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Head coach Paul Thomas with Ayla Zawadski after she signed her letter, with parents Mark and Reigen watching from the table.

Photo provided

## 8-year-old signs letter of intent with SMC women's basketball team

By Jon Kingdon

Whether it's to replace an injured player or add a player to try and improve the team, as a rule, it's only professional teams that can bring on a new player during the season. Once again, the Saint Mary's Gaels have pushed the envelope, in this case with the women's basketball team.

On Feb. 4, at the University Credit Union Pavilion, witnessed by family, friends and the entire women's basketball team, head coach Paul Thomas signed 8-year-old Ayla Zawadski to her official letter

of intent, which also required the signatures of Ayla's parents, Mark and Reigen. Ayla was then presented with her own Gael jersey No. 3 with Ayla on the back. This was all brought together by Team IMPACT, Saint Mary's and the basketball team. Team IMPACT's goal is find children with chronic or life-threatening illnesses and connect them with college athletic teams and the local campus community. Team IMPACT has matched over 2,000 children with more than 700 colleges nationally and 300 throughout California.

Ayla was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes four

years ago, along with celiac disease. According to her father, Mark, it has not slowed Ayla down: "Even with all of this other stuff going on, these devices that she has to put on her body and the things she has to do because of her condition, she still has the goals that she sets for herself that are typical and even above typical. This past year, when she was 7 years old, she had a goal of running four miles ('I did it and I was faster than Daddy and my next goal is six miles,' Ayla interjected).

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## Appellate Court upholds Lafayette's 2016 approval of cabana project

By Pippa Fisher

The city announced a victory in the case heard by the Court of Appeals, filed by a small group of Lafayette residents challenging the approval by the city of a neighbor's cabana construction.

The group alleged that the city had used a biased process in reaching the land-use decision in 2016 by improperly considering the application in closed session, in violation of the Brown Act – an open meeting law designed to ensure transparency in local government – and that they were deprived of a fair hearing due to a potential conflict of interest at the design review and planning commission level.

The California First Appellate District Court upheld the trial court's December 2018 ruling against the plaintiffs. The court did however agree that the city violated the Brown Act but con-

cluded there was no prejudice.

"We are very pleased that the Court of Appeal has affirmed the city of Lafayette's trial court victory in this matter," said Lafayette Mayor Mike Anderson in a Feb. 11 statement. "The city will continue to keep our focus on important issues facing Lafayette."

The litigation stems from the application for a now-completed tennis cabana, which went before the planning commission at four meetings between December 2015 and May 2016. Following the planning commission approval the neighbors appealed to the city council, which considered it at four further meetings. While approval was pending, the applicants' attorney threatened to sue the city if denied. The city attorney notified the council of the litigation threat orally during a July 25, 2016, closed session meeting. Record of this litigation threat was not made pub-

lic, although notes were kept and could be viewed at the planning department if the public knew to ask for them. The court determined, "This availability is illusory if an interested person would not know the question to ask," the court report states.

The plaintiffs were not aware of the threat of litigation until after the project was approved.

The court found that no prejudice resulted from the violation and that it had no impact on the city council's decision. The report reads, "Here, where there is no basis to conclude the closed sessions were themselves improper, where the merits and demerits of the project were exhaustively debated in multiple city council meetings, and where there is no indication of how the plaintiffs would have proceeded differently if they had known of the threat,

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### Dear Lamorinda Weekly reader,

The Lamorinda Weekly website at [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) is back with its full function and content. We apologize for any inconvenience it may have caused while we moved our content to a new hosting company. The website had reached a volume that required a different way of hosting.

We also moved our email hosting server which may have interrupted email receiving on our or your end. If you feel as if we have not responded to an email please make sure you have checked your spam folder and please reach out to us with any concerns.

Thank you for understanding.  
Lamorinda Weekly



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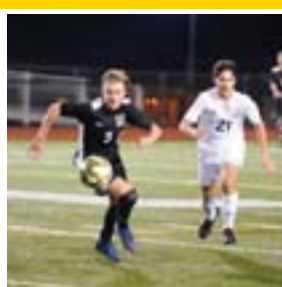
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See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements  
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**City council throws support behind school funding measure**



Photo Jeff Heyman, City of Lafayette

**Tom Mulvaney addresses the Lafayette City Council Feb. 10, seeking endorsement for Measure L.**

**By Pippa Fisher**

The Lafayette city council unanimously voted to endorse the Yes on L Campaign – Measure L, Lafayette School District's proposed parcel tax to secure additional funding for all district schools – at its Feb. 10 meeting.

LAFSD governing board President Meredith Meade introduced the campaign's co-chair Tom Mulvaney who told the council that the \$290 per year per parcel, or \$0.80 per day tax, is needed to attract and retain high quality teachers, and to prevent deep cuts to math, science, reading, lan-

guage arts, engineering, technology and robotics programs. It will be necessary, said Mulvaney, in order to maintain manageable class sizes, keep facilities safe, clean and well maintained, and to preserve the high quality programs currently offered in music, visual and performing arts.

Noting the "Green hills, great schools" slogan adopted by the city, Mulvaney pointed out the integral role excellent schools play in keeping Lafayette a desirable place to live and house values strong. He explained that Measure L would last only seven years and could not be extended without a new vote. All funds, he said, would stay local for Lafayette TK-8 schools. It would be monitored by a citizen's oversight committee and would have mandatory audits to ensure proper spending. Furthermore, he explained, there is a senior exemption option whereby homeowners aged 65 or older can opt out.

The district has slashed \$3 million over the past three years but even with these cuts the campaign chairs say the district does not receive adequate funding from the state to balance the budget. The campaign says that Measure L is needed to protect vital instructional programs and to avoid teacher layoffs.

According to a recent Stanford study, Getting Down to Facts, the cost of an "adequate level" annual per student spending is \$16,000, with New York providing \$24,000 per student annually. Lafayette's students receive just \$8,000 in funding from the state, supplemented by Lafayette Partners in Education to bring the total figure up to \$11,000 per student.

... continued on Page A12

**Introducing Rocco**



Photo Pippa Fisher

**Officer Kevin White and Rocco (center) pose with the police chief and city council Feb. 10.**

**By Pippa Fisher**

Residents got to meet the newest member of the Lafayette Police Department at the Feb. 10 city council meeting.


Rocco, a 2.5-year-old Belgian Malinois has already started working with Officer Kevin White, patrolling the streets. Rocco will be working as a dual-purpose dog, trained in tracking and apprehension, and firearms/explosives detection. He has already completed his patrol training and will be starting his eight-week firearms/explosives training program in April, in time to work the city's

summer events, noted Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt.

Alldritt expressed his gratitude to the supportive community members who have funded the program to bring Rocco in through generous donations.

Alldritt explained that most police dogs are trained in German. He and White were surprised then to find out on meeting Rocco, that, "In all the cosmic workings," said Alldritt, "somehow we got the one dog that actually responds to French commands."

It seems like an appropriate nod to General Lafayette, even if Rocco's handler now has to learn French.

 <p><b>Lafayette Public Meetings</b></p>	<p><b>City Council</b>                  Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.                  Lafayette Library &amp; Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>	<p><b>Planning Commission Meeting</b>                  Monday, March 2, 7 p.m.                  Lafayette Library &amp; Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>	<p><b>Design Review</b>                  Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.                  Lafayette Library &amp; Learning Center, Arts &amp; Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>	<p><b>School Board Meetings Acalanes Union High School District</b>                  Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m.                  AUHSD Board Room                  1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Laf.                  www.acalanes.k12.ca.us</p>	<p><b>Lafayette School District</b>                  Wednesday, March 11, 7 p.m.                  Regular Board Meeting                  Stanley M.S. Library                  3477 School St., Lafayette                  www.lafsd.k12.ca.us</p>
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# Lafayette citizens of the year announced



From left: Niroop Kasthuri Srivatsa, Don Tatzin, Janet and Rick Cronk and John McCormick. Photo provided

By Pippa Fisher

The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and Lamorinda Weekly have announced this year's citizens of the year – longtime residents Rick and Janet Cronk.

Over many years their generosity of time and talent have benefited multiple corners of the community,

and further afield. They have supported local, regional and international philanthropies, all while inspiring others with their leadership and volunteerism.

The 2019 Citizen of the Year Don Tatzin will be officially handing over the reins to the Cronks at a sold-out dinner in their honor Friday, March 13 at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa.

# An evening of community issues



Photo Pippa Fisher

Mayor Mike Anderson gives the State of the City address at the Homeowners Council meeting Feb. 6.

By Pippa Fisher

The Sequoia Room at the Community Center was full Feb. 6 for a Lafayette Homeowners Council meeting. The crowd was engaged for an evening of three presentations on “community issues.”

Up first was Mayor Mike Anderson who gave a State of the City address, prefaced with a brief reminder of Lafayette's background. He recalled that the city started without taxes before Prop 13, and it maintains its 15 commissions and committees with volunteers. He noted that it is a small city where people know each other and are friendly and he asked, given our topography nestled into the hills but with a BART station, freeway and only one main drag through town, “How do we deal with state legislature who wants a cookie-cutter solution to the housing crisis? We are different – tighter, friendlier,” he said.

Anderson gave a presentation full of budget facts and figures, noting that the city's operating costs are around \$17 million annually. The city maintains a 60% reserve and has done for

the last five years. He drew the audience's attention to budget vulnerabilities, such as wildfire prevention, police costs, downtown maintenance, stormwater pollution and legal exposure.

With the state pushing for more housing, reduced green house gases and reduced vehicle-miles traveled, Anderson once again said that just providing housing alone isn't going to help. “The jobs/housing balance is key.” But he noted that even if it is not happy to be losing local control, Lafayette is a subdivision of the state, and as such it has to work with the state. In fact he and City Manager Niroop Srivatsa had just returned from a series of meetings on the subject of housing in Sacramento with State Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, and State Sen. Steve Glazer, amongst other housing-focused lawmakers.

Next up for the evening was Lafayette School District Superintendent Richard Whitmore who discussed the state of funding for Lafayette schools. Joined by Yes on L Campaign Co-chairs Tom Mulvaney and Danielle Gallagher,

... continued on Page A8

## City of Lafayette Recruiting for Part-Time Administrative Assistant

The City of Lafayette is recruiting for the position of part-time Administrative Assistant for the hours of 12:30 - 5PM Monday through Friday (22.5 hours per week). This is a regular position that includes paid vacation, holiday, healthcare, and retirement benefits (pro-rated).

The Administrative Assistant will primarily be responsible for front-desk duties including heavy phone and walk-in interaction with the public as well as other clerical duties. As the “face of the City”, candidates should have excellent organizational skills, highly polished communication skills, the ability to deal with difficult situations, a professional demeanor and a passion for serving the public.

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**The tent behind Safeway (aka Cirque du Moraga)**



Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Ever since the large white tent was erected behind Moraga Shopping Center's Safeway in early January, locals have been speculating as to its purpose. Many have wondered (tongue-in-cheek) whether the circus

was coming to town. Not so.

The tent was erected by Steve Hammond, owner of Bay Area Ballplayers, an indoor batting cage and sports training venue, as a winter-time extension of his permanent facility located at 1460-H Moraga Rd. in Moraga. Hammond's BAB opened its doors in Janu-

ary 2019 and became so successful that by late summer of that year he approached Moraga's Planning Department with plans to erect a tent between the months of January through April to accommodate his booming business.

According to Hammond's Project Description, "There has long been great demand for an indoor training facility during the winter time, as very few fields in Lamorinda have lights or adequate drainage to allow sports play for up to 36 hours after a strong storm." It goes on to add, "The facility will accommodate athletes of all ages, including from Moraga Baseball Association, Campolindo High School, Saint Mary's College and others from surrounding communities."

Hammond plans to operate the tent 7 days a week

Monday through Friday from 2 to 9 p.m., and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends. He intends to repeat the process annually with the town and property owner's approval.

Inside the 7,524 square foot tent, are plans for an artificial turf on top of the gravel parking lot and LED lighting powered by a stand-alone solar trailer. Batting cages and the tent fabric are fire resistant and able to withstand high winds.

When Hammond had approached the town of his intentions last summer he was advised by staff that even such temporary use would require approval. However, on Jan. 3, Hammond installed the tent without the required approval of the town. On Jan. 6, the Planning Department notified Hammond that the tent

needed Design Review Board approval in the Community Commercial zoning district pursuant to Moraga's Municipal Codes. Hammond submitted a Design Review Board application on Jan. 21, and on Feb. 6 the town mailed public hearing notices to neighbors as well as posting them at the project site.

Planning Department Senior Planner Steve Kowalski's staff report specifies that, "The proposed improvements (must) conform with good design as set forth in the Town of Moraga Design Guidelines, and in general contribute to the character and image of the town as a place of beauty, spaciousness, balance, taste, fitness, broad vistas and high quality."

... continued on Page A11



From left, Alu-Motion sculptor Buddy Brodwin and Teresa Onoda Photo Vera Kochan

**Alu-Motion: the newest public art display in Moraga**

By Vera Kochan

At the intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road is a small plot of land known as "the triangle." The Moraga Garden Club maintains the area with seasonal flowers, providing an oasis in the middle of one of the town's busiest thoroughfares. A new art installation, Alu-Motion, joins the garden in the triangle thanks to the efforts of the Art in Public Spaces Committee.

The former mayor of Moraga, Teresa Onoda, is the APSC founder, chair of the committee and liaison to the town council, who describes the red, 10 foot by 8 foot "weather vane-like" kinetic sculpture as an "elegant red lady; with a bit of a breeze she shows her ballroom moves."

Lafayette resident and Alu-Motion creator Buddy Brodwin is a

retired dentist who always enjoyed art. While in San Francisco, he came upon a metal kinetic sculpture by artist George Rickey that intrigued him. Taking it to the next level, Brodwin began taking metal classes at Oakland's "The Crucible" to hone his craft. Turning his garage into a studio, he surfed the internet for ideas.

"I'm creative, but not that creative," Brodwin joked. "I'm learning and following others."

Through trial and error Brodwin began to turn out sculptures that expressed the artistic statements he wished to make. "Alu-Motion is my first public piece," he stated. "It's similar to one I made initially that was out of steel. This is aluminum."

Brodwin's creations came to Onoda's attention when he spotted her at her booth during Lafayette's Art and Wine Festival. In the

process of catching up with each other, Brodwin showed Onoda pictures of his sculptures. "I felt that an ultimate expression and culmination of my art would be placing a piece in the public domain," Brodwin explained. "I am thrilled and excited by this opportunity, as well as for the strong winds that typically are found in the area!"

Onoda pointed out that Alu-Motion comes with no expense to the town. Brodwin donated it to Moraga. "Art in Public Spaces was started in 2015. Our mission is to create joy and a sense of wonder," Onoda said. "We now have 10 sculptures - nine on loan from sculptors and one, the orange bench, at the library. We WILL (Women of Moraga Instilling a Lasting Legacy) bought that for the town. Art brings joy and surprises to us all. Buddy's sculpture does just that."



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## Moraga's Business of the Year and Nonprofit of the Year named



From left, Mechanics Bank Universal Banker Sarn Saefong, Branch Manager Brandy Ford and Senior Universal Banker Pilar Norleen



Lamorinda CERT Program Manager Duncan Seibert

Photos Vera Kochan

### By Vera Kochan

This year's Business of the Year recipient is Mechanics Bank located inside Safeway at the Moraga Shopping Center. The Nonprofit of the Year honor goes to Lamorinda's Community Emergency Response Team.

According to Moraga Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kathe Nelson there are so many reasons why both organizations deserve the award. Mechanics Bank is "truly a community bank. Their employees can be seen at every civic event; they generously sponsor everything from Saint Mary's sporting events to the Community Fair," adding how employees are well trained, efficient and very pleasant to work with. "Mechanics has very competitive programs on all levels, and they have a great customer service department." Nelson's praises are just

high for CERT. "Their mission is to prepare the community for any and all emergencies," she said. "They offer training in all facets of emergency response, remind us to have enough water and supplies on hand, provide backyard water storage containers to offering sandbags, should we have flooding in and around our homes. It is a small group of people that provide a huge amount of very important information."

Mechanics Bank has provided over 100 years of service to the East Bay beginning with its founding in 1905, by E.M. Downer. Initially named the Bank of Pinole, it became Mechanics Bank thanks to the service it provided for the workers of Richmond's two largest companies, Standard Oil and the Santa Fe Railroad. The bank has been serving Moraga since 1996.

Corporate Officer/Branch Manager Brandy Ford has been with Mechanics for 13

years, eight of them in Moraga. When asked whether she expected to work in Moraga's branch for so long she replied, "When I first came, no. As I grew, working with my customers and the community, I couldn't see myself anywhere else."

Mechanics Bank has long been a sponsor of many organizations and events such as the Moraga Educational Foundation, the Saint Mary's College basketball team, Xenophon, Saklan School events, East Bay International Jewish Film Festival, the Kiwanis Lobster Festival and, coincidentally enough, Moraga's Business of the Year and Nonprofit of the Year event.

"I was really shocked when I saw that we were nominated," Ford stated. "By

the way the nomination was written I could tell that it came from a customer. It's truly an honor to be recognized by the community that you take pride in doing your work for."

Nonprofit of the Year, Lamorinda CERT, has been serving the community since 1997. The CERT concept was created by the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1985 and came to the forefront in 1987 during the Whittier Narrows Earthquake. By training civilians in disaster preparedness the LAFD recognized the importance of teaching citizens to safely help themselves and the neighbors within their community.

Lamorinda CERT has trained in excess of 1,000 residents under a "Train and Maintain" objective in the hopes that graduates of their Basic Training Series will continue as active members. Moraga-Orinda Fire District sponsors the volunteer-based program whose instructors, for the most part, have Federal Emergency Management Agency experience.

Program Manager Duncan Seibert wants citizens to know that their website offers emergency supplies for sale to the public. CERT operates with no salaries and no office expenses through an all-volunteer labor force. Their only outlay is the cost of running water drum and fire extinguisher programs. Anyone interested in purchasing emergency supplies such as water drums or fire extinguishers can visit the website: [supplies.lamorindacert.org](http://supplies.lamorindacert.org).

"The purpose of CERT is to teach people to be ready for disasters," Siebert stressed. "We teach people how to do it on-scene. The residents will be the true first responders."

The dinner honoring both recipients and sponsored by Aegis Living of Moraga and Mechanics Bank is scheduled at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24 at La Finestra, 1419 Moraga Way (Moraga Shopping Center). Tickets are \$65 per person. RSVP by Feb. 20 as seating is limited. For more information visit [www.moragachamber.org](http://www.moragachamber.org) or contact Nelson (925) 323-6524.

## T J Maxx thieves apprehended thanks to teamwork by witnesses

### By Vera Kochan

At approximately 10:45 a.m. on Feb. 12, the T J Maxx located at 472 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center of Moraga fell victim to thieves.

Thanks to several witnesses pooling their observations they were able to not only get the license plate number of the getaway car, but a general vehicle description from a photo taken, along with accurate accounts of the suspects and their stolen goods. Re-counting this information to a 911 dispatcher, the witnesses had the presence of mind to note the direction the suspect vehicle was heading as being north on Moraga Road toward Lafayette.

According to store managers, the items stolen were high-end clothing and products such as cologne and perfume at an estimated worth of approximately \$500. As the suspects, one woman and two men, exited the store, security tags triggered the store's alarm system. The witnesses, each of whom was located in different

areas of the general vicinity, noticed the suspects running in the parking lot carrying armfuls of clothing still on the hangers.

Moraga Police Department officers responded to the report and notified the Lafayette Police Department who in turn spotted the vehicle, which had been reported stolen. LPD stopped the vehicle in front of Ace Hardware at 3311 Mt. Diablo Blvd. and detained four occupants until MPD units arrived on the scene.

According to the Moraga Police Department, officers recovered the property that had been stolen from the T J Maxx and the suspects were positively identified by witnesses as being involved in the theft. The suspects (Jimmy Swearingin 53, Major Mack 55, Shirley Johnson 32 and Tony Richard 44) all from Oakland, were arrested by MPD officers and later booked at the Martinez County Jail for a variety of charges including petty theft and conspiracy, probation violations and vehicle theft.

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### Town Council

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

**Planning Commission:** Monday, March 2, 7 p.m.

Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.  
**Park and Recreation Commission:** Tuesday, March 17, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.  
**Moraga School District Board Meetings:** Thursday, March 10, 7 p.m.  
Joquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium, 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
[www.moraga.k12.ca.us](http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us). See also AUHSD meeting page A2



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**ORINDA**

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

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## Orinda takes a deep dive into storm drains



Photo Sora O'Doherty

**Failed metal culvert that was replaced with concrete culvert under Miner Road in 2017.**

**By Sora O'Doherty**

Having completed most repairs of residential roads by the end of 2019, Orinda's public works department has turned its attention to arterials and collectors and to public storm drains. On Feb. 4 Orinda Senior Engineer Scott Christie provided an update to the city council on the storm drain project. The importance of storm drain maintenance was underlined by the Miner Road sinkhole, that caused the city so much trouble in 2017. The main challenge facing the city is where to find the approximately \$28 million shortfall for the public storm drain program.

Storm drains smaller than 36 inches

in diameter were replaced during recent road repaving, but larger ones require permitting. In the 2015 through 2019 paving projects, approximately 10,000 feet of pipe was either replaced or lined at a cost of \$3.9 million. Lining old pipes is a technique used to give longer life to existing drains.

City staff have been working with the Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission to produce a comprehensive storm drain repair plan. Earlier work by the city to identify public storm drain deficiencies, such as the 2016 Storm Drain Master Plan by Schaaf & Wheeler has been supplemented by Drake Haglan & Associates, contracted in 2019 to provide cost estimates and a prioritization scheme for storm drains.

The prioritization scheme balances four criteria and applies different weights, or importance scores, to each. The most heavily weighted score is that of the pipe condition, which accounts for 45% of its priority, followed by the importance of the roadway at 30%, the size of the pipe at 15% with the remaining 10% weight attributed to whether capacity upsizing is recommended for the pipe.

The estimated total cost for repairing or replacing all public storm drains is nearly \$30 million, divided roughly by one-third for pipes that will need repair or replacement in the next three to five years and the other two-thirds devoted to pipes that will need repair or replacement in the next five to 10 years. Full funding is not currently available, and some \$28 million needs to be raised to complete the project.

The plan is to repair or replace all metal pipes and only repair or replace non-metal pipes, such as concrete box culverts, when the need is discovered. The plan only includes storm drain pipes within the city right-of-way, which is estimated to include 1,470 public pipe segments totaling about 89,000 linear feet. City drainage maps show at least 1,800 private pipe segments, totaling about 145,000 linear feet, but these are not included in the plan.

At the same meeting the city council approved awards of two contracts to Miksis Services, Inc. The first is a construction contract to rehabilitate four high priority storm drain pipes. The construction agreement is for \$176,090, plus a 16% contingency fee that results in a total authorized contract amount of \$205,000. Miksis Services Inc. also was awarded a construction contract to repair a culvert in the city draining easement on El Camino Moraga. That contract authorizes expenditure of up to \$34,200.

## 2020 Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest opens for Orinda students



**By Sora O'Doherty**

Once again this year all students who reside and/or attend high school in Orinda are invited to compete in the Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest. Students may submit up to three entries, but no more than one entry in any of the four categories, which are: short story, science fiction/fantasy, essay/memoir/biography, and poetry. The deadline for submissions is Friday, April 10 at noon.

Up to four winners will each be awarded \$500 prizes at the end of the school year, underwritten by the

Friends of the Orinda Library. Entries will be judged by a panel of local judges involved professionally in reading, writing or publishing. The judges will not know the names of the authors while judging entries. The winning entries will be posted in the Orinda library and on the Friends' website for all to enjoy. Prizes will be awarded to the four entries deemed to be the best; there will not necessarily be a prize in each category.

The Friends of the Orinda Library Creative Writing Contest was renamed in 2002 to honor the memory of Poul Anderson, a popular science-fiction writer and Orinda resident, who was a

true friend to the community for 40 years. During his career, Anderson authored over 80 books. Anderson was born in Pennsylvania in 1926 of Danish and Danish-American parents. His family went to Denmark for a short period after his father's early death in a car accident, but returned to live in various parts of the U.S. where his mother worked in an office, ran a chicken farm, and worked as a college librarian to support Anderson and his brother. Anderson attended the University of Minnesota Institute of Technology. Before he graduated with distinction in 1948, he had begun writing science fiction stories and selling them to magazines. His realization that his writing skills surpassed his scientific skills came over a period of time, resulting in his decision to pursue a ca-

reer in writing science fiction.

Specific details for entries are available online, such as number of pages and spacing as well as how entries should be fastened and other guidelines. Hard copy submissions can be turned in at the Orinda Library or to the Miramonte College & Career Center Director, or can be mailed to FOL Writing Contest, Post Office Box 152, Orinda, CA 94563.

Electronic submissions must be emailed to contest@friendsoftheorindalibrary.org.

Judges will award the prizes to the works judged best, regardless of category. Not all categories of writing will necessarily win an award. Winners will be announced by the close of the school year.

**Entries forms for the 2020 Contest Entry are available at:**  
<http://friendsoftheorindalibrary.org/writingcontest/>  
**Any questions about the contest, should be send by email to:**  
[contest@friendsoftheorindalibrary.org](mailto:contest@friendsoftheorindalibrary.org).

## Neighbors vote to keep overnight parking restrictions for lower El Toyonal

**By Sora O'Doherty**

Following up on a request to seek greater public input on a resolution adopted in September 2018 that prohibits overnight parking on lower El Toyonal, the city of Orinda

polled residents to determine if they wanted the requirements changed; 48% of those polled responded, and of those 11 ballots received, eight were in favor of some sort of parking restriction. As a result, the staff recom-

mended that the city council correct a technical error in the resolution, but continue it in effect, banning any overnight parking from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. along the north side of El Toyonal beginning at the intersection of Camino

Pablo and extending westerly a distance of 390 feet along El Toyonal. The original restriction was adopted in response to a citizen request for the parking restrictions because large construction vehicles were parking overnight on

lower El Toyonal and creating unwanted noise in the early mornings. The city council unanimously agreed to keep the resolution, with the minor correction in a reference to the municipal code.



**Orinda Public Meetings**

**City Council**  
Tuesday, March 3, 7 p.m.  
Tuesday Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, March 10, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

**Downtown Planning Discussion Council Subcommittee**  
Special Meeting March 25, 5:00 PM  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room  
22 Orinda Way City Hall Orinda

**Orinda Union High School District Board Meetings**  
Monday, March 9, 6 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda www.orindaschools.org  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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## Orinda City Council ends meeting by honoring Steve Gentry



Steve Gentry checks a beehive frame.

Photo LW archive

all," she said, "Steve was a rather famous beekeeper." She recounted how he went to Humboldt State and became a marine biologist, often did painting and contracting on the side while he was practicing to be a marine biologist and soon, she said, he found it was more profitable to be a remodeling contractor. Gentry took a local beekeeping course in 1979 and soon after he helped found the Mt. Diablo Beekeepers Association, writing the charter in 1982, and he served for many years in that association. He was a board member of Contra Costa certified farmers' markets and he sold his honey at farmers' markets, Diablo Foods, Whole Foods, and many of the restaurants in the area. "We are very, very sad," Gee said. "Steve was often featured on the Food Network and many, many times he was in newspapers and magazines so we are going to miss him very, very much and we would like to close this meeting in his honor."

Vice Mayor Amy Worth said Gentry was an incredible man and a real environmentalist. Worth spoke of how Gentry had worked very closely with Toris Jaeger over the decades to nurture and insure that the nature area was an incredible resource for our students. One of his big loves, Worth said, was bringing nature home. She recalled personally how she "loved going to the hardware store and seeing his honey. What a treasure he was. Just a wonderful, wonderful man."

Mike Vigo, the current president of the Mt. Diablo Beekeepers, in an interview, said he had first met Steve at a Mt. Diablo Beekeepers meeting around 2006. "We had started beekeeping because our daughters were in 4H; we had a hive at our house. We had questions, so we reached out to Steve. He was very gracious; he came over and spent at least an hour with us at the house. Such a nice guy, so wonderful

with bees." Vigo praised Gentry's generosity and openness. Vigo said he absorbed everything he could from Gentry, whom he described as "pretty much a walking encyclopedia about bees."

Andy Scheck, the publisher of Lamorinda Weekly, who is also a beekeeper, recounted how Gentry was like a bee whisperer. When others would be fully suited up in protective gear, Gentry would be casually wearing a Hawaiian shirt. The bees would walk all over him, in and out of his shirt, but never sting him, Scheck said. "Where others could keep a hive open for maybe 10 minutes before the bees would become disturbed," Scheck said, "Steve could have a hive open for 45 minutes while he explained its workings, and the bees tolerated him happily."

It won't just be people who miss Gentry.

(See Gentry's obituary on page B6.)

### By Sora O'Doherty

The mayor and members of the city council took time at the conclusion of their meeting on Feb. 4 to honor Steve Gentry, who died on Jan. 20. Mayor Darlene Gee began by saying that Orinda lost a very dear resident recently. She went on to describe Gentry as

a fourth-generation Orindan who was very active in the community. Gee wanted Gentry's family to know that Orinda was thinking of them.

Most recently, Gee continued, Gentry was the president of the Friends of Wagner Ranch Nature Area; he raised over \$36,000 for the preservation of that area. "Most of



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# Crisp, fresh look for redesigned MOFD website



Screen shot of the website

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District unveiled its upgraded public website in early February with a fresh, con-

temporary design that should be much easier to navigate, especially by visitors with disabilities.

Gloriann Sasser, MOFD administrative services director, oversaw the website redesign, and pointed out

some of the features of the new site. Five tabs on the home page cover basic district categories, and five large buttons on that same page direct visitors to frequently requested areas, such as meeting agendas, plan submissions and career information.

"The website will also work on phones and tablets," Sasser said, and she noted that the site complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Coming up with a plan to bring the website up to current ADA standards was the most challenging part of the job, according to Rachel Schultz, project manager for Granicus, the digital technology company that redid the MOFD website. Granicus designed the much-heralded website of the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District. "Photos, maps, graphics and other

images on the website have tags written into the code that have description or text equivalents of the material being visually conveyed," said Schultz, explaining that this will permit users who rely on screen readers to navigate the content. The MOFD website also incorporates contrast checkers to aid users with visual color impairments, and the site allows visitors to access all information using a keyboard.

The district will pay Granicus \$28,000 over five years, which includes the development and hosting of the website, plus regular maintenance. "We continually update the software, and we do annual health checks, to make sure the district stays up to date in ADA compliance," Schultz said. "We also update the analytics on the visitors to the site."

# ConFire bolsters ability to successfully treat cardiac arrest victims



Photo Nick Mernell

Capt. Jonathan Lemke and firefighter Patrick Kelley at ConFire Station 17

By Nick Marnell

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, through its Alliance partnership with American Medical Response, recently purchased 30 new LUCAS devices for its front line apparatus fleet, giving each district operational crew an added method to improve blood flow in victims of cardiac arrest.

"This is a major milestone for our organization," Fire Chief Lewis Broschard said.

According to the district, LUCAS devices – machines that automatically deliver hands-free chest compressions – are part of a ConFire initiative to improve survivability of cardiac events, which includes administering of CPR Highly Defined, a technique that provides highly choreographed, time-driven prompts for management of cardiac arrest. LUCAS devices also free first responders to perform other critical advanced life support tasks during medical incidents, and offer the potential for fewer injuries to first responders while they administer CPR.

Alliance paramedics demonstrated the equipment in December at a district governing board

meeting, and the ConFire crew at Lafayette Station 17 pointed out some of the advantages of the new medical devices, praising their ease of use. "They're great for providing a consistent compression rate with proper depth," firefighter Patrick Kelley said.

The LUCAS device can also be a boon to helping first responders manage a lifesaving call. "It saves the crew time and energy," Capt. Jonathan Lemke said. "It stops interruptions, such as when we're putting a patient onto a gurney or carrying them down stairs."

The device is lightweight, comes in a backpack and can be applied easily to a patient, whether the patient is on the ground, on a bed, or on a stretcher in an ambulance. ConFire spent \$600,000 on the 30 new LUCAS devices, which along with the five already in house will be used not only on front line apparatus but also in operational sessions and training exercises. Each operational truck and engine of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District carries a LUCAS device.

LUCAS is a formal trademark for the Lund University Cardiopulmonary Assist System, developed and manufactured in Sweden and distributed by Stryker Medical in the United States.

# ConFire adds 22 firefighters



Photo provided

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District added 22 probationary firefighters to its ranks upon the graduation of Academy 54 recruits Feb. 13 in Walnut Creek. The probationary firefighters will fill slots due to retirements, the increased staffing of the district's truck companies to four personnel and the reopening of fire stations – including Fire Station 16 in Lafayette last September.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the graduates were given their orders. Christopher Cropley, who delivered the recruit's

address to the Leshner Center audience, tore open his envelope and found that he was assigned to Lafayette Fire Station 15. "I am excited and eager to serve the residents of Lafayette," Cropley said.

The new firefighters remain on probation for one year. -- Nick Marnell

# An evening of community issues

... continued from Page A3

they presented their case for the measure on the March 3 ballot, for a parcel tax to benefit the local schools. (See separate article on Measure L, page A2.) Finally, Contra Costa County Transportation Board Member Don Tatzin presented his case for why residents should support Measure J, which would levy a half-cent sales tax for 35 years to raise an estimated \$103 million for transportation and road projects in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County.

According to the measure, money would be used to reduce congestion and fix bottlenecks on highways and roads. Tatzin made the point that the county can't

build its way out of the traffic issues. "You can't just add lanes to 24 or 680," he said, noting that 55% of the money would go toward transit improvements. Tatzin said that they would be able to further explore bike lanes, increase school bus services and use funds to make BART cleaner and safer.

Time was allowed following each presenter for questions and answers. The evening was a chance for conversation about each of the three issues.

Mulvaney even commented at a city council meeting several days later to the mayor that he had learned more about how the city is run in the mayor's 20-minute presentation than he had known in his previous 32 years of living here.

The mayor's State of the City PowerPoint presentation is available on the city website at [www.lovelafayette.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=6076](http://www.lovelafayette.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=6076)

## Fire District Public Meetings

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m.  
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas.  
Visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)



## ConFire

Board of Directors  
Tuesday, March 10, 1:00 p.m.  
Board Chamber Room 107,  
Administration Building  
651 Pine St., Martinez.  
For meeting times and agendas, visit [www.cccfpd.org](http://www.cccfpd.org)



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Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt  
925-299-3221

Police Department Tip Line  
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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](mailto:Orindatip@cityoforinda.org)

## Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

**Jan. 26 - Feb. 8**  
Alarms 54  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 15  
Traffic 127  
Suspicious Circumstances 8  
Suspicious Subject 18  
Suspicious Vehicle 14



Service to Citizen 50  
Patrol Req./Security Check 47  
Public/School Assembly Check 2  
Supplemental Report 29  
Vacation House Check 10  
Welfare Check 13

**Vehicle violations**  
Auto Burglary  
1200 Block Del Arroyo Ct.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
1200 Block El Curtola Blvd.

DUI Misdemeanor  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Exhibition Of Speed  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Reliez Creek

Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dewing Ave.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Police Department  
900 Block Oakhill Rd.  
4000 Block Valente Dr.  
3700 Block Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Petty Theft From Vehicle  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Reckless Driving  
St. Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr.  
Wb Sr 24 At Wilder Rd., Ori  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd. (2)  
Reliez Station Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Risa Rd.  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.

**Other criminal activity**  
Counterfeit  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Forgery  
900 Block Moraga Rd.  
Fraud Credit Card  
3300 Block Kincheloe Ct.  
Fraud False Pretenses  
1100 Block Via Media  
Grand Theft  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Grand Theft Vehicle Parts

3500 Block Brook St.  
Identity Theft  
Police Department  
600 Block Sky Hy Cir.  
Petty Theft  
3200 Block Elvia St.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.

Robbery  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Shoplift  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (9)  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Theft Access Card  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
800 Block Reliez Station Rd.  
3900 Block Cowan Rd. (2)  
Disturbance-fight  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
Eb Sr 24 At Oak Hill Rd.  
Disturbing The Peace  
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Drunk In Public  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Laf

Harassment  
900 Block Hough Ave.  
500 Block St. Mary's Rd.  
Loud Noise  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Public Nuisance  
3000 Block Camino Diablo  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
800 Block Rosedale Ave.  
Hartwood Ct./Silverado Dr.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Vandalism  
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.  
100 Block Bacon Ct.  
900 Block 3Rd St.  
1000 Block Buchan Dr.

Vandalism - Felony  
Oak Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.  
**Other**  
Oattery  
3400 Block School St.  
Ordinance Violation  
1000 Block Dewing Ave.  
Threats  
Acalanes Rd./El Nido Ranch Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Trespass  
1800 Block Del Rey St.  
Unwanted Guest  
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.  
Violation Restraining Order  
Police Department

**Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report**  
**Jan. 28 -Feb. 3**  
Alarms 6  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 3  
Traffic 37  
Suspicious Circumstances 3  
Suspicious Subject 3  
Suspicious Vehicle 4  
Service to Citizen 27  
Patrol Req./Security Check 27  
Supplemental Report 6  
Vacation House Check 6  
Welfare Check 2

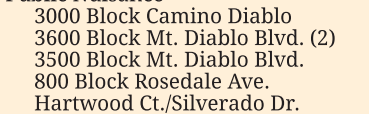
**Vehicle violations**  
Accident Property  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
Auto Burglary  
Not Available  
Not Available  
Moraga Commons  
DUI Misdemeanor

St. Marys Rd./Stafford Dr.  
Excessive Speed  
Moraga Rd./Lucas Dr.  
Moraga Rd./Via Granada  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
40 Block Hardie Dr.  
Reckless Driving  
Camino Ricardo/Moraga Way  
Canyon Rd./Camino Pablo  
St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.

**Other criminal activity**  
Fraud Credit Card  
900 Block Country Club Dr.  
Identity Theft  
Police Department  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
Not Available  
Drunk In Public  
Canyon Rd./Camino Pablo  
Loud Party  
Not Available  
1700 Block Camino Pablo  
Not Available  
Vandalism  
1100 Block Moraga Way

**Other**  
Aailure To Obey  
Moraga Rd./Via Granada  
Fireworks  
Rimer Dr./Camino Pablo  
Joquin Moraga Int. School

**Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report**  
**Will be back next time**



**Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report**  
**Will be back next time**



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Burton Valley PTA  
California School Employees Association, Chapter 134  
Contra Costa Taxpayers Association  
East Bay Times  
Friends of the Lafayette Library  
Happy Valley Parents Club  
Lafayette Chamber of Commerce  
Lafayette City Council  
Lafayette Education Association  
Lafayette Elementary PTA  
Lafayette Historical Society  
Lafayette Homeowners Council  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center Foundation (LLCF)  
Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE)  
Lamorinda Democratic Club  
Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs  
League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley  
Springhill Parent Faculty Club  
Stanley Middle School PTA  
Trust in Education

## Measure L Signatories:

Jack Weir, Executive Director, Contra Costa Taxpayers Association  
Dana Green, Lafayette Realtor  
Mary McCosker, 69-year resident, Grandparent, Community Volunteer  
Bridget Quinn, First Grade Teacher, Springhill Elementary, 23-year Educator  
Rick Cronk, Retired CEO, Civic Leader

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Diana Al-Awadhi  
Samer Alami  
Daniel Albert  
Lisa Albert  
Alan Aldrich  
Paul Aldridge  
Sheila Alfaro  
Tom Alfaro  
Denali Allen  
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Salab Amirdelfan  
Allison Anderson  
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Raffi Asadorian  
Stephanie Asadorian  
Sadegh Asefi  
Guy Atwood  
Theo Lynn Austin-Smyth  
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Jennifer Baceda  
Lauren Baird  
Ian Baisas  
Jayakrishnan Balasubramanian  
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Mark Balfrey  
Betsy Balmat  
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Sean Barclay  
Ashley Battersby  
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Alexander Behm  
Cathy Beier  
Thad Beier  
Daniah Beleford  
Brian Belier  
Carolina Belier  
Andrea Bell  
Duane Bell  
Gene Bell  
Nick Bell  
Amanda Benbow  
Lorin Bender  
Geraldine Benjamins  
Noah Benjamins  
Helen Bequette  
Anabela Beraudo  
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Linda Choi  
Nelly Chong  
Paul Chopra  
Sayeed Choudhury  
Annie Chuang  
Trushal Chudasama  
Vernita Chudasama  
Christina Churchill  
Randy Churchill  
Ann Clark  
Martha Clark  
Peter Clark  
Steve Clark  
Christopher Clayton  
Hien Clayton  
James Claytor  
Tina Clendenin  
Emma Coffey  
Michele Colaco  
Stuart Colaco  
Catherine Coletta  
Connie Collier  
Daniel Collier  
Michael Collier  
Robert Combi  
Charlene Condy  
Joe Condy  
Kristin Connelly  
T.J. Connelly  
James Cooley  
Corinne Cooper  
John Cooper  
Susan Cooper  
Brent Copen  
Susan Corkery  
Kathleen Correia  
Dave Coultas  
Tiffany Coultas  
Kara Cox  
Matthew Coy  
Joseph Craig  
Nahide Craig  
David Cristman  
Heather Cristman  
Janet Cronk  
Rick Cronk  
Kimberley Crossley-Overaa  
Kristin Crotty  
Addys Cuddihy

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Kevin Bronson-Castain  
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Beth Brown  
Greg Brown  
Lindsay Brown  
Noelle Brown  
Trish Brown  
Wynne Brown  
Laurel Brownman  
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Gayle Burleigh  
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Shannon Cahoon  
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Kandice Caicedo  
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Denise Cain  
Erin Caldwell  
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Deborah Callister  
Susan Callister  
Alissa Campbell  
Richard Campbell  
Susan Candell  
Brian Candell  
David Carmichael  
Terra Carmichael  
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Kevin Carter  
Paula Carter  
Samantha Carter  
Sara Carter  
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Randal Castro  
Supicha Castro  
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Ka Chan  
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Lauren Deal  
Nancy Deal  
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Kaylin Deutscher  
Anand Devendran  
Pooja Devendran  
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Kimberly Grover  
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Elyse Hackney  
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Jim Gebhardt  
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Hong Geng  
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Marshall Grodin  
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Sadie Hannah  
Brian Hannah

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Geoff Martin  
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Kristina Massey  
Abbey Massie  
David Massie  
Karla Massie  
Stan Massie  
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Byrne Mathisen  
Oystein Mathisen  
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Bahar Koopah  
Reza Koopah  
Samar Koopah  
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Tom Krackeler  
Tom Krakow  
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Morgan Kubas  
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Patrick Kuhner  
Veronique Kuhner  
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Cindy Kuo  
Maggi Kurimai  
Amanda Kush  
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Todd La Porte  
Gretchen La Rotonda  
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Lori Lane  
Tim Lane  
Warren Lane  
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Jennifer Larsen  
Niels Larsen  
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Bruce Last  
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Sue Layng  
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Kelley Lazzareschi  
Marc Lazzareschi  
Kelly Lazzareschi  
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Tammie Lee  
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Jill Lewis  
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Nathalie Lieber  
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Judith Lipscomb  
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Lynn Lopez  
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Nadine Lusch  
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Sandra Lutsko  
Sara Lutsko  
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Francine Lyall  
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Jeannine Lyons  
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Todd Machtmes  
Budd MacKenzie  
Lori MacLeod  
Tommy MacLeod  
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Molly Maduck  
Sean Maduck  
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Jeff Marquez  
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Gregory Marsh  
Kathy Marshall  
Blake Martell  
Jennifer Martell  
Daniel Marthaler  
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Erin Martin  
Geoff Martin  
Susan Martin  
Kristianne Martineze-Fonts  
Cathy Martinsen  
Erica Mason  
Alex Mason  
Adam Massey  
Kristina Massey  
Abbey Massie  
David Massie  
Karla Massie  
Stan Massie  
Robin Mathers  
Byrne Mathisen  
Oystein Mathisen  
Peter Maxmin

Sally Maxmin  
Press Maycock  
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Lori McAdams  
Lauren McCabe  
Herpich  
Bob McCallister  
Casey McCann  
Christine McCann  
Kristina McCann  
Penelope McCloskey  
Annette McCormick  
Cheri McCormick  
Colleen McCormick  
John McCormick  
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Daryl McCosker  
Mary McCosker  
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Amy McDonough  
Joe McDonough  
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Damian McKenna  
Regina McKenney  
Christine McKinney  
John McIlwain  
Meghann McNaught  
Michelle McNeil  
Tom McNeil  
Brooke McShane  
Holly McShane  
Toni McShane  
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Meredith Meade  
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Joe Megibow  
Kerin Megibow  
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Kacey Meredith  
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Dominique Mickelson  
Patsy Mickens  
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Tifanie Mikalis  
Liza Milanes  
Cindy Miller  
Steve Miller  
Jill Milnes  
Josh Milnes  
Hassan Mirzai  
Meghan Mitman  
Xander Mitman  
Andrea Mitroff  
Audrey Mockler  
Melissa Moehle  
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Alyson Moore  
Guy Moore  
Megan Moore  
Lori Moran  
Katie Morgan  
Rees Morgan  
Adam Morrison  
Tracy Morrison  
Semira Moslem  
Lindsay Moss  
Chris Motes  
Katy Motes  
Hilary Mrachek  
Louis Mrachek  
Rudy Gomez  
Karen Mulvaney  
Mason Mulvaney  
Meg Mulvaney  
Tom Mulvaney  
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Shannon Murphy  
Carolyn Murray  
Linda Murray  
Terry Murray  
Annie Myers  
Hillary Nagy  
Patricia Napper  
Syed Naqvi  
Kevin Nash  
Andrea Nazemi  
Ray Nazemi  
Helen Nazzal  
Naim Nazzal  
Therry Neben  
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Nancy Newcomb  
Mary Debenedeti Newman  
Dana Nicholson  
Nora Nicholson  
Robin Nick  
Dean Nicolacakis  
Maria Nicolacakis  
Norman Rotblat  
Wendy Rotblat  
Caryn Roth  
Derrick Roth  
Tracy Roy  
Daniel Rubens  
Sharon Rubens  
Laura-Kate Rurka  
Mark Rurka  
Andrew Sabey  
Erin Sabey  
Justin Safdie  
Ossamu Sakaguti  
Christine Sampson  
Elaine Samson  
Ivor Samson  
Sharon Samson  
Shari Samuels  
Eric Sandberg  
Judy Sandberg  
Cassie Sanders  
Nicole Sanders  
Ryan Sanders  
Jon Sands  
Kristina Sands  
Lisa Sargent  
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Shane Palmer  
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Sean Parks  
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Brooke Peterson  
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Nicole Peterson  
Todd Peterson  
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Monica Phillips  
Sarah Phillips  
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April Pierce  
Jennifer Pierce  
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Adriano Pignatelli  
Ivana Pignatelli  
Jacinta Pister  
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Alison Poitzyk  
Amelita Potts  
Katherine Powers  
Pavi Prasad  
Kristin Preston  
Scott Preston  
Rachael Pringle  
Pauline Proffett  
Madhvi Puri  
Michael Quillinan  
Bridget Quinn  
Mark Quinn  
April Raffel  
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Becca Raiser  
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Dana Reedy  
Hina Rehmani  
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Jennifer Reid  
Traci Reilly  
Naomi Renbarger  
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Matt Roberts  
Kathleen Robertson  
Kim Robinson  
Jacob Robinson  
Annette Robison  
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Craig Roder  
Jaime Roder  
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Carlos Roig  
Meghvi Roig  
Aron Rosenberg  
Nicole Rosenberg  
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Mason Ross  
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Norman Rotblat  
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Caryn Roth  
Derrick Roth  
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Daniel Rubens  
Sharon Rubens  
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Erin Sabey  
Justin Safdie  
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Christine Sampson  
Elaine Samson  
Ivor Samson  
Sharon Samson  
Shari Samuels  
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Judy Sandberg  
Cassie Sanders  
Nicole Sanders  
Ryan Sanders  
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Kristina Sands  
Lisa Sargent  
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Francisco Silva  
Marissa Silva  
Shayne Silva  
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Jennifer Reid  
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Meghvi Roig  
Aron Rosenberg  
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Kristin Wilson  
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Marisa Wilson  
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Janet Thallaug  
Mette Thallaug  
Justin Thaxton  
Ramsey Thomas  
Allison Thomas  
Kathryn Thompson  
Holly Thompson  
Kelly Thomson  
Josh Thornton  
Julie Thornton  
Christina Tibbals  
Troy Tibbals  
Connor Tierney  
Shannon Tierney  
Tracy Tierney  
Jim Titus  
Loretta Titus  
Patricia Todd

Partial list. Find additional names on our website.



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## VOTE YES on Measure L by MAIL or at the POLLS on Tuesday, March 3rd.

Measure L includes a **SENIOR CITIZEN EXEMPTION** option and strict **TAXPAYER SAFEGUARDS** to ensure proper spending.

Please contact us for more information:

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[YesonLforLafayetteSchools@gmail.com](mailto:YesonLforLafayetteSchools@gmail.com)

Paid for by Residents to Protect Lafayette Schools – Yes on L 2020. PO Box 663, Lafayette 94549. FPPC# 1423254.

# Letters to the editor

## Vote for Measure L

For over 50 years our Family has lived and done business in Lafayette.

Our children attended Lafayette public schools, some of the best in California in spite of being substantially under funded by the State when compared to California's large urban school districts.

Measure L will provide the Lafayette School District with the funds necessary to prevent deep cuts to programs in science, math, reading, technology and language arts. Measure L gives our Lafayette Community an opportunity to step-in and provide a stable, locally controlled source of funding for our public schools. Measure L provides our children the education they need to be successful in this changing world.

Let's protect our Lafayette public schools and vote yes on Measure L.

Connie Collier  
Lafayette

## Protect our schools with Measure L

High quality public schools contribute to the vitality and success of any community. Our family recognizes how important Lafayette's great schools are to our town. Our children, and now our grandchildren, have experienced these benefits firsthand. We have been involved with and supportive of our schools for many years. They are the heart of Lafayette.

I admire the lengths to which our school district leaders and teachers have gone to in order to protect our classrooms from being negatively impacted by insufficient state funding for communities like ours. Without raising more local revenue for our schools, our district will face additional cuts that will directly threaten the high-quality education we have come to expect in Lafayette. Our community cannot let that happen.

I am proud to support Measure L because it will provide funds that will have a lasting impact in the classroom. Measure L will help retain our first-rate teachers and keep award-winning programs like music, art and STEM thriving. All money will stay right here in Lafayette, under our local control, and will directly benefit the students at Burton Valley, Happy Valley, Lafayette Elementary, Springhill, and Stanley.

All of us can play a role in ensuring that our great schools stay great. Every vote matters. Please join me and my family and vote YES for Measure L for Lafayette Schools and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same.

Janet Cronk  
Lafayette

## Why Lot 66 should be denied once and for all

At recent public hearings (1/6/20, 2/3/20), the Lafayette Planning Commission failed to do its job in regards to the Lot 66 building application by Richard Holt.

- Lot 66 has a road running through the middle of it.
- Lot 66 is encumbered by a public trail easement and a private easement held by 22 property owners.
- Lot 66's plans exceed the maximum non permeable coverage in asphalt/house footprint.
- Lot 66's plans exceed the maximum 50 cubic yards of allowable excavation
- Lot 66's plans exceed the 17' height maximum for a hillside home by more than double.
- Lot 66 development would require multiple variances that are so extraordinary, they would be granting "special privilege" to the applicant.

City Attorney Mala Subramanian has recommended—with no precedent—that the city should "continue to process the application" because it cannot enforce a private easement. Even so, we are still left with a highly constrained lot. The commission members have spent hours at the hearings debating massing and siting issues without first addressing the buildability of Lot 66.

Lot 66 was never intended to be developed. In 2008, the Lafayette Planning Commission and City Council denied the application and Mr. Holt's appeal of those applications. Holt's response was to sue the City in 2010. He lost. Yet here we are a decade later being forced to fight Mr. Holt's greed once again. The remaining issues include but are not limited to:

1. Building on a drainage swale
2. Elimination of privacy for the adjacent neighbor whose four bedroom windows would sit 6' from Holt's new driveway
3. Removal of 12 protected redwood trees, pine trees and bay trees that stabilize the steep hillside and provide privacy
4. An imposing 34.5 feet high structure that would tower over the neighbor's home and does not fit in with the character of the neighborhood of one-story homes.

Mr. Holt is a former Lafayette Planning Commissioner Chair and should know better. Holt was the realtor when Petar Jakovina purchased Lot 66 decades ago. Lot 66's only purpose was to create access to develop the Sessions Road and Northridge Lane subdivisions up hill. Holt obtained Lot 66 for a song after Jakovina died. Lot 66's 2019-2020 tax valuation is a mere \$25K with annual taxes of only \$630. A true buildable lot would be valued much higher. Why should you care? If approved, this project will set a dangerous precedent allowing future development of non-

buildable lots through a series of ill-advised variances. Privacy and property values will suffer. Attend the March 3, 2020 public hearing to show our city that no one, including Mr. Holt, can skirt established building regulations.

Pamela Swarts  
Lafayette

## Student support for Measure L

My name is Brendan Connelly, and I'm a freshman at Acalanes High School. For the past 10 years, I have benefited immensely from the education I have received at Lafayette's public schools. Lafayette schools are full of some of the highest caliber teachers available.

However, we, as a community, risk losing some of our best teachers because of budget pressure. Many of our teachers could, because of how proficient they are, do very well at other jobs. In fact, my math teacher this year has a doctorate, but she chooses to stay and teach at Acalanes instead of at a college or at a higher-paying private sector job.

The Lafayette School District has been making budget cuts for the last three years. When I was in 6th grade, I had an excellent math teacher with an education from U.C. Berkeley. Her enthusiasm for math really inspired me. However, she was the youngest and newest math teacher at Stanley Middle School. Because of the budget cuts, she had to be laid off, even though she was one of the best teachers I ever had. Now, three years later, my sister is in 6th grade and I am disappointed she can't have the same teacher with the same spirit that I had.

While some may think Measure L does not benefit them and is not necessary, it is more important than ever. For people who don't have children in public schools anymore, Lafayette is still renowned for the quality of its public schools. We have good schools which produce very successful students. So, even if someone living in Lafayette couldn't care less about the quality of education, the quality of the public schools is what makes living in Lafayette so desirable and elusive. It is the reason housing prices remain so high.

As a student, I want to make it clear how critical it is for Measure L to pass. If more budget cuts become necessary, more teachers like my 6th-grade math teacher will have to leave. It is crucial that this measure passes.

Brendan Connelly  
Lafayette

## Measure M maintains Moraga's quality education

Almost 40 years ago, a group of concerned parents came together to begin to address the inadequacy of state funding for Moraga's public schools by establishing an education foundation. In the years since its inception, the need to privately fundraise to bridge the gap between what the state provides, and the real cost of educating our children, has not changed. If an education foundation could solely bridge that gap it would have already been accomplished. Unfortunately, education costs continue to rise and outpace the revenue required to fund experienced teachers, academic and student support programs, manageable class sizes, and libraries (to name a few). Like many in Moraga, my husband and I moved here specifically for the quality public schools, which in turn support strong property values and a vibrant community. A YES vote to support Measure M is a vote to renew a stable source of locally controlled funding to protect the quality education our children deserve and maintain one of Moraga's greatest assets.

Heather Davis  
President  
Moraga School District Governing Board

## Vote Yes on M — Moraga's

Schools Are the Heart of Our Town  
There is no denying that

Moraga's schools are fundamental to our Town's strength and desirability. By keeping our schools strong, we keep our property values strong.

That's why, for nearly 30 years, our community has generously supported our schools with voter-approved, locally controlled funding to attract and retain outstanding teachers and protect excellent core academic programs. Local funding has been integral to keeping our schools among the best in the Bay Area and State.

It's also why it is imperative that we vote Yes on Measure M this March. Measure M renews an expiring source of local funding, protecting our schools from \$1 million in deep cuts. If Measure M fails, teacher layoffs and class size increases are assuredly on the horizon.

Voting Yes on M renews this funding at the current rate with modest annual inflation adjustments. The inflation adjustment is modest — it can't exceed 48 cents per month in 2021 — and allows Moraga's schools to keep pace with our neighbors and the cost of providing quality educational programs for students, without overburdening local taxpayers.

All money raised by Measure M will be controlled locally, only support our elementary and intermediate schools and cannot be taken away by the State. It will allow our schools to continue funding for effective science, technology, engineering, math, arts and music programs, maintain manageable class sizes and attract and retain the best qualified teachers. It's also critical to keeping school libraries open and protecting student safety.

Strict fiscal accountability — including an independent Citizens' Oversight Committee and annual public audits — are built directly into Measure M to ensure that every penny is spent as promised. Legally, Measure M cannot fund administrator salaries or benefits — all funds go directly to the classroom.

Moraga's schools have relied on local funding since 1992 because the State has repeatedly failed to adequately fund our schools and continues to fall short. The need will not go away and we can't rely on Sacramento.

Measure M is the only solution to secure our Town's legacy of supporting its great local schools. Please join us in voting Yes on M.

Susan Sperry, 2018 Moraga Citizen of the Year & 67-year Moraga Resident  
Dr. Eric Axelrode, Moraga Business Owner  
Fred Weil, 2019 Moraga Citizen of the Year & 47-year Moraga Resident  
Larry Jacobs, Chair, Moraga School District Citizens' Oversight Committee  
Sue Olsen, Moraga Realtor & 2018 Moraga Chamber Business of the Year  
Gary DeWeese, Retired Assistant Treasurer, University of California Regents & 40-year Moraga Resident  
Kathy Ranstrom, Former President, Moraga School Board & 45-year Moraga Resident  
Brett Lorie, Moraga School District Teacher & Parent  
Teresa Onoda, Former Mayor, Town of Moraga & 28-year Moraga Resident  
Kitty Stephens, CPA, Moraga School District Fiscal Advisory Committee Member & 15-year Moraga Resident

## Yes on Measure J

We can all agree that we have to do something to reduce traffic congestion and improve transit in our community. That's why we ask you to join us and other elected leaders across Contra Costa in supporting Measure J on the March ballot.

Passage of Measure J will directly improve traffic flow and provide congestion relief throughout Lamorinda. The projects identified for funding in Measure J were decided upon by people in our communities and are the right solution, right now for our traffic problems.

For Lamorinda, the new Measure J funding will:

- Increase our annual transportation funds for paving and maintaining Lamorinda roads to allow Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda to maintain roads at a high level
- Reduce congestion along Highway 24 with improvements to the old bores of the Caldecott Tunnel and auxiliary lanes
- Improve traffic flow on major roads like Camino Pablo, Moraga Way, Pleasant Hill Road, Deer Hill Road, Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard
- Relieve congestion, ease bottlenecks and improve local access along the I-680 corridor
- Fund a bicycle route from the Lafayette Moraga Trail to the BART station and implement improvements along Pleasant Hill Road to reduce peak hour delays
- Provide better access from home to BART and back again.
- Double funding for Lamorinda School Bus Program to reduce congestion around schools

Approval of Measure J will also ensure that Contra Costa can compete for hundreds of millions of dollars in matching funds from the state and federal government — funds that we can use locally to make travel faster and more predictable.

And all Measure J funds stay local. . . they cannot be "grabbed" by the State.

To learn more, visit [www.friendsofcontracosta.com](http://www.friendsofcontracosta.com)

We deserve the transportation improvements Measure J will bring.

Please join us and vote YES on Measure J.

Teresa Gerringer, Council Member, City of Lafayette  
Amy Worth, Vice Mayor, City of Orinda

## Yes on Measure L

The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has unanimously voted to support Measure L. Measure L will help bridge the gap between what California provides to our district and what it really costs to give our children a meaningful education. Community support and business engagement is a critical factor that continues to keep our local schools achieving at such a high level. Until California figures out the value of properly funding great teachers, facilities, elective classes, arts, and science across all schools in our state we will continue to be at a disadvantage. Passing reasonable parcel taxes from time to time and supporting Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE) is therefore necessary.

The Measure L ask of \$290 a year per parcel has a 7-year term and provides seniors the option to be exempt. The measure includes an oversight committee to audit the spending.

In addition to supporting Measure L, the Chamber believes there are many additional ways we can all contribute to the success of our Lafayette students. Volunteer, sponsor, donate, coach a team, help in a classroom. The responsibility of raising well educated students does not fall on the shoulders of our schools alone. Businesses, families of schoolchildren, and community members must all take an active role to make this work. We get just \$8,000 for each student from the State of California. We need to spend a minimum of \$12,000 on each student just to stay relevant and competitive.

Most of the fundraising our Chamber does throughout the year goes right back to our schools. We applaud our local merchants for their generosity and their willingness to stand with our schools. We need to mention that great schools and a vibrant downtown are perhaps the most important factors that keep our property values at such a high level.

We urge you to vote Yes on Measure L. Does it take a village? You bet it does!

Jay Lifson, Executive Director, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce  
John McCormick, President, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and Owner, Lamorinda Music



## City seeks volunteers for vacancy on the Design Review Commission

The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applicants to fill one vacancy on the Design Review Commission.

The five-member body is responsible for matters relating to aesthetics and the physical appearance of the city. The commission advises the staff, planning commission, and city council and acts on applications for design review including residential and commercial development projects.

Members of the design review commission are selected on the basis of education, training and experience in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, design, city planning or a related field. The council may appoint one or more nonresidents if, in its discretion, it considers it necessary to gain sufficient expertise.

Individuals interested in this volunteer position may obtain an application from the City's web site at [www.lovelafayette.org](http://www.lovelafayette.org) or in person at:

City of Lafayette Offices  
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210  
Lafayette, CA 94549

You may also call the City Clerk's Office at (925) 284-1968 to request an application be mailed to you.

Completed applications must be received by 5:00 pm, February 20, 2020.



Photo Sora O'Doherty

## MidMod is a new concept in shopping in Theatre Square

By Sora O'Doherty

Owner Janell Lamela recounts how she would watch passersby check out her new shop, but not come in, thinking it was an expensive boutique. Then she put a sign up proclaiming that nothing inside cost more than \$40, and suddenly passersby became droppers-in. Lamela, who is also the owner of Doll Face Permanent Cosmetics, had her eye on the vacant premises next door for a while be-

fore launching the new shop, which she calls an "exchange shop." It isn't a consignment store but rather an upmarket thrift shop, selling "quality new and gently used items," including home goods, at reasonable prices, according to Lamela.

Lamela and her husband, a San Francisco police officer, have five children and the oldest, a 23-year-old daughter, is an artist who also works at MidMod three days a week. Two of her children are in

college and her 14-year-old twins are in middle school. The family lives in Danville.

One thing that Lamela is quite excited about is offering a full range of sizes in the shop, from size 0 through size 22. She accepts donations during business hours and by appointment and also shops for bargains to offer in the store. MidMod is open 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday. Appointments can be made by calling (510) 206-0233.

## 8-year-old signs letter of intent with the SMC women's basketball team



Photo provided

... continued from Page A1

"We are very proud of her for attacking the conditions that she has and for staying strong for who she is and also for just being a child so we give her a lot of credit to that," her father added. "Ayla still has the ability to impact people in a lot of different ways. Team IMPACT has been a very positive influence to us and our family. Through them, we were introduced to the Saint Mary's women's basketball team which has been far and above the best experience we've had as a family and an extended community."

Thomas made it clear how happy he is with the program that brought Ayla to his team and what he is looking forward to from Ayla: "We want to say thank you to Team IMPACT for making something like this happen and working with Saint Mary's College. It's extremely important that both communities work together and to make positive influences on all of our young people. We

like people with positive attitudes, people that like to smile, people that are fun to be around, people that wake up and like to have a good breakfast and whether it's after a tough loss or an exciting win, they're always happy people. Ayla, you really fit that bill and we want to make sure that you continue to do that."

Ayla, who attends Rheem Elementary School and whose favorite basketball players are Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson, likes to play other sports like soccer and swimming and readily accepted the "standards" set by Coach Thomas: "I am happy to be here. I want to thank my coaches and my team. I am glad that I joined this team. It gives me a great opportunity to make new friends."

Ayla's mom, Reigen, was appreciative of everyone that connected Ayla with the team: "We're so grateful for this opportunity. The people that we interacted with through this program have been amazing. The team that we have gotten to know, (assistant coach)

Allyson (Fashnicht) and coach Thomas have been great to work with and the team that we hope to continue to get to know. It's been so much fun to go to the practices and the games and most importantly to see the joy and happiness it brings to Ayla. She's my inspiration with what she deals with on a day-to-day basis. Ayla's a very strong individual and this opportunity is only going to make her that much stronger."

Ayla has been very much welcomed, said sophomore forward Sam Simons: "She has brought a lot of energy, heart and toughness to our team and I think it's good to have her as a part of our team to show we're really lucky people and we're able to impact a young person in a great way. She comes to practices and into the locker room before our games. A couple of the girls have gone over to her house for lunch. We have yet to work on her game but that will be upcoming."

Team IMPACT stays involved with the players and the teams, says Pamela Sulli-

van, the West Coast Regional Director for Team IMPACT: "Ayla is going to bring a lot of strength and courage to the team. There is lots of caretaking with a case worker who will track the progress of the young person and they will constantly check with the parents to see how things are going, along with constantly staying in contact with the coach."

Shari Coskey, a board member with Team IMPACT, has a son who has been a match with the University of California men's water polo

team and personally speaks to the benefits of the program: "It's a two-year match, which is the amazing feature of this program. The point of this program is to create life-long relationships. It's been phenomenal for the kids whose confidence grows with this program."

Ayla's influence was quick in coming. Just four days after her official signing, in front of the home crowd, the Gaels defeated the 11th ranked Gonzaga Bulldogs 70-60.

## T J Maxx thieves apprehended thanks to teamwork by witnesses

... continued from Page A5

MPD Det. Kevin Mooney explained that these types of thefts often go to a fence (a buyer of stolen goods) who purchases the merchandise at reduced prices and in turn resells it for a profit, oftentimes

at swap meets or flea markets.

Mooney gratefully acknowledged the witnesses, without whose efforts the suspects would have gotten away. He encourages residents to be vigilant and report anything suspicious to the authorities, but stresses that safety precautions be taken and not to phys-

ically engage with suspects -- leave that to the police. "Be a good witness," Mooney advised. "It helps quite a bit."

MPD asks anyone having any information about this case to please contact Det. Mooney at mooney@moraga.ca.us.

## The tent behind Safeway

... continued from Page A4

Additionally, "The structure will be protected against exterior and interior noise, vibrations and other factors which may tend to make the environment less desirable; the exterior design and appearance of the structure is not of inferior quality as to cause the nature of the neighborhood to materially depreciate in appearance and value; and the structure is in harmony with proposed developments on land in the general area."

According to the staff's analysis report, "As a temporary tent structure, it is not consistent with the quality or character of nearby commercial buildings comprising the remainder of the Moraga Center, and the visible characteristics of its temporary nature (such as the curtain-like walls, exposed metal framing and the generator trailer that provides its lighting) detract from the appearance of the surrounding commercial and residential development in the area.

"Additionally, as it is made

out of vinyl wrapped around a metal frame, the tent will likely not be able to effectively prevent noise from emanating from or entering into the structure and the sound of baseballs and softballs being struck by bats could resonate from within the tent to the surrounding outside.

"Finally, the temporary tent structure is inconsistent with the land use designations and development standards prescribed by the Land Use Element of the Moraga Center Specific Plan as they relate to the mixed-use/residential characteristics of the site and its surrounding area, specifically for commercial uses as prescribed in the Mixed Retail/Residential designation since the subject area is in the town's designated Priority Development Area and slated to house the town's future downtown core featuring a mix of commercial and residential and civic uses in permanent buildings and facilities.

"While staff finds that the tent does not meet the town's design guidelines and therefore should be denied, the request

for temporary placement of the tent through April 30, 2020 creates the possibility to reconsider this request within the current context of the site."

The analysis report also states, "One could argue that since the structure will only be in place through April 30, 2020, it does not materially detract from the quality of the surroundings, most of which are comprised of vacant land, the back sides of some commercial buildings, and an open vehicle storage yard."

Additional points made acknowledge that an otherwise underutilized portion of land could be put to good use by serving as a temporary facility for the area's youth during the winter months providing that the tent's "visual quality will not be allowed to degrade from neglect or exposure to inclement weather during the period that the tent is installed."

This issue of Lamorinda Weekly went to press before a decision by the Planning Commission was made at its Feb. 18 meeting.

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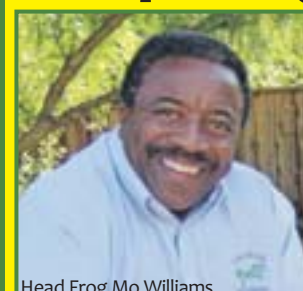
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### Appellate Court upholds city's 2016 approval of cabana project

... continued from Page A1

we see no basis for inferring even the possibility of prejudice from the city's failure to disclose in the meeting packet the applicant's litigation threat."

Attorney for the plaintiffs, Scott Sommer, is concerned for potential implications this could have on cities' future practices. He says that despite the court finding the city violated the Brown Act by holding closed session meetings with-

out the record being available for public inspection, the court rejected finding the project null and void, which he says, sets a new precedent.

"In requiring 'prejudice' - that a petitioner must additionally show the council would have voted differently had the law been complied with - the Court has established a precedent that will make it difficult or impossible for citizens and the media to henceforth use or enforce the Brown Act's 'Sunshine' provisions,"

says Sommer. "This is a purely judicial creation not found in the specific statutory language or exceptions the Legislature put in the Brown Act, and will be controversial."

Sommer says the group will meet to decide what their next steps might be. Their options include petitioning for a rehearing or taking it to the California Supreme Court.

Legal fees to date have cost Lafayette taxpayers \$832,023.

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James Burkin  
Sole Proprietor

### City council throws support behind school funding measure

... continued from Page A2

State funding is determined by the Local Control Funding Formula which allocates more money to school districts with higher concentrations of English language learners, low income and/or foster youth. Out of 1,037 school districts in California, LAFSD consistently scores in the top 24 despite being the 11th lowest funded per

student per year.

Mayor Mike Anderson spoke of the strong bond between the city council and the school districts and observed, "What's been done with the funding has been unbelievable."

All council members were supportive. Council Member Teresa Geringer quoted a phrase coined by Former Mayor Don Tatzin, saying that

the schools are a part of the "virtuous circle" of what makes Lafayette a place people want to live.

The vote to endorse the measure was unanimous and was greeted by applause from the public.

The measure on the March 3 ballot needs a two-thirds majority to pass. No argument against Measure L has been filed.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.  
Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorindaweekly.com






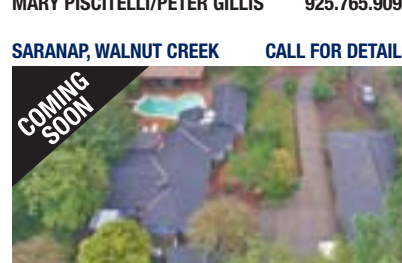

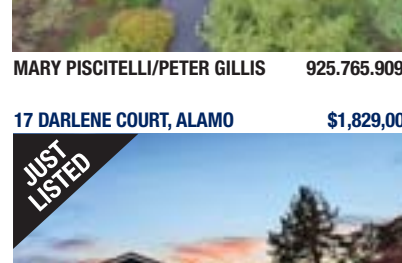


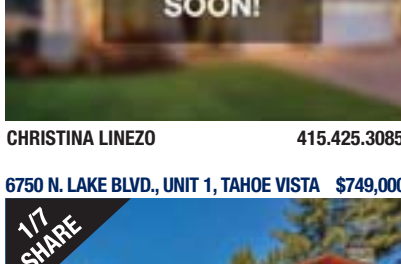
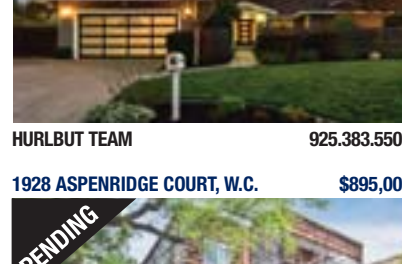

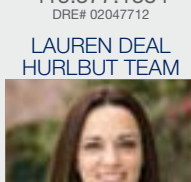



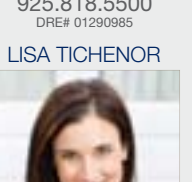
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# ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

## Want a pet? Need a pipe repaired? Call MOFD. Well, sort of...



Katy Himsl

Photo provided

### By Nick Marnell

Firefighters enter into the profession because they are driven to help those in need, and many of the firefighters of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District continue their efforts to assist even when they are off duty. A pilot, an animal rescue volunteer, a plumber, a football coach and a drone operator shared how their outside passions help them give back and in one case, add to the ability of the district itself to help others.

#### Air transport

After he completes his shift, MOFD engineer Matt Epperson heads home and as he unwinds, he checks an app on his smartphone and sees that a cancer patient needs transport from her home in the Central Valley for treatment at the Stanford Medical Center. As a volunteer for Angel Flight West, Epperson is able to fly to the patient's home and deliver her to the medical center for her appointment.

"She had been spending seven hours a day each week traveling to Palo Alto," Epperson said. "Now, it's a 35-minute flight."

Angel Flight West is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization that arranges free air travel for children and adults with serious, but not emergency, medical conditions. Epperson, one of 1,400 volunteer pilots, flies his own plane – a Piper Lance, out of Concord Airport – and pays for all costs out of his own pocket, in order to help families receive vital treatment that might otherwise be inaccessible because of financial, medical or geographic limitations.

"I love being in the air," said Epperson, who has been flying for 10 years. "To be able to help someone and do something useful ... this is life-changing to many people." As the company website says, There's an angel in the cockpit.

#### Animal rescue

Katy Himsl, an MOFD firefighter-paramedic who had been volunteering at the Contra Costa County animal shelter since 2013, was running an animal rescue adoption event at a district open house when a light went off. "Why not start our own service," Himsl said, and from that spark arose It's A New Day Animal Rescue, a foster-based nonprofit organization founded in 2018 by Himsl and three other municipal shelter volunteers. The organization matches abused, neglected

and unwanted animals with loving homes and families.

The company is growing, but building up a list of dedicated foster parents to temporarily house the rescued animals is the biggest hurdle the organization faces; despite the largeness of her heart, there are only so many animals Himsl can care for in her home sanctuary.

Adoptions can also be arranged. "If you want to adopt an animal, there are all types of animals for you," said Himsl, whose service has fostered even goats and tortoises. "And there are many options available to you."

One shelter dog particularly moved Himsl. "It was heartbreaking to sit with an animal who was about to be euthanized in a couple of hours," she said. Three years later that doomed dog – Bella – remains healthy and happy in Himsl's own home.

#### Plumbing services

Between his job as MOFD engineer and working in his father's local business when he is off duty, plus the fact that he graduated from Campolindo High School in 2001, Tim Williams is likely one of the most well-known fire district employees.

"I help out part time when he gets overloaded," Williams said of his father, who owns LeapFrog Plumbing, an East Bay company that provides plumbing services to residential and commercial customers.

Williams' plumbing skills come in handy in some of his fire interactions with residents. "Like showing them how to turn off a water heater," he said. "Or helping them with a gas shutoff if they don't know how to find the valve."

Once his firefighting days are over, Williams, who has worked with his father since he was 16, looks forward to taking over the family business. "It's a special community and through LeapFrog and fire, I understand the needs of the local residents, and I have been able to build a deep personal connection with the people here," Williams said. "And I care a lot about them."

#### Football coach

Another Campolindo graduate may give Williams a run for his money for most well-known MOFD firefighter. Not only did Mark DeWeese attend Campo and play football there, he has maintained his connection with the school and its football program as assistant coach of the junior varsity for the past 16 years. DeWeese runs the JV defense,

comprising mostly 14- and 15-year-old student athletes. "I love being around kids in that age group," he said.

Though DeWeese works in an industry that adheres to discipline and chain of command, he conducts his football practices using a looser structure. He's not a big disciplinarian. He runs his practices as fun exercises, preferring to have a good time with the young players.

Seeing his players succeed gives DeWeese his greatest pleasure, he said, "No matter what their career path." Among his football progeny include Giorgio Tavecchio, who played in the NFL for the Oakland Raiders and Atlanta Falcons, and Tyler Petite, who played tight end with the University of Southern California. Two of his former players are firefighters: one with Alameda County and one with the state fire agency.

"I love being able to have Campo football a part of my life, creating a bond with kids who are a lot of fun," DeWeese said.

#### Drone pilot

Capt. Mike Marquardt has been able to convert a childhood passion into a 21st century program to help suppression personnel fight fires.

Marquardt played with remote control cars as a kid, graduating to radio control planes as he advanced through his firefighting career. "It was a great way for me to relax after work," he said.

Drones had begun to creep into the fire service, and four years ago former Chief Stephen Healy told Marquardt to look into the possibilities for MOFD. It was a simple transition from his after-work hobby for Marquardt, and after attending a training seminar in Menlo Park and consulting with the Fremont Fire Department, which had already been using drones, he ushered in the era of unmanned aerial vehicles for the district.

MOFD now has five drones and four licensed pilots, with Marquardt the drone program manager. Not only MOFD has benefited from the program but outside entities like the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the Moraga Police Department (but not the Houston Astros) have requested aerial help from the district.

"It's great to bring a hobby to the workplace," Marquardt said. "Lots of people think of drones as toys, and we show them that drones can be used as tools."

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# Rotary Gala to benefit nonprofit; bring hope to child victims of sex trafficking



Photo Pippa Fisher

Guests at last year's Rotary gala enjoy the silent auction, before dinner.

## By Pippa Fisher

The Lafayette Rotary Club is gearing up for the Swing to Freedom Gala on March 7 – an elegant evening with money

raised to benefit New Day for Children and their work with the young victims of sex trafficking.

The statistics don't paint a pretty picture. According to

the United States Institute Against Human Trafficking, the U.S. is the number one consumer of commercial sex worldwide, and 83% of all sex trafficking victims in the country are American-born.

This area is no exception. New Day for Children has supported girls from Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Berkeley, Oakland, Antioch, Pittsburg, Richmond, Vallejo, Fairfield and San Francisco, in addition to girls from central and southern California and from across the country. Two-thirds of the girls supported by New Day are from California and, according to Executive Director Sharon Wood, the Bay Area is a major hub for trafficking.

Wood recalls how she first became involved with the organization when she became aware of a girl in her Danville Sunday school class, whom she had known since she was a baby, started to act out. "She was being trafficked right out of her bedroom, first by her father and then by another," says Wood.

To continue with the ugly statistics, the average victim of human trafficking is raped 6,000 times. The odds of escape are just one in 100. One out of four victims of modern slavery is a child, and Wood points out that the majority of the children are trafficked for sex rather than labor. She has seen girls as young as 3 being

used.

"These are our kids," says Wood. "And the damage it does? It's not irreversible ... but it is intense."

Wood says social media and extremely disturbing content available online are partly to blame for what she says is "one of the fastest-growing commercial industries in the country." She says the vast majority of victims are trafficked online, not by their families.

"The average age for a child's first porn experience is now 8 years old," says Wood. "What's available online is so much more disturbing than in the past. You can watch real rapes and kidnappings posted online," she says noting that often this content is targeted at the young.

New Day works with the FBI, law enforcement and child welfare agencies to locate and rescue girls victimized by commercial sexual exploitation.

Wood is happy to describe the safe housing, tuition, therapy, and equine therapy for which New Day provides financial assistance and scholarships, as well as medical and dental care. The main school they work with is in a remote area of northern California where, Woods says, they have goats and dogs. They partner

with schools in Oregon and Colorado. She says the average stay is about 15 months.

It costs approximately \$45,000 per child to cover the expenses of long-term intervention for these girls, says Wood. And as she explains, the nonprofit relies 100% on donations.

Last year's Rotary Gala raised just under \$105,000 for New Day for Children. This year, says Club President Matt Pease, proceeds from the silent auction will raise money for scholarships and local community groups. The live auction and paddle-raise will benefit New Day and the parent company of Lafayette Social (N2 Publishing) will match their net profit with a dollar-for-dollar match to an international organization that helps in trafficking victims.

"A wonderful picture of philanthropy," says Wood. "The Rotary Club of Lafayette is making a tangible impact here at home, Contra Costa County, the greater Bay Area, California, the U.S. and around the world."

This year's gala will be at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Center from 5:30 to 10 p.m. March 7 and includes a champagne welcome, hosted cocktail reception, an elegant sit-down dinner and music followed by a live auction.

Further information is available on <https://rotarylafayette.org/event-directory/>

## Family Focus

### When your child is being bullied

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

"Jill" mentioned during a therapy session that her 8-year-old son, "Brandon," who was in third grade, was being bullied on the school playground by a boy in his class. The other child called Brandon names, such as "fag" and "ugly", and made fun of his ears that stuck out a bit. The bully got two other boys to join in with him against Brandon, to the point where Brandon was scared and miserable. Fortunately he told his mother, and she could then assist him in dealing with this problem.

Sometimes children don't tell anyone that they are being bullied. Some signs that your child could be a target of bullying include social withdrawal and isolation, changes in sleeping or eating habits, cutting, apathy and poor grades in school, moodiness, frequent displays of anger, and general unhappiness. Be persistent in asking him or her about friends, school, teachers, and specifically if anyone is bothering them in any way.

In general, there are steps your child can take to deal with bullying. The old advice of just ignoring bullies doesn't seem to serve our children well since often the bullies persist in their attempts to torment. Instead, encourage your child to do the following:

1) Try to stick with at least one or two other children. Bullies prefer preying on victims who are alone, so they can exert their power to intimidate more completely.

2) Use humor if possible. This serves two purposes. One is to try to diffuse the situation. The other is to give the impression that the bully's mean comments aren't effectively penetrating.

3) Use eye contact and calmly tell the bully to stop.

4) Move away from the bully and go to an adult for help.

5) Parents and older children can talk privately with a teacher, counselor, and/or principal to ask them to observe and try to catch the bully in action. Just reporting the bullying behavior is not always effective. Setting up a "he said, she said" situation can backfire because the bully will deny the accusations and then not be held accountable. And

often the perpetrator will seek retribution for being exposed. So it is best if the bullying behavior can be witnessed and documented by people in authority.

6) If your child continues to be very upset and all methods to combat the bullying fail, then find a way to remove your child from the bully or bullies. Yes, bullies should not have the right or power to affect decisions you and your child make, but your child's well-being is much more important than standing on principle. Choosing a fresh start in a new school or enrolling in an accredited study program online can provide a welcome relief for your child.

#### Cyberbullying:

Older children are vulnerable to bullying on social media, so check this out as best you can and as quickly as you can. The sooner you address cyberbullying, the better you can protect your child from its damaging effects. A 2018 Pew Research Center survey found that 59% of U.S. teens acknowledged having been bullied or harassed online.

If your child denies being bullied, but you see telltale signs, this is the time to be proactive. If he won't voluntarily show you his social media accounts, you will need to find ways to access them. If you check for the purpose of keeping your child safe, and not in order to snoop into his or her private life, then you are being a responsible parent. You don't want to err on the side of caution since children who are bullied can be a threat to themselves or to others. In most instances, you need to insist that your child close their social media accounts and then check over time to be sure they remain closed as long as a threat exists.

In cases of cyberbullying encourage your child to document each episode by taking screen shots and forwarding them to you. Then report these incidents to school authorities, and if appropriate, to law enforcement officials. Check out cyberbullying support sites online. Reassure your child that there is something wrong with the cyberbully and not with them. Your child is never at fault for someone else's cruel and deviant behavior.

One high school student I worked with was bullied for two years at school and on social media. "Lily" stuck it out at school because she was determined not to be driven away. She closed all her social media accounts. And she came in for therapy to work on ways to handle the situation and also for help with her ensuing depression. It was especially hard on her because the peers who were the most mean were formerly her close friends.

Lily concentrated on her grades with the goal of going away to college. She leaned on her parents, siblings, and other family members to help her feel worthwhile. She got a part-time job to bolster her spirits and to take her mind off of her problems. And she became president of the social action committee at school so that she could surround herself with other students working for good causes, and also to avoid feeling like such a victim.

Unfortunately, while we may not be able to control bullies' behavior and prevent it from occurring, we can try to mitigate the damage they inflict. Parents can try hard to emotionally support a child who is being bullied and keep him or her safe from external harm and from self-harm. Lily is now in her second year of college and is doing well. Although she was deeply affected by the peers who turned against her, and remains anxious about running into them when she is home on school breaks, she is now proud that she didn't let them stop her from succeeding in school and from pursuing her goals.



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

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## What the fork? Campaign aims at getting rid of high school plastic utensils



Photo Gracie Woidat, Campolindo La Puma

**Members of the Campolindo Zero Waste Club, from left, top row to bottom row: Erin Thomas, Sahana Rajesh, Maddie House, Chloe Dawkins, Ben Powers, Anika Johnson, Ella Seaman, Melissa Dunbar, Mabel Vo, Erika Reidel, Lexi Oxanizo, Ava Sparacio**

**By Sora O'Doherty**

Mabel Vo, president and founder of the Zero Waste Club at Campolindo High School, has collected about 500 metal forks to replace the plastic ones used on campus that wind up in the landfill. A

similar plan last year was successful at Burton Valley Elementary School in Lafayette.

Vo says that she wants to see the schools transition away from all plastic utensils. She is working on developing a plan with the schools. In her vision,

students who eat their lunch in or near to the school cafeteria could use metal utensils, and return them to the cafeteria after their meals. For students who perhaps eat too far from the cafeteria to return utensils before returning to class, she envisions the use of compostable utensils, such as those made of bamboo.

Vo started the Zero Waste Club at Campolindo this academic year. She previously did a project at the Rheem Center to set up recycling bins. She worked with advisor Jay Lifton and Joan Bruzzone on the pilot program, which she says went really well. So her second project is to provide metal forks for Campolindo, Miramonte, Acalanes and Las Lomas high schools.

Why just forks? Well, actually the Zero Waste Club would like to get rid of all plastic utensils.

It is estimated that Campolindo, Miramonte, Acalanes, and Las Lomas together are disposing of 72,000 plastic forks every year. The estimated annual cost for the Acalanes Union High School District to send the plastic forks to the landfill comes out to be about \$1,248. The club met their goal of collecting about 500 forks for the program by the end of January as well as raising \$675 in donations from the community.

Nancy Hu, vice chair of the Lafayette Environmental Task Force and mother to two young sons, was excited to see students taking charge and

using their collective voice to reduce plastic usage in schools and donated to the project. "I hope Lafayette's residents and businesses are listening to the students," she said. The Environmental Task Force is also working on an ordinance which targets single-use plastic foodware, such as utensils and straws.

"Under the current draft of our ordinance, which has still to go to the city council, compostable fiber foodware would still be compliant. However, we do recognize that reusable foodware would be ideal, especially for dine-in situations. With the currently proposed 25 cent disposable cup fee, we not only hope residents will start to bring their own cups, but also we hope businesses will offer customers the option to consume beverages and foods in real reusable cups, bowls, and plates with silverware if they choose to stay and dine-in. Reusables have a real cost savings benefit, and it's time we start rethinking our disposable culture and the havoc it has wreaked on our planet," Hu said.

Last year Julian Jackl was recognized for his work as a fifth-grader at Burton Valley Elementary School to eliminate single-use plastic utensils, replacing them instead with metal cutlery.

(Read about Jackl in the April 17 Lamorinda Weekly archives). As a result of his dedication other schools have been inspired to do the same.

## Big brother steps into the gym



Photos provided

**By Jon Kingdon**

Technological gadgets have become an extension of our lives, with different smart phone applications used to wake us up, count the steps we take, and tell us how to get to different locations ... like the gym. Formula3 Fitness, which opened last April in La Fiesta Square in Lafayette, developed an app to help design a specific program for each member, says Benji Simonton, a former professional baseball player and the head of programming who owns the Lafayette studio.

"Our app will help you to decide on what your focus is. If you want to get stronger and increase your mobility, you will tell the app which days you are able to work out and the times that you are available and this is what I want to accomplish," Simonton says. "The app's algorithm will recommend which classes to take on the days that you have chosen."

However, human interaction is not overlooked. "At the end of the day, our goal is for everyone to get what they need for that day," says Simonton. "If a member is a little tired or feeling beat up due to a lack of sleep or being stressed, we want them to have an experience that they need and not just continue to beat up on themselves."

Formula3 provides a

complete workout program with hour long classes focusing on three areas: FORGE which aims to strengthen the metabolic engine and build lean muscle; FIRE which exercises the heart, lungs and trains the cardiovascular system and FLOW which are yoga classes which focus on breathing movement and awareness of the connection between the mind and body.

The idea for Formula3 was the brainchild of the two owners, Noah Roland who owns a Formula3 in Portland, Oregon, Erin Gilmore, and Simonton.

"If you go to a boutique studio space, you're going to do one thing, you'll exclusively do yoga at one studio space, you're going to your cross fit studio and focus on strength, there are other studios that are cardio focused," says Simonton. "We're trying to get people to check more of their fitness boxes in one location. At Formula3, you will get high level coaching in yoga, strength and cardio which is all in one location for one price."

One of the goals at Fitness3 is to create "functional fitness" which requires unique equipment, says Simonton: "We call our equipment unstable implements. Everything we pick up in life, for the most part, isn't balanced or stable and is an ever-shifting load, so we use

sandbags, which is an ever-shifting load, mimicking real world strength. We use a center mass dome which is unstable when you pick it up. We use TR suspension trainers for our strength because you have to create stability to work through all of your different movement patterns. Our goal is to give people real world strength so when they do

things in everyday life, they feel stronger and more confident in those movements."

Mariah Martin, the assistant manager at Formula3 speaks to the positive atmosphere in the studio: "Anyone at any level can benefit from these workouts. Our oldest member is 79 and the youngest is 16. We offer

everything under one roof and want this to be a place where everyone can workout and have a good time. We're a big family here."

People who are new and unfamiliar with the program will be given a free three-day pass to try out all of the classes.

For information, including hours, visit formula3fit.com.



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## Not to be missed

## ART

**Lamorinda Arts Alliance** presents an exhibit, "Strictly Abstract," though Feb. 28 at the Lafayette Bank of America at 3530 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. The new exhibit features abstract paintings by Susan Erickson, Carla W. Gelbaum, Irenka Kudlicki, Pam McCauley, Geoff Meredith and Judy Bolef Miller. <https://laa4art.org>

**Valley Art Gallery's** new show "Joel Summerhill's Wild Jazz 5" runs through March 13. See Summerhill's watercolor jazz animals. Reception from 4 to 6 p.m. on Feb. 15. [www.valleyartgallery.org](http://www.valleyartgallery.org); (925) 935-4311.

**Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery** presents "Translations: Painting and Poetry" - Abstract work by Rebecca Crowell and Jerry McLaughlin through March 14. [www.jenniferperlmuttergallery.com](http://www.jenniferperlmuttergallery.com)

**JPG@ The Bank Pop up Art Gallery** presents "Unknown Key: The Adventure" at 7 p.m. on Feb. 22.

**Saint Mary's College Museum of Art (SMCMoA)** is opening two new exhibitions on Feb. 12; "Feminizing Permanence" features 40 historical and contemporary artworks by 40 women artists from the permanent collection. "Sign of the Times: The Great American Political Poster 1844-2012," a traveling exhibition, explores a variety of styles, design trends, and printing technology associated with political posters. Reception is from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on

Feb. 20. SMCMoA admission and programs are free for everyone. [www.stmarys-ca.edu/museum](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/museum).

**"Fire!" A New Exhibit** at Diablo Valley College Art Gallery through Feb. 28 that examines the impact of the Northern California wildfires. Visit the Diablo Valley College website at [www.dvc.edu](http://www.dvc.edu).

**The Lamorinda Arts Council's** annual Visual Arts Competition (VAC) features artwork from high school students who attend schools in Orinda, Lafayette or Moraga, or who reside in Lamorinda and attend schools outside Lamorinda. Approximately 200 entries of 2D, 3D, Photography and Digital Art have been entered in this juried art competition. Student artwork is on display through Feb. 27 in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. For more information go to <http://www.lamorindaarts.org/vac>.

**Moragan Dave Manousos** currently has an art exhibit "Big Eye Series" at Orinda Books. The exhibit runs through Feb. 29. There will be an artist reception at 7 p.m. on Feb. 24 at Orinda Books with wine and light hors d'oeuvres.

**The Lamorinda Arts Council** presents a solo exhibition of photographs entitled "The Allure of Equine Beauty" by Barbara Brady-Smith of Lafayette, running through Feb. 29 at the Art & Garden Center at Wilder. <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/>

## Not to be missed

## MUSIC

**The Gold Coast Chamber Players** present Grammy-nominated Aizuri Quartet in "Songs and Echoes of Home" at 7:30 p.m. March 7 in the Don Tatzin Community Hall at the Lafayette Library, 3492 Mt. Diablo Blvd. A special student showcase from the SF Conservatory of Music begins at 7 p.m. Tickets and information- [GCCPmusic.com](http://GCCPmusic.com).

## THEATER

**Town Hall Theatre Company** presents "The Cherry Orchard" Feb. 27 through March 21 at 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$18 Previews \$27-30 evenings, \$25-27 Sat. & Sun. matinees. Discounts available for Seniors and youth. For tickets and showtimes: (925) 283-1557; [www.townhalltheatre.com](http://www.townhalltheatre.com)

## LECTURE &amp; LITERATURE

**The San Antonio Breast Cancer** Symposium forum from 6 to 8 p.m. (5:30 to 6 p.m. registration and refreshments) on Feb. 25 at Oakland Library Rockridge Branch, 5366 College Avenue, Oakland. RSVP: call (510) 204-5656

**SMC Creative Writing Reading Series** with Chris Feliciano Arnold from 7:30 to 9 p.m. on Feb. 26 at the Soda Activity Center: Claeys Lounge, 1928 St. Marys Road. Chris Feliciano Arnold has written essays for The Atlantic, Harper's, Outside, Vice News, The New York Times, and more.

## Not to be missed

## KIDS, PARENTS &amp; TEENS

**8th annual Contra Costa Camp and School Fair** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Feb. 23, with booths for camps, schools, preschool, S.T.E.M. and S.T.E.A.M. programs, sports, cooking, enrichment, performing arts, scouts and YMCA. Free coding workshop plus tennis, abacus and arts activities. Free admission and free parking. Acalanes High School, 1200 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lafayette. [www.ContraCostaCampFair.com](http://www.ContraCostaCampFair.com)

**The Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center** has an invitation to all Lafayette students from kindergarten to eighth grade. Here is an opportunity to express your artistic talent in the form of a bookmark. The Contest begins Feb. 14. All entries must be submitted by March 6. The entry forms will be available at the Lafayette Library and the Friends Corner Book Shop. The winner's bookmarks will be framed and exhibited in the library and the Friends Corner Book Shop.

**Registration is open** for the fifth annual AAUW-OML Techbridge STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) conference for middle school girls being held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 21 at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. <https://oml-CA.aauw.net>. Fee is \$25 per student.

## OTHER

**Mountain Shadow** is pleased to present its annual "Best of the Oscar Shorts" in the categories of live-

action narrative, documentary and animated short films. Mountain Shadow Film Society presents the films at 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 22 at the Walnut Creek Library, Oak View Room, 1644 N. Broadway St., Walnut Creek. General admission tickets are available on a first come, first served basis for \$12. <http://mountainshadow.org>

**Rev. Sophia Jackson** presents a talk about Mass Incarceration and the impact of The Prison Industrial Complex on the black and brown community at 11:15 a.m. Feb. 23 at Orinda Community Church Fellowship Hall, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Lunch will be served. Free.

**Salary Negotiation Seminar** from 2 to 4 p.m. on Feb. 23 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center in Lafayette. Come learn about salary negotiation and how to better articulate your worth at work or as a volunteer. <https://oml-CA.aauw.net>

**Lafayette resident, Papa John** Kiefer, will, again, offer workshops on "How to Raise Your Own Chickens." Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction. Workshops are free and will be held in Lafayette from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on March 1 and 15. Reservations are required. Contact: [chickenspajohn@gmail.com](mailto:chickenspajohn@gmail.com). Location provided upon registration.

**Yeah Buddy Awesome Time:** Comedy Show from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on March 7 at Spats Berkeley, 1974 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. Yeah Buddy Awesome Time brings back room laughs to the people of Berkeley. Come to Spats to see comedians from Conan, Viceland and Comedy Central. Cost: \$5. For more info see <https://yeahbuddyawesome-time7.eventbrite.com> or call (510) 227-7477 or email [chrisjohncomedy510@gmail.com](mailto:chrisjohncomedy510@gmail.com).

**Double down for the Lafayette Community Center Foundation's** first Poker Party! The festivities will be held at 7 p.m. on March 14 at 500 St. Mary's Road. Come to play poker, visit with Lafayetteans, learn a new game, win fabulous prizes. This is a night not to miss. This event is run by the Lafayette Community Center Foundation and will raise funds for its new Lafayette Community Center playground.

**All are cordially invited** to celebrate with Saint Mary's College Guild St. Patrick's Day Dinner / Auction / Fundraiser at SMC's Soda Center Saturday, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. March 14. Featuring Rohan Murphy Academy Irish Dancers and The Frank O'Connor Band. A delicious traditional, Irish corned beef dinner with all the trimmings. Guinness, Harp, wine, Irish Coffee available. Tickets: \$50 per person. Make checks payable to: SMC Guild and mail to: Cynthia Kelly, 628 Augusta Drive, Moraga, 94556. Questions: Call Cynthia Kelly at (925) 388-0437

**The Persian Center** will be hosting its 21st annual Chaharshanbeh Souri from 6 to 10 p.m. on March 17 at 2029 Durant Ave., Berkeley. Jump over bonfires to celebrate the change of seasons and to welcome spring. Enjoy Persian food, music, dancing, and children's activities. Rain or shine. Free. <https://www.facebook.com/Persian-CenterOrg/> [www.AnotherBullwinkleShow.com](http://www.AnotherBullwinkleShow.com) 510.334.6523

## GARDEN

**The Moraga Garden Club** Monthly General Meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 20 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street. Garden Designer Katie Creighton will speak about "Brightening your Garden with Variegated Plants." [www.moragagardenclub.com](http://www.moragagardenclub.com)

**The Montelindo Garden Club** February meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 21 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall. Presentation: "Soil, a Sexy Subject." Speaker: Carole Frost a.k.a. Seductress of Soil.

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club** will hold its monthly meeting at 10 a.m. on March 9 at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, in Walnut Creek. The topic of the March program is "Behind the Scenes at the Rose Bowl." You do not need to be a gardener to join the Walnut Creek Garden Club.

**Please join the Orinda Garden Club** for its annual community meeting at 10 a.m. on March 19 at the Orinda Library Auditorium. Brenda Coffee, one of America's top women Bloggers, will speak about the joys and perils of a full and ambitious life. There is no charge to attend and there will be a small sampling of garden club items available for your shopping pleasure.

## Lamorinda's Religious Services

### ST. PERPETUA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

celebrating our faith • enriching our community • sharing our gifts

#### Join us

Masses Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.  
Sundays at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.  
School for TK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Faith Formation for children and adults

3454 Hamlin Road | Lafayette | [stperpetua.org](http://stperpetua.org)  
925.283.0272 Parish | 925.284.1640 School

### Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422 [www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org)



9:30 a.m. CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP  
10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship  
in the Center for Ministry

visit <http://www.holyshepherd.org> for more details



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | [www.orindachurch.org](http://www.orindachurch.org)  
"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

Join us Sundays at 10 a.m. | Sunday School 10 a.m.



### ST. MONICA CATHOLIC CHURCH

1001 CAMINO PABLO, 925-376-6900  
[WWW.STMONICAMORAGA.COM](http://WWW.STMONICAMORAGA.COM)

Mass Times: Daily Mass Monday - Friday 9:00 am  
Saturday - Confessions 3:30 - 4:30 pm / Vigil Mass 5:00 PM  
Sunday - Masses at 7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 am



### OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

TRANSFORMED BY THE PATH WE WALK TOGETHER

JOIN US FOR OUR SUNDAY SERVICE AT 9:30 AM  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS AT 10:45 AM

### LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Where all are welcome, nobody is perfect,  
and anything is possible with God.



- Sunday Worship 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
- Programs for all ages
- Guest Speakers & Workshops
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### WILLOWSRING community church

Practical biblical teaching, contemporary worship, come as you are.

[www.willowspringchurch.com](http://www.willowspringchurch.com)

1689 School St. Moraga | 925-376-3550

Sunday Service 10:45 am



### ST MARK'S CHURCH OF ORINDA & MORAGA

Sunday Service at 10 a.m.

451 Moraga Way, Orinda  
[www.stmarksorinda.org](http://www.stmarksorinda.org) | (925) 254-5965  
All Are Welcome

### St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

An Open, Affirming & Loving Community  
Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM

In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare  
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, [www.stanselms.ws](http://www.stanselms.ws)

### ORINDA CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

24 Orinda Way (next to the Library) - 254-4212

Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am  
Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm  
ReadingRoom/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat. 10 - 12

[www.christianscienceorinda.org](http://www.christianscienceorinda.org)

### JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

ALL ARE WELCOME

Sundays, 9:30 am



10 Moraga Valley Lane  
[www.mvpc.today.org](http://www.mvpc.today.org)  
925.376.4800



### Lafayette United Methodist Church

955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 [thelumc.org](http://thelumc.org)  
Sunday 10am Worship and Faith Formation for all ages

Opportunities to Love God, Love Others,  
and Serve the World



# Warm up this winter with puréed poblano soup



Roasted Poblano Soup

Photo Susie Iventosch

## By Susie Iventosch

There is a small correction for last week's recipe. Thanks to a tip from one of our readers, I learned that I had inadvertently typed "unsweetened" butter in the list of cake ingredients for the Rocky Road Cake. My sincere apologies for the oversight, especially since I've never even heard of "unsweet-

ened" butter! The recipe can use either salted or unsalted butter, whichever you prefer, as it makes little difference in this recipe. If you use salted butter, you may want to drop the amount of salt to 1/2 teaspoon from 3/4 teaspoon. But otherwise you are good to go with either one.

This week's recipe is based on a delicious cup of soup I got

at a food stand in Austin, Texas. Although I love roasted poblano peppers, I had never had puréed poblano soup before. It is absolutely delicious and a great comfort dish for cold wintery nights! Even though poblano peppers can vary quite a bit in their heat level from one pepper to the next, the cooking process mellows the peppers quite a bit, so you really don't have to worry too much about the soup being too fiery. In fact, I added a finely diced jalapeño and an Anaheim chili to balance out the flavors. But, if you are concerned over too much heat, just use an even mixture of poblanos and Anaheim chilies for this recipe. Also, to make the dish a bit heartier, simply add 2 cups of shredded cooked chicken breast after the veggies are pureed.

The toasty aroma of the roasting peppers is an olfactory delight, one that propels you to discover the source. In this case, it will be in your very own home, so you won't have to travel too far to find it. But, it can be a real pain to get the papery skin off the roasted

peppers. If you don't roast the peppers, you can simply cut them into small pieces and sauté them along with the onions, and the skins will remain nice and soft and will purée nicely. In an effort to have the best of both worlds, I roasted just two of the poblanos and chopped the remaining peppers without roasting. When I left the house to run an errand shortly after making the soup, the house still had the lovely roasted pepper aroma several hours later.

There are several methods for roasting peppers and the website in the information box below will give you details on how to do all of them.



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

**How to roast chili peppers:**  
<https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/cooking-with-chili-peppers/how-to-roast-poblano-peppers/>

# Wells Fargo Bank's new interior mural honors Moraga's history



Photo Vera Kochan

## By Vera Kochan

Customers of Moraga's Wells Fargo Bank, located at 1399 Moraga Way, have noticed the obvious remodeling that took place a few months ago. Cubicles have been repositioned, seating has been rearranged, walls have been painted a brighter color, and the biggest change of all was the removal of the western-era mural behind the teller stations.

According to Branch Manager Mandeep Dhindsa, "Branches go through a remodel about every 10 years. Many customers wanted to know what happened to that mural."

A brand new color mural reflecting the town's history was installed in late January near the seating area of the bank's lobby. WFB initiated their Community Mural Project back in 1998 and has since installed more than 2,400 murals in locations nationwide. More locally, there are 175 throughout the Bay Area and 18 murals in Contra Costa County. The murals are not painted, but rather they

are designed by a team of graphic artists to create collage-style historical art.

WFB Vice President of Corporate Communications Rubin Pulido said it was "important to install a mural to showcase some of Moraga's rich history for its close-knit community." Photos include Saint Mary's College, the iconic Moraga Center sign, the Carroll family and their horses c.1920, Moraga School's eighth grade graduating class of 1957, and the Moraga Valley which were provided by the Contra Costa County Historical Society. Additional photos of the Moraga Barn and Willow Spring School were provided by the Moraga Historical Society. Besides the mural, a "key" is located nearby with a description of each image on the 8.7 foot wide by 4.8 foot high installation.

Moraga Historical Society President Susan Sperry said, "We got a message at the Historical Center that Wells Fargo would like to change their mural. They needed our permission to use the Barn and Willow Spring School photos."

While the MHS wasn't consulted about the final product, Sperry added, "It's representative of the area, and I'm so pleased that they used our two photos."

The town's mural project began in July and was completed by November. Pulido explained that WFB makes sure to "use a blend of various images and not all buildings or not all people so that there is good visual variety. In addition to historical relevance, we feature images that are visually strong and read well on a large scale."

Dhindsa said, "Customers have received it well." Remarks have been positive ranging from, "Very nice." to "Oh! It's the old days of Moraga!"

Pulido noted that WFB offers a special bonus regarding each of their nationally located murals. "When family members of people featured in the murals are able to identify their relatives, we are glad to present them with framed replicas of the mural as a special gift!" It's time to dust off the family photo albums Moraga!

## Roasted Poblano Soup

(Makes about 5 cups of soup)

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 poblano peppers, (2 of them left whole, and 2 of them stem and seeds removed and diced)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 Anaheim chili, stem and seeds removed and diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, stem and seeds removed and finely diced
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons minced cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups roasted chicken broth, divided
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- \*2 cups shredded chicken breast (optional)

### Garnishes:

- Grated Cotija cheese
- Crema Fresca (can substitute crème fraiche or sour cream)
- Finely diced poblanos
- Fresh cilantro leaves
- Chopped avocado

### DIRECTIONS

Clean peppers and roast two of the poblanos in any of the methods you prefer. We charred them on the grill, but I have done them on the open flame of the gas burner as well as broiling them in the oven. When they are good and charred, remove them to a paper or plastic bag and seal. Allow them to sit for about 10 minutes to loosen the skins and allow them to cool. Remove skins using a knife or a kitchen towel, leaving as much of the meat of the pepper intact as possible.

Chop the remaining peppers and add to a small soup pot along with the olive oil, chopped onions and garlic. Sauté until onions are translucent and peppers are beginning to soften. Stir in cumin, salt and minced cilantro. Add 1 cup of the broth and allow to cook over medium-low heat for 5-10 minutes. Remove from heat and purée veggies using an immersion blender or food processor. Return purée to pot and add remaining 3 cups of roasted chicken broth and lime juice. Heat over low heat for about 20 minutes to allow flavors to meld. When ready to serve, heat soup over medium-high heat until bubbly and hot. Serve immediately with garnishes. If you decide to add chicken, add it after puréeing the veggies.

## 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.

<b>February 20:</b>	<b>February 27:</b>
<b>Tina Akins</b>	<b>Ali Stoddard</b>
<b>5160 District Governor</b>	<b>The medical benefits</b>
<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>of CBD</b>

[www.rotarylafayette.org](http://www.rotarylafayette.org)  
[www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-CA](https://www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-CA)

**Lamorinda Weekly**

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

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## 'Big Eye Series' exhibit at Orinda Books



### Submitted by Lynn Champagne

Dave Manousos' current art exhibit, "Big Eye Series," which features the Moraga artist's original paintings runs through Feb. 29 at Orinda Books. An artist reception at 7 p.m. Feb. 24 will feature wine and light hors d'oeuvres.

## Starry Night Parachute Prom helps toddlers celebrate Valentine's Day

Submitted by Emily Best

Gymboree Play and Music of Lafayette organized its first ever Starry Night Parachute Prom Feb. 9 to celebrate Valentine's Day. Cuteness overload was the order of the night as little prom babies and toddlers had the chance to have a whole lot of fun with special Valentine-inspired activities and play. On arrival the tots could walk, crawl or run on a special 'red carpet' to receive their prom crowns. Gymboree Play and Music of Lafayette is a new family community and indoor playspace that provides a wide range of early childhood classes for ages up to 5. The selection of classes are designed to help develop cognitive, physical, and social skills.



Photos provided

## Five local students win Good Citizen awards



Photo provided

Submitted by Louise Diracles

The Acalanes Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution treated students to high tea Feb. 1 in the Fellow-

ship Hall of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. These five students were selected by their schools as outstanding citizens and leaders deserving of the DAR Good Citizens Award and Scholarship Program. Their essay submissions were optional and impromptu, and the students were asked to describe how they would energize the youth of America. The students read their essays to an audience of DAR members, parents, counselors, and friends at the tea. Chairperson, Susan Bourne, then presented each student with a monetary award, a recognition certificate, and a U.S. flag that had been flown in their honor over our nation's Capitol.

Acalanes DAR Chapter essay contest winner and Good Citizen was Isabelle Restrepo

from Campolindo High School. Isabelle is active in sports, coaching, tutoring, club activities, and she speaks three languages. Isabelle wants to pursue a career in international business.

Georgia Carpenter was the Good Citizen winner from Acalanes High School. She is on the board of the Lindsay Wildlife Experience and will attend the College of William and Mary in the fall. Georgia hopes to become a politician and lawyer.

Sophie Foster won the Bentley School's Good Citizen Award. She has extensive volunteer experience and is a teacher's aide, a student ambassador, a peer counselor, and a member of the student body government. Sophie hopes to become an attorney

and run for U.S. president in 2040.

Alexis Im was the Good Citizen winner from Contra Costa Christian School. Alexis is captain of the school's varsity volleyball and basketball teams, a member of her student body government, and a band and choir member. Alexis hopes to become a doctor and serve overseas.

Naomi Desalegne won the Las Lomas High School Good Citizen Award. She led her school's Pineapple Club welcoming English Language Learners into the school. Naomi was awarded the Silver Presidential Award recognizing her 2019 volunteer hours, and she hopes to become a surgeon and join Doctors Without Borders.

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

## In Memory

### Steve Gentry

Nov. 2, 1946 – Jan. 20, 2020 Resident of Orinda



Our beloved local beekeeper and founding member of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, Steve Gentry of Orinda, California, passed away on January 20, 2020 of natural causes. Steve was born on November 2, 1946 and except for travel, lived his entire life in

Orinda. Growing up, he played high school football and enjoyed exploring Orinda's open spaces. He loved history, especially the survival stories of America's original explorers. After excursions in Europe and the US, Steve returned to Orinda where he established his business, "Steve's Bees," a line of honey, beeswax, candles, soap and more; selling them at several of the local farmers' markets often in his bee-print shirt. He was known for his warmth and wisdom and for telling a great story. He was committed to his community answering any question a customer might have about his craft. And there was always a "honey stick" for the kids! He was a founding member of the Mt. Diablo Beekeepers Association, one of the largest in the state.

Steve had a lifelong respect for nature, and was especially proud to have received Orinda's William Penn Mott Environmental Award in 2008 for his contributions to conservation. His passion beyond beekeeping and the environment was the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, an outdoor education facility in Orinda. He was a founding member and served as president of the Board of Directors for a decade until 2019 when he stepped down for health reasons. The Nature Area embraced his mission to helping local youth develop a respect and passion for the environment. During his tenure, the Friends preserved the unique Nature Area programs for Orinda's school children.

Steve is survived by his brother, Mark Gentry, Mark's wife, Martha Gentry; his niece, Chris Grill, Chris's husband Darren; his nephew, Sean Gentry; grand-niece, Shannon Grill; and his grand-nephew, Brandon Grill.

Donations can be made to Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area/FWRNA. Steve will be honored at our Wildlife and Olive Festival on April 19 at around 12:15 p.m.

Rest in peace, Steve. You made an immeasurable impact on everyone you met, and you will be missed.

## Burton Valley students support Kincade Fire victims



Photo provided

Submitted by Lila Morrison

It's official: Burton Valley Elementary's AIM class annual fundraiser, "the Book Bonanza," was a success once again! Every year, Cathy Martinsen's AIM class raises

money from the Book Bonanza and donates it to a local cause. This year, the students of Martinsen's AIM class decided that the proceeds made from the Book Bonanza would be donated to the Kincade Fire victims, in the hope to help them after all they had

been through. After weeks of collecting gently used books from Burton Valley families, they priced the books and sold them to other classes and teachers. Books were priced from 10 cents to \$3. The AIM students also sold bookmarks, origami, Rainbow Looms, and raffle tickets. When sales began, all the students worked hard, and it paid off. The sales went on for three days before students counted their money for the final total. In the end, they were left with \$1,716.50! The students were proud to send in the check for the Kincade Fire victims, knowing that the money they raised would help the lives affected by the fires. Martinsen's class is very thankful for all the support from the BVE community. Their book donations and purchases really helped the class succeed in their goal. Thank you to everyone who supported the Burton Valley Book Bonanza!

## Children's Health Guild raises over \$182K for kids



Photo Mugsy Clicks

Trisha Renno, Patricia Balch, Martina Sola Heneghan, Sarah Franti, Charlie Gaulke, Gina Witucki

Submitted by Sharon Koh

Children's Health Guild hosted its annual winter fundraiser, BELIEVE, Dec 12 at the Ritz-Carlton San Francisco. More than 300 guests came together for the annual function that benefits George Mark Children's House in San Leandro and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oak-

land in continuing to provide the full spectrum of medical care for children and their families, including emergency and ongoing treatment, as well as transitional, respite, and palliative care. The event raised over \$182,000 thanks to the generous sponsors and attendees of this year's event.

Guest Speaker Martina Sola Heneghan, a Bay Area native, tech industry executive, and mother shared the

story of her first child who was diagnosed with a rare life-limiting neurological condition. Her family's journey led them to GMCH where they were able to find refuge as they have navigated an extraordinary path of caring for their child.

Patricia Balch, a former high school biology teacher, swim coach, and mother to four boys, also spoke and shared the story of her oldest son, who was diagnosed with brain cancer. After his passing, she set on a journey to go back to school to become a nurse; she currently works in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at CHO. Alongside her work as a nurse, Balch has put efforts into fundraising for brain cancer research.

The wonderful day of community, shopping, speakers, and fundraising was chaired by the efforts of our very own Lamorinda Women, Gina Witucki of Orinda and Trisha Renno and President of CHG Charlie Gaulke of Lafayette. The day's success was a result of their hard work and dedication.

## Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Acalanes and Campolindo lead boys soccer into the playoffs



Nick Geannacopulos (Acalanes #23) and Gio Sponzilli (Miramonte #9)



Will Easley (Acalanes #1)

Photos Gint Federas

### By Jon Kingdon

Once again, Acalanes head coach Paul Curtis has led the Dons to another season with double-digit wins (12-3-4, 8-1-3 in league games) heading into the playoffs. "The success of our season has been about the boys focus and discipline," said Curtis. "They execute what they can do well and not trying to do too much, fulfilling their roles on the team."

Senior co-captain Nick Geannacopulos, who was second team all-league last season, has been the leader both on and off the field said Curtis: "Nick has been our key playmaker. He runs the middle of the field and does a great job there. He's very composed and is able to get the boys around him to relax, whether it's a senior or a sophomore. They respect him and he respects them and he is able to direct traffic pretty easily. He's a very inclusive young man, communicating with our freshman and JV squads."

It's been a group effort that Curtis attributes to the overall success on the offensive side of the field: "In general, we're very balanced on the attack and that's been one of the keys which makes it hard for anyone to concentrate on any one particular player. The boys have really developed a nice balanced attack."

The defense has been led by the center back senior Owen Hansen: "Owen is the real leader back there and has done a very good job in organizing the team," said Curtis.

Senior Will Easley has been a solid force in the net. The Dons have only given up 13 goals in 19 games, working out to be only 0.68 goals/game which included nine shutouts and not giving up more than two goals in any game. "Giving up so few goals almost meets our standards, but not quite," said Curtis with his tongue firmly ensconced in his cheek. "We have not seen a better goalie in the matches that we have played."

Acalanes lost only once in their last 10 games (6-1-3) which Curtis feels bodes well for the playoffs: "We have continued to build going into

the playoffs. We've played a lot of quality teams but the boys have concluded that they have not seen a team that they cannot beat."

### Miramonte

Evidencing how competitive the Diablo League is was Miramonte's 5-0-1 in non-league games and battling to a 5-6-1 record in league games. "We are in a tough league and a number of our losses were close and could've gone either way," said head coach Masood Ahmed. "We have a lot of underclassmen that have stepped up big time and gotten experience this year and they've done great things throughout the matches but it's been a learning lesson for us throughout the season, things we can take away in looking forward to the playoffs and overcoming the obstacles in front of us."

The offense has been led by senior Kent Barbir and junior Simon Neuwirth-Stein. "Both have been on the varsity since their freshman year," said Ahmed. They are great attack minded players that have done well for us over the last couple of years."

Ahmed also cited seniors Greg Kornguth and Gio Sponzilli, juniors Adrian Argast and Gio Donofrio, Marco Rodriguez and freshman Nick Govea: "They have helped to create the chances for the scorers."

It's been a team effort in the goal with senior Ethan Luckenbach and junior Benjamin Persinger with each alternating as starters throughout the season. "It's a unique situation where you can share minutes with each of them and they both have great skills. Ethan and Benjamin both bring different dynamics to the game. They both have their strengths and weaknesses and they are committed players with great attitudes."

With the playoffs coming up, the injury bug has caught up with the Matadors. With injuries to Kornguth, Argas, Spnozilli and Donofrio, the backups are going to be asked to step up while relying on team leaders to help pull the team together, something Masood feels good about: "Overall we have had great senior class leadership. Sponzilli and

Barbir are our co-captains and Cayden Weiszmann is the one that also steps up for the emotional support of the team, picking up the boys and giving the emotional speech before the games."

### Campolindo

Beginning the season with a major diminution of the team's roster and the loss of the team's head coach, it was no surprise that the Campolindo soccer team began the season with a 1-9-1 record. However, with co-head coaches Jose Kalipo-Diaz and Juan Mendez-Sanchez, the Cougars never let up, winning three games in January and staying in competition for a playoff spot for most of the season.

Though it was a slow process, Kalipo-Diaz attributed the turnaround to the inner strength of the team: "They just improved mentally and physically and we were playing more as a team now with less individual play and more team building with the team. The character has been great. Everyone improved a lot. It's been that way better since the start of the season."

The players just worked hard in practice and in the games. We did a lot of team building activities and bonding practices which helped a lot."

The offense was led by Luka Brassinga and Justin Truax. "Both were super quick and confident on the ball so they took their chances very well, taking shots whenever needed which was good," said Kalipo-Diaz. "We worked

hard on attacking and taking shots and it constantly got better."

The defense only gave up an average of 1.8 goals per game and were led by Jamiel Liu and Chase Giglio who were the key players on the Cougars defense said Kalipo-Diaz: "They were both great and really stepped up on defense."

... continued on Page C2

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## Supporting student-athletes at Saint Mary's



Staci Byrne and her husband Bryan at the World Series. Photo provided

By Jon Kingdon

With the recent spate of negative press regarding the falsification of athletic participation of students by parents who felt the need to purchase their offspring's way into colleges, it actually puts a more positive light on the athletes who were accepted by schools based on their legitimate academic and athletic qualifications. There are instances at various colleges and universities where the academic standards for some of the athletes have been nowhere near the student body at large. This has not been the case at Saint Mary's College.

Because of the demands placed on the student-athletes at Saint Mary's, they have established an Athletic-Students

Services Office. Sharing the responsibilities for the nearly 300 student-athletes are two women: Kari Montero, in her 17th year with the Gaels, is a UC Davis graduate and basketball player who is in the Davis sports Hall of Fame and Staci Byrne, a Saint Mary's graduate and softball letterman, who is in her 14th year at SMC. Byrne's husband, Bryan, played baseball at Saint Mary's and in the minor leagues and is currently a scout for the Washington Nationals.

When Byrne was offered the position of Athletic Academic Advisor, she was employed at the time by Saint Mary's in marketing, a skill which she was able to carry over into her new department while being exposed to a whole new area of academia: "I just had to hit

the ground running and I learned as I went."

The demands put on the athletes are exacerbated by the amount of time they have to invest in training, practice and traveling to games. "Most of their life here is academics and sports so we're working to help them with the scheduling of their classes and making sure that it's fitting in with the missed class policy that the college has," says Byrne. "We are here to be advocates for the athletes to make sure that they can be successful in their sport while maintaining the balance of academics."

The competitive attitude that the athletes bring to their sports carries over to their studies as well, says Byrne: "Most of the athletes are competitive in everything which also carries over to their classes. The individual teams want to have the highest GPA compared against the other teams at Saint Mary's and in putting in their community service hours. They want to win. The WCC conference has a community service award for the number of hours completed by the school which they started three years ago and we won the award in the inaugural year."

There are athletic-academic advisors at a number of the Division I schools whose job is to keep their basketball players eligible for at least one season, knowing they will be using the one-and-done rule to go on and play professional basketball. For the top football players, it's three years that they need to stay eligible before than can declare for the National Football League.

At Saint Mary's and for the entire West Coast Conference, this is nothing like their policy, says Byrne: "In this league, all of the schools have a similar standard with academics. Our student-athletes are here to graduate."

Byrne, a people person, finds the interaction with the

athletes the most satisfying aspect of her day: "You build a relationship with each of the student-athletes. That is what really attracted me to this career, helping them stay on top of their classes. Seeing them be successful with their sports while also having high academics, that's probably the most rewarding part of the job."

It's a four-year process for Byrne and Montero that will then carry over past graduation. They will meet with all of the freshmen and sophomores individually, ensuring that they are making the appropriate adjustment to college and beginning to plan for a career and determining what they are going to do with their future.

This is where Byrne utilized her background in marketing: "I was able to use that experience enlarging our career events, working with the upperclassmen showing them how to handle a business dinner or a cocktail hour when you're trying to schmooze with people and learning how to enter or leave a conversation."

Though all of the student-athletes accepted at Saint Mary's meet the academic requirements, some are more prepared for college than others, says Byrne: "Some may need more help and we'll spend more time with them, particularly in the first year. There are kids that are so on top of things they really don't need much direction, as they know what they want to do and are able to handle their classes without much help. Still, I will make it a point to check in on everyone."

The biggest adjustment for freshmen, according to Byrne, is learning time management: "Since the athletes have to be on a schedule, freshmen year is an adjustment for some but as the years go by, they get dialed in and know when they have to go to class and then to practice and then to fit in their studying and their personal life and finding that balance with everything. That's the

biggest challenge for our freshmen and we will work with them in trying to figure out how to keep a schedule. We have lost very few athletes who have flunked out and the ones that did were usually first semester freshmen that would have failed everything. We have not as a rule lost any of the upperclassmen."

It's a unique job that brings new challenges every day for Byrne: "Every day is different. It's not a 9-5 job. You may have a list of to-do's and then something comes up and you have to change your plans and a coach may bring something up or a student-athlete may have an issue and you have to work on that and then you can go back to what you were originally working on."

It's not just the athletes at Saint Mary's who are provided counseling: "Everyone has a faculty advisor and a Student Engagement and Academic Success (SEAS) coach," says Byrne. "They do what we do in a sense in being an all-encompassing resource who the students can talk with about career plans and their classes."

This past January, Saint Mary's reported that of the 16 varsity sports the athletic department sponsors, 15 of them earned fall semester grade point averages above 3.0, the most in the history of the athletics department.

Department-wide, the Gaels averaged a 3.28 grade point average in the fall of 2019, while every team was above a 2.85 GPA. "I am extremely proud of the efforts put in by our student-athletes," Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics Mike Matoso stated. "The rigors in the daily life of our student-athletes are intense, but they continue to show that work off the court, off the field, and in the classroom is the foundation for success in their respective sports."

## Acalanes and Campolindo lead boys soccer into the playoffs

... continued from Page C1

Taj Smith-Vuong who we brought up from the JV also stepped up big and started every game." The team lost nine of their games by only two goals or less.

Nathan Pearce was solid

in the goal, coming back from and injury and showed constant improvement. In the last eight games of the season, Campolindo scored 11 goals to their opponents' 10 goals, losing three of those games by only one goal.

Senior Shawn Donovan,

who Kalipo-Diaz called the heart of the team was the team's captain and helped to hold the team together.

Donovan gave a lot of credit to the coaches: "Our coaches did a pretty incredible job. They stepped in on short notice and earned the respect of the

players quickly. They've done well allowing the players to do what they wanted to do and we looked up to them a lot."

Donovan also gave much of the credit to the support of the players that were no longer on the team: "Those players have been there sup-

porting the team at all times made a huge difference for us this year, always being there for us. That kept us rooted and humble and focused on one goal which was doing the best we could to represent those who couldn't go on the field."

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## Lafayette resident honored as 2019 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year

Submitted by Antonia Hutzell

US Sailing Announced the 2019 Rolex Yachtsmen and Yachtswoman of the Year Awards on Feb. 6, aboard the historic and storied USS Midway in San Diego at Navy Pier. The best U.S. sailor athletes of 2019 were honored among family, friends, peers, competitors, and contributors to the sport of sailing.

At just 19 years old, Daniela Moroz of Lafayette earned this year's special distinction as Yachtswoman of the Year and was celebrated along the 2019 award finalists who were all participating in the program's festivities.



Photo provided

## St. Perpetua 6th grade American League team wins West Diablo CYO 2020 Championship



Pictured: Gavin Dodge, Peyton Beld, Gavin Beers, Tucker Jones, Rhys Thuma, Branson Smith, Leo McDonough, Merek Mastrov and Arman Craig.; not pictured Wyatt Zawadski.

Submitted by Tim Jones

Smith, local sixth graders representing St. Perpetua won the 2020 West Diablo CYO American League Championship.

Coached by Chris Dodge and Ian

## St. Monica teams win at 2020 West Diablo CYO Basketball Playoffs



Second grade team, top from left: coach Jon Kinney, Colin Kinney, Zane Hill, Justin Rosiak, James Getze, Ben McCollum, coach Craig Pinedo; bottom from left: Ryan Lee, Cameron Greer, Robbie Simpkins, AJ Pinedo, Ryan Nguyen.



Forth grade team, top from left: coach Craig Pinedo, coach Chad Hamilton, Hudson Ortland, Charlie Sullivan, Riley Schnurr, Chase Nickens, Coach Tony Wong, Coach Brian Shaffer; bottom from left: Dylan Hamilton, Brayden Holtmeier, Ben Shaffer, Aiden Wong, Jake Pinedo.

Submitted by Craig Pinedo

The St. Monica's second and fourth grade American teams won the championship of their respective age groups this month in the 2020 West Diablo

CYO Playoffs at the Ultimate Fieldhouse in Walnut Creek. The second grade team won 28-27 over another St. Monica's team, and the fourth grade team won 44-37 over Santa Maria.

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

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

### Basketball and soccer playoffs schedule

#### GIRLS BASKETBALL

TEAM (SEED)	Div.	OPPONENT (SEED)	DATE
Miramonte (4)	Open	Bishop O'Dowd (5)	Feb. 20 - Home
Acalanes (4)	2	Tamalpais (13)	Feb. 18 - Home
Campolindo (3)	3	BYE	Feb. 21 - Home
Bentley (7)	5	Sonoma Academy (10)	Feb. 19 - Home

#### BOYS BASKETBALL

TEAM (SEED)	Div	OPPONENT (SEED)	DATE
Campolindo (4)	Open	San Leandro (5)	Feb. 20 - Home
Acalanes (9)	2	Tamalpais (8)	Feb. 18 - Road
Miramonte (5)	3	San Rafael (12)	Feb. 18 - Home
Bentley (11)	5	International (6)	Feb. 19 - Road

#### GIRLS SOCCER

TEAM (SEED)	Div	OPPONENT (SEED)	DATE
Campolindo (5)	2	Benicia (12)	Feb. 19 - Home
Acalanes (2)	3	Analy (15)	Feb. 19 - Home
Miramonte (5)	3	San Francis Drake (12)	Feb. 19 - Home
Bentley (14)	4	Marin Catholic (3)	Feb. 19 - Road

#### BOYS SOCCER

TEAM (SEED)	Div	OPPONENT (SEED)	DATE
Acalanes (3)	3	Sonoma Valley (14)	Feb. 19 - Home
Miramonte (8)	3	San Rafael (9)	Feb. 19 - Home

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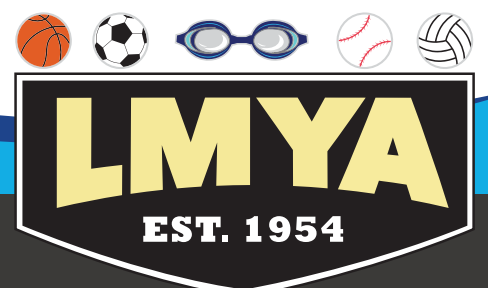
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- Swim Conditioning begins 4/7

- Summer Swim Team begins 4/27  
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- Gutter Guppy Program begins in June

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

## Feng Shui

### Activating the relationship areas in your home



**By Michele Duffy**

St. Valentine was many things and known as the Roman saint who was martyred on Feb. 14, after ministering to persecuted Christians. The traditional “Feast of St. Valentine” initially, was an opportunity to celebrate his ministering life and preserve his support of religious freedom. The life of a humble clergyman, it’s certain he never expected that over time those devoted to seeking love, acceptance, and support would celebrate his example with a tradition of sharing love notes, celebrating love, gifting flowers, which again, did come much later.

St. Valentine’s ministry demonstrated a profound understanding of deep love, re-

spect, courtly love which have much in common with Feng Shui’s “law of attraction” and the specific activation of the “Relationship/Marriage/ Partnership” area of the main tool used in Feng Shui, the Bagua Map. The Relationship/Partnership/Marriage Bagua Area is located in the home, master bedroom or yard is far right from front entrance door.

This is the time of year we intentionally express our love for one another and share couple time to allow personal connection, intimacy, and expressions of mutual love to be experienced.

How do we approach such an intimate and personal area of our lives and environments? To activate this area, hang or place photos of all those we have and want to continue to have a close connection to in the Relationship area of the home.

In the master bedroom, place photos of a happy couple including with your own partner and remove pictures of kiddos. Pairs and the number two dominate this BAGUA area.

... continued on Page D10



**Lights placed thoughtfully in the far-right Relationship area of the home generate passion and inspiring illumination of our relationships.**

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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	9	\$940,000	\$2,800,000
MORAGA	5	\$500,000	\$2,260,000
ORINDA	7	\$800,000	\$5,000,000

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

- 1161 Estates Drive, \$2,880,000, 3 Bdrms, 4224 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 01-10-20,  
Previous Sale: \$2,450,000, 05-31-13
- 1986 Marion Court, \$1,725,000, 4 Bdrms, 3217 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 12-30-19,  
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 12-08-14
- 857 Mountain View Drive #A, \$1,955,000, 3 Bdrms, 4222 SqFt, 1995  
YrBlt, 01-07-20, Previous Sale: \$1,510,000, 05-21-19
- 1490 Pleasant Hill Road, \$970,000, 3 Bdrms, 1906 SqFt, 1944 YrBlt, 12-31-19
- 2 Roxanne Lane, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3615 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 01-03-20,  
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 02-24-15
- 1067 Serrano Court, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 1968 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 12-31-19
- 1611 Shangri La Court, \$2,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 3442 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 01-03-20,  
Previous Sale: \$2,315,000, 06-17-19
- 99 Silverwood Drive, \$1,595,000, 2 Bdrms, 2036 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 01-09-20,  
Previous Sale: \$1,565,000, 09-14-07
- 25 Via La Cumbre, \$940,000, 3 Bdrms, 2045 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 01-03-20

### MORAGA

- 1997 Ascot Drive #C, \$500,000, 2 Bdrms, 1124 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 12-30-19,  
Previous Sale: \$405,000, 10-18-07
- 279 Calle La Mesa, \$1,384,000, 4 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 01-03-20
- 261 Claudia Court, \$1,665,000, 3 Bdrms, 2706 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 01-09-20
- 1060 Sanders Drive, \$1,450,000, 3 Bdrms, 2407 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 01-09-20
- 201 Sonora Road, \$2,260,000, 4 Bdrms, 4057 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 01-03-20

### ORINDA

- 11 Crestview Court, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 3164 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 12-31-19,  
Previous Sale: \$225,000, 09-13-00
- 1 Dalewood Terrace, \$5,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 6126 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 01-03-20,  
Previous Sale: \$1,185,000, 02-01-16
- 21 Ichabod Lane, \$1,435,000, 4 Bdrms, 2034 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 01-06-20,  
Previous Sale: \$925,000, 03-14-19
- 9 Keith Drive, \$2,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 3318 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 01-08-20,  
Previous Sale: \$649,000, 03-06-02
- 18 Monte Veda Drive, \$800,000, 3 Bdrms, 1687 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 01-07-20
- 54 Spring Road, \$1,024,000, 3 Bdrms, 1782 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 01-02-20
- 578 Tahos Road, \$1,860,000, 4 Bdrms, 2574 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 01-10-20,  
Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 08-22-16

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## Feng Shui

# Activating the relationship areas in your home



Birds are heavenly symbols of unconditional love, and filling your environment with images, photos, or art that amplifies loving fidelity, commitment, and magic is key for relationships to stay on track like this ideal photo taken by an Orinda resident.

... continued from Page D1

Birds are Feng Shui symbolic of heavenly attraction, and in the Relationship area amplify the fidelity, commitment and devotion we intimately wish to manifest.

Relationship area bird symbols are doves, swans and ducks, and ideally materially consist of clay, crystal, stone, marble or shells. Placing fresh and blooming peonies encourage blooming in all of our consequential relationships, while a pair of elephants activate nobility, longevity and impressive bonds. Use a pair of soy candles or red ceramic hearts to ignite the bonds of passion and romance, softly and deftly illuminating lovemaking, and especially the 'Volcano' candles at Anthropologie in well-designed silver mercury glass with handy lids.

Choose satins and rich silks for master bedroom luxury, soft bed linens that shroud our love in tenderness, and intimate art and lighting to enhance our connection to the spirit of intimate relationships.

Colors that symbolize, activate and place the Earth element perfectly in the Relationship area are pink, pinky tan, neutrals of white/pink. Colors symbolize, activate and place the Fire element to create more Earth in the Relationship area are bright red, bright red-orange, and a tad of purple that is more red.

There is no doubt we want a tad of passionate red in the master bedroom, but in accents only, like silk pillows or satin drapes, and definitely, dare I say, never, any red paint on bedroom walls.

Other ways to activate healthy, harmonious and happy Relationship Qi in our most intimate environments is to surround ourselves

with positive references to ground our guided-from-within and mindfully, positive wishes for our relationships.

Forgo the commerciality that St. Valentine never stood for and remember the Saint in St. Valentine, since when we are loving and generous with our love, we model all the very sweet aspects toward ourselves and our loved ones, just as he did so long ago. We have only this moment to be loved and life is short.

May every day this year be inspired by love, led in love, and shared thoughtfully.

<b>WEALTH &amp; PROSPERITY</b> XUN Wood Southeast Purple	<b>FAME &amp; REPUTATION</b> LI Fire South Red Summer	<b>RELATIONSHIPS</b> Kun Earth Southwest Pink
<b>FAMILY</b> ZHEN Wood East Green Spring	<b>HEALTH</b> TAI JI Earth Center Orange, Yellow Brown	<b>JOY &amp; COMPLETION</b> DUI Metal West White Autumn
<b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; SELF-CULTIVATION</b> GEN Earth Northeast Blue	<b>CAREER &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b> KAN Water North Black & Dark Blue Winter	<b>HELPFUL PEOPLE &amp; TRAVEL</b> QIAN Metal Northeast Grey

Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2019 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to [spaceharmony@gmail.com](mailto:spaceharmony@gmail.com).





Village Associates is Pleased to Welcome  
Claudia Gohler as their Newest Associate.



Claudia is an Orinda native and attended elementary school, middle school and high school in Orinda. She went to college at UC Davis and is currently raising her son in Orinda. She has first-hand experience being both a child and a parent in the area. This unique perspective is helpful for buyers new to the area that are looking for guidance on neighborhoods and insight on what it's like to live in this area. Claudia has been in advertising and marketing for over 20 years and speaks Spanish and German fluently.

Claudia's experience and vast network of friends and neighbors ensure your property will get the greatest and best exposure possible. She truly cares about her clients and views buying and selling a home as a major milestone and not just a transaction. Whether you are downsizing or upsizing, Claudia looks forward to guiding you through to your next chapter.

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## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

# Stars of the garden



Photos Cynthia Brian

A David Austin stunner named Olivia.

By Cynthia Brian

*“Won’t you come into my garden? I would like my roses to see you.” – Richard Sheridan*

It’s only mid-February, yet it feels like spring. As I write this article, the thermometer in the shade reads 71 degrees. The sun is shining, the skies are clear, and it’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood. Historically the average daily temperature in our area for February is 46.4 degrees. I’m accustomed to dreary Februaries, yet this year is full of cheer. Although we still need more rain, I am delighting in this weather as I finish pruning my roses and grapevines.

Roses are the ultimate garden stars, complementing classic and contemporary landscapes. Many varieties are repeat bloomers, extravagantly fragrant, and easy to maintain. The thorns are a nuisance, yet, sometimes we

have to endure a bit of pain to savor the pleasure. As I’m pruning, I’m wearing two pairs of thick gloves. The thorns still pierce the leather and I find myself extracting tiny pieces of barbs with tweezers from my fingers after an afternoon amidst these stellar actors.

If you haven’t started or finished your annual heavy pruning, you’ll have about two more weeks to accomplish the task to have blooms by mid-April. Roses anchor a landscape offering unrivaled diversity of colors, shapes and sizes. From 10-inch miniature roses to 25-foot rambling and climbing roses, there is a variety for every preference. The scents that emanate from these stunners can be musky, fruity, sweet, and indescribably powerful. In our region, once established, roses will bloom a full 10 to 11 months as long as they are regularly deadheaded. Although roses prefer a sunny location, shade and even poor soil are tolerated.

It’s best to plant roses from January through May and make sure the root has plenty of space to grow. Rehydrate bare root roses in a bucket of water before planting. If planting from a quart or gallon container, remove the plant carefully. Sprinkle roots with Mycorrhizal Fungi to stimulate root growth. Place the stems of bare root roses about two inches below the top of the hole, and for a potted rose, position the plant level with the ground. Backfill with the original soil and lightly tap it with your foot. Water deeply. My secret to rose success is to scratch a scoop of alfalfa pellets in the soil around each bush in March. Every morning, I stir my used coffee grounds into a carafe of water to nurture a different rose daily. They love their jolt of java. Feed your roses according to the instructions that you receive when purchasing. Never over-fertilize. Add mulch or compost to retain moisture. Contrary to popular belief, roses are not fussy. Feed, mulch, water, deadhead and enjoy.

A shining star of the winter garden is the daffodil. Every year daffodils signal that spring is around the corner as they salute the skies with their bright trumpets. Daffodils belong to the genus *Narcissus*. The over 50 species come in all sizes with colors ranging from the ubiquitous butter yellow to pure white, peach, and combinations of yellow and orange. They are perennials, popping up to surprise us just when we need a boost of encouragement. Many vari-

eties will naturalize when planted in a sunny place with slightly acidic soil and plenty of mulch. The deer and wildlife won’t eat them, so they are great bulbs to plant everywhere the deer and rabbits roam. Bulbs planted in fall are now blooming. There is no need to remove the bulb after the flowers fade. Cut back the stems when the foliage is yellow and potato chip crispy. If you insist on digging out bulbs, wipe the dirt off, store in onion bags or pantyhose, and hang in a cool location. Bulbs require air circulation to survive or they will rot. Many of the smaller daffodils, also called narcissi are very fragrant. They make marvelous cut bouquets brightening any room.

The heart-shaped cyclamen is a tuberous perennial that is honored with garden star status. Shades of pink, red, salmon, and white flowers with silver-marbled leaves adorn winter borders and indoor rooms. Cyclamen require almost zero care and very little water. They go dormant when temperatures rise toward summer and return in glory when winter arrives. When grown outdoors, like the daffodil, when you are least expecting to see a riot of color, the cyclamen unfurls its pretty petals. Hardy cyclamen sold in nurseries are to be planted outdoors. Tropical cyclamen for décor as a houseplant won’t tolerate temperatures above 68 degrees or below 40 degrees.

Our shining garden stars may only twinkle during certain times of the year, yet they are always here. Planting and appreciating them helps us grow into kinder humans. Saunter into the garden to say hello.



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## Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide for February

**TAKE** 15% off all orders of David Austin Roses before March 6, 2020 with CODE UKA at [www.DavidAustinRoses.com](http://www.DavidAustinRoses.com) or call 1-800-328-8893.

**CARE** for your trees. With the recent heavy winds, limbs and trees have toppled. Make sure to prune dead branches, mulch to suppress weeds and pest infestations, deep soak when the weather is hot, and protect shallow roots from lawnmowers. Call an arborist for help when in doubt.

**INSPECT** lawns for dandelions. When you see the yellow flower, snip it off to avoid the flower going to seed. Dig out the roots if possible but be aware that dandelions have long taproots. Do not put in the compost pile.

**CHECK** irrigation systems for broken or damaged pipes. Weeds and lawns often cover sprinkler heads. This is a good time to prepare and repair for spring.

**WATER** lawns and gardens as needed. This is the first February in decades that I've had to turn on sprinklers. Rain is not forecast until March. Global warming?

**CUT** a branch from flowering pear or peach trees to use as an indoor decoration. Pear trees are in full-bloom, peaches are in bud.

**PLANT** summer bulbs including gladiolus, cannas, dahlia, and caladium towards the end of the month as the soil dries.

**-WALK** barefoot on a blanket of soft moss to connect with Nature.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing!



Bonica roses create a star-studded hedge.



Roses are the star performers of the garden.



Perennial cyclamen shine in a February landscape.



Soft pink roses flanked by cornflags and gladiolus.



Cut a branch of ornamental pear blossoms to use indoors.

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**Cynthia Brian outdoors on a cooler February day.**

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia 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®

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## ORINDA



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## ORINDA



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## ORINDA



### 48 Oak Drive

Elegant 4 bed/ 3.5 bath two level renovated home with remarkable views from terrace decks. **\$2,495,000**

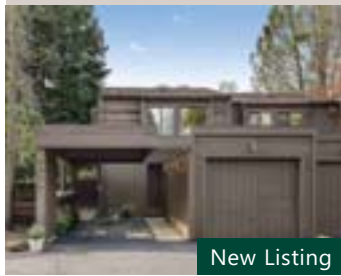
## ORINDA



### 57 Charles Hill Circle

A new SpringHill Homes masterpiece! 5 bed/ 4 baths + 2 half baths with an open floor plan on a .75 acre lot. **\$4,395,000**

## LAFAYETTE



New Listing

### 3079 Camino Diablo

Updated 2 bedroom end unit. Huge private fenced yard! Sparkling white kitchen w/ stainless appliances. Lafayette schools! **\$729,000**

## LAFAYETTE



New Listing

### 962 Reliez Station Lane

New construction! Recently completed 4 bed/ 3.5 bath Springhills Homes residence. Close to downtown, Highway 24 & BART. **\$2,795,000**

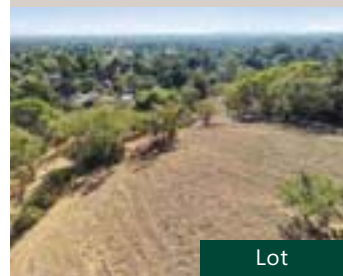
## WALNUT CREEK



### 1986 Fair Ridge Court

Spacious, updated 4 bed/ 2.5 bath 2549 sqft townhome situated on a private cul de sac in Summit Ridge neighborhood. **\$1,115,000**

## PLEASANT HILL

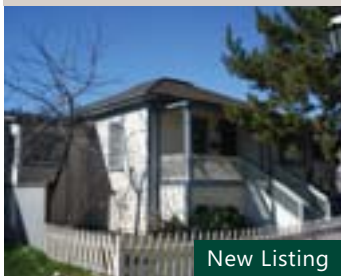


Lot

### 20 Whitfield Court

Great parcel at top of knoll with views of Mt. Diablo. Ideal for privacy. Investment opportunity! **\$1,375,000**

## MARTINEZ



New Listing

### 502 Alhambra Ave

Charming 3 bed/ 2 bath single family home, with large fenced yard & covered deck. Great downtown Martinez location. **\$450,000**

## BERKELEY



Lease

### 7164 Buckingham Boulevard

Fabulous, furnished, light-filled 3 bed/ 3 bath home. Easy access to Hwy 24, UC Berkeley, and the Caledcot Tunnel. **\$7,500/ mo**

## The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby  
Patricia Battersby  
Shannon Conner  
Meara Dunsmore

Linda Ehrich  
Emily Estrada

Joan Evans

Linda Friedman

Claudia Gohler

Dexter Honens II

Erika Hood Kossut

Susan Layng

April Matthews

Hillary Murphy

Karen Murphy

John Nash

Altie Schmitt

Judy Schoenrock

Ann Sharf

Amy Rose Smith

Molly Smith

Jeff Snell

Lynda Snell

Steve Stahle

Clark Thompson

Angie Evans Traxinger

Ignacio Vega

Ann Ward

Jenny Lyons Wilhite

Margaret Zucker

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