

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Brian, Cathy, Sophia, Theo and Sadie on the back steps of their new home in Orinda.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

New or old, Lamorinda real estate sales are on fire

By Sora O'Doherty

One effect of the coronavirus pandemic has been that in recent months the real estate market has been exploding, particularly in the East Bay and more particularly in Lamorinda. New Lamorinda resident and financial analyst Brian Schwartz says, "I think the pandemic in COVID-19 is an accelerator for the housing market in this area, but it is just the latest accelerator or catalyst or tailwind in a multi-

year secular dynamic." He attributes the heated housing market to the very strong tech economy and says that it looks like it will continue to be strong for the next 10 years.

Schwartz seized the opportunity in March to acquire a unique property in Orinda and he and his family – wife, Catherine, two children, 11-year-old Sophia and 8-year-old Theo, and a growing puppy, Sadie – are delighted to join the neighborhood. They had been in the market for a dream home for over a year, but they couldn't find the right fit because of

the lack of inventory and the high demand. When the pandemic hit, it created what Schwartz called "mass fear," and on March 19 they went into contract on their Orinda house.

"Had the house listed a month earlier, or had the buyers been able to have their open house," Schwartz said, "the odds would have been very, very low that we would have won this house."

Although inventory is low, new developments in Lamorinda are also selling out quickly.

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PG&E hydrostatic testing starts in downtown Lafayette



Photo Pippa Fisher

PG&E begins work testing gas pipelines in downtown Lafayette, which will last till November.

By Pippa Fisher

Hydrostatic testing of the underground transmission gas pipeline is underway in downtown Lafayette. And those coned-off lanes, contractor trucks, metal plates in the road, detour signs, air compressors, closed sidewalks, and heavy equipment will be a familiar sight until the work is com-

pleted in early November. Described as a "safety and reliability" project, hydrostatic pressure testing is designed to test pipeline strength and integrity by filling the pipeline with water and increasing the pressure to a level much higher than normal operating pressure. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. will repair or replace any pipeline that does not meet acceptable standards.

PG&E spokesperson Tamar Sarkissian says they do not anticipate any disruption of service connected with the work, explaining that customers in this area receive gas from two transmissions lines, which are the large high-pressure gas lines that transport natural gas throughout the state. "The transmission lines then provide gas to distribution lines, which are lower pressure, lower diameter lines that serve communities directly," she says.

While the transmission line is undergoing testing, customers will continue to receive natural gas service from the second nearby transmission line, while the other line is temporarily not in service. "Once the test is completed, we expect that natural gas we will be reintroduced to the line," Sarkissian says.

According to Sarkissian, this section of pipeline is due for federally-required assessment before the end of this year and has no correlation to the

Lafayette Transmission Integrity Management audits by the California Public Utilities Commission; audits that Lafayette's Gas Safety Task Force has long-called for.

"We're glad for the strength testing," says GSTF Co-Founder Gina Dawson, adding, "It should lead to safer pipelines in the heart of downtown as well as consideration for automated shut-off valves to protect the city center." Dawson says she is disappointed PG&E didn't communicate with the GSTF directly.

Save Lafayette Trees – a group formed in response to PG&E's proposal to remove hundreds of trees in Lafayette under the Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – and the GSTF are focused on PG&E's safety priorities. They say the CPSI is misguided.

"The CPSI calls for destruction of hundreds of trees without context of more significant pipeline safety threats to the public. There are laws for pipeline integrity testing, none for tree removal," says Dawson, adding that pipeline testing is a core part of proactive, preventative safety protections.

Noting that the pipeline sections in downtown Lafayette are almost 70 years old, Dawson says PG&E has no testing records to show for them.

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LAFAYETTE
 See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
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The General Plan 2040 update kicks off; city seeks community input



Photo courtesy city of Lafayette

The General Plan guides policies in many areas within the city for the next 20 years, including open space.

By Pippa Fisher

The official kickoff of Lafayette's General Plan update is underway and, at its Aug. 12 meeting, the city council voted unanimously with Council

Member Cam Burks absent, confirming the General Plan Advisory Committee selection process, designating a council liaison to the GPAC, and authorizing the city manager to hire a housing element consultant.

And if thrashing out such initial 'how-to' housekeeping details did not have residents spellbound, the relevance of the General Plan to the future of the city with its "Green Hills, Great Schools" was underscored in a short video explaining the importance of this long-range document in determining the community's vision for Lafayette over the next 20 years.

With input from various community stakeholders through public meetings, surveys and workshops, feedback gathered through GPAC's work over the next four years will guide how policies grow especially around land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety in the city.

Every city and county in California is required by State law to have a General Plan that establishes conservation and development goals, as well as the location and intensity of dif-

ferent land uses. Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and specific plans must be in conformance with the General Plan.

Council members supported staff's proposal to have the GPAC comprised of 11 members, including four representatives from commissions and committees (from Parks, Trails and Recreation, Transportation and Circulation, Senior Services, and Youth Commissions), four residential district representatives, one 'at-large' representative, one non-profit and one Chamber of Commerce representative.

A lottery system will be used to allow all nonprofits equal chance of being drawn and it will be up to the selected nonprofit to provide its representative. It was agreed that a system of targeted outreach to underrepresented communities during the recruitment period and selecting GPAC members through a weighted district-based lottery to prioritize ap-

plications from Black, Indigenous, and people of color would be the best way to increase the likelihood of equitable representation from the community.

Council Member Teresa Gerringer emphasized that in this process "everyone's voice will be heard."

The council supported executing a professional services agreement with Environmental Science Associates to serve as the lead on the required housing element CEQA document and Fehr & Peers as the traffic sub-consultant.

Lastly it was determined that Gerringer would act as the primary council liaison to the GPAC in a non-voting capacity.

City staff will allow six weeks to accommodate extensive outreach and for applicants to respond.

Residents can find out more and view the introductory video at www.planlafayette.org/

Future of Terraces apartments still undecided



The proposed location of the Terraces

Photo courtesy city of Lafayette website

By Pippa Fisher

The Lafayette City Council has

yet to make a final decision on the controversial Terraces apartment project, following an almost nine-hour meeting,

with over 50 members of the public weighing in. The matter is to be continued to an Aug. 24 meeting.

The council met to hear afresh the application on an appeal, called for by Council Member Cam Burks who said he believed the decision to be of such profound importance to the city that it should be heard by the full council. The Planning Commission reluctantly approved plans last month.

The application proposes 315 apartments, in 14 two- and three-story residential buildings on a 22-acre parcel on Deer Hill Road, adjacent to the freeway. First proposed in 2011, the application was suspended in 2014 in favor of al-

ternative plans for a scaled back development of 44 single-family homes. Local preservationist group Save Lafayette sued the city, resulting in a referendum on the future of the revised project. With the defeat of Measure L in 2018, the developer, O'Brien Homes, resumed the original application for the 315-unit apartment project under the process agreement. The project includes 20% (63 units) offered as low-income housing and as such has protection under the Housing Accountability Act.

... continued on Page A9

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Outpouring of community support to preserve Leo's legacy of kindness



Photo Pippa Fisher

The tribute at the entrance to Burton Valley Elementary School tells of a selfless, kind child who was a friend to everyone, and urges others to "Live Like Leo."

By Pippa Fisher

The notes and posters left as a tribute at the entrance to Burton Valley Elementary School tell of the sweet, selfless boy who lost his life in a fatal bicycle accident July 28. A memorial foundation set up to honor his memory is growing by the day, reflecting the outpouring of love and support from the community.

Ten-year-old Leo Cellura touched everyone he met in his short life with kindness, inclusivity and empathy. Based on these principles that Leo embodied, his parents

now hope to honor his memory with the Live Like Leo Memorial Foundation.

According to the fundraiser organizers, the foundation will reward young people for kindness, selflessness, and empathy rather than on their accomplishments, seeking instead "to build and support decent humans who care for others before themselves – and hopefully create whole communities of young people who live like Leo did."

At time of going to press the foundation had raised \$203,379 in just over two weeks.

Those wishing to donate in Leo's memory should go to www.gofundme.com/f/leo-cellura-memorial-scholarship-fund

Three spots open; four candidates contesting for city council

The Nov. 3 election will see three seats open on the Lafayette City Council, following Mayor Mike Anderson and Council Member Steven Bliss' announcement that they will not be running for office.

Council Member Cam Burks is also up for reelection.

Four candidates have filed papers to run for the three seats – Cam Burks (incumbent), Carl Anduri, Gina Dawson, and Farschad Farzan. - P. Fisher

BLM rock garden becomes Lafayette's latest art installation

The Lafayette City Council approved plans to move a middle school student's anti-racism artwork to a more permanent location.

As reported in the Aug. 5 issue of this paper, Adam Dolberg's message of inclusivity created with painted rocks alongside the Lafayette-Moraga Trail has been repeatedly vandalized. The relocation of the art, to a site near the Community Center, approved together with input from the Public Art Commit-

tee, is in recognition of the young man's dedication.

Adam agreed to a simple, extendable, two-year contract for monitoring, and maintenance of the rock garden.

Thanking Adam for his patience with the city's processes in getting the relocation approved, Mayor Mike Anderson commented, "You are a recognized artist – it is a great concept and we want it done correctly."

- P. Fisher

PG&E hydrostatic testing in downtown Lafayette

... continued from Page A1

"Untested transmission pipeline runs counter to state laws passed after San Bruno's tragic gas incident."

Members of the GSTF are glad the utility is receiving audits from the CPUC, the first of which was completed in June. "Untested, high pressure, vintage pipeline under busy downtown roads has long been a red flag for us," says Dawson. "Prior to the (June) audit, PG&E had no testing schedule for down-

town pipelines until 2026. Due to the long list of GSTF safety concerns, the CPUC added a second audit week for December of this year."

The utility informed the city of the work on Aug. 7, just days before work started Aug. 11, but Sarkissian says they had in fact already notified roughly 1,500 customers in the immediate area of construction, and had been working closely with the city on the project for some time for permitting and planning purposes.



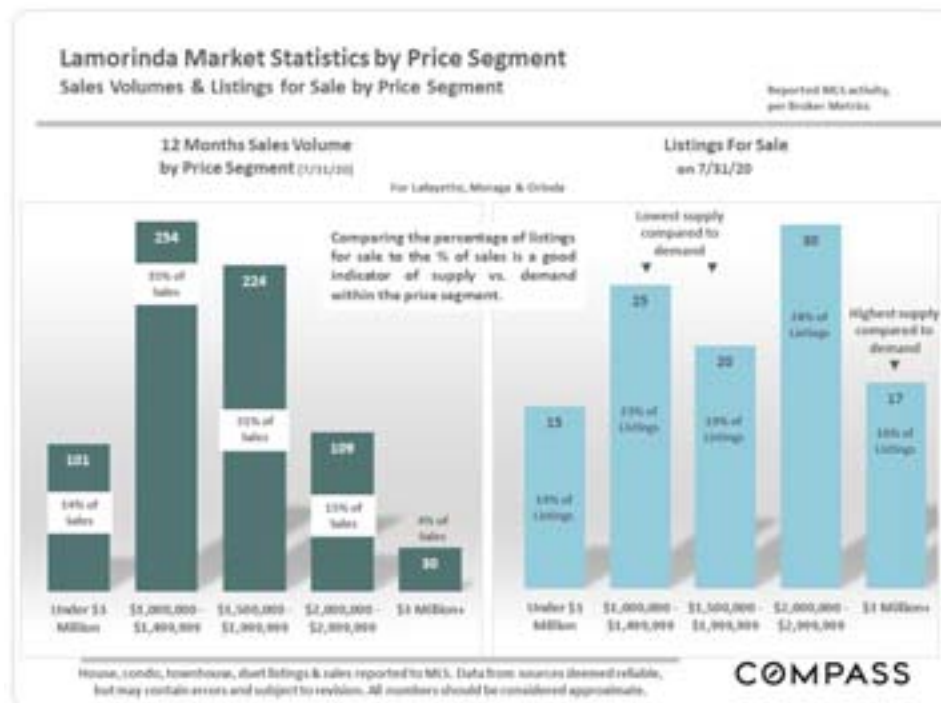
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Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, Aug. 24, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Don Tatzin Community Hall

Design Review

Wednesday, Aug. 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center.
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Arts & Science Discovery Room



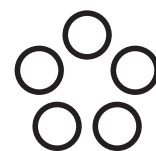
MORAGA

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Town's Virtual Evacuation Drill a success

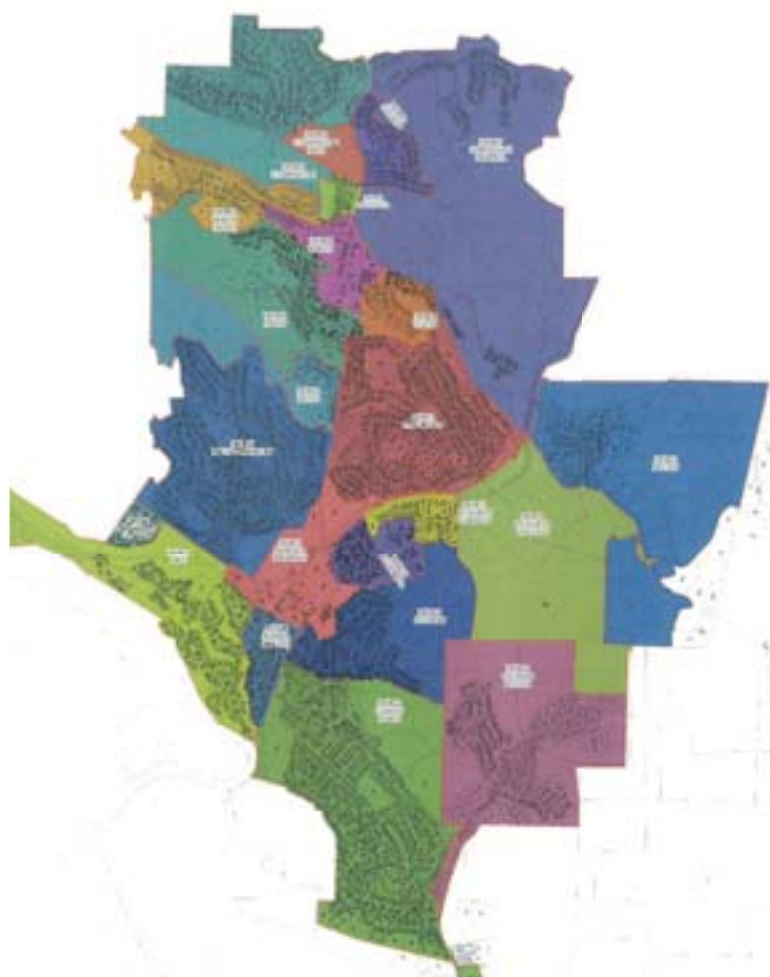


Image provided

ning at 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 1. Its purpose was designed to refine the Community Warning System which will be used in the event of an actual alert and to enhance coordination between both organizations.

Residents were informed, over a month in advance through the town's website and emails, of the upcoming drill and were encouraged to register with CWS. On the day of the event, a simulated wildfire scenario was created to mimic the spread of a fire while alerting residents through the CWS in a time-phased evacuation notification.

According to Moraga Police Chief Jon King, over 1,800 registrants signed up with CWS in preparation for the drill. That in itself was quite an achievement. "When we do a virtual evacuation, we are accomplishing a number of things in a short period of time, without a tremendous amount of resources," explained King. "For example, the evacuation drill we did last year involving the Moraga Country Club neighborhood involved over 75 people. A virtual evacuation drill allowed us to test the notification system, provide information to all town residents, en-

couraged everyone to sign up for CWS and think about and work on their own preparations, and provided training to fire and police personnel about how we would respond to such an incident."

The virtual "fire" started in the area south of Moraga Road and Sky Hi near the Moraga/Lafayette border. The CWS notifications were sent out with the fire and police taking action based on the fire's progress. Alerts were sent out to those registered residents according to the fire's direction, and until all of the town's 23 zones were evacuated in a roll-out fashion.

There were some glitches to the CWS notifications in that residents who registered phone numbers attached to an internet provider never received their alert. Registrants who did not receive an alert to this type of line or any of their registered phone numbers are encouraged to call CWS (925) 313-9622, as they are currently in the process of overcoming the issue. King stated, "This is one of the reasons that we ask people, when they are evacuating, to knock on the doors of houses on either side of them to ensure their neigh-

bors also received the alert."

After the virtual evacuation, participants were emailed a survey to fill out in order to help MOFD and MPD gain valuable insight as to how residents may react to an actual evacuation. Both departments are in the process of compiling the survey data along with statistics from CWS.

"Emergency preparedness is very important for all Lamorinda residents," King said. "Both the MPD and the MOFD are dedicated to working with our community to prepare for emergencies. I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Virtual Evacuation Drill and encourage people to continue their planning and preparedness efforts in their homes and neighborhoods. Lamorinda CERT (www.lamorindacert.org) offers free training and has emergency supplies for sale and is an excellent resource. Everyone should ensure they are registered with the Community Warning System (www.cwsalerts.com) so they receive emergency notifications as this is the system that will be used in a real emergency."

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Police Depart-

ment and Moraga-Orinda Fire District held a town-wide virtual evacuation drill begin-

Five candidates qualify for Moraga's town council ballot

By Vera Kochan

Election day is Nov. 3, but before anyone can fill a seat on

the town council dais they must qualify as a candidate. First and foremost, candidates must be a registered

voter of Moraga at the time nomination papers are issued. All prospective candidates are given a Candidate

Application Packet often referred to as "papers" which include a bevy of forms to be filled out and processed with the Contra Costa County Registrar.

Nomination Petitions must be filed with the required number of valid signatures for the office. Signers of Nomination Petitions must also be registered voters and reside in the town.

There is no filing fee, per se, but each candidate must pay \$335 to have a Candidate Statement printed into the voter's information packet.

A Declaration of Candidacy is an official document in which the candidate indicates how his/her name and ballot designation is to appear on the ballot.

The Ballot Designation Worksheet is a group of words that will appear on the ballot under the candidate's name, designating the candidate's principle profession, vocation or occupation.

A Candidate Statement of Qualifications is designed to familiarize voters with a candidate's qualifications for the office he or she is seeking.

The Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) provides transparency and ensures accountability in two ways. It gives necessary information to the public about an official's personal financial interests to ensure that officials are making decisions in the best interests of the public and not enhancing their personal finances. It also serves as a reminder to the public official of potential conflicts of interest so the official can abstain from making or participating in governmental decisions that are deemed conflicts of interest.

Lastly, there is a Code of Fair Campaign Practices in which a candidate vows to follow the principles of decency, honesty and fair play during the campaign period.

Moraga's five candidates who qualified to run for a town council seat in 2020 are: Renata Sos (qualified as of July 23); Teresa Onoda (qualified as of July 30); David Stromberg (qualified as of Aug. 5); Ursula Schilling (qualified as of Aug. 7); and Kendall Langan (qualified as of Aug. 13).

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Moraga hires new senior civil engineer



Photo provided

Moraga Senior Civil Engineer Bret Swain

By Vera Kochan

The town has hired Senior Civil Engineer Bret Swain to fill the position previously held by Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp.

Swain began his duties June 15 and has jumped right into Capital Improvement Program projects such as the Hacienda de las Flores ADA restroom and concrete pathways, and the Laguna Creek Restoration Project.

With 22 years of engineering and project management experience along with bachelor degrees in physical and soil science from Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo; a master's in civil en-

gineering from Fresno State University; and an MBA in finance/management from UC Davis, Swain is also registered as a Professional Civil Engineer; a Land Surveyor in Training; and holds a variety of other certificates. "I feel that the better I know my trade, the better and more efficiently I can address the needs of the community I serve, and I strive to keep learning."

Most recently Swain held positions with the cities of Manteca and East Palo Alto. While the distance between those locations and Moraga are poles apart, locale played a big role in his decision to work for the town. "Moraga is much closer to my home in northwest Dublin," explained Swain. His wife was uncomfortable with his long commute times.

When asked what the similarities and differences are between Moraga and his previous work experiences, Swain replied, "While there are some scope and scale differences, there are substantial similarities in the type of work and the issues to be resolved that I did in East Palo Alto. While in Manteca, I worked mainly utilities, primarily for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The experience garnered overseeing large programmatic master planning, design and construction activities provided some

insights that can be applied across many engineering activities."

Some of Swain's prior work history will come in handy for Moraga's purposes. He has prepared CIP projects and budget reviews for stormwater programs; prepared and presented reports to city councils and commissions; managed large construction projects involving planning and financing through CEQA; sought funding for CIP projects; had public interaction regarding engineering projects; prepared construction contracts and managed bidding processes to name a few.

Swain is looking forward to meeting the town's needs and prioritizing them in order "to achieve the greatest 'bang for the buck' as it were." He gives kudos to the town staff and the local tri-city governments. "The Lamorinda teaming efforts really seem to have a very collaborative approach in the way they work together, which can promote greater productivity and efficiencies benefiting their communities." Swain added, "There are numerous opportunities for growth in Moraga. Moraga has some real opportunities to creatively resolve technical issues to the benefit of the community."

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SMC opts for mainly remote fall instruction

By Vera Kochan

Unlike the California State University system which announced a predominantly remote instruction format in May or the University of California system in which announcements were each made independently of each other and primarily in July, Moraga's Saint Mary's College made an official announcement to its students on Aug. 3.

SMC had high hopes back in May that it would be able to conduct in-person courses in the fall. Unlike much larger college campuses, trimming class sizes and reducing the number of occupants in on-campus housing facilities was a distinct and not impossible scenario. However, the resurgence of positive coronavirus cases globally dashed any hopes for a semblance of normalcy and business as usual.


Like many campuses across the country SMC faculty, staff and a COVID-19 Response Group monitored the pandemic situation. According to a statement from SMC President James Donahue, "We have developed robust health and safety protocols including screening, testing, and contact tracing capabilities; redesigned classrooms and campus spaces to take advantage of our unique natural and built environment; adopted intensive cleaning and sanitizing procedures; and developed plans to offer our fall classes in a mix of instructional modes, including in-person, hybrid and online."

On-campus student housing has seen its capacity cut by half to help enforce social distancing. Every resident will have their own bedroom with priority assignment of the 868 single-occupancy rooms provided to first-year students, High Potential Program students, international students, Pell-eligible students, students requiring on-campus disability accommodations, students requiring on-campus courses with no remote options, and students who are experiencing housing insecurity and/or technology constraints.

The entire fall semester of courses will be conducted remotely with the exception of some in-person and hybrid classes for undergraduates living on campus doing research and lab work. Studio, performance-based and seminar courses will also fall into the exception category.

"We will be making use of newly-developed outdoor classroom spaces and non-traditional classrooms to the extent feasible for those classes," stated Donahue, adding, "and will identify on-campus spaces for residential students to study and participate in remote courses."

Faculty, staff and students will be expected to wear a mask, maintain a 6-foot distance and follow other safety protocols as directed by SMC. The college is in the process of developing a policy for any visitors and guests wanting to visit the campus. The new fall term is scheduled to begin Aug. 31.



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

Planning Commission: Monday, Aug. 24, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Park and Recreation Commission: Tuesday, Sept. 15 7 p.m., Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Moraga School District Board Meetings:
Special Board Meeting, Tuesday, Sept. 8, 6 p.m.
www.moraga.k12.ca.us. See also AUHSD meeting page A2

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON THE MORAGA CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN ZONING PROJECT SCHEDULED



The Town has scheduled two Town Hall meetings, an in-person meeting on September 1 and a Zoom webinar on September 2, to discuss implementation of the Moraga Center Specific Plan with the community

MORAGA, CA - The Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) zoning implementation project continues the 20-year plus planning process for the Moraga Center area. During the summer and fall of 2019, a 35-member Citizens Advisory Committee met four times and provided input on the zoning implementation project which is now before the Planning Commission and is scheduled to be heard by the Town Council later this calendar year. Public input is welcome and encouraged at the Planning Commission and Town Council meetings. Additional opportunities for the public to ask questions and provide input into the process have been planned. Given the current shelter-in-place order, two different kinds of public meetings are scheduled prior to the Town Council taking action on the proposed zoning.

- On Tuesday, September 1 at 5:00 p.m., a Town Hall meeting to discuss the MCSP will be held outside at the Hacienda de las Flores at 2100 Donald Drive. Town staff as well as the Fire Chief will be available to answer your questions and hear your input. To comply with the County Health Officer's order, all attendees will be required to wear a mask and maintain 6-foot separation. Attendance will be limited to 50 individuals.
- On Wednesday, September 2 at 6:00 p.m., a Zoom webinar will be held on the same topic in a similar format with the same speakers. The webinar will enable public input. For more information, email Planning@moraga.ca.us or go to the Town's website www.Moraga.ca.us. The webinar will also be available via Livestream.

The adoption of the proposed zoning does not directly result in development. A developer must submit an application to the Town for a project, and each application must go through the Planning Commission/Town Council review process. The proposed zoning includes the maximum development

potential; however, the property owner(s)/ developers will consider market conditions when proposing development. At this time, the Town has not received a formal or preliminary application for any development project in the Moraga Center area.

The community's vision for the Moraga Center as a focal point and pedestrian-oriented activity center with higher density housing and mixed uses was defined in the Town's General Plan adopted in 2002 following a three-year public process. Work on the Moraga Center Specific Plan began in 2003 and included seven years of robust public input and analysis culminating in the adoption of the Moraga Center Specific Plan. In 2010, the Town adopted a new Residential R-20 Zoning District that applies to a portion of the MCSP area and allows for 20 residential dwelling units per acre or 30 Senior Housing residential dwelling units per acre. In January 2015, after outreach and public engagement, the Town adopted the 2015-2023 Housing Element that continues the General Plan vision of higher density housing in the MCSP area to maximize opportunity for the development of housing to accommodate anticipated growth and meet the State's Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

The California Government Code requires internal consistency in the General Plan, Specific Plans and zoning code. Inconsistencies in the MCSP and current zoning has created challenges for the Planning Commission and Town Council when considering development. Between 2015 and 2017, the Town worked to implement the remaining MCSP zoning, but was unable to finish due to lack of funds. Alignment of the Town's adopted plans with the zoning code is a high priority Council goal. The MCSP zoning implementation project has been impacted by recent State laws that encourage the development of more housing in response to the housing crisis. These laws, such as SB 35 and SB 330, have limited local jurisdictions' land use authority thereby impacting the Town's ability to limit development in the MCSP area and reduce the densities and other development standards adopted already in the 2010 MCSP.



See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Orinda:
www.cityoforinda.org
 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
www.orindaassociation.org

Orinda Public Meetings

City Council
 Tuesday, Sept. 1, 7:15 p.m.
 Regular Meeting
 By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission
 Tuesday, Aug. 25, 7 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only

Finance Advisory Committee Regular Meeting
 Thursday, Aug. 26, 6:30 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only

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 ◆ LINOLEUM
 ◆ TILE
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Community involvement helps bring outdoor creakside seating to Genuine Goodness



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Genuine Goodness owners Donna Pickthale and Diane Eames enjoy their new outdoor seating area.

By Sora O'Doherty

An outpouring of community support has given Genuine Goodness a new outdoor seating area, located below the small restaurant down beside San Pablo Creek in Orinda. Genuine Goodness co-owners Donna Pickthale and Diane Eames spoke with Orinda Senior Planner Adam Foster about the idea of providing outdoor seating and found the city to be enthusiastic and cooperative. When they were wondering how to organize funding to get the dining area set up, it was

suggested to them that they just ask, because there was so much love for them in the community. Both materials and labor were supplied to them by donations and volunteers, and the seating area is now ready for business.

After talking with Foster, the co-owners did a Zoom meeting with the city council and got the approval of their landlord. Architect Lara Dutto volunteered her work to help them create a plan. Orinda residents and customers, including neighboring businesses provided tables and chairs, huge sun umbrellas, outdoor rugs and

planters and plants. They volunteered to put the furniture together and fill the planters.

The Friends of Orinda Creeks were very enthusiastic, according to Pickthale and Eames, and provided lists of appropriate native plants to landscape the creakside where last year Pacific Gas and Electric Co. took down large trees. Friends volunteered to clear the wilderness of weeds that had grown up after the trees were removed, and Girl Scouts volunteered to plant the new plants.

Rising Miramonte senior Reese Whipple organized a large mural on a canvas tarp which was painted by local children. Whipple helped them paint the riparian scenery and animals that can be found in creeks. She blocked out the basic structure of the mural, the creek and plantings, then helped the children to fill it in. The mural is done in an impressionistic style and was completed over a number of weekends.

When coronavirus and shelter-in-place orders hit suddenly last March, business owners were unprepared for the sudden shift in how they could conduct their businesses, if at all. The owners of Genuine Goodness

say that they did what they always do in a crisis: they sat down and came up with a creative solution. Seeing what was going on with the restaurants in other cities, they launched their "take and bake" menu, providing ready to cook meals for families who were suddenly busy being teachers, housekeepers and daycare, all while often working from home full time. With children back at school, the owners hope to offer a special kids' lunch menu soon.

They are highly concerned about their own health and safety, and have been doing most of the work alone, with only one staff member to help. The exigencies of the pandemic have made their work exhausting, but they are proud of what they have achieved. The restaurant will soon have a new website, and customers will be able to order online, by telephone or in person, then grab their food and eat it down beside the creek.

Security cameras will guard the new furnishings, and the Orinda Police Department will be driving by to check things nightly. The co-owners have a message for Lamorinda: little things can improve the appearance of the community and help businesses thrive.

Council discusses prohibiting parking on El Toyonal on red flag days, adopts new fire code

By Sora O'Doherty

Although there may be some latitude in how it will be enforced, the Orinda City Council

seems favorably disposed to adopting a ban on parking on El Toyonal on red flag days to ensure the ability of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District to access the area in the event of emer-

gency and also to facilitate evacuation of residents, if needed. After discussion, the council continued the matter to allow staff to come back with some revisions at its next meet-

ing on Sept. 1. The council also adopted the new fire code immediately, while leaving open the possibility of improvements being adopted in the future.

... continued on Page A9

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 Moraga-Orinda Fire District

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- Founding member of Orinda FireWise Council (OFC)
- Promoted sensors/cameras/software enabling early fire detection and evacuation
- HOA president, leading 150 acre open space fire prevention effort
- BS in Engineering/Economics, MBA

Join me on the OFC Fire Insurance Townhall on 9/11/2020 www.OrindaFireWisecouncil.org



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November election features 1% sales tax, contested city council race

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda mayor Darlene Gee and past mayor Inga Miller are running for reelection to the city council, having fulfilled their current four-year terms. A new candidate has also filed and will appear on the ballot: Latika Malkani.

The city council at its Aug.

4 meeting also approved putting a 1% sales tax on the general election ballot. Finance Director Paul Rankin told the city council that 63% of cities in Contra Costa County have sales taxes, that 50% of them have higher taxes than Orinda, and that Moraga already has a 1% sales tax. If passed, the measure would also rescind the

current half-cent sales tax.

Although it is a general tax and cannot be limited to specific allocations, the council indicated that it is their intention to focus on priority needs for the first three to five years of the tax, which is to last for 20 years. Those priorities are wildfire management and disaster planning, high priority

drainage structures, and continued public street maintenance.

The mayor and the vice mayor were authorized to prepare the ballot argument in favor of the tax, as well as the rebuttal to any argument against. If approved, collection of the tax will begin on April 1, 2021.

In other developments, past presidents of the Orinda Union School District Board Hilary Weiner and Cara Hoxie are also running for reelection, but are unopposed, so there will be no OUSD election on the November ballot.

Orinda establishes underground utility district along Camino Pablo near El Toyonal

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda will undertake a project to move overhead utility lines underground in an area alongside Camino Pablo near El Toyonal. The project will create an underground utility district and will be largely funded by money returned to the city by Pacific Gas and Electric Co. under Rule-20A, established by the California Public Utility Commission to require utility companies in California to annually budget funds for use by the communities they serve for such conversions. The rule is specifically limited to lower watt distribution lines and

cannot be used to underground high wattage transmission lines. The proposed distribution lines must be along a collector or arterial road.

In 2004 the city conducted a similar project around Miner Road. Since the amounts allocated per year are small, it is common for agencies to accumulate funds for many years in order to complete a small portion of undergrounding.

City staff recently received some requests to underground electric lines along the west side of Camino Pablo in the vicinity of the El Toyonal intersection after a fire ignited in the area about two months ago.

Having reviewed the existing overhead electric distribution lines, staff determined that the Camino Pablo Underground Utility District would be a good candidate for the city to consider. The proposed length of 2,100 feet is relatively short, with nine utility poles to be removed. This scale of a project is more affordable with the city's current credit balance of \$2,519,172 (with annual allocation of approximately \$72,500). The proposed area is along a major arterial route with two lanes in each direction for more options for traffic control/lane closures during the work, and there are limited

numbers of service connections to private properties. Undergrounding the overhead lines would eliminate the danger that sparking could ignite vegetation and lead to a wildfire.

In addition to paying the cost of undergrounding utilities in the public right-of-way, Rule 20A credits will pay for the installation of up to 100 feet of each customer's underground electric service lateral affected by the undergrounding, and the conversion of electric service panels to accept underground service in an amount up to \$1,500 per service entrance, excluding permit fees. All affected customers/property

owners in the proposed district are expected to be within 100 feet of the underground line. The only expected cost to affected property owners is any cost in excess of the \$1,500 for electric service panel conversion.

By establishing the project, the city averted a risk of losing some of the funds allocated to it. Mayor Darlene Gee requested that there be a revision in the language of the measure to specify that, when the project is completed, the underground lines will still belong to each utility and that they will retain responsibility for their lines within the trenches.

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Local stakeholders collaborate on heightened fire prevention efforts

By Nick Marnell

Neighborhood groups, municipal leaders and fire district officials agree that fire prevention is a top concern of Orinda and Moraga residents, and have backed up the rhetoric with tougher code enforcement and increased community participation in fire prevention programs. Orinda lawmakers also said they intend to use a portion of a proposed sales tax to fund added fire prevention efforts in the city.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District bolstered its code enforcement program this year and conducted 2,300 property assessments from June 16 to mid-July. More than 1,760 properties were assessed in Orinda and nearly 540 in Moraga, with 79% of the parcels free of code violations.

Property owners whose parcels failed the inspection were given 30 days to correct the violations, and owners who ignore the citations can be ordered to a hearing before the fire district board of directors.

In July, the board directed the fire chief to begin abatement proceedings against eight Orinda property owners who ignored communication from the district.

Neighborhood groups are doing their part to mitigate dangerous fuels by signing up for a national fire prevention program and availing themselves of a free chipping program offered by the fire district.

The Firewise USA program, a joint offering of three national organizations and sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association, encourages homeowners to take individual responsibility for preparing their homes from the risk of wildfire. According to program materials, Firewise provides resources to help homeowners learn how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together to take action now to prevent losses.

The voluntary program has been around since 2002, has nearly 1,500 active member communities and boasts a participation retention rate of 80%

over the past decade. The latest NFPA figures show Orinda with 11 Firewise groups and Moraga with four.

"I'll do what I can to see whether there is anything Moraga can do to push the program more," Moraga Mayor Kimberleigh Korpus said.

MOFD recently instituted a wood chipping program, available within the district upon request. Since the program inception, the district removed 90 tons of chipped material from Moraga neighborhoods and 100 tons from Orinda.

The program was so successful that the district halted the chipping in June because it could not keep up with the demand, as district fire prevention efforts shifted to inspections and compliance. Chipping will resume after the end of fire season.

The city of Orinda took a major collaborative step by intending to set aside a portion of its proposed one cent sales tax to be used for fire prevention efforts. "Whatever we do with fuel mitigation will be in addition to the baseline that the fire district is already involved in," said Dennis Fay, Orinda council member.

MOFD budgeted \$834,000 for fire prevention in 2021. As the Orinda proposed sales tax is a general tax, the city could not commit to the amount of money allocated for fire prevention.

The mitigation work performed by district residents has not gone unnoticed, by both property owners and the fire district itself.

"For the district to be successful we need to be able to partner and work in collaboration with our citizens and prop-

erty owners," Fire Marshal Jeff Isaacs said. "I think we have been very successful in building a positive working relationship with the citizens of the fire district."

Still, some residents show no interest in complying with either the fire district requirements or the wishes of the community.

"We are working hard to educate everyone on the importance of defensible space and the measures that homeowners can take to reduce their risk from wildfire," Isaacs said.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors
Wednesday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org



ConFire

Board of Directors
Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1:00 p.m.
Board Chamber Room 107, Administration Building
651 Pine St., Martinez.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



ConFire expands Lafayette protection as fire season under way



Photo Nick Marnell

Station 16 crew stands ready to protect western Lafayette. From left, engineer Rusty Perkins, firefighter Griffin Sims and Capt. Nick Barnes

By Nick Marnell

After it put out two potentially devastating fires in Lafayette during last year's fire season, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District beefed up segments of its operation to prepare for whatever the 2020 fire season has in store for the city.

The Pleasant fire of Oct. 27 straddled Highway 24 in

Lafayette, and while the blaze destroyed the Lafayette Tennis Club, Fire Chief Lewis Broschard said that the nine-alarm fire response prevented tens of millions of dollars in structure loss in the city. (See Page A1 Lamorinda Weekly article in Nov. 13, 2019 archive.)

During the October fire siege, prepositioning – the ability to place firefighting resources up front to attack wildfires where

they are most likely to occur – assisted the district in the containment of numerous county fires. The program is funded by the governor through the State Office of Emergency Services. "We expect to take full advantage of this program to better protect residents of Lafayette and the county during the 2020 fire season," Broschard said.

To its apparatus fleet, ConFire added a second bulldozer. Moraga residents may recall in 2018 that a ConFire bulldozer helped prevent a catastrophe, plowing through vegetation to stop a major fire from reaching homes on Buckingham Drive.

Other district apparatus additions include two wildland engines, two water tenders and a second helicopter, which will offer aerial fire suppression in addition to patient transport.

Rebuilt and ready for fire season is Fire Station 16 in western Lafayette. Since the station reopened its doors in September, response times in the area dropped more than one minute, according to district records.

"This is an important and significant response time reduction for the residents of

Lafayette because a house fire can double in size every minute before fire crews arrive on scene, while cardiac arrest victims' odds of survival increase 10% for every minute saved in delivering emergency medical services," Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Stark said.

The district further refined its evacuation plan for the city. "Having a preset plan in place improves communication and allows agencies to instantly be aware of the area and the affected impact," Broschard said.

The chief explained that district geographic polygons are instantly available to first responders for quick and easy reference, providing data on which homes would be evacuated in recommended evacuation areas. These zones have been incorporated into the Lafayette Emergency Response Plan.

"An important role of the district is prevention of fires before they occur, a mission for which our Fire Prevention Bureau is largely responsible," Broschard said. Since June 1, the bureau inspected 124 parcels in Lafayette for abatement violations, with 25 failing. Seven properties had work orders for

contract abatement issued.

New to the district is its Fire Control Worker Program, consisting of a 12-person hand crew that does fire prevention work throughout the region. "Crew 12" is now available to conduct weed abatement activities ahead of and in the early months of the season and to provide firefighting support throughout," Broschard said.

ConFire commended the city for its level of engagement with the Contra Costa County Community Warning System, a program that delivers potentially lifesaving alerts to registered members. "Lafayette's registration numbers are excellent," said Heather Tiernan, CWS manager, as the city boasts more than 8,100 registrants, far higher than the 25% average of overall county registrations.

"I am incredibly pleased with the advancements the district has made ahead of fire season," said Lafayette Council Member Cam Burks, chair of the city council Public Safety Committee. "I have complete confidence in ConFire, especially in the way they handled the fires last October, keeping the city and our residents safe."

Public Safety

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

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

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

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report



June 26 - Aug. 8
Alarms 51
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 10
Traffic 51
Suspicious Circumstances 12
Suspicious Subject 15
Suspicious Vehicle 17
Service to Citizen 58
Patrol Req./Security Check 51
Public/School Assembly Check 0
Supplemental Report 19
Vacation House Check 21
Welfare Check 17
Ordinance Violation 2
Vehicle violations
Accident Property
Mt. Diablo Blvd./1st St.
Auto Burglary
Lafayette Cir./Whitten Ln.
3500 Block Walnut St.
10 Block Green Pl.
10 Block Black Forest Ct.
900 Block Dewing Ave.
3500 Block Walnut St.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Oak Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.
3200 Block Old Tunnel Rd.
Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Reckless Driving
Rohrer Dr./Silverado Dr.
Reliez Station Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./2Nd St.
St Marys Rd./Glenside Dr.
Glenside Dr./Michael Ln.
Stolen Vehicle Recovery

Highland Rd./Sundale Rd.
Tc - Property Damage
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3200 Block Sweet Dr.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Vehicle Theft
Wb Sr 24 At Acalanes Rd.
3700 Block Sundale Rd.
3900 Block Canyon Rd.
Other criminal activity
Commercial Burglary
300 Block Saranap Ave.
Computer Fraud
2900 Block Rohrer Dr.
Fraud False Pretenses
600 Block Huntleigh Dr.
900 Block Hough Ave.
Petty Theft
1000 Block Windsor Dr.
1000 Block Orchard Rd. (2)
1200 Block Sunset Lp.
30 Block Meek Pl.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
600 Block Buzzle Ct.
3700 Block Sundale Rd.
Petty Theft Veh Parts
900 Block Mountain View Dr.
Residential Burglary
1300 Block Martino Rd.
Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Warrant Service
900 Block Hough Ave.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
3200 Block Deer Hill Rd.
800 Block Ava Ct.
3400 Block Golden Gate Way
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24
1000 Block Serrano Ct.
Disturbance-fight
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Disturbing The Peace
3500 Block Boyer Cr
Loud Music
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1700 Block Springbrook Rd.
3900 Block Cowan Rd.
Loud Noise
1000 Block Carol Ln.
Moraga Blvd./3Rd St.
3300 Block Springhill Rd.
3900 Block Rancho Rd.
3400 Block School St.
Brook St./Moraga Rd.
Golden Gate Way/2Nd St.
Loud Party
10 Block Fallen Leaf Ct.
Public Nuisance
3400 Block Golden Gate Way
3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.
Dolores Dr./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Vandalism
500 Block Merriewood
1000 Block 2Nd St.
Other
Animal Cruelty
Panorama Dr./Happy Valley Rd.

Fireworks
Meadow Ln./Franklin Ln.
K9 Outside Assist Request
500 Block Medanos Ave., Bpo
Loitering
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Trespass
3700 Block West Rd.
3300 Block Silver Springs Ct.
Violation Custody Order
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Police Department

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report



July 28 - Aug. 10
Alarms 13
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 8
Traffic 24
Suspicious Circumstances 8
Suspicious Subject 6
Suspicious Vehicle 4
Service to Citizen 61
Patrol Req./Security Check 17
Supplemental Report 12
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 4
Ordinance Violation 2
Vehicle violations
Accident Property
Campolindo High School
Excessive Speed
700 Block Plot
Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd. (2)
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Moraga Way/School St.
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.
Campolindo Dr./Moraga Rd. (2)
Moraga Rd./Buckingham Dr.
Moraga Rd./Ifo Commons
Moraga Rd./Ascot Dr.
Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.
Paseo Linares/Moraga Rd.
Camino Pablo/Hodges Dr.
Devon/Moraga Rd.
Moraga Way/Miramonte Dr. (2)
Moraga Way/Eastwood Dr., Ori
Reckless Driving
St Marys Rd./Rheem Blvd.
Moraga Way/Brookwood Rd., Ori
1000 Block Larch Ave.
Moraga Rd./Ascot Dr.
Moraga Commons Park
Overhill Rd./Glorietta Blvd., Ori.
Vehicle Theft
1400 Block De La Cruz Way
Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses
100 Block Tharp Dr.
Grand Theft
1400 Block Moraga Way
2000 Block Ascot Dr.
Not Available
Ivy Dr./Moraga Way
Not Available
Identity Theft
30 Block Arroyo Dr.

Petty Theft
Seven Eleven
Petty Theft Bicycle
Not Available
Warrant Arrest
Corliss Dr./Mroaga Rd.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
Not Available
Disturbance-fight
Moraga Commons Park
Disturbing The Peace
Fay Hill Rd.
Loud Music
Not Available
Campolindo High School
Campolindo High School
600 Block Moraga Rd.
Loud Noise
30 Block Hardie Dr.
Rheem Valley Shopping Center
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.
Loud Party
100 Block Oxford Dr.
90 Block Courter Ln
Public Nuisance
Library
100 Block Natalie Dr.
200 Block Birchwood Dr.
100 Block Warfield Dr.
Calle La Montana/Paseo Del Rio
1200 Block Rimer Dr.
Millfield Pl./Deerfield Dr.
Vandalism
Moraga Commons Park
Other
Covid19 Violation
Moraga Commons Park
Mentally Ill Commit
200 Block Calle La Montana
400 Block Millfield Pl.
Resist Delay Or Obstruct
School St./Moraga Way

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

July 26 - Aug. 8
Alarms 34
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 6
Traffic 39
Suspicious Circumstances 7
Suspicious Subject 11
Suspicious Vehicle 12
Service to Citizen 94
Patrol Req./Security Check 95
Public/School Assembly Check 4
Supplemental Report 21
Welfare Check 10
Ordinance Violation 4
Vehicle violations
Auto Burglary
60 Block Diablo View Dr.
Orinda Community Center (3)

Hit And Run Misdemeanor
Camino Pablo/Clairemont Ave.
Reckless Driving
St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr., Laf
Camino Pablo/Eb Sr 24
Other criminal activity
Commercial Burglary
100 Block Camino Pablo
Fraud False Pretenses
10 Block Broadview Terrace
Grand Theft
Beverages And More
Identity Theft
60 Block Meadow View Rd.
Misc Burglary
Wildier Sports Fields
Petty Theft
20 Block Orinda Way
Shell Gas Ori
Petty Theft Bicycle
100 Block Canon Dr.
Residential Burglary
300 Block Miner Rd.
Shoplift
Cvs
Warrant Arrest
Wb Sr 24 At Acalanes Rd., Laf
Library
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
50 Block Lost Valley Dr.
Disturbing The Peace
100 Block Oak Rd.
10 Block Crown Ct.
Loud Music
90 Block Diablo View Dr.
Loud Noise
10 Block Stanton Ct.
100 Block Oak Rd.
Loud Party
60 Block Van Ripper Ln.
Camino Don Miguel/Miner Rd.
Public Nuisance
90 Block Rheem Blvd.
100 Block Fiesta Cir.
200 Block Sundown Terrace
50 Block Charles Hill Rd.
100 Block Overhill Rd.
10 Block Las Aromas
40 Block Las Cascadas Rd.
10 Block Abbott Ct.
Europa Hofbrau
Las Palomas/La Espiral
Other
Accident Property
Safeway
Moraga Way/Camino Encinas
10 Block Bonita Ln.
Covid19 Violation
Wildier Sports Complex
Theatre Square
Death Suicide
300 Block Village View Ct.
Other Felony
50 Block Moraga Way
Revoked License
100 Block Canon Dr.
Trespass
Manzanita Dr./Vista Del Mar
Trespass W/ Vehicle
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Future of apartments still undecided

... continued from Page A2

It was a meeting that got off to a tense start with all council members reading statements of impartiality, prompted by the applicant's objection to Vice Mayor Susan Candell's participation in the meeting. Attorney for the developer Bryan Wenter has publicly called for Candell to recuse, accusing her of bias because of her previous public position in opposition to the development, saying she had "crossed the constitutional line," and that they would only answer questions from her under protest. For her part, Candell stated she was coming to the matter with an open mind. "I'm here to listen," she said.

Following presentations from the traffic consultants TJKM, the meeting went from tense to sometimes hostile, as Burks called the fire evacuation plans for the schools, mobilizing 22 buses from County Connections in Concord to evacuate students "absurd."

"This modeling is honestly third-grade modeling," he said.

Burks was also dogged in his questioning of Dave Baker, project manager for the Terraces and particularly of Wenter, asking if he had met with State Sen. Nancy Skinner, or had anything to do with a letter to the council received from her in December urging the city to approve the project. When repeatedly pushed on the subject, Wenter refused to answer, saying it had no relevance to the matter at hand.

The council heard four hours of public comment which continued past 1:30 a.m. the following morning and reflected much of what was said in prior meetings, with many residents – especially those in the northeast section of the city already badly impacted by traffic – voicing their concerns over wildfire evacuation safety.

SL Attorney Richard Drury, pointed to what he described as "new significant impacts" to birds, air quality, the 2019 designation of the area as Very High Fire Severity Danger

which were not present during the original environmental impact report and which he said comes before HAA considerations.

A statement from SL Founder Michael Griffiths summarizes their view: "Save Lafayette continues to believe that serious health and safety issues have not been properly addressed, that the city needs to do a full EIR to address wildfire risk and evacuation, air pollution, traffic congestion, wildlife endangerment and noise pollution, so as to properly protect the citizens of Lafayette."

However those against the project, once clearly in the majority, now find their voices countered by a growing pro-housing group, with many residents speaking in favor of the diversity that low-income housing units could provide, both racially and socioeconomically. A group called Inclusive Lafayette, started by two young men, Jeremy Levine and his brother Benji, has attracted many followers in a short time looking to address social justice.

Addressing comments made during the meeting, Jeremy Levine says that CEQA does not provide valid grounds to deny an HAA-protected project like the Terraces. He points out too that Lafayette is lagging in providing sufficient low-income housing as required by the Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

"We are supposed to approve 78 low-income units by the end of 2023. The Terraces, with 63 units marked for the low-income category as defined by state law, will contribute approximately 80% of the units our city is supposed to approve in that category," Levine said.

"The council has a straightforward decision to make," added Levine, "a decision I am confident they will make based on available evidence and the law. No public commenter identified anything remotely close to a 'specific, adverse impact on the public

health and safety' based on available evidence as required to deny the Terraces proposal under the HAA."

A statement issued by Wenter on behalf of O'Brien Homes after the meeting read, "We are pleased with the council's thorough discussion of the Terraces application and we appreciate the hard work by city staff and consultants. We were also encouraged to hear so many community members speak passionately in support of new rental housing in Lafayette and look forward to the city's final decision in two weeks."

Whatever the outcome of the city's final meeting, it is almost certain the matter will end up in litigation. Wenter has previously warned that litigation could cost as much as \$15.75 million if courts find the city acted in bad faith in denying the project.

Parking on El Toyonal

... continued from Page A6

MOFD Chief David Winkacker, who attended the Zoom council meeting while fighting a fire in northern California, said that when it comes to access, every foot counts. City Manager Steve Salomon pointed out that the requirement will only be effective on red flag days, a relatively small number of days per year, on average from 20 to 30. The main topic of the discussion was how to allow parking on private spaces created by homeowners living on El Toyonal. The council is contemplating how to allow the use of such spaces, while at the same time permitting the widest emergency access. The council members and staff discussed whether the space in which parking is prohibited should be measured from the middle of

the road or from the edge. As there is not a continuous center line on El Toyonal, the measurement from the edge of the roadway was considered the clearest. How much clearance was debated. Three feet gets awfully close to the pavement, according to Director of Public Works Larry Theis, five feet would be better, in his opinion, while 10 feet would be great but would defeat the purpose of allowing some parking spaces to be used.

Vice Mayor Amy Worth brought up the tragedy of the Highlands fire, when there was a horrifying loss of life, she said, and many who lost their lives were stopped alongside the roadway but were unable to evacuate the area of the fire. It is very important to implement a plan for this year, as the fire season is already upon us, she said.



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AUHSD Board adopts new policy on racial equity, interdistrict transfers still contentious



Photo Pippa Fisher

A crowd gathers Aug. 4 in front of the AUHSD office in support of interdistrict transfers.

By Sophie Braccini

In the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd and the resulting conscious awakening of racial inequity and biases, parents and students demanded that the Acalanes Union High School District revise its equity policy. A group including students, parents and teachers, led by AUHSD Associate Superintendent Amy McNamara, worked over the summer to have a new policy in place for the start of the school year. Approved at the beginning of August, the policy's three main topics addressed are: a new code of conduct, a new bias incident reporting, and diversifying the curriculum.

But a group of students, graduates, and other stakeholders in the

AUHSD are asking for the board to restore the interdistrict transfer policy that was suspended in 2018. Their concern is that without it, the local high schools will remain segregated, and diversity and inclusion will suffer.

The governing board believes that addressing the needs of all district students requires a commitment to racial equity and that race needs to cease to be a reliable predictor of student achievement. McNamara added that it is essential that the district interrupts institutional racism in its programs and activities. Ellide Smith, Campolindo Parents Club Diversity and Inclusion (DNI) committee chair, stated that the Campo group, along with the equivalent groups at the

other AUHSD school sites were very influential in the formation of this new policy.

The new code of conduct prohibits racial slurs, epithets, symbols, and other forms of racist speech. To enact this policy the district is putting into place a bias or bullying reporting system that any student can activate, anonymously or not. If the offended party provides his or her name, there will be an immediate follow up and support system provided by staff. Clear and timely consequences are also defined for infringement of the new code. Consequences include no more participation in sports and clubs, and no more letters of recommendation for college.

Special attention will be paid to social media, on and off campus, and students will be informed about the consequences of inappropriate posts.

The other policy change adopted by the AUHSD involves revising curriculum and instructional materials to accurately reflect perspectives of the racial and ethnic diversity among students. The historical Eurocentric curricular and course offerings' institutional bias will be examined and addressed.

Specific classes, training, and seminars are being offered to all students to examine racial identity, white privilege and institutional racism. Discussions started in the first week of school with teachers trained by Dr. Lori Watson, equity transformation specialist. McNamara hopes to also engage the parents through the wellness group and parents' groups so the conversations can continue at home.

Smith noted that the new policy is a step in the right direction. She adds that the next step is properly informing and transparently taking action in the spirit of this new policy. This is an area that Smith says many feel has not always been the district's strongest suit. She is glad that what this policy does is allow parents and the community to hold the district and the high schools accountable.

The district also committed to hiring a diverse staff reflecting the stu-

dent racial and ethnic demographics, however the Acalanes Union Coalition for Transfer Students (AUCTS) is saying that without reinstating the interdistrict transfer, this new equity policy is pointless.

The group of AUCTS supporters gathered at the AUHSD office Aug. 4 to ask the board to reexamine the interdistrict transfer policy that was abolished in 2018. Superintendent John Nickerson explained that the policy that allowed for a number of students from other districts to ask to join the AUHSD had to be canceled for budgetary reasons. About 50 transfer students at the time were part of Miramonte and Campolindo high schools. The AUCTS argued that ending the policy did not create any savings and that asking for it to be reinstated to fill schools to capacity would not cost anything to the district, while it would enrich the high school experience, exposing students to a more realistic picture of the American culture, outside the Lamorinda bubble.

The board members unanimously approved the new policy but rejected the idea of reinstating interdistrict transfers at this time, since the change would not be effective before the 2021-22 school year. They committed to reexamining the topic but would not decide when it would come back to the board.

Smith explained that the DNI parents group does not have an official stance on interdistrict transfers and that it will be an agenda item on their next general group forum to discuss. Her personal opinion is that she is against any policy that perpetuates institutional or systemic racism and discrimination, but she adds that the data that she has received from the district has been murky and that it is a complex problem with no easy solution.

The AUCTS has promised to stay on this topic and to work with the board to start the conversation again in the fall. In the meantime, the group is polling students and parents to gauge their support.

In Memory

Bradford Pace Whittaker

November 23, 1949 – June 14, 2020

Resident of Moraga



Following an incredibly brave four-and-a-half-year battle with pancreatic cancer, Brad Whittaker, aged 70, passed away at home with his loving wife Sally, adored daughter Cary, and ever faithful companion Duke by his side. Brad never complained and will forever be remembered for his upbeat, positive spirit, love of family, loyalty to friends, and warm sense of humor.

Born the morning before Thanksgiving in 1949, it's no wonder that Brad had an affinity for pumpkin pie with loads of whipped cream. He spent a happy childhood in Lafayette, the third of four children born to Robert Austin Whittaker and Jane Pace Whittaker. Growing up Brad relished his family trips to Mendocino (especially the Donut Shop in Fort Bragg), enjoyed horseback riding and caring for the

Whittaker horses, looked forward to fun Sierra visits in Twain Harte, and had terrific memories as a Scout in Lafayette Troop 204.

In 1962, a fortuitous family move to the Sacramento area brought the Whittakers to Carmichael, where Brad would eventually graduate from La Sierra High School. Not only would Brad make lifelong friends in this new school, but at the age of 16 he met his future wife, 15-year-old Sally Ryland. As their relationship progressed, it was no coincidence that Brad followed Sally to the University of California at Berkeley and then also worked at the UC Berkeley Alumni camp, the Lair of the Bear. Brad fit right in at the Lair, and his exploits as Camp Blue Head Cook were epic. These summers, along with his time as a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, forged lasting friendships and amazing college memories—Go Bears!

Upon graduating from CAL in 1973 with a B.S. in Business Administration, Brad did some traveling and worked at a number of diverse companies. Ultimately, he settled down finding his niche in sales and later, specifically in printing. Along the way, Brad married his high school sweetheart Sally in 1981, bought a home in the idyllic town of Moraga, and shortly thereafter started a family. A son, Reed Austin, was joyously welcomed in 1984, and then a sweet daughter, Cary Glenn, was born in 1988. Brad was a devoted dad and loved his kids dearly. As they grew, he was busy each weekend driving from swim meet to soccer field, baseball diamond to tennis court, and finally, from rugby match to volleyball tournament. Brad also juggled his own athletic pursuits. At age 39 he joined the Orinda RoadRunners, a welcoming running club that ironically ended every run with coffee and donuts. Brad ran at the crack of dawn five or six mornings a week, entered marathons, and thoroughly enjoyed the group's camaraderie.

No matter how hectic life was, Brad always made sure his family vacationed each summer at the Lair of the Bear. Just as he and Sally had loved their Blue and Gold camp experience, it soon became a shared passion for Reed and Cary. For some, Disneyland may be the happiest place on Earth, but for the Whittakers—it was the Lair. The family spent 17 straight years in Camp Gold's tent #36 and later, both kids were proud to become Lair staffers—just like their folks.

Clearly, Brad never forgot his scouting roots or the thrill of cooking huge quantities of Lair food. In 2002 when Reed's Troop 212 needed a head cook at Camp Timberwolf, Brad was more than happy to help. Working with a sensational group of Scout moms, the kitchen crew sliced and diced to Brad's favorite country music. The Dixie Chicks were blasted from the mess hall, as his team prepared more than 33,000 camp meals over the course of nearly two decades. Sysco, as Brad was aptly nicknamed, volunteered countless hours at Timberwolf, served on the Camp Timberwolf Board, and truly loved every minute.

Brad is survived by his wife of 39 years, Sally, daughter Cary, brother Bob Whittaker, sisters Christie Gore and Pam Dunckelmann, as well as many in-laws, nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was predeceased by his parents Austin and Jane, and his deeply missed son Reed, tragically killed in 2013. A celebration of life will be held at a future date when all those who loved Brad are able to gather together in remembrance of a genuinely good guy.

The family suggests memorial gifts be made to Alameda County Community Food Bank, 7900 Edgewater Drive, Oakland, Camp Timberwolf, in care of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, and Rescue One Foundation, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.

As seen in Lafayette...



A blowout from a PG&E transformer for a high power line caused a fire Aug. 15 at the intersection of Glen and N. Thompson in Lafayette. Neighbors attempted to extinguish the flames before firefighters arrived, according to property owner Lucy Beck.

Photo courtesy Lucy Beck

As seen in Moraga...



Moraga-Orinda Fire District personnel responded Aug. 16 to a vegetation fire located on the Rheem Boulevard hillside near Saint Mary's College. Photo provided John Garvey

Letters to the editor

Not a new tax now. Please.

Our taxes are already very high. On Aug. 4 the City Council voted to put a 1% sales tax, lasting 20 years, on the ballot. The City says that this will generate \$2.4 million of revenue per year. This tax, the largest single tax in Orinda's history, will be imposed at a time of great financial uncertainty for both businesses and individuals, in the midst of a rampant pandemic.

The City plans to use these funds to maintain Orinda's public residential streets and some public storm drains. But it has ignored the private street resident's pleas that all Orinda streets be treated fairly. The City is calling this tax an "essential services" tax, but it is only "essential" to maintain 64 miles of public residential streets, not all 94 miles.

The City is also suggesting that possibly 5% of the tax may fund fire prevention but they will not commit to that. The tax will be a "general" tax. Once it is paid, the City can use it for anything it wishes. Conversely a five year parcel tax of \$150 would be committed to fuel reduction, would generate more funds, and could be proposed at any time. Alternatively, a general tax could prudently be delayed until 2022, when the current 1/2 cent tax expires. It is clear that fuel reduction is essential and popular, but it is being used as a sweetener for a very large money grab.

This is the wrong tax for the wrong uses at the wrong time.

All the City Council seems to understand is winning and losing. If that means making the City "lose" this time, so be it. It will only be a temporary loss which could generate an equitable win for everyone later, even at the cost of delaying some fuel reduction for a year.

Charles Porges
Orinda

Downtown Orinda: Five Points for Consideration

The latest three meetings of the City Council's Downtown Subcommittee have provided thoughtful guidance for updating Orinda's aging Downtown and its Master Plan from 1987. Proposed changes to zoning, circulation (including traffic), and adherence to state mandates for housing are being carefully considered. Props to our city council, planning commission and staff.

Following are five points of opinion, taken from various voices at the meetings, that I support and hope to elevate to the public for further discussion, renderings/modeling, and review:

(1) Re-examine Zoning Codes. Enforce Type I (restaurant and retail) zoning on primary streets: Moraga Way, Orinda Way from 25A to the Country Club bridge, and Camino So-brante. Prioritize our Downtown's best access, visibility, and traffic-count areas to ensure retail and restaurant success. City consultants should render/model those corridors specifically, for public review.

(2) Allow housing in the Downtown Office (DO) District with emphasis on parcels along the north side of Altarinda Road (near the Masonic Center, for reference). Allow mixed-use housing in the Downtown Commercial (DC) District only where larger or assembled parcels, along with building height setbacks and topography changes, mitigate the appearance of housing height/mass.

(3) Prioritize redevelopment at the two "bookends" of our downtown: the Country Club block at the north end of the Vil-

lage, and the CVS/ BevMo/Wells Fargo block at the south end of the Theater District. Each of these sites has sufficient acreage to support mixed-use housing and accommodate parking on-site. Each has a locational advantage as an entrypoint to our Downtown.

(4) Leverage the city's in-lieu fees from 25A into a public/private partnership for a 2-3 level public parking garage, located in a central area to benefit all the small retailers in the Village.

(5) Consider relinquishing the street of Avenida de Orinda, instead using it as a public space to improve upon the properties around it and for the community. Activate the current dead-end street into a walkable public plaza or ingress/egress to connect two vibrant commercial blocks.

Each of these points is worthy of ongoing discussion within the context of our downtown plan.

Marianne Moser
Orinda

Oppose Orinda's Proposed Sales Tax

Fair minded Orindans should reject the City Council's proposed 20-year, one percent sales tax for the following reasons:

1) Now, in the middle of a once-in-a-century medical pandemic and associated economic turmoil is NOT the time to embark on Orinda's largest-ever (over \$60 million) infrastructure program. While many may be able to absorb the average cost of \$340 a year; not all will be able to.

2) The tax is being sold as a "safety" tax (by the support group Safer Orinda) but it is not. So far, out of the total \$60 million cost, the City has only identified \$500-750,000 going to wildfire prevention. Since MOFD refuses to provide adequate fire prevention services, the City needs to do a lot more than this. Until it figures out how to and is willing to dedicate funds for this purpose, no new taxes should be voted for.

3) The City is calling the tax an "essential services" tax. It is nothing of the sort. The majority of the tax will go to maintain 64 miles of public residential streets (home to 4 of 5 City Council members). If the maintenance of a residential street is an "essential" service; why does the City continue to withhold that service from the 30 miles of streets, home to 1,500 Orinda families, it calls "private" because it will not allow them into the public road network?

4) The City currently has over \$3 million per year at its disposal for infrastructure and wildfire fuel reduction. It does not need a new tax for this at this inappropriate time.

This is the wrong tax and the wrong time to impose it. Tell the City Council this by voting no on this tax.

For more information see www.OrindaRoadFacts.info

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Improve walkability through downtown development

We urge our fellow citizens to support — quietly or vocally — but persistently — revitalizing our small downtown in Orinda. Our City is at last seriously starting to move on this issue, well, to WALK-the-talk.

We two are 45-year residents of Orinda. So, we are hardly "Young Turks" supporting hasty change. Indeed, real change to our City will be, should be, slow, careful. Improvements will realistically come only when, first, the "plate is set" by the City Council, Plan-

ning Commission and city departments, then second, when private owners perceive that the "rules of the game" will permit them to meaningfully spend money to improve their properties — and our community — or to sell to those who will. Improvements that we hope for will be seen most vividly over time — by our children and grandchildren.

The City Council plans to arrive at some good decisions in 2021. Long way off? No, not in the context of the City's lack of action in the past decades.

The Past (tired, drowsy): In a quarter of century, Orinda has had no new buildings in its commercial area. Not since Theater Square. Only two ... two! ... of the remaining commercial buildings have been renovated since then. Stagnation. The City has a well-deserved reputation of being anti-commercial improvement.

To the contrary, in our view, livable, active city downtowns in America are always, gradually, persistently renewing themselves.

The Future: Orinda Village in particular, is too far "apart." It can and should be more "walkable." Walkability raises property values, increases commerce and — vitally — enhances a sense of community. "Connect Orinda" has made some positive steps.

But, we can do more: Careful density changes for residential, business units. Enhance, encourage mixed-use properties. In the distant future, open up San Pablo creek to viewing, walking. Such will help with walkability, community. Indeed, we have already two large communities downtown who can walk...Eden Housing residents and the Orinda Senior Villagers. But, as well, we need newly-retired and "workforce" housing (teachers, police, fire personnel). The opportunity is right here. Right now.

Give voice to hope. Give voice to renewal. Get ready to walk ... our emerging town!

Dave and Sandy Anderson
Orinda

Thumbs Down for the Downtown Precise Plan

The recent letter from Kirsten Larsen of What's Up Downtown Orinda (published Aug. 5) manifests a lack of understanding of how state housing laws affect Orinda.

First, the Downtown Precise Plan, which will increase density and raise the height limit (possibly to 70 feet) has now been exposed as a plan to increase housing density downtown, in the hope that retail will follow. Contrary to Ms. Larsen's prophecy, the DPP will not attract "high level development which will in turn entice an attractive mix of new businesses and increase vitality in our Downtown District." Instead, the DPP will attract housing developers bent on maximizing profit, who will do so by making 10% of the new housing units affordable. Such a project will not be "high level" but instead will be subject only to objective design standards. Most of the units will be small studios or one bedroom. If the project is within one-half mile of BART (approximately to the fire station), the City cannot require the developer to add any parking.

The retail spaces at street level in the new project will likely remain empty. Retail is dying, and it seems likely that new businesses, and shoppers, will be deterred by the resulting lack of parking caused by adding hundreds of units without parking. Meanwhile, our existing small businesses will have been demolished, and their owners

will have had their livelihood permanently destroyed.

Second, the DPP will not "allow Orinda to make decisions on how to incorporate housing into our Downtown district in a thoughtful way that is in keeping with the City's unique personality and aesthetic." In fact, under existing SB 35, it won't be long before a new project containing 10% affordable housing is considered "by right," which means it is entitled to streamlined, ministerial processing subject only to objective zoning and design standards. The only "decisions" that will be made will be whether those objective standards are met; "thoughtful" consideration and subjective judgment is banned under SB 35. Increasing the density and raising the height limit will irrevocably change whatever "personality" Orinda has, and certainly will change Orinda's "aesthetic," for the worse.

Orinda's downtown will not be in the hands of its citizens but instead in the hands of developers.

Nick Waranoff
Orinda

A vote for Carl Anduri

I encourage you to vote for Carl Anduri for City Council in the upcoming election, and am writing to let you know why I think Lafayette would benefit from his leadership. I have deep admiration for Carl. Some of you who have recently moved to our City may not be aware that he has a proven and well-respected record as both City Councilmember and Mayor of Lafayette. For 10 years, from 2002 – 2012, Carl served on the Lafayette City Council. He was Mayor in 2005 and 2011. Prior to that time, he served six years on the Lafayette Planning Commission. Carl retired from the City Council when the demands of his job – being president of a global network of law firms – increased. He has recently retired, and is willing to again commit his time and tremendous skills to help guide our community.

Carl has many assets. Among them are his thoughtful, balanced approach to problem-solving. He listens to all sides, takes great time in researching issues and is clear and respectful in his communication. He has proven to be fiscally responsible. He cares about people, the community and our wonderful rich environment, and is open to new ideas. In 2004, as chairperson of the Acalanes High School Science Department, I was granted funding by LASF (now LPIE) to create an Environmental Science program. Students in the newly created course wanted to become more involved in local policy. Carl came to my classroom and met with students, where they discussed creating a Climate Action Plan for Lafayette. This meeting led to the creation of an Environmental Task Force, which exists to this day to help guide City policy.

During the next few years, Lafayette will create a new General Plan. And during this time of pandemic, we will be faced with unforeseen challenges as a community. I will miss the valuable service of Mike Anderson and Steven Bliss, who have recently decided to step down as councilmembers, and am grateful to Carl for offering to step back into City leadership.

Janet Thomas
Lafayette

Orinda private roads – What is fair?

Orinda has been hearing a lot recently from a vocal group of its private road homeowners. This group argues it is "unfair" that private road homeowners must pay taxes for the maintenance of Orinda's public roads AND pay to maintain their private roads.

Obviously, no one in Orinda was compelled to purchase a home on a private road. The fact that a private road homeowner has this dual and "unfair" obligation presumably was (or should have been) taken into account in determining whether to purchase, and what to pay for, their home.

Consider, for example, fairness in the context of Wilder. Orinda approved Wilder on the condition that the development's homeowners, via their HOA, be solely responsible for all future road maintenance in Wilder. If Orinda had instead agreed to assume the cost of maintaining these roads, the fees charged to the developer would have increased substantially. In turn, the original purchase price of each home in Wilder would have increased materially.

I don't think it can be credibly argued that it would now be i) "fair" to the city to give up, for nothing in return, the road maintenance arrangement it bargained for when approving the Wilder development or ii) "fair" to non-Wilder homeowners to now increase their taxes in order to relieve Wilder residents of their obligation to maintain Wilder's roads.

With apologies to my friends who live on private roads,

Jim Evert
Orinda

Donate to the Food Bank

The pandemic and the recession have dramatically increased the need for emergency food. The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano buys a significant amount of the food it distributes, so a reliable stream of revenue is even more important now. I have signed up via the Food Bank website to have my credit card charged every month for an amount I am comfortable with. This is the most convenient way to help the Food Bank serve 270,000 people a month during this time. Please consider doing this. The need is great and the need is now.

Dale Walwark
Moraga

Vote Gina Dawson for Lafayette City Council

I am thrilled that Gina Dawson is running for the Lafayette City Council. She led our community's effort to save hundreds of mature trees and heritage oaks from PG&E's chainsaws, and provided jaw-dropping evidence of PG&E's exposed gas pipelines and neglected maintenance. Gina pushed for transparency, integrity, and follow-through in her efforts to protect the safety of residents. She is a strong community organizer who knows how to be appropriately tough on the issues yet kind and respectful. I trust her judgment, admire her integrity and urge Lafayette residents to seat her on Lafayette's City Council on Nov. 3.

MaryJo Cass
Lafayette resident 20 years

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Save Local Journalism bill unanimously passes Senate committee

By Sora O'Doherty

A bill that would further delay the deleterious effects of Assembly Bill 5 on the newspaper industry was passed unanimously by the California Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee on Aug. 11. The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Blanca Rubio.

AB 323 extends the newspaper carrier exemption from Dynamex for two additional years, allowing news outlets to stabilize from COVID-19 losses. It also requires state agencies to give preference to local news organizations, specifically ethnic media and community organizations, in contracts and subcontracts for marketing and outreach advertising services.

Introducing the bill, Rubio said, "Our free media — one of our most cherished constitutional rights — is at risk of extinction at a time when local information is critical for our communities and the rebuilding of our economy." According to Rubio, AB 323 will prevent "news deserts" by providing a lifeline to California's community and ethnic media outlets.

Local Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan said, "I'm a proud coauthor of AB 323 because now more than ever local journalism is critical to keeping our citizens informed and engaged. I look forward to the bill coming before me in the Assembly."

Numerous witnesses spoke in favor of AB 323, including California Black Media, the Los Angeles County

Business Federation and the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Witnesses urged the committee to consider the importance of community journalism as the state addresses COVID recovery.

AB 323 is now headed to the Senate Appropriations Committee for consideration.



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New PG&E power poles installed along St. Mary's Road



Photo Andy Schreck
An old PG&E power pole, left, is dwarfed by a new one, right, along St. Mary's Road.

By Vera Kochan

Anyone driving past the St. Mary's Road and Moraga Road intersection in Moraga will have noticed what appears to be a bunch of telephone poles lying on a mat in the vacant lot usually occupied in December by Bob's Christmas Trees.

According to Pacific Gas and Electric Co. spokesperson Tamar Sarkissian, the replacement poles are part of an electric hardening project. They are lying on rubber mats in order to preserve the lot surface, which is being leased. PG&E is wrapping up the work from the Lafayette Community Center's gas transmission project which began June 1. Electric and vegetation mitigation all along St. Mary's Road is part of that project.

"PG&E has been working to harden its electric system," stated Sarkissian. "For this particular project, that includes replacing approximately 80 electric poles with stronger and more resilient poles and installing 11,000 feet of larger, covered power lines in an effort to upgrade and strengthen the electric system to help reduce the threat of wildfire. Crews also installed down-guys and anchors, as well as making necessary equipment upgrades. This work is also part of efforts to reinforce the circuit between the Moraga and Rossmoor substations."

The old poles will be replaced by stronger poles, often made of composite materials. New, thicker power lines will replace old thin ones. They will be insulated, making them more resistant to weather, wind and broken branches.

When asked why the new poles are substantially taller than the old ones, Sarkissian explained, "Adding additional conductor and circuit requires taller, thicker and more resilient poles to support the heavier infrastructure. Taller poles are also needed because spacing is required to install double circuit on the poles."

New or old, Lamorinda real estate sales are on fire

... continued from Page A1

Long in the planning stage, J&J Ranch is now actively building. Lots in the development are selling from \$1.2 million, and homes from \$3.5 million. The sites, which surround the historic Moraga Adobe above Del Ray Elementary School range from a half-acre to more than 3 acres. According to Dana Green of Dana Green Team realtors, J&J Ranch will have a total of 13 luxury homes; six are currently under construction. Three lots are already sold and two are pending. All of the parcels will be built by Brannagh Development.

Part of the deal that allowed the development to move forward is an agreement with the Friends of the Moraga Adobe that allows them to purchase the historic building and the developers will renovate it. The Friends will then manage the property for some public access as a museum or event location.

Dana Green Team is also working on Lucas Ranch, a luxury development in Lafayette. Jeff Stone, the developer, said they have been working on the new development for a year and a half and the first home will be coming for sale in a month in a half. The development consists of eight homes in total, with selling prices ranging from \$4 million to \$6 million. Each owner will share in the 52-acre Lucas Ranch Nature Preserve. The development in total covers 88 acres, and each of the eight lots will be between 2 and 7 acres.

"When COVID hit," Stone said, "I was wondering if it was going to be very bad on us financially, but I have experienced the exact opposite." He finds that people are very interested in moving to the East Bay. Three CEOs agreed to purchase up front, he said, adding, "More buyers are coming after my real estate, escaping San Francisco."

In Moraga, Cindy Betzel, community sales manager of Bellavista off Rheem Boulevard, said that the pandemic caused the development to completely sell out. The development includes 27 homes, the last 10 of which sold in the past month. Betzel said that the homes, which sold from over \$2 million each, mostly went to young families, although a few were bought by "empty-nesters." The pandemic prompted people to look for larger homes with yards for the children, good schools and safety of working from home.

"Quite a bit of medical staff, either doctors or nurses, bought four houses in a row," she said. The project covers 12 acres, leaving over 100 acres as open space.

Antonio and Jennifer Araujo and their two children, ages 2 and 6, recently moved to Orinda. Both adults work in the medical field, and they moved after renting in Concord. Fortunately, living in Orinda means that they counter commute to their jobs in Walnut Creek and Jennifer can partly work from home. They too feel that the market in early spring was really competitive, with really high prices because of the limited number of houses available.

Marco Huerta and Jane Lee and their 5-month-old son Sebastian moved to Moraga about a month ago. They stumbled upon Lamorinda, and found everyone to be really friendly and welcoming. He works in design tech and she is currently the stay-at-home mom, but formerly worked in management consulting. Sebastian was born at the end of February, just before the shelter-in-place order took effect, so Marco went from parental leave to working from home. Marco talked to his realtor about possibly buying a scooter and commuting on BART to his company in Mission Bay, a block away from the new Chase Center.

For Alicia Harper and her husband, Steve, it was more the boredom of sheltering in place that led them to their dream home in Moraga. The San Francisco natives who had been living in Montclair were spending their time looking at Redfin when they saw their house pop up. The home in the Campolindo neighborhood is on a large lot overlooking the Lafayette Reservoir and backing onto the ridge trail. They were attracted to the better schools in Lamorinda, but what really sold them was the house with access to the trail. Steve is a cyclist and goes through the canyon sometimes.

Alicia is a baker who used to work in San Francisco restaurants, and had been hoping to start working for a small catering business this year, when both children would be in school. Now she is the primary teacher/caretaker for their kids, but is grateful to do that from their new home.

~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Slim pickings as volunteer pear pickers work together while staying apart



Volunteers Gisele Purdy, left, and daughter Kaia Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Moraga's annual pear harvest to benefit The Food Bank of

Contra Costa and Solano saw plenty of volunteers, but not enough pears to pick. The Moraga Park

Foundation-sponsored two-day event was narrowed down to one short morning on Aug. 8 when it became evident that within a matter of hours all of the fruit had been removed from the century old trees located on Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, St. Monica's Catholic Church and Bruzzone properties.

Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club event lead Karen Reed estimates that this year's haul came to approximately 3,000 to 4,000 pounds; considerably less than last year's record-breaking 14,731 pounds. The lack of a substantial rainfall this past winter can be blamed. However, Reed quoted her grandmother's philosophy in that "whenever there's a bumper crop one year, the trees need a year to regroup."

A battalion of 265 volunteers from around the community, including organizations such as Boys Team Charity and 178 members of National Charity League, came dressed in obligatory face masks and kept their social distance with each familial group working on a tree together. For liability reasons ladders were not permitted, but workers were supplied with fruit picking poles and cardboard boxes to fill.

Controversies over new therapeutic homes in Lafayette



Photo courtesy Evolve

From left: Brandi Ellis, MA, LMFT, Clinical Program Director, Evolve Lafayette, and Tyra Bennett, MA, LMFT, Primary Therapist, Evolve Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini

Two new therapeutic treatment residential centers for adolescents, Evolve on Panorama Drive and Monte Nido on Ivanhoe Avenue, are set to open in the coming weeks in the affluent Lafayette hills. Such centers bring much-needed services to teens suffering from eating disorders, depression, anxiety and addictions, and are permitted use and protected under the Fair Housing Act, however these facilities are not always welcome near homes and schools.

Residents from the Happy Valley neighborhood nestled on a narrow road expressed concerns about the adolescent mental health residential treatment home on Panorama Drive during the June 22 city council meeting's public comment portion. Concerns predominantly focused on traffic impacts, parking, and emergency services access. Worries were also expressed over housing troubled teens only 400 feet away from the children at Happy Valley Elementary School.

Under state law, residential group homes for six individuals or less must be treated as single-family residential use, with the same zoning standards applied for construction, parking, use, etc. They also need to abide by the same regulations that would apply to any other residence or resident, but the city cannot call these centers out and regulate differently as a specific type of use.

Judy Sylvia, chief business development officer for Evolve,

responded at the June meeting that the center is fully compliant with the law as a residential treatment facility for 12- to 17-year-old children, with a maximum of six at a time. She added that the 11 trips anticipated generated by staff were negligible compared to the thousands of cars passing the school every day. She confirmed that staff shift hours would not conflict with school arrival and departure times. Sylvia also indicated that the property chosen had more than enough on-site parking for all.

According to Sylvia, teens accepted at the center are admitted providing they have had a level of acceptance of the treatment, and violent teens would not be admitted. She stressed that the center is a place for young people struggling with anxiety, depression or substance abuse, or who may have lost their will to live to seek help. The center focuses on treatment models like Dialectical Behavior Therapy and Cognitive Behavior Therapy as primary modalities in the individual, family and group therapy sessions. According to Evolve, DBT is shown by research to reduce self-harming and suicidal behaviors in teens. Yael Klein for Evolve said that the services also incorporate psychiatry sessions, addiction recovery support, and experiential therapies like music therapy, yoga, art therapy, hiking, equine-assisted therapy and physical fitness.

Linda Mackinson, a Lamorinda resident and psychology social worker, expressed satisfaction that such a center

would open locally. She said that there are many kids in Lamorinda, as in other communities, who suffer from mental health issues and that having a facility in their own community was needed.

At the same time, a second company Monte Nido has also purchased a home on Ivanhoe Avenue to create an eating disorder treatment center. The company indicated that it will open as soon as the state gives it its license and will accommodate up to 10 clients at a time.

Monte Nido was founded 24 years ago by Carolyn Costin with a vision to provide a homelike setting conducive to healing for those seeking eating disorder treatment. Monte Nido offers residential and day treatment options to clients at any stage in the recovery process from an eating disorder such as bulimia, anorexia, binge eating disorder and/or exercise dependency, as well as co-occurring substance use, trauma, and psychiatric presentations. According to Nierah Jinwright, handling communications for Monte Nido, the underlying philosophy of the centers is a belief in every individual's ability to achieve full recovery through holistic treatment that encompasses clinical, medical and nutritional elements.

... continued on Page B4

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A tasty citrus trio of flavor for your turkey tenderloin



Citrus Turkey Tenderloin

Photo Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

Turkey is anything but boring! We love turkey and it gives chicken a break for those who don't eat red meat or pork. It's accommodating and delicious and lends itself to so many different styles of marinades, sauces or condiments. Even though turkey most often signals Thanksgiving, we love grilling up a whole turkey or tenderloins any time of the year. This

recipe is simple but very flavorful and can be grilled up in a matter of minutes on the barbecue. A citrusy trio of lemon, lime, and orange juice combine with crushed pepitas, cilantro, chipotle, and cumin to create a tangy and smoky flavor. Just the smell of the marinade is delicious. Whisk a teaspoon or so of cornstarch into the reserved marinade and boil until slightly thickened for a perfect finishing sauce.

Citrus Turkey Tenderloin

(Serves 4 as a main course)

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. turkey tenderloin
 Marinade:
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/2 cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
 1/4 cup fresh-squeezed lime juice
 1/4 cup fresh-squeezed lemon juice
 2 tablespoons minced cilantro leaves
 1/4 cup roasted pepitas (green pumpkin seeds), pureed in the food processor
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 1 teaspoon sea salt
 1 teaspoon chipotle powder
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
 1 teaspoon oregano
 1 teaspoon black pepper
 1 teaspoon cornstarch for final sauce

DIRECTIONS

Mix all marinade ingredients except the cornstarch in a mixing bowl. Stir with a whisk to combine well. Set aside 1/2 cup of the marinade for the glaze. Cut tenderloin in half lengthwise (i.e. butterfly the tenderloin). Place in a container with a tight-fitting lid. Pour marinade over tenderloin and marinate for at least 2 hours.

When ready to grill, preheat grill to medium-hot. Remove turkey from marinade and place directly on grill and cook for about 5 minutes per side, or until a meat thermometer registers 165 F when inserted into the center of the tenderloin. Meanwhile, heat remaining marinade in a small sauce pan. Slowly whisk in cornstarch and cook, stirring all the while, until sauce thickens slightly to coat the back of a spoon. This makes a perfect glaze for the tenderloin. Remove meat from grill and drizzle glaze over meat.



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

'My Dog Stupid' – a French film based on an American novella



Image provided

By Sophie Braccini

In the French film "My Dog Stupid" – released by the International Film Showcase and now available online – Henry is a man in his mid-50s who feels he has become a loser. Who is responsible for his painful back, his failures, and his lack of inspiration?

His four children of course. He used to be a successful author, 25 years ago. Now he is full of regrets, thinks of the cars he will never drive, and of the women he will never love. As he wails into self-pity, an enormous, very obnoxious dog shows up in his garden. He is delighted by the bad rule-breaking behavior of the dog, that wreaks havoc among the family members, especially with Cécile, his wife, whose unwavering devotion starts to crack. Once the children and the wife are gone, will inspiration return?

Yvan Attal, the director and main character in the movie, got his inspiration for the film from John Fante's eponymous novella. Like Fante in his story, Attal is not afraid to bare his worst, as a disappointed and disappointing self-centered aging male. The leading tone in the first part of the movie is ironic, even sarcastic and often very funny. The dog is obnoxious; the kids, in their early 20s, are disappointing – they constantly ask for money and hang on the beautiful family home like parasites. The still pretty wife takes anti-depressants and drinks a bit too much. Yet, they are affluent, live in a wonderful home close to the beach and seem to have a full rewarding

social life. How could they be so miserable?

The first part of the film questions with humor a central myth of middle-class life: having children does not in fact bring fulfillment and happiness, it creates boring routines, adds stressing responsibilities, and crushes creativity.

The second undertone is bittersweet. Henry and Cécile have been married for 25 years. A lot of things have aged, including their ability to surprise each other. The nostalgic relationship of the couple as the children leave the nest, is depicted gently and in a very endearing manner. It is a hard transition, and it is shown in the movie with a tender touch. Cécile, who needs anti-depression medication and stimulation, is emblematic of women in their 50s feeling the passage of time, still needing to feel desired, and wanting to have fulfillment beyond having been a mother for all these years. Charlotte Gainsbourg who plays Cécile in the movie brings a lightness and a charm to her character. Attal is as moody as ever, as well as funny

and caustic. The children are obnoxiously perfect.

One interesting twist to the movie is that Attal has been in real life Gainsbourg's partner for 25 years; they have three children, one of them, Ben Attal, plays one of their children, Raphaël. The closeness is such that people have wondered if there was not some autobiographical undertone to the movie.

Attal explained in an interview to a French network that he had read Fante's book 20 years ago without really connecting, but when he did it again recently, after 25 years living with the same woman and raising three kids, he empathized with Henry as he had himself become an "old fart." Both he and Gainsbourg said they had a lot of fun playing these caricatural roles together.

This touching reflection about an aging couple is in fact full of hope as, by the end of the movie, a chapter opens for all of them that will hopefully bring forth a new level of self-realization. Attal said in the interview mentioned earlier that this movie was a love letter to Gainsbourg.

This and other international movies can be accessed on the International Film Showcase website at <http://internationalshowcase.org/>. The films range from \$10 to \$12.

Looking Good in Lamorinda Pandemic style



SewNow in Lafayette

Photos Moya Stone

By Moya Stone

As the pandemic rages on, we move from season to season looking forward to a time when we can get back to something resembling our pre-pandemic lives. With the traditionally big fashion season approaching, we might ask what role does fashion have today? It certainly looks different during shelter-in-place, home schooling, and Zoom meetings, but there's

always a desire for style and our local boutiques are here for us.

Irene Chen from Parker Thatch in Orinda says that fashion is now quality over quantity, and "what's handmade and special ... and what's going to make us happy." Parker Thatch is known for creating local must-have handbags, but since the shutdown Chen and her husband, Matthew Grenby, have stayed busy with regular video updates on their Instagram

feed and stocking new products that speak to the pandemic. One popular item is a line of headbands in patterned fabrics that are just the thing for those perpetual "bad hair days." Soft but sturdy, simply slip the band on your head and instant chic.

To help navigate our new world, the couple designed the Cootie Stick. Made of clear Lucite the Cootie Stick is shaped like a large key and can be used to open doors and punch in numbers on keypads. Masks are an important new accessory and Parker Thatch has designed a line of masks for adults and kids in brightly colored patterns. Some styles have vents and all are adjustable and have a pocket for a filter. These pandemic-friendly items as well as new handbag styles are available at parkerthatch.com and can be shipped or arrangements made for pickup. Follow the shop on Instagram: [parkerthatch](https://www.instagram.com/parkerthatch).

Since the shutdown, SewNow Fashion Studio in Lafayette has offered classes online. Proprietor Susan Goldie says that shifting to virtual classes has been "an interesting ride." But it has also been rewarding as Goldie is happy to be able to provide a creative outlet for kids during this challenging time. The plan for fall is to continue virtual classes with a new schedule coming out soon. Available now is Sketch and Sew at Home, which is a membership program that provides a project kit, online instructions, and weekly online group meetings. Also on the SewNow website there is an instruction video on how



Parker Thatch in Orinda

to make cloth masks and mask kits with all the needed materials that can be ordered. Get more information at sewnow.com.

In local fashion news, Glamorous Boutique in Lafayette has closed its doors, but the same fabulous selection of women's clothing is still available. Eliza Jamkochian says she decided to shift the business online when her daughter was born in 2017. But she hesitated because she didn't want to give up seeing her customers in person. "I love and enjoy the personal care I give," she said. Then the pandemic happened. For now Jamkochian is featuring her stock on Facebook and Instagram, but she plans to have a new website up and running within six months. She says that current fashion is comfy and cozy. "My customers are looking for more casual wear, summer dresses, and sweat sets ... shorts, basic tees, and tanks." Find her latest collections at [glamorouslafayette](https://www.instagram.com/glamorouslafayette) on Facebook and [glamorousoflafayette](https://www.instagram.com/glamorousoflafayette) on Instagram.

Pandemic or not, go forth in style. Moya Stone is a fashion writer at www.overdressedforlife.com.

Massive loom band bracelet lands local teen a world record



Photos provided



When Lafayette resident Katie Dougherty was in fifth grade, rainbow looms were all the rage.

Dougherty, a junior at Campolindo High School, spent nearly five months making a 6,600-foot loom band bracelet that landed her a Guinness World Record. “I started by making a jump rope and it grew from there. I stopped for a few years and picked it back up my freshman year,” Dougherty said. She and several friends spent roughly four hours on Nov. 17, 2019 laying the bracelet out on the Campolindo football field – 22 times across the field, 11 trips up and 11 trips back.

The bracelet is made of individual rubber bands looped together by hand. This is Dougherty’s first world record, and she rightly said that winning the award was a “pretty cool feeling.”
-- J. Wake

Moraga Garden Club celebrates 50 Years

Submitted by Linda U. Foley

The idea to start a Garden Club in Moraga germinated over coffee around a kitchen table 50 years ago.

Three relatively new transplants to Moraga – Shirley Engstrom, Pearl Duncan and Mercedes Brewer – put their collective idea into action. They began by contacting the California State Garden Club for guidelines.

The Holy Lutheran Church became their first meeting place and to everyone’s surprise, 20 people turned up in response to fliers they’d distributed. Positions were filled effortlessly with Brewer becoming the first president of the Moraga Garden Club with her husband, a nursery owner, supportive in the wings.

The nonprofit Club flourished, growing its membership exponentially.

Over the years, the Club planted Redwoods at Rancho Laguna and thousands of daffodil bulbs along Moraga’s scenic corridors, donated daffodil bulbs and funds to the five schools, hosted a booth at the Pear Festival, planted a garden at the Hacienda de la Flores, maintained several sites at the Commons, the Triangle at the intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road, the urn fronting the Library, the Holy Trinity Cultural Center and the atrium at John Muir Hospital.

The Club also contributes to reforestation and Arbor Day, decorates a

Christmas tree with natural ornaments for the Library and creates a monthly floral arrangement. It holds a fundraiser in the spring and a festive Christmas luncheon at Diablo Country Club.

MGC’s work adapted to changing times and needs. The schools developed their teaching gardens; the daffodils propagated beautifully.

This fall, the Moraga Garden Club will join with the Kiwanis Club of Moraga in adding even more daffodil bulbs for the dazzling spring display Moraga has come to expect.

The long neglected urns on Country Club Drive have been restored. The garden at the Hacienda has undergone an amazing transformation near the Casita including a new picnic table. The Triangle is in the throes of a serious facelift working in conjunction with the town.

Typically, the monthly meetings held at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center are free and open to all. However, the coronavirus pandemic dictates that meetings are held virtually until it is prudent to meet again in person. Speakers this year will cover a wide range of subjects commencing with “Tips, Tricks and Tonics,” presented by Cynthia Brian.

For information about meetings and projects, visit moragagardenclub.com. Contact Membership Chair Jane Magnani at (925) 451-7031 for additional information.

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

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

Cars2ndChance donates reconditioned minivan to Putnam Clubhouse



Photo provided

Posing with the 2001 Ford Windstar that Cars2ndChance donated to Putnam Clubhouse, from left: Larry Hutchings, member of Clayton Valley Concord Rotary; Tamara Hunter, executive director of Putnam Clubhouse; Jim Davis, Moraga resident and member of Putnam board of directors, Dave Kemnitz, owner of D&H Enterprises auto repair shop who is intimately involved with Cars2ndChance campaign; and Paula Boyd, member of Putnam board. Both Davis and Kemnitz belong to Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.

Submitted by T.F. Black

Just as Dave Kemnitz was about to place an ad for a used Ford minivan he accepted as a donation, he received a phone call from a friend – and fellow Rotarian – Jim Davis, who “just happened” to be looking for a used van.

Background: The Kemnitz family owns D&H Enterprises, an auto repair shop in Concord. Dave and his wife, Mary Kemnitz, lead an initiative to keep second-hand vehicles in the food chain. Davis sits on the board of directors of Putnam Clubhouse, a nonprofit, also in Concord, that provides mental-health services to adults. Not incidentally, both are members of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.

Davis, in serious tire-kicking mode, asked Dave Kemnitz if perhaps he knew of a used vehicle that Putnam might add to its scant, one-vehicle “fleet” of vans. Sure enough, replied Kemnitz, gazing at a 2001 Ford Windstar people mover that had just been donated to Cars2ndChance. This is a separate nonprofit that the Kemnitzes formed a dozen years ago when he was a member of Clayton Valley Concord Rotary, which remains an active program partner. Kemnitz has since transferred membership to Lam-

orinda Sunrise Rotary.

Because the van had been given to Cars2ndChance, it was declared a “benevolence” vehicle, meaning a donation to another 501(c)3.

Donors have the option of designating Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano as beneficiary of vehicle proceeds. For decades Food Bank has distributed donated packaged comestibles to countless thousands of community residents. Given the coronavirus-caused crisis, the need is more acute than ever.

Had Kemnitz instead put the Windstar on the block, as he had planned, it would have stickered at \$3,995, a bona fide bargain. Instead, once the title-transfer paperwork was completed, Kemnitz handed the keys to Davis, who together with a few Putnam staff members, came to the D&H lot on Monument Boulevard to take delivery of the new wheels.

The initiative will continue “until the cows come home,” said Kemnitz. Anyone with a candidate vehicle is asked to contact Cars2ndChance, visit www.cars2ndchance.org or phone D&H at (925) 360-5260. “We accept any vehicle – auto, truck, boat, motorcycle – with a valid title, even if it is not in running order. All donations are tax deductible as provided by law.”

Seven Boy Scouts from Lafayette Troop 200 achieve Eagle rank



Photo C.J. Poloka

New Eagle Scouts from Lafayette Troop 200 include, from left, Joshua Summerlin, Ian Ho, James Crosby, Declan Tsuyuki, Nicholas Crosby, Cole Regan and Matthew Crosby.

Submitted by Lisa Summerlin

Boy Scout Troop 200, chartered by Our Savior’s Lutheran Church of Lafayette, announced its latest group of Eagle Scouts – Joshua Summerlin, Ian Ho, James Crosby, Declan Tsuyuki, Nicholas Crosby, Cole Regan and Matthew Crosby. The new Eagle Scouts will be honored at an outdoor National Eagle Court of Honor on Aug. 22. To become an Eagle Scout, a candidate must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges, including 13 Eagle-required badges, demonstrate leadership and Scout spirit, and successfully complete a community service project.

Summerlin graduated in May from Idyllwild Arts Academy. For his Eagle Scout project, he provided a complete music program for Children of Faith Orphanage in Visakhapatnam, India including ukuleles, music stands, music books and CDs.

Ho, a senior at Acalanes High School, completed a naturalistic landscape project at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Lafayette for his Eagle

Scout project.

James Crosby, a senior at De La Salle High School, fulfilled his Eagle Scout project requirement by designing and building a new redwood deck for the youth program at St. Mary’s Church in Walnut Creek.

Acalanes senior Tsuyuki for his Eagle Project created 12 STEM Education Box Kits to enrich Science curriculum in a Title 1 school, Brentwood’s Marsh Creek Elementary School.

Nicholas Crosby, who is a senior at De La Salle High School, designed and built benches under the trees at St. Mary School in Walnut Creek for his Eagle Scout project.

Acalanes junior Regan interviewed eight veterans for the Veterans History Project, which stores and publishes content related to war veterans’ service in the Library of Congress for his Eagle Scout project.

De La Salle senior Matthew Crosby built new redwood benches for the St. Vincent De Paul food distribution program at St. Mary’s Church in Walnut Creek for his Eagle Scout project.

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Controversies over new therapeutic homes in Lafayette

... continued from Page B1

Cities and counties can restrict the location of facilities housing seven or more clients by requiring use permits, adopting special parking and other standards for these homes, or prohibiting large facilities in certain zoning districts. Lafayette city attorney Mala Subramanian spoke during closed session on July 13 about anticipated litigation, with the summary provided noting that she spoke with Patricia Curtin, legal counsel for Monte Nido. During this call, Curtin informed the Lafayette counsel that if the city at-

tempts to place restrictions on the Monte Nido project her client will sue the city. Curtin asserted that these facilities are supportive housing and must be treated the same as a single-family residential use.

At the end of the June 22 council meeting Mayor Mike Anderson asked that the topic be brought back to council for discussion. Lafayette staff did not respond to questions about how and when this topic would be addressed, indicating that "due to the sensitivity of this matter, (staff is) unable to comment at this time."

Not to be missed

ART

2020 LAA Member Show "Summer Musings" at aRt Cottage. Lamorinda Arts Alliance is pleased to invite members to the closing reception for our member show, "Summer Musings." The reception will take place at aRt Cottage on Saturday, Aug. 22 from 7-9 p.m. This event is open to the public with refreshments and live music. If you have not had a chance to see this show, here is your chance since the show ends that evening. The aRt Cottage is a cool little art

gallery just off the square in downtown Concord. This intimate venue provides a comfortable environment for artists and art aficionados to enjoy the show.

The Moraga Art Gallery art exhibit, "Dark and Light, A Delicate Balance," runs through Sept. 12. The gallery is located at 432 Center Street, Rheem Shopping Center, in Moraga. Hours are Saturday and Sunday from noon to 3 p.m. The gallery may need to change its hours if there are new health directives, so call

Not to be missed

MUSIC

Harpist Anna Maria Mendieta performs online from Walnut Creek at 7 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 29 in an online broadcast from 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek. Optional donation upon ticketing/registration: average \$20; students \$10 (all are welcome regardless of donation).

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Athlete Giorgio Tavecchio – Italian born, Moraga-raised gastro-preneur



Giorgio Tavecchio fingers to sky

Photos provided

By Jon Kingdon

Giorgio Tavecchio is the Chief Executive Officer of ElevenTwelve, an importer from Italy of wine, pasta, sauces, and spreads. After graduating from Campolindo and the University of California at Berkeley, he has followed three F's in his life: Family, food, and football.

Tavecchio was born in Milan, Italy to an Italian father (Renato) and an Italian-American mother (Gabriella) who worked for the American government. With his mother being transferred

every three years, the Tavecchios lived all over the world but eventually found a home when she was transferred to San Francisco: "My parents would always look for the best schools and the best soccer teams and clubs for me and my brother and that is how we ended up in Moraga when I was 9. We liked it so much we put down our roots here and my parents still live here."

After one last move to Washington, D.C., the Tavecchio's returned to Moraga in 2005 where Giorgio began his freshman year at Campolindo

High School and he was exposed to the game of football: "I ended up kicking for the Campolindo football team by chance. One fall day during my sophomore year (2006), a friend of mine asked if I wanted to be the kicker for the football team. My mother urged me to try and to this day, I believe it was to stop me from damaging our furniture by kicking mini-soccer balls all around the house. The next day, I showed up to football practice and had fun kicking the football. What really sealed my fate was the team barbecue after practice. The ribs were absolutely delicious, so I thought to myself 'If I have to kick a few footballs to get these once a week, I'll do it!'"

After graduating from UC Berkeley with a degree in political science and economics and having kicked 48 field goals for the football team, Tavecchio eventually kicked in the NFL for the Oakland Raiders and the Atlanta Falcons. Tavecchio became the first player to hit two 50-plus yard field goals in his debut in NFL history and was named AFC Special Teams Player of the Week.

All of these experiences eventually led to the creation of ElevenTwelve. "The past three years, the University of California has run a coaching clinic in Torino, Italy where I have coached the kickers and served as a translator as needed," said Tavecchio. "It was there that I became close friends with Paolo Tempo, an accountant, who grew up playing American football in Italy in the 1980s. From that friendship, blossomed an idea to share some of the wonderfully communal experiences we had in Italy and a lot of those experiences were set around a big table with a lot of wine and food."

Tempo then brought in David Merlo, a food and beverage wholesaler, with whom he played youth football together and Tavecchio brought in Vincenzo D'Amato, who also emigrated to the United States from Italy, and though they competed against each other at Cal, became best friends.

To Tavecchio and his cohorts, it's more than providing a simple product, it's a desire to bring the Italian love of food to their customers. "It should be a vessel to serve as a communal experience at the table," Tavecchio said. "The food itself is the most unique aspect of the Italian dining experience. What I really appreciate and treasure with Italian food and the culture behind it is that there is a deep respect and tradition that is very cherished nowadays and it lends a respect that Italians relate to food. The food nourishes the body but the experience and the mood behind it, and the story and the culture that goes into our products, creates the opportunity to nourish more of the soul."

Chef Boyardee, they are not.

Tavecchio is not an executive that stays behind the desk. When I interviewed him over the phone, he apol-

ogized for the noise because "I'm packing up some boxes from some recent online orders because our warehouse manager is on vacation."

The intangible aspects of football are essential factors in ElevenTwelve operations. "The respect and teamwork from the football setting and the way Italians look at food and how artisanal production and craftsmanship is revered, cheered, respected, and sacrificed for in Italy, it's the same pattern with ElevenTwelve but in a different context. What I did for my teammates is what we do for our products, for the cheese, wine and pasta making traditions, which shows our respect for the service and the sacrificing for the better good of the tradition. It's pursuing a goal that is bigger than you."

So where does the name ElevenTwelve come from? Of course, there is a football connection to the name – it's the jersey numbers for Merlo (11) and Tempo (12). "It's an homage to our playing days as football players," Tavecchio said. "We chose 11 and 12 out of respect for our elders. We wanted it to be something curious, something mysterious and different that would make people wonder why we're named ElevenTwelve."

... continued on Page C2



Giorgio Tavecchio at Campolindo

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Athlete Giorgio Tavecchio – Italian born, Moraga-raised gastro-preneur

... continued from Page C1

The coronavirus has forced the company to adjust on the fly, keeping things up and running. “Our initial strategy was to go more business-to-business, getting into retails and restaurants,” Tavecchio said. “So, we pivoted and got our website up earlier than we had planned and we’ve been open for business online. We’ve been pleased with the progress we’ve seen online and with the feedback we’ve received from our customers. We are young enough to handle these things with the quickest agility possible, not having too much of a backlog in business procedure and accounts payable. Thankfully, all of our products were delivered in late 2019 prior to

the virus and we have avoided having to move anything during the tense time of the outbreak and we are beginning to receive more of our products, although it is taking a little longer to get here due to the customs and more of the bureaucracy. We have both private and business clients in the small retail and boutique shops at this point and look to do more with the restaurants once things settle down.”

Tavecchio has not yet closed the door on his returning to the National Football League. “I kick and lift three times a week if I’m not working and doing stuff for ElevenTwelve, so those two things are keeping me busy. I never try to make excuses. I’m just trying to be the best kicker that I can be and take advantage of whatever situa-

tion can come my way because there is nothing else that you can do.”

With his experience in the NFL, Tavecchio is trying to connect with the various teams. “After kicking with the Atlanta Falcons, I have been making great inroads with them,” he said. “When you look at the NFL stadiums, it has evolved from hot dogs, hamburgers and peanuts to luxury boxes, field level suites and gourmet foods. There seems to be an explosion of attention on the food service side and the quality of offerings at the stadiums. As things progress, I’d love to have those discussions with the Raiders, if the stadiums do have fans. We’re working on it with all the sports but at this point we are focusing on the football market. We can form

our pasta into the shape of football (Pasta al Football) and color them to match a team’s colors.”

Growing up in Moraga also provided a foundation for Tavecchio, having worked in high school at Ristorante Amoroma, still maintaining a friendship to this day with the owners.

Returning periodically to visit his parents brings back a lot of memories for Tavecchio. “I’ve always liked driving around Moraga around sundown during the summertime when it was going from hot to cool to crisp fresh air. Driving through the neighborhoods, it just felt so peaceful and it smelled so fresh with the eucalyptus trees and all the flowers and the beautiful colors and it was such a warm and welcoming place to grow

up. That’s something that I will never forget about Moraga. When people ask me where I’m from, I say that I have lived everywhere but I consider Moraga my home because of how close I felt with the community. At one point, I was a volunteer coach at Campolindo and lived at home so there are a lot of deep roots that have been planted in Moraga that have shaped who I am, shaped the story of my family and shaped our experience in the United States. It’s those little things that make me grateful.”

Tavecchio is now sharing an exclusive promo code LAMO with the Lamorinda community for 25% off for all the ElevenTwelve products which can be ordered at www.eleventwelveusa.com

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

... read on Page D16

Home remodel planning during a pandemic



Before

By Amanda Eck

Now more than ever we are seeing that our homes have become a place of not just comfort, but an office, a classroom, and even a vacation substitute. Homeowners are embarking on remodels now more than ever. I thought I'd share some tips on what to expect during a remodel if you are choosing to stay in your home during construction. And how to make the best of upending your life to hammers, drills and dust.

Did I mention the dust?

1) The dust gets everywhere (I mean *everywhere*). Especially when things are being torn out. Even when areas are taped off in plastic, those little particles have an amazing ability to sneak into other parts of the home. You might want to consider moving pieces into storage if you are concerned with dust, especially if you suffer allergies.

2) Sleeping in is no longer an option. You will have people in your home day in and



After

Photos provided

day out. Most crews like to start as early as possible. If you need your beauty sleep, like I do, consider an earlier bedtime.

3) Set up a separate living space. You will need a place to sit, work, cook, eat and wash up. Try and make this space as clean and organized as possible. You will want a space that feels "put together" as the rest of your home is in chaos.

4) Consider installing a portable sink in your laundry room to make clean up easy. Set up a microwave in the garage or extra room you are not using. Purchase an electric tea kettle for hot water for tea, hot coco for the kids, or instant oatmeal for an easy breakfast. An outdoor grill or camping stove are a must.

5) This is not the time to worry about the environment. Yes, I said it. Paper plates, bowls, cups, towels and plastic utensils are your best friend.

6) Stay organized. If you are not working with a designer, keep a binder with all the info for your project. Designers keep a selections binder with all the pertinent

information for your project like paint selections, hard surface selections (flooring, countertops, tile), elevation sketches, carpentry details, tile layout patterns, etc. Have divider tabs for each room you are remodeling. Keep all the phone numbers, emails, etc. of all the trades that are working in your home. Print out any email or text exchanges you have with your GC or other trades. There is nothing worse than a trade saying, "You didn't tell me that." Guard this binder with your life. A clear plastic sleeve to keep all your receipts and invoices in one place is also helpful. You can also add a sleeve for takeout menus because, hello, takeout is your new best friend. And it helps support our local restaurants – it's a win-win.

7) Your contractor and their trades will be your new family. Having a good professional relationship with your GC is gold. Ask friends and neighbors for referrals. Specifically ask how they treated the home while onsite.

... continued on Page D4

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MORAGA	11	\$1,150,000	\$2,700,000
ORINDA	18	\$946,000	\$2,865,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 11 Candlelight Lane, \$2,079,500, 4 Bdrms, 3262 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 06-29-20, Previous Sale: \$1,860,000, 01-16-14
- 14 Candlelight Lane, \$2,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 3355 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 07-09-20
- 206 Colt Court, \$1,979,500, 3 Bdrms, 3275 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,885,000, 11-10-18
- 8 Crest Road, \$1,775,000, 3 Bdrms, 2271 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 10-25-12
- 3286 Fairholm Court, \$1,865,000, 5 Bdrms, 2502 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-01-20
- 3629 Happy Valley Lane, \$1,640,500, 3 Bdrms, 1645 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 09-21-15
- 3652 Happy Valley Road, \$1,777,500, 3 Bdrms, 2372 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 07-02-20
- 4015 Happy Valley Road, \$4,495,000, 5 Bdrms, 6011 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$4,240,000, 08-13-18
- 2199 Hidden Pond Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 3352 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$1,355,000, 04-29-14
- 4145 Hidden Valley Road, \$1,250,500, 3 Bdrms, 1572 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$660,000, 03-05-13
- 850 Las Trampas Road, \$1,760,000, 3 Bdrms, 2117 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 06-30-20
- 1045 Los Arabis Lane, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2043 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$426,000, 08-27-99
- 790 Los Palos Mnrx, \$3,795,000, 6 Bdrms, 5685 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$2,150,000, 03-28-12
- 3793 Mosswood Drive, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 1300 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$915,000, 01-20-06
- 856 Mountain View Drive, \$1,955,000, 5 Bdrms, 4004 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$494,000, 04-01-88
- 3279 Mt Diablo Court #19, \$815,000, 3 Bdrms, 1842 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$680,000, 05-05-15
- 3137 Old Tunnel Road, \$1,267,000, 3 Bdrms, 1563 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$885,000, 04-07-14
- 3390 Orchard Valley Lane, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 912 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$710,000, 08-14-14
- 3936 Quail Ridge Road, \$1,100,000, 6-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,210,000, 04-23-20
- 1 Rimrock Road, \$1,950,000, 4 Bdrms, 2962 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 06-29-20, Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 10-03-12
- 30 Sanford Lane, \$4,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 4906 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$2,725,000, 05-04-12
- 1092 Sierra Vista Way, \$1,950,000, 4 Bdrms, 2419 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$270,000, 11-01-88
- 3357 Springhill Road, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2707 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$970,000, 03-29-04
- 3441 St Marys Road, \$1,235,000, 4 Bdrms, 1816 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$900,000, 03-29-15
- 3362 Stage Coach Drive, \$2,235,000, 4 Bdrms, 3289 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$1,855,000, 08-18-15

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... continued on Page D6

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JOHN FONDNAZIO



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JULIE DEL SANTO
BROKER/OWNER



925.818.5500
DRE# 01290985

LISA TICHENOR



925.285.1093
DRE# 01478540

MATT McLEOD



925.464.6500
DRE# 01310057

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TINA FRECHMAN 925.915.0851

1492 BOULEVARD WAY, W.C. \$1,299,000



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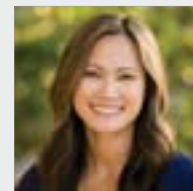
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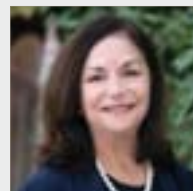
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3800 CAMPOLINDO DR., MORAGA CALL FOR PRICE



RUTH EDDY/JULIE DEL SANTO 925.788.5449

3205 ANDREASEN DR., LAFAYETTE \$2,149,000



HURLBUT TEAM 925.383.5500

2671 MOSSY OAK DR., DANVILLE \$2,250,000



SHERRY HUTCHENS/ADAM HAMALIAN 925.212.7617

1727 RELIEZ VALLEY ROAD, LAFAYETTE \$1,850,000



TINA FRECHMAN 925.915.0851

730 MORAGA ROAD, LAFAYETTE CALL FOR PRICE



RUTH EDDY 925.788.5449

472 KINGSFORD DRIVE, MORAGA \$1,449,000



MATT McLEOD 925.464.6500

3526 EAGLE POINT ROAD, LAFAYETTE \$2,200,000



ZOCCHI & ASSOC/TERESA ZOCCHI 925.360.8662

116 ALTA MESA COURT, MORAGA \$940,000



MATT McLEOD 925.464.6500

Home remodel planning during a pandemic



... continued from Page D1

Did they leave trash everywhere at the end of the day? Are they careful with your outdoor landscape? But keep in mind renovation is a messy job, things will get damaged, this is not the time to plant \$2,000 of perennials only to get them trampled on.

8) Make sure you get your contractors schedule on what he needs and when he needs it. There is nothing worse than a job getting held up because you didn't know he needed the faucet before the countertops are selected and fabricated. Having all your selections ahead of time and ready before he needs them will make for a very happy GC. Also keep in mind we are in the middle of a global pandemic; things take twice as long to come in.

9) Have a budget buffer. Things will always cost more than what you expected. Let me say that again, *things will always cost more than what you expected*. Surprise expenses always pop up. That wall they just tore down revealed a leaky pipe or mold or crappy electrical wiring. I like to suggest have at least 15% and closer to 25% more than your estimated budget to save you from these unexpected "gifts."

10) Take a deep breath and remind yourself this is only temporary; patience and a sense of humor go a long way. Also, don't forget to take photos throughout the project. Having before and after photos are always fun to look back on and help create a history of the project.

I hope these tips help ease some of the stress and chaos of home renovation. I have yet to have a client come back and say, "I regret doing this." It's always, "I wish we had done this sooner."

Until next time, friends!

OAKMONT

The Golden State Series

Only 2 Left!

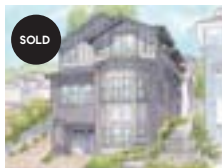
Latest release of four new homes in the new Oakmont neighborhood. Steps to Piedmont Avenue

Master planned for optional solar, air conditioning, in-law suite and elevators to meet owner's future needs.

Private Showings by Appointment

Starting at \$1,995,000

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THE YOUNTVILLE | 4519 Howe Street



THE PRESCOTT | 4523 Howe Street



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- 3+ baths
- Office space per plan
- Exquisite details in each unique home
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- 2 car dedicated parking space & garage



Andrew Pitarre
Real Estate Consultant
415.342.9950
APitarre@gmail.com
DRE 01867911

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

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page D2

LAFAYETTE ... continued

3145 Stanley Boulevard, \$1,283,000, 4 Bdrms, 1898 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$715,000, 08-08-08
 3305 Sweet Drive, \$1,420,000, 3 Bdrms, 1842 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$1,260,000, 05-19-16
 1024 Timothy Lane, \$2,050,000, 5 Bdrms, 3334 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$158,000, 01-01-79
 3177 Teigland Road, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2620 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 07-06-20
 757 Tofflemire Drive, \$1,180,000, 3 Bdrms, 1592 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$812,000, 05-07-08
 1201 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$3,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 4956 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$3,830,000, 05-17-17
 4022 Woodside Court, \$1,380,000, 3 Bdrms, 1896 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$740,000, 01-23-04

MORAGA

651 Augusta Drive, \$1,375,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$950,000, 03-21-18
 1 Barnes Court, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3907 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 07-02-20
 409 Birchwood Drive, \$1,580,000, 5 Bdrms, 2562 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 07-01-20
 106 Brookline Street, \$1,200,000, 2 Bdrms, 1905 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 06-29-20, Previous Sale: \$1,170,000, 07-03-18
 188 Calle La Montana, \$1,885,000, 4 Bdrms, 2415 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 03-04-20
 217 Corliss Drive, \$1,570,000, 4 Bdrms, 2357 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,357,500, 08-22-17
 1750 Donald Drive, \$1,392,500, 3 Bdrms, 2800 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$435,000, 09-01-88
 1078 Larch Avenue, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 1885 SqFt, 1920 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$1,030,000, 10-17-06
 217 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,690,000, 3 Bdrms, 2104 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$1,098,000, 03-28-17
 1092 Sanders Drive, \$1,410,000, 3 Bdrms, 1886 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$772,000, 11-19-10
 5 Whiting Court, \$1,795,000, 4 Bdrms, 2652 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 07-02-20, Previous Sale: \$1,450,000, 09-17-15

ORINDA

52 Acacia Drive, \$1,658,000, 3 Bdrms, 2521 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 05-12-08
 48 Bates Boulevard, \$1,820,000, 4 Bdrms, 2042 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 06-30-20
 79 California Avenue, \$1,000,000, 2 Bdrms, 1421 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$87,000, 09-01-77
 7 Dias Dorados, \$2,098,000, 3 Bdrms, 2753 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 07-02-20
 34 Dias Dorados, \$2,855,000, 3 Bdrms, 4787 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-10-20
 257 Ivy Place, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 2556 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 06-29-20
 328 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1679 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$835,000, 12-12-14
 21 Greenwood Court, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2308 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,145,000, 03-06-14
 19 La Cintilla, \$2,865,000, 5 Bdrms, 4290 SqFt, 2003 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$2,650,000, 10-18-04
 34 La Cuesta Road, \$1,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 2604 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$1,021,000, 02-24-09
 20 Monte Vista Road, \$946,000, 2 Bdrms, 1404 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 07-01-20, Previous Sale: \$946,000, 06-11-20
 460 Moraga Way, \$1,052,000, 3 Bdrms, 1361 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$680,000, 07-16-08
 48 Oak Drive, \$2,487,000, 5 Bdrms, 3690 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 07-07-20, Previous Sale: \$410,000, 05-10-16
 412 Ridge Gate Road, \$1,890,000, 3 Bdrms, 2950 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,390,000, 10-12-12
 14 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$1,525,000, 3 Bdrms, 2120 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,400,000, 04-18-08
 528 Tahos Road, \$2,665,500, 5 Bdrms, 5050 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 07-10-20, Previous Sale: \$2,262,500, 07-01-14
 33 Van Ripper Lane, \$1,460,000, 3 Bdrms, 2000 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-30-20, Previous Sale: \$953,000, 10-08-18
 13 Washington Lane, \$1,641,000, 4 Bdrms, 2285 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-09-20, Previous Sale: \$995,000, 06-23-09

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5+ BD | 2.5 BA | 2,942± SF | 0.52± AC | \$1,795,000
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3337walnut.com

3957 Rancho Road, Lafayette



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3957rancho.com

7 Carey Court, Moraga - Coming Soon



4 BD | 3 BA | 2,812± SF | 0.24± AC | \$1,535,000
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34 Ichabod Ln, Orinda - Coming Soon



5BD | 3 BA | 2,587± SF | 1.28± AC | \$1,595,000
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Terri Bates Walker | DRE 01330081
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2020 Lamorinda Sales

1024 Timothy Lane, Lafayette



SOLD for \$2,050,000 (seller)

3357 Springhill Road, Lafayette



SOLD for \$2,000,000 (buyer)

824 Solana Drive, Lafayette



SOLD for \$1,900,000 (buyer)

14 Sleepy Hollow Lane, Orinda



SOLD for \$1,525,000 (seller)

66 Sleepy Hollow Lane, Orinda



SOLD for \$1,505,000 (seller)

4 Huff Court, Moraga



SOLD for \$1,325,000 (buyer)

104 Brookline Street, Moraga



SOLD for \$1,200,000 (buyer)

1435 Camino Peral, Moraga



SOLD for \$660,000 (seller)



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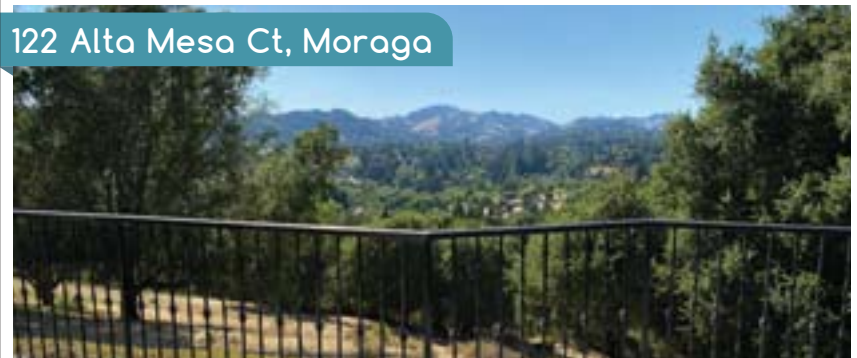


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51 Laird Drive, Moraga
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3D tour at www.51Laird.com



5 Berrybrook Hollow, Orinda
Offered at \$2,395,000

4 Bed | 3.5 Bath | 3,332 Sq. ft. / 1.32 Acres
3D tour at www.5BerrybrookHollow.com



440 Deerfield Drive, Moraga
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5 Bed | 2.5 Bath | 2,969 Sq. ft. / .24 Acres
3D tour at www.440DeerfieldDr.com

PENDING

SOLD



3 Roberts Court, Moraga
Offered at \$1,425,000

3D tour at www.3RobertsCt.com



703 Las Trampas, Lafayette
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265 Sandringham Drive, Moraga
Buyer Rep \$1,635,000



28 Honey Hill Road, Orinda
Buyer Rep \$1,730,692



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 SUSAN SCHLICHER
 CATHY SCHULTHEIS
 JOEL SHEIMAN
 MELANIE SNOW
 TOM STACK
 TED STREETER
 BO SULLIVAN
 NORLA TORRES-TURNEY
 LINDA VAN DRENT
 THERESA WANG
 GREG WATKINS
 VAL COOK- WATKINS
 JERRY WENDT
 SCOTT WINBURNE
 FRANK WOODWARD
 JUNE YOUNG
 ANA ZIMMANK

LAMORINDA EXPERTS - GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p>  	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">20 Hacienda Circle \$4,250,000</p> <p>Stunning state of the art Orinda estate designed by Orinda architect Richard Bartlett includes 8000+ sq. ft. comfortably situated on a flat 1.3-acre site adjacent to the Orinda Country Club's 13th hole. www.20haciendacircle.com</p> <p>Melanie Snow 925-360-0344; Laura Abrams 510-697-3225</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Lic#00878893, #01272382</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">53 Tappan Lane \$2,995,000</p> <p>Modern exterior, renovated pool, wine cellar, breathtaking views</p> <p>Melanie Snow 925-360-0344 53tappanlane.com Lic #00878893</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Valley View Ln. \$3,195,000</p> <p>Prestigious Luxury Estate</p> <p>Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com www.3ValleyViewLn.com Lic #01390784</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10 Rheem Blvd. \$1,899,999</p> <p>Quintessential Masterpiece</p> <p>Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com www.10Rheem.com Lic #01390784</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">212 El Toyonal \$1,760,000</p> <p>Sold for over asking on the lovely El Toyonal Hill! Stunning remodeled rancher with Beautiful gardens!</p> <p>Laura Abrams 510-697-3225 laura@lauraabrams.com Lic#01272382</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Lafayette</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Danville</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">91 Silverwood Dr. \$1,600,000</p> <p>Just sold off market four months after previous sale! Lovely mid century delight in stunning setting!</p> <p>Laura Abrams 510-697-3225 www.212eltoyonal.com Lic#01272382</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">112 Spring Road \$1,149,000</p> <p>Mid Century Modern</p> <p>Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com Lic #01390784</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">103 Blossom Ct \$975,000</p> <p>Move-in ready & beautifully updated 4 brd-rooms, 3 full baths in cul-de-sac.</p> <p>Peyman Moshref 925-878-9151 Lic #01441254</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Oakland</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Moraga</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Pleasant Hill</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">1175 66th Street \$949,000</p> <p>Modern Oakland Condo w/Private Elevator</p> <p>Christine Mason 925-900-5288 Christine@christineMason.me Lic #02050542</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">503 Woodminster Dr. \$729,000</p> <p>Prime, private setting</p> <p>Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com 503WoodminsterDr.com Lic #01390784</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">344 Grapevine Cir. \$575,000</p> <p>Incredible opportunity on updated townhome. Serene location yet close to downtown Pleasant Hill.</p> <p>Peyman Moshref 925-878-9151 Lic #01441254</p>



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian, the Goddess Gardener, for August

The Dog Days of Summer



Photos Cynthia Brian

Lacy silk tree and oleanders add color to the landscape.

By Cynthia Brian

“Dog Days bright and clear, indicate a happy year!”~ The Old Farmer’s Almanac, 1817

Sirius, the Dog Star, rises in summer in the Northern Hemisphere with the “dog days” traditionally beginning on July 3 and ending on Aug. 11. The ancient Egyptians welcomed Sirius as a forecaster of the floods of the Nile River. They could prepare for the river’s overflow delivering much needed rich soil to their deserts or destruction to their lands. The Greeks and Romans did not appreciate the sweltering weather believing Sirius, meaning “scorching” in Greek, brought drought, disease and disaster. The Roman poet, Virgil, described Sirius as the “bringer of drought and plague to frail mortals.”

Aug. 11 has come and gone, yet the month of August is notoriously hot, dry, and this year, permeated with a global pandemic. And although the historical meaning of “dog days” has nothing to do with our canine comrades, it is a fact that many house-bound families have decided to adopt a hound or two. What better time to romp in the yard with a new puppy than now as we shelter-in-place?

Although you need to keep yourself and your dog well-hydrated in this hot weather, if you planted a succulent garden earlier in the season, you don’t need to waste any water by running the irrigation



Poisonous to all pets, the genus Begoniaceae boasts over 1800 species of begonias.



Indoors, a spotted mauve phalaenopsis orchid will bloom for months.

system. Succulents and cactus thrive in the heat and offer texture, color, form and interest when planted with consideration. Silk trees and oleanders provide a long blooming season, but do not let your hound chew on any oleander leaves as they are poisonous. A sparkling clean gurgling fountain can be the watering hole for your pet, while placing a small saucer filled with marbles or stones that I call a “butterfly bowl” will be a lifesaver for butterflies, bees, lizards, and other insects.

While you are out playing with your pooches, glance through your garden to see what projects await attention. I find that these hazy days of August are a great time to assess the needs of my yard. If you have weeds anywhere, they need to be pulled or at least cut to the base before they seed and invade more of your landscape. If perennials have finished flowering, it’s time to deadhead to encourage a repeat bloom. Do your hedges need trimming? Are any sprinkler heads broken? Is your nightscaping working? If your clay soil is compacted, it requires mulch and compost to regenerate the nutrients. Composting is easy and your doggie will probably enjoy helping you to create a compost pile, although don’t let him do his business in it!

Making Compost

To make nutrient-rich compost, all you need is a combination of greens and browns. The greens are vegetable and fruit peelings, grass clippings, eggshells, coffee grinds, tea leaves and other organics. The brown is wood shavings, small branches, sawdust, cardboard and newspaper. Keep a lidded pail under your kitchen sink, in the garage, or at the back door for ease of use and just scrape the scraps into the pail.

... continued on Page D18



Pots of tomatoes with parsley and basil can be moved to follow the sun.



Humans love grapes, but grapes can mean death to dogs.



Freshly harvested beets are good for dogs. Don't feed them canned beets.



Armenian cucumbers are crunchy and low calorie, good for pooches,

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian, the Goddess Gardener, for August

The Dog Days of Summer



Photo Cynthia Brian

Shine with succulents as they add texture and form to a garden.

When the pile is full, pour into a 3 x 3 x 3-foot enclosure in an out-of-the-way area or buy a compost tumbler. If you have chickens or rabbits, add their manure to the batch. If you made a pile, with a pitchfork, turn the compost regularly. Keep the contents damp, and when the compost turns crumbly with a texture of a chocolate cake, it is ready. Add it to your flowerbeds as a fertilizer, moisture retainer, and soil enricher.

Although we want to discourage our furry friends from munching on our plants, if you want a beautiful flowering plant that is not harmful to indoor pets, look no further than orchids. My spotted

mauve phalaenopsis orchid has been blooming continuously for the past four years. Orchids are trouble-free and undemanding. Just leave them alone, put an ice cube once a week in their container, and let them beautify your home. Outdoors, begonias are now gorgeously in full bloom and they are toxic to all animals.

Our dogs watch us eat and they may be inclined to want to join the party. Use caution and knowledge when feeding your canine anything but dog food. Grapes will be ripening in the next few weeks but as delicious as they are for humans, don't be tempted to feed any to your dog. Grapes can be toxic to a dog, damaging the kidneys, and for some, even eating one grape could be fatal. Beets and cucumbers are ready to be harvested along with tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and numerous herbs. If you plant tomatoes in a large pot with parsley and basil, you can move the container to follow the sun. In small amounts, ripe tomatoes (not green, too much solanine), cucumbers, peppers (specifically red), and eggplants can contribute to a healthy immune system for your dog. Consult your veterinarian before dispensing any fruit or vegetable to your pet.

Summer is the time to pick and dry fresh herbs to be savored all year. Home-grown herbs have more flavor than store-bought varieties. If your dog has bad breath, a sprig of mint or parsley will remedy the odor.

It's easy to dry your own by following these simple steps.

Drying Herbs

1. Harvest herbs in the morning after the dew has dried. Make sure to pick herbs before they begin to flower. Flowers can be used in all food preparations, but to save your herbs, it's best to have foliage, not flowers.
2. Make a clean cut using a sharp shear. Don't pull herbs or you may disturb the entire plant.
3. Rinse in cool water, pat with a towel.
4. Choose a hot, dark and dry spot where temperatures will be 80 degrees or higher without any humidity. A garage, shed, attic, porch, or even a closet can work. Light degrades the essential oils, thus, make sure the area will be dark.
5. For large leaf herbs such as basil and mint, the best drying method is to place the stems on a rack or screen to allow for air circulation. A window screen works great.
6. For small to medium-sized leaves such as parsley, sage, thyme, dill or cilantro, gather into bunches of a dozen stems and hang from the rafters. Don't hang herbs in the kitchen as steam and the brightness will destroy your craft.

Most herbs only take a week to three weeks to dry perfectly. They can then be put in airtight jars or canisters and stored for future use. Dried herbs make excellent gifts for a cook who is a non-gardener, too. Most herbs are a healthy additive for dogs, but, again, always consult with your vet first.

Although the dog days of summer are over, you still have time to romp with Rover and watch the twinkling Dog Star in the predawn darkness. Sirius will be the brightest star in the heavens for the next 210,000 years shining with glints of red and blue sparkles!

Happy gardening. Happy growing.



A butterfly bowl with marbles affords bees, butterflies, and lizards a drink without drowning.



Cynthia Brian suns with her dog.

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® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, *Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul*, *Growing with the Goddess Gardener*, and *Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers* at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Cynthia is available for virtual writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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14 Los Dedos Road

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220 Crestview Drive

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ORINDA



New Listing!

182 Ardith Court

Single level updated 3070 sqft 5 bed/ 4.5 bath w/ panoramic views, owned solar, & outdoor living on .46 acre lot. **\$2,550,000**

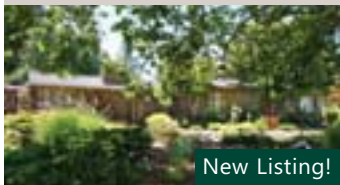
ORINDA



737 Miner Road

Custom 5 bed/ 4 bath 4088 sqft Orinda Country Club home w/ easy indoor/outdoor living & breathtaking views. **\$2,295,000**

ORINDA



New Listing!

8 Tappan Court

Custom 4 bed/ 4 bath 3424 sqft home set on a .82 acre knoll offering a huge level grassy yard, spectacular beauty, & views. **\$1,995,000**

ORINDA



New Listing!

10 Washington Lane

Lovely 4 bed/ 3 bath 2986 sqft home on a .70 acre lot neighboring the sought-after Sleepy Hollow Elementary. **\$1,699,000**

ORINDA



21 Los Arboles

Large 3736 sqft 4 bed/ 3.5 bath home on private cul-de-sac w/ easy access to commute, top schools, & recreation. **\$1,689,000**

ORINDA



New Listing!

10 Bonita Lane

Charming 2995 sqft 4 bed/ 3 bath contemporary w/ a mid-century modern feel. Close to shopping, BART, & Hwy 24. **\$1,565,000**

ORINDA

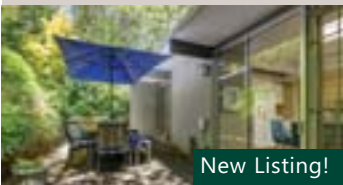


New Price!

15 Linda Vista

Beautifully maintained 4 bed/ 2 bath home w/ spectacular sunset views across the Orinda Country Club & beyond. **\$1,399,000**

ORINDA



New Listing!

48 La Vuelta

Stunning 4 bed/ 3 bath mid-century contemporary in Orinda Country Club neighborhood. First time on market! **\$1,279,000**

MORAGA



651 Moraga Road # 15

Peaceful upper end single level 3 bed/ 2 bath condo w/ updated kitchen & baths. Washer & dryer included. **\$640,000**

LAFAYETTE



44 Prado Way

Private gated 3 bed/ 3.5 bath on 19.9 acres with 2 additional rooms in highly coveted neighborhood. **\$4,275,000**

LAFAYETTE



3554 Springhill Road

Upgraded spacious 5 bed/ 4.5 bath contemporary of 5983 sqft at end of Springhill. Includes private office. **\$3,988,000**

LAFAYETTE



3971 Canyon Road

Private gated 6 Bed/ 4 Bath/ 2 Half bath estate including two-story guest house located in desirable Happy Valley. **\$3,175,000**

LAFAYETTE



3696 Happy Valley Road

Private gated 6 bed/ 6.5 bath 5500 sqft custom home including chef's kitchen, guest house, & pool on flat .85 acres. **\$2,795,000**

ALAMO



New Listing!

180 Alamo Square

Updated 2 bed/ 2.5 bath 1757 sqft townhome in gated complex. Gorgeous creekside setting w/ wooded views. **\$829,000**

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