certain way. To find the interiors and style that is the true you, you have to step outside of your comfort zone. It's time to take chances and do what you haven't done before. Paint the walls that bold color that terrifies you. If it's wrong, you can just paint it again. But if it's right, it just might be what you needed. Life is too short to play it safe, let down your hair and have fun with it. Don't worry if it doesn't fit what you see on social media or what is showing up in every home décor catalog (i.e. all things gray). Think outside the box. The goal is to have a space that screams "you live here," "this is what our family is about." And maybe you start small with a small corner or an extra bedroom that doesn't get used often. The point is to not only "live" in your home but "LOVE" living in it.

I hope these tips encourage you to take some time to decorate your home in a way that is a true reflection of those who live in it. Until next time dear friends!

As the Owner and Principal Designer of Lamorinda-based Amanda Carol Interiors, Amanda Eck believes your home's interior should be both approachable and well-appointed. She often asserts, "Beauty is a necessity."

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Cynthia Brian's 'Back to Work' Gardening Guide for October

The chores already discussed need doing before inclement weather begins. Once we have a deep soaking of life-giving rain, October is one of the best months for planting, seeding and digging.

- **CREATE** meandering borders filled with perennials and shrubs.
- **PLANT** trees and bushes as the temperature cools.
- **SCATTER** wildflower seeds, especially California poppies and lupines.
- **START** a new lawn or reseed an existing lawn.
- **DEADHEAD** annuals.
- **ROOT** out any remaining weeds.
- **DIG** a pond and add a water feature.
- **CHOOSE** fall planting bulbs that will have different bloom times from early to late spring. Don't forget muscari (grape hyacinth). This fragrant bulb will multiply, growing in sun or shade.
- **REFRIGERATE** hyacinth, crocus, and tulip for six weeks before planting.
- **SOW** cool-season vegetables including turnips, peas, lettuce, rutabagas, kohlrabi, carrots, kale, spinach, cabbage, broccoli and Brussels sprouts.
- **ADD** a tropical ambiance with New Guinea impatiens, red-hot poker and palms.

- **PROVIDE** long-lasting beauty for sunny areas with ornamental grasses, geraniums and elephant ear.
- **FIX** nitrogen and increase biomass with a cover crop such as mustard, alfalfa or crimson clover.
- **ENJOY** your begonias. Once they start dying back, do not pull them out. They will return more robust next fall.
- **TAKE** pleasure in photos of beautiful gardens, such as those from Butchart Gardens in Canada. See www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1316/Cynthia-Brians-Gardening-Guide-for-October-Benvenuto-to-Butchart-Gardens.html

Our gardens are winding down and so too will we. Get to work finishing your tasks this autumn in anticipation of a restful winter. Life begins again! Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



Create meandering borders filled with perennials and shrubs.



Feathergrass, geraniums, and elephant ear add beauty to the garden.



Sweet, delicious Mission figs are ready to harvest.



This fern grotto is reminiscent of Jurassic Park.



Colorful, perennial tuberous begonias should be left in the garden after their leaves die.



Cynthia Brian in the vineyard by the vintage Chevy.

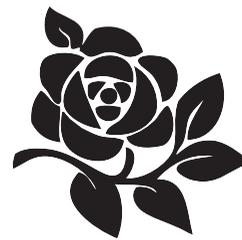
Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3.

Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com.

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