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Photo provided

Photo Diane Claytor

This scary monster will be greeting visitors in Moraga.

Jessie and Jake Seitler and their creepy friends are ready for Halloween .

Locals find spooky, socially distanced ways to celebrate Halloween

By Diane Claytor

Creepy black spiders crawling up windows and walls, weaving their webs through bushes and doorways. Well manicured lawns turned into graveyards. Skeletons, witches and ghosts swaying from trees. Pumpkins of varying shapes and sizes adorning doorways. It's Halloween in Lamorinda. And while this year's holiday may be different from previous years (it's

2020, after all), it will, nevertheless, be filled with fun and candy – lots and lots of candy. The Lamorinda communities are asking residents to follow the CDC and state guidelines which discourage trick-or-treating and large parties. But that's not stopping the determination and creativity of Lamorinda parents to create the best Halloween possible. "Our kids have already had school, activities, trips, sports and performances canceled," said Lafayette

mom Heather Cousins. "There has to be a way we can do Halloween safely." Turns out there are many ways. Families are planning backyard candy and scavenger hunts, pumpkin carving and painting, cookie and haunted house decorating, scary movie nights, pinatas, neighborhood costume parades and outdoor parties within small, already-established "bubbles." And even some limited trick-or-treating. ... continued on Page A10

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ConFire Engine Company returns from Glass Fire with a message



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ConFire Engine Company 16, at Glass Fire. From left, engineer Keld Laustsen, Capt. Casey Lyons and firefighter-paramedic James Myres.

By Nick Marnell

Just after midnight Sept. 28, Capt. Casey Lyons, engineer Keld Laustsen and firefighter-paramedic James

Myres received an order to head to the North Bay. The crew from the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District had 10 minutes to hit the road, as they were needed immediately for the initial attack against a wildfire that began that night in the Deer Park community of Napa County. "It was an extremely chaotic scene. The amount of fire we encountered is more than I've seen in all my years," said Lyons, an 11-year ConFire veteran. "Homes were on fire. Trees were on fire. Power lines were on fire. People were scrambling to leave. "I now have a thorough understanding of the term 'firestorm.'" The crew, technically a task force, was stationed at Base Camp at the Santa Rosa Safeway. As they did at Lafayette Station 16, the crew worked together, but unlike in Lafayette, where they pull 48-hour shifts, they worked 24 hours on, 24 hours off. The task force remained in the North Bay for one week. The Glass Fire, named after its proximity to Glass Mountain Road, eventually burned 67,000 acres and destroyed or damaged 1,800 structures, including numerous wineries and restaurants. Despite the enormity of the situation, amidst the firestorm and all of the chaos, the firefighters on scene persevere against the odds. "You just do your own as-

signment. I focus on my own task and try not to think of the big picture," Lyons said. "My orders were to pick a house you can defend and try to defend it." The fire headed downhill along Spring Mountain toward the Stony Hill Winery, a 60-year-old North Bay institution. That fire attack gave the crew an opportunity to experience a positive outcome in an occupation often bereft of positive outcomes. "We saved the winery and the vines," Lyons said. "The owner brought us food the next day and invited us to have dinner at his restaurant." But the crew had no time to enjoy a meal at a winery restaurant. Lyons returned home with a plea to Lamorinda residents. "If you get a warning to evacuate, please heed that warning. Be prepared to leave in a hurry. I understand people lose a lot of things, but you do not want to lose your life," he said. The captain also urged residents to surround their homes with defensible space, which he called the difference between returning to a house intact and a house burned down. As Lyons looked out his Lafayette Station 16 window, he saw a suburban landscape dominated by oak trees and private residences. "There is potential here for a horrific wildfire," he said.

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Strong showing of GPAC applicants as Lafayette starts General Plan update

By Pippa Fisher

The General Plan Advisory Committee, which will be responsible for the comprehensive update to Lafayette's General Plan, has been selected and is now in place. Senior Planner Sarah Allen brought the city council up to speed at the Oct. 13 meeting, reporting that they were happy to have had 85

applicants, which she said gets the process off on a really positive note. Commission and community representatives include members from the Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission, the Senior Services Commission, the Youth Commission, Transportation and Circulation Commission along with the Chamber of Commerce.

A lottery system was used for the remaining member selection with the mayor conducting the drawing live via a Zoom webinar Oct. 5. That provided representatives from a nonprofit organization and from each of the four districts of the city plus one at-large member. In each instance both a primary and an alternate was chosen, with the intention

that it should be mainly the primary who will attend meetings and vote, to ensure continuity through the long-term process. But Allen noted that there will still be opportunities for participation and that the public should visit the city website or General Plan website for ways to be involved. The general plan is the blueprint for how the city will

grow over the next 20 years, containing policies on housing and development, jobs, leisure, public safety etc. Mayor Mike Anderson commented that this was a great start to the process. "The lift off is spectacular," he said. For more information go to: www.planlafayette.org/

New book store opens; offers thoughtful escape amid pandemic



Photo Pippa Fisher

Betty and Rudy Winnacker opened a new bookshop in Lafayette in mid-September

By Pippa Fisher

Independent bookstores are something of a rarity these days. And that's even without a pandemic. So it came as a bit of a surprise to many in

Lafayette to see a brick-and-mortar book shop open its doors in mid-September. Reasonable Books is located in the old Papyrus store near Trader Joe's. For owners Rudy and Betty Winnacker,

this is their first time owning a bookshop. It has been a dream of theirs inspired by their family's shared love of reading. Rudy Winnacker says the store is an opportunity he's

looked forward to for some time to work with the printed word after a career working with a number of digital publishing companies such as Blogger, Twitter and Medium. "Before that," he says, "I delivered newspapers and worked in most of the libraries at Cal as a gopher." The store feels like a sanctuary of peace and quiet – a deliberate goal of the Winnackers. Their aim is to make available thoughtful, quality, "reasonable" materials, believing that there is enough stress in the world at the moment and that the mind can benefit from rest and healthy distractions. They carry a roughly 50-50 split between fiction and non-fiction, along with a small selection, about 20%, of gently used books as well. The types of books include current fiction and non-fiction bestsellers along with classics, science, history, philosophy and other books of enduring quality. If they lack a title, they are happy to order it. While Betty Winnacker prefers well-written fiction, her husband says he prefers

non-fiction. "I became interested in history as a way to understand our current world," he says. If their name sounds familiar, that is because local Moraga-Orinda Fire District Fire Chief Dave Winnacker is Rudy's cousin. The challenges of opening a physical bookstore are real and not helped by the pandemic, but the couple is optimistic. Rudy Winnacker says they're very pleased with how the first month has gone. "There is a steady stream of visitors and a lot of support and good will from the community," he says. "We are making sales, growing our inventory and learning a lot about how we can serve the readers in Lafayette and surrounding towns." The couple plans to become very involved with the community, the Chamber of Commerce, schools and book clubs. They aim to have in-person events at the store such as books signings and author talks. ... continued on Page A3

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Lafayette calling!



Photo provided

By Pippa Fisher

The city has recently added another way of keeping its residents up to speed for emergency information and instructions when needed. Lafayette's community information and emergency radio station is now broadcasting continuously on 1670 AM.

Serving as an extra channel of communication, which could be critical during wildfires and power outages when cell phone and the internet may not be working, as happened last year in Lafayette's fire that destroyed the tennis club, the station will provide an alternative for delivering vital information to residents directly.

The AM station will broadcast information during times of disaster such as wild-

fires, as well as details on PG&E power outages. During non-emergencies residents will hear general city information and news, details on events and programs, and general visitor information about Lafayette.

The station, put in place by the work of the Lafayette Police Department's John Cornell together with Information Station Specialist Technician Tom Coviak, is housed at the LPD and can be heard for a 6- to 7-mile radius. It covers all of Lafayette, portions of Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, and Walnut Creek.

The station's FCC-designated call sign is WRHU776.

Residents should have the station saved in their cars as well as on their AM radios for up-to-date information.

New book store opens; offers thoughtful escape amid pandemic

... continued from Page A2

For now the pandemic has limited those opportunities, although they are currently featuring a couple of local authors – Ecolunchbox Founder Sandra Ann Harris (her book – “Say Goodbye to Plastic: A Survival Guide for Plastic-Free Living”) and Jane Blomstrand, a veteran of public school leadership in California (her book – “Meet the Principal: My Journey Beyond the Curriculum”) and hope to host virtual events with them soon.

The lack of in-store events meant adjustments in the Winnackers' opening plans. The store opened very quietly but word is spreading and they are grateful to the people who are making a point of

visiting.

Rudy Winnacker says there was a lot of uncertainty at the beginning of the lockdown, which happened just days before signing the lease. On top of this, they faced the unexpected challenges of distance learning for their three children ages 10, 14, and 15 (who can often be spotted in the store on their Zoom classes).

While bookshops face stiff competition from internet sellers, Rudy Winnacker is emphatic that there is nothing online that can replicate the experience of taking time browsing through books.

Customer Rhonda Chaikin agrees. “We need a book store – we all need relationships with books,” she says.

The store is located at 3645 C Mt. Diablo Blvd. Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Website: <https://books@reasonable.online/>



Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Nov. 9, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, Nov. 2, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Don Tatzin Community Hall

Design Review

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Lafayette
Zoom Teleconference Meeting via Zoom Webinar

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Town council reviews MCSP



Rendering of 40-foot setback on Moraga Way.

Image provided

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Center Specific Plan Implementation Project made its way to the town council's Oct. 14 meeting. No action was taken other than to provide input and feedback to the town's staff and attorney regarding recommendations from council members about zoning code and design guidelines.

Staff's presentation to the town council took into consideration any updates or modifications previously requested by the planning com-

mission. New and revised definitions were made to create consistency between the MCSP and existing zoning code by consolidating definitions in one place.

Additionally, new zoning districts were created: Residential R-12 (10-12 dwelling units per acre); MCSP Mixed Retail/Residential (12-20 DUA); MCSP Mixed Office/Residential (12-20 DUA); MCSP Commercial; and the Moraga Ranch Overlay District, which proposes to retain existing buildings as feasible, and design new development

consistent with the existing character.

Shared parking would be allowed for commercial uses and provide flexibility in site planning. If there are two proposed uses, then the required parking for each use type would be divided accordingly.

The development potential continues to include retail, office, hotel, assisted living/congregate care, active senior, single-family, workforce housing and compact single-family units.

The Moraga Center Design Requirements moves and edits the R-20 design and applies them to the MCSP area. New additions include a 40-foot setback along scenic corridors and an 8-foot stepback on building elements above the first floor. Parking would be required onsite or on streets immediately adjacent to the development. Measures are included to protect trees that are in good condition.

Construction of a Town Square is encouraged and would be constructed in the area bounded by Moraga Way, Moraga Road and School Street. The town would have to analyze ways to finance its

construction.

With regards to streets, trails and bridges the MCSP requires construction of School and Bridge streets; the Lafayette/Moraga Regional Trail; and a vehicular and/or pedestrian bridge over Laguna Creek. It allows, but doesn't require, a pedestrian/bicycle trail along either side of Laguna Creek.

Any creek and channel setbacks would follow Contra Costa County regulations and state or federal regulatory agency regulations.

The updated draft of the MCSP Design Guidelines were integrated into the Town Design Guidelines. Included is the incorporation of interpretive signs to describe natural features and history of the MCSP area.

Also included is direction to maintain and enhance Moraga Ranch's visual and cultural resources by reflecting its character in new buildings and organize new development in clusters, as well as provide informal and formal pedestrian connections. It also provides guidance on how to reduce impacts of outdoor lighting and requires compliance with state energy efficiency regulations.

Street design standards include allowances for continuity, topography, parking, truck access, bus and transit service, fire/emergency access and a green infrastructure.

The Town Square encourages primarily civic uses and secondary commercial activities in a formal urban space with a spatial definition by adjacent buildings and tree-lined streets.

Key revisions based on staff recommendations were to reduce the size of the Town Square from 0.5 acres to 0.25 acres and legal council advised not to require construc-

tion through zoning ordinance, but to trigger cooperation with the property owner instead.

The planning commission had requested construction of a trail along the creek as a requirement, however, legal advised against it by instead having trail requirements determined at the time of a project application review.

There were very few public comments about the MCSP during the meeting, although the topic of fire safety and evacuations came up once again. Also, the property owners expressed the desire for clarification of updates, because they feel that the new changes that have been made steer away from the original Specific Plan and its verbiage.

The council was concerned about setback footage and three story buildings detracting from the views along the scenic corridor. They also discussed housing and mixed-use possibilities. Various scenarios were discussed while staff pointed out that it was important to go through with the MCSP before the end of the year when the state might decide to create even tougher regulations.

The size of the Town Square and its location was another topic with all council members agreeing that it would be a good gathering spot and would attract people to the town's center. It was decided that size and setting would be determined in the future according to what buildings and businesses would be built in its vicinity.

Any updates are necessary to be consistent with the General Plan, Housing Element and the adopted 2010 MCSP. The item will return to the town council for its next meeting on Oct. 28.

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Moraga earns No. 8 ranking of 50 Safest College Towns in America



Saint Mary's College entrance

Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Moraga ranked No. 8 in the 2020 list of the 50 Safest College Towns in America, according to Safewise, an independent review site. Home to Saint Mary's College, Moraga was the only California college town to appear in the top 10. California ranked third as

the state with the most safe college towns behind Massachusetts with eight, and Illinois with seven.

Safewise based its rankings purely on which college towns reported the fewest violent and property crimes per 1,000 residents by using FBI crime statistics reported in 2018. Each city's score was

based 50% on the number of violent crimes and 50% on the number of property crimes.

To qualify, cities needed to have a population greater than 15,000 residents and be home to an accredited college offering four-year degrees.

"The average violent crime rate among the safest college towns remained steady at 0.9 incidents per 1,000 people in 2019 and 2020," states Safewise. "About half of the safest college cities reported less than one violent crime incident per 1,000 residents. The average property crime rate among the safest college towns dropped seven percentage points year over year - 8.6 incidents per 1,000 people in 2020 vs. 15.6 in 2019." Safewise lists Moraga's violent crime rate as 0.7 and a property crime rate of 5.3.

Town Council Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission: Monday, Nov. 2, 7 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 Special Board Meeting Tuesday, Nov. 10, 6 p.m.
www.moraga.k12.ca.us See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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Moraga School District phasing into hybrid learning model Nov. 16

By Jenn Freedman

The Moraga School Board Oct. 15 approved Superintendent Bruce Burns' recommendation to reopen the Moraga School District for in-person/distance hybrid learning beginning in mid-November. "We can't deliberate forever," Burns stated in his proposal. "Contra Costa County Health Services and the California Department of Public Health have stated conditions have been met to reopen schools ... and MSD has exceeded guidance to reopen."

TK through second grades will begin phasing to in-person hybrid learning on Nov. 16. Third through fifth grades will phase in beginning Dec. 7. Sixth through eighth grades are scheduled to begin in-person hybrid learning on Jan. 5.

In the proposed hybrid model, students would be broken into two cohorts, and would rotate between one week of in-person learning followed by one week of distance learning to keep the in-person class sizes to about 12-13 students. However, all families will have the option for their students to continue distance learning for the remainder of the school year if they prefer.

For elementary school, the district revised the initial schedule on Oct. 22 based on feedback from the community, school board, and teachers. While still a work in progress, the current schedule has all students distance learning in the morning together with their teacher via Zoom for core subjects of reading, writing, and math. In the afternoon, the in-person cohort would attend class with their teacher, working on various topics like science and social studies, while the distance cohort would have asynchronous work as well as art, music, PE, or library classes. The schedule has all students distance learning on Fridays, mostly asynchronously. The next step for the elementary hybrid schedule is for the district to provide specificity on full distance learners' access to teachers.

For middle school, teacher-led learning would also take place in the morning, with classes shortening to 50 minutes to enable all four periods to happen before lunch. All students would attend synchronously for the full class,

with half the class in-person and half distance on Zoom. Afternoons would be for independent student work, Organizational Academy, and teacher office hours.

The Oct. 22 meeting was the 19th public forum school board meeting since schools closed in March. The district has been working continuously to ensure all safety measures have been taken and has exceeded expectations from county guidelines. The district has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars (with the assistance of Moraga Education Foundation) to address classroom environments: for example, all classrooms have a new air purification system, fans, and will have MERV 13 filters by 11/11. Plus, an HVAC company is cleaning and checking all units for air flow. However, Burns reiterated, "The most important thing we must do as a district to prevent transmission when we reopen is to wash hands, wear a mask, physically distance, and stay home when not feeling well."

The district has produced a video to showcase what schools will look like, and has also scheduled time for parents and staff to walk through Camino Pablo School to see firsthand the implemented safety measures from 3 to 5 p.m. on Oct. 29, Nov. 2, and Nov. 12.

The district has a communication protocol for what happens if a student or staff is exposed to COVID-19. The county has also reported guidance on triggers for closures: for example, if 5% of a classroom cohort tests positive, the classroom will close. School staff will aid the county in contract tracing as needed.

The district surveyed parents and staff about reopening in early October: 85% of parents responded to the survey and were split 50/50 between returning before winter break or after, while 23% of parents said they preferred schools stay closed for the remainder of the year.

Nearly 60% of staff responded to the survey, with 78% of those who responded preferring to open after break, and 31% of those preferring to stay closed the whole year.

Parents and teachers shared their perspectives during public comment at the October meetings. The majority of parent comments were in favor of reopening quickly.

Paul Espinas, a parent, pediatrician, and volunteer on the COVID-19 MSD safety taskforce, said, "Current evidence tells us that safe schools are possible. The district has done a great job of following the science and recommendations. My wife and I would feel comfortable sending our middle schooler back to JM, if implemented well. My overall advice is to open now as the current state meets the indicators to do so. Let's learn and improve implementation before flu season starts."

Laura Fegraus, a parent, health care leader at Kaiser Permanente, and also a volunteer on the safety taskforce, reinforced, "All health care providers are aligned that it's time for kids to go back when county indicators are met."

However, teachers and staff voiced concerns for returning to school. Annette Herbert, president of the Moraga chapter of the California School Employees Association said, "Let us only move out of distance learning when the science of safety is clear, not just when the pressure for change raises its voice."

Angela Guidi, representing the Moraga Teachers Association, warned, "When it is safe, we want to return. We want to be with our kids. We all want to return to normal real school. But right now, we all need to understand how different hybrid school truly is."

The school board will meet again Oct. 28 to revisit the elementary hybrid schedule details as well as school childcare. The school board plans to hold weekly public meetings for the foreseeable future as they navigate through this transition. For the latest information on school reopening, visit www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

Lafayette School District board moves forward with reopening plans

Lafayette School District Superintendent Richard Whitmore presented reopening plans to the governing board Oct. 22, after several earlier special meetings on the subject, and hearing public comments on the proposals. At the Oct. 14 special board meeting, Whitmore explained how from June to mid-July, the district focused on creating a hybrid model, then had to pivot due to the summer surge before moving to online learning. "You don't wave a wand and have this happen," he said. "It's painstaking work."

The exhaustive reopening plan presented on Oct. 22 focused on a hybrid model in all grades, which would divide students into small "A" and "B" cohorts. During an "A" cohort's in-person instructional time, the "B" cohort would participate in distance learning. In TK through fifth grade the full classroom will receive instruction in the core curriculum through a distance learning setting, and in-person time will be scheduled after lunch by cohort. Middle school has a greater challenge to maintain stable cohorts, so the plan is to team students as much as possible to reduce exposure.

The district plans to provide full online curriculum and instructional support to families who prefer to continue distance learning. Students in Special Day Classes will be offered a phased in approach to in-class instruction on a structured schedule beginning in November, which is manageable due to small class sizes. TK and kindergarten students would have a return date of Nov. 30, with all other grades returning on Jan. 5 or 11. To view the entire plan, including safety protocols and proposed schedules, visit the LafSD website (lafsd.k12.ca.us) click on "Special Governing Board Meeting, Oct. 22" and open "Report Item" in the agenda (<https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/lafsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BUDMEQ5AE5C8>).

- J. Wake

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Canyon Road Bridge to have soft opening



New concrete approach slab, poured Oct. 21. Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

Phase 1 of the new Canyon Road Bridge is on the verge of completion. Bridgeway Civil Constructors is finishing up the last of the structural backfill on the new retaining wall, installing storm drain improvements and asphalt

paving the new roadway approaches to the bridge. A soft opening of the inbound lane is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10. At that time, the public is invited to walk or bike across the bridge. Please observe the county mandates by wearing a mask and staying at least six feet apart.

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See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
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 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, Nov. 10, 7 p.m.
 Regular Meeting
 By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission Special Meeting

Thursday, Nov. 12, 6:30 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only

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Good fences make good neighbors on Rheem to Parkway trail



Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda Director of Parks and Recreation Todd Trimble has informed users of the trail from Rheem Boulevard to Parkway Court that the DeSpains, owners of the adjacent property, have completed the installation of a fence along the trail. Trimble said that it is hoped that the fence will ease tensions between the users of the trail and the homeowners along the trail.

Trimble took the opportunity to remind trail users that it is for pedestrian use only, and that bicycles must be walked all the way from Rheem Boulevard to Parkway

Court, as well as the other way, including on the driveway portion. Dogs are allowed, but must be leashed and owners must pick up after their dogs on the trail.

Littering, smoking, alcohol, and amplified sound are prohibited. And, as the days become shorter, Trimble reminded users that trail hours are dawn to dusk – no use is allowed during darkness.

The full list of trail rules appear on signs posted in two locations; one near the beginning of the dirt portion of the trail, adjacent to the DeSpain home, and one near the entrance off Parkway

Court.

The trail was adopted by the city of Orinda last year following a dispute with the DeSpains about the long-used easement beside the property that they acquired and built their home on. The matter was settled and the city paid the DeSpains \$17,500 for the fence and \$5,500 to defray the costs of surveyors, and a negotiated payment of \$22,500, which represents the value of the easement and the avoided legal costs that would have been incurred in litigation.

Orinda manages to restore furloughed staff

By Sora O'Doherty

Although suffering steep revenue declines owing to the COVID-19 pandemic this year, one-time income sources, such as a state distribution of \$234,707 of CARES Act funds,

and an unexpected management staff vacancy were enough to allow the city to restore to full time three positions in the Parks and Recreation department that had been on reduced hours: the Director Todd Trimble, a recreation supervisor II;

and a facilities and maintenance supervisor. Since July 6, these staff had worked only 24 hours per week

The city had also been able to recall a laid-off public works employee earlier. However, Finance Director Paul Ranking reported that,

unfortunately, the employee found it necessary to resign and his position is currently vacant. Human Resources will be working with the department to initiate recruitment.

Orinda is still asking, when is it safe to return to school?

By Sora O'Doherty

As the Orinda Union School District board continues to struggle with the question of when and how to return students to campus, they heard from competing voices on Oct. 14: Sara Edwards, a physician and parent of two in Orinda schools presented an overview of the COVID-19 staff and student testing options and shared information on COVID-19 transmission data, while teachers and staff

continued to have reservations.

Edwards has been working with OUSD Superintendent Carolyn Seaton, board president Cara Hoxie, and board vice president Liz Daoust to secure a viable COVID-19 testing solution for the District as one of the school site reopening steps. She is an associate professor of sports medicine and shoulder in the UCSF department of orthopaedic surgery. Edwards met with two other doctors at Stanford, Yvonne Maldonado,

a specialist in pediatric infectious disease, and Christina Kong, who runs the testing lab at Stanford and advises the Los Angeles Unified School District and Burlingame. Both doctors are doing school reopening research.

According to Edwards, "Dr. Maldonado was extremely reassuring with regards to current disease transmission rates in the Bay Area and in her words 'there is no reason for schools to be closed at this point.' Although Maldonado emphasized the

importance of masking, hand hygiene, and symptom screening, Edwards said, testing is not currently required and does not prevent COVID, although it is important for contact tracing.

Edwards noted how in New York City, out of 1,751 random tests of children, only one child tested positive. According to the Washington Post, in late September, Europe stays committed to in-person classes as school outbreaks remain rare.

... continued on Page A13

Re-Elect Darlene Gee to the Orinda City Council

I am proud of my City Council contributions and the progress we have made in repairing our roads, delivering City services more efficiently, and adding new community facilities.

To learn more about my continued priorities and goals for Orinda, please visit my campaign website at: darlenegeeforcouncil.com.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✓ Maintain and enhance the roads and drainage rehabilitation momentum the City has achieved over the last seven years.
- ✓ Develop long-term maintenance plans that are financially secured.

“Darlene has been a significant contributor to our progress and success with Orinda’s roads and drainage rehabilitation. Her expertise and commitment to improving our infrastructure is why we need Darlene on the City Council.

Terry Murphy, Former Chair
 Orinda Citizen's Infrastructure Oversight Commission

PUBLIC SAFETY

- ✓ Maximize fire prevention and fuel mitigation efforts in Orinda - working closely with our Fire Chief.
- ✓ Increase emergency services planning, interagency coordination, and state legislative efforts for fire protection funding and insurance.

“Darlene’s initiation of a joint subcommittee between Orinda, Moraga and MOFD has furthered our fire prevention coordination. She has demonstrated a real commitment to protecting our community.

Craig Jorgens
 MOFD Director, District 5

DOWNTOWN

- ✓ Complete the Downtown Precise Plan, including well-grounded economic analysis studies.
- ✓ Advance communications with downtown property owners to facilitate opportunities.

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Arran Schultz, Chair
 Tom Trowbridge, Former Chair OrindaVision

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Orinda Intermediate School survey reveals continued disagreement on return to school

By Sora O'Doherty

Stacy Wayne, Principal of Orinda Intermediate School, presented the results of a return to school survey of OIS students, parents and staff at the Oct. 14 school board meeting. In general, students and teachers were more aligned in their responses, and parents less so.

While parents tended to want a return to school for all six periods per day, teachers and students did not favor that option. Students and staff were more positive than parents about the OIS session cycle

model, which involves two classes per session of distance learning.

All groups were in agreement with the small cohort size in the synchronous Zoom sessions. Students, staff and parents were largely in agreement that both synchronous sessions and asynchronous work are relevant and engaging, with the majority of both students and parents thinking that the amount of asynchronous work is appropriate and staff largely feeling that the asynchronous work being assigned is appropriate to cover the content and essential standards. However, a

sizable minority, about a quarter, of parents or guardians think that there is not enough asynchronous work.

While students said that they feel a sense of connection to their classmates, their parents and guardians strongly disagreed. Both stated that they would like more opportunities for students to meet with friends and classmates for clubs, sports and other activities.

Regarding willingness of teachers and staff to return to school and their preferences about timing, the majority favored continuing distance

learning until the end of the school year. If that isn't possible, their next choice would be to return in March and less favorable would be to return in January.

Of teachers and staff asked about their intentions to return to school, 41.4% of teachers reported that they would return to work on campus and another 28.3% agreed to work on campus, but preferred not to. While only 7.6% cannot return to school owing to a medical condition, 22.8% said they would have to discuss the matter with the principal. Classified staff numbers were simi-

lar, although the return from staff was lower.

Board member Carol Brown expressed how hard this decision is. "I think we're not supposed to be governing by survey," she said. "Surveys are useful in finding out about feelings and health issues, but we are the ones who are supposed to be deciding this. This is what we signed up for, whether we anticipated this or not." Brown wants to have a decision by the end of October. Another meeting was scheduled for Oct. 26, after press time.

... continued on Page A14

OUSD board excited about new cameras in classrooms ... teachers not so much

By Sora O'Doherty

New cameras in the classroom could mean that teachers could teach those on campus and those at home at the same time, in theory, according to the Orinda Union School District board, which did a test run with the camera at its Oct. 14 meeting. This could cut a teacher's work

load by up to half, but teachers had a different view of having their work constantly available to the eyes of all parents.

To test the poly student camera, OUSD IT Director Bobby Bardenhagen set one up in the boardroom. Board president Cara Hoxie and board member Jason Kaune were in the boardroom during the meeting. They

wore masks and sat far apart. Bardenhagen explained that the camera is very easy to set up, it plugs into a computer via USB and is, he said, literally plug and play. Cara Hoxie said that the sound quality was very good, and Superintendent Carolyn Seaton and board member Carol Brown agreed that the sound was really incredible. The

speaker view is around 120 degrees. It is not a 360 degree angle because of privacy issues. The audio can be muted or the video stopped as well. Board member Hilary Weiner inquired if there was any lag, and Bardenhagen explained that it is not connected to the internet but plugged in directly, like a gigantic version of a web cam. Be-

cause it is hard-wired, it eliminates a lot of lag, he said.

Teachers, however, approached the idea with less enthusiasm. Charles Shannon, president of the Orinda Educators Foundation, said that the fact that parents can observe teachers all day in the classroom causes them anxiety.

... continued on Page A13

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Firefighters crush 30-acre Moraga vegetation fire



Photo courtesy MOFD

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga vegetation fire the evening of Oct. 11 was a powerful reminder for residents to complete their exterior abatement projects by the Moraga-Orinda Fire District deadline

of June 1.

The Irvine Fire, a one-alarm grass fire first reported before 6 p.m., required a response from four fire agencies, including MOFD, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the East Bay Regional Park District. The

Sanders Ranch blaze occurred in a Mutual Threat Zone, meaning that it started in the MOFD local responsibility area but had a high probability of spreading into the state responsibility area. Hence, the response from Cal Fire and the park district.

According to MOFD, the fire was caused by a resident who was mowing tall grass behind a house.

"In short, it is too late to complete fuel reduction work for this year, and we ask that residents use the winter to plan their late spring work to protect their homes during

next year's fire season," MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker said. "In my time with the district, three of the four significant vegetation fires have been caused by residents carrying out late season fuel mitigation work and it has been only thanks to the timely response and aggressive attack by our firefighters that the loss of homes has been avoided."

The Sanders Ranch fire burned 30 acres and took two hours to contain. No structures were threatened, as the fire burned away from houses, unaided by wind or severe weather.

"The biggest challenge was the hilly topography," said MOFD's Steve Gehling, the on-scene battalion chief. The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the park district provided aerial suppression support, preventing the

fire's forward progress into areas inaccessible to the firefighters.

Winnacker again stressed the need to complete exterior abatement by June 1 of next year. He reminded residents to cut annual grasses and weeds to less than 3 inches; to limb up trees to create at least a 6-foot air gap between the ground, ground fuels or roofs; and to maintain roadside vegetation to create a 3-foot horizontal and 15-foot vertical clearance.

MOFD has the authority to issue citations for violations of the fire code and health and safety code, and also has the authority to seek cost recovery for fires within their jurisdiction. "The fire district is not seeking cost recovery nor have we issued a citation," said Fire Marshal Jeff Isaacs of the Irvine Fire.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 6 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.mofd.org


ConFire

Board of Directors
Tuesday, Nov. 10, 1:00 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



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Orinda City Council

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MOFD official renders split decision in PG&E-San Ramon Valley Fire hearing

By Nick Marnell

At an October hearing over the justification of two fines issued by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, hearing officer Jeff Isaacs sided with the district on one citation and with the utility on the other.

It was the first time Isaacs, fire marshal of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, presided over such a hearing. "My role as the hearing officer was to protect the process, and insure that there was fair process and that each side was provided the opportunity to present their side and submit evidence," he said. "I then reviewed all testimony and evidence and issued a decision."

At issue was San Ramon Valley Fire Ordinance No. 35, which prohibits PG&E and any other electric utility from performing non-emergency electrical work — or any electrical work during periods of high fire danger — within district

boundaries without 48 hours' prior notice to the district.

The ordinance also prohibits PG&E from deploying a safety and infrastructure protection team without notice, and it allows the district to fine the utility and recover costs for overseeing the company's electrical utility work after each violation.

In May, San Ramon Valley Fire responded to the explosion of a power transformer that occurred while PG&E maintenance crews performed work on-site, with two company safety and infrastructure protection teams on standby alert. Per its ordinance, the district fined the company \$1,000 for failing to provide advance notice of the two deployments and billed the utility for costs incurred.

Isaacs found that one of the safety and infrastructure protection teams on site was merely passing through the fire district, and technically not deployed to the incident. He dismissed that citation.

But because the second SIPT was specifically assigned work within the fire district, and PG&E gave no notice to the fire district as required by its ordinance, Isaacs upheld the district's \$500 fine against the utility.

"We are very happy that our ordinance, intended to hold PG&E accountable for their actions, is exposing PG&E for their lack of concern for our citizens' safety," San Ramon Valley Fire Chief Paige Meyers said. "I want the citizens to know we offered to waive the fine in its entirety if PG&E would agree to just follow our ordinance in the future. Not only did they not take me up on the offer, they never even responded."

According to PG&E spokesman Matt Nauman, the company is evaluating the decision and deciding how to proceed.

The MOFD board unanimously passed a similar ordinance Oct. 21.

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



Oct. 4 - Oct. 17

Alarms	37
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	14
Traffic	73
Suspicious Circumstances	10
Suspicious Subject	13
Suspicious Vehicle	10
Service to Citizen	53
Patrol Req./Security Check	53
Public/School Assembly Check	2
Supplemental Report	26
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	17
Ordinance Violation	2

Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
1200 Block Warner Ct.	
Deer Hill Rd./Oak Hill Rd.	
300 Block Saranap Ave.	
Reckless Driving	

Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
15t St./School St.
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.
Bacon Way/Springbrook Rd.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.
10 Block Eleven
Mt. Diablo Blvd./2Nd St.
El Charro Restaurant

Vehicle Theft
3600 Block Walnut St.
Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses
Police Department
1000 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
1000 Block Carol Ln.

Identity Theft
Police Department
Petty Theft
1800 Block Del Rey St.
3400 Block Black Hawk Rd.
3300 Block Mildred Ln. (2)
1200 Block Monticello Rd.
4200 Block Canyon Rd.

Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Warrant Arrest
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.

Warrant Service
1100 Block E Waterloo Rd.
Stockton

Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
900 Block Risa Rd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Disturbing The Peace
900 Block Hough Ave.
60 Block Bacon Ct.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd. (2)

Loud Music
10 Block Eleven
900 Block Mountain View Dr.
Florence Dr./St Marys Rd.

Loud Noise
Bickerstaff St./Dewing Ave.
3400 Block School St.
900 Block Dewing Ave.
3300 Block Springhill Rd.

Loud Party
900 Block Diablo Dr.
1000 Block 2Nd St.
Glenside Dr./Las Trampas Rd.

Public Nuisance
900 Block S Thompson Rd.
Golden Gate Way/2Nd St.
2Nd St./Moraga Blvd.
3500 Block Brook St.
Magnolia Ln./Laurel Dr.
East St./Brook St.
Lucas Dr./Michael Ln.

El Curtola Blvd./Camino Diablo
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
900 Block 2Nd St.

Vandalism
3300 Block Betty Ln.

Other
Animal Cruelty
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Indecent Exposure
4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
K9 Outside Assist Request
Sams Club Warehouse, Con
1500 Block Mendocino Dr., Con

Trespass
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.(2)
3600 Block Deer Hill Rd.
N Thompson Rd./Deer Hill Rd.

Trespass W/ Vehicle
3400 Block School St.
Unwanted Guest
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Violation Custody Order
1200 Block Warner Ct. (2)
Violation Restraining Order
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report



Oct. 6 - Oct. 18

Alarms	8
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	12
Traffic	42
Suspicious Circumstances	5
Suspicious Subject	1
Suspicious Vehicle	1
Service to Citizen	38
Patrol Req./Security Check	49
Supplemental Report	8
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	5
Ordinance Violation	2

Vehicle violations
Accident Property
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.

Excessive Speed
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr.
Moraga Way/School St.
Moraga Way/Miramonte Dr.
Rheem Blvd./Fernwood Dr.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
Not Available
Reckless Driving

2000 Block Donald Dr.
Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.

Other criminal activity
Burglary

1100 Block Moraga Way
Commercial Burglary
100 Block Moraga Rd.
Fraud False Pretenses
2000 Block Donald Dr.

Petty Theft
Moraga Country Club (2)
Not Available
70 Block Shuey Dr.

Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
1900 Block Canyon Rd.
Disturbing The Peace
10 Block Corliss Dr.

Loud Music
1200 Block Rimer Dr.
2000 Block Ascot Dr.
Canyon Rd./Country Club Dr.
Canyon Club Brewery
300 Block Draeger Dr.
300 Block Rheem Blvd.

Not Available (2)
Loud Noise
2000 Block Ascot Dr.
100 Block Ascot Ct.
300 Block Draeger Dr.

Public Nuisance
70 Block Hardie Dr.

Other
FAnimal Cruelty
McCaulou's
300 Block Rheem Blvd.
Mentally Ill Commit
Not Available

Revoked License
St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.
Unwanted Guest
Starbucks



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

Oct. 11 - Oct. 17

Alarms	19
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	5
Traffic	43
Suspicious Circumstances	1
Suspicious Subject	1
Suspicious Vehicle	1
Service to Citizen	27
Patrol Req./Security Check	20
Public/School Assembly Check	3
Supplemental Report	1
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	4
Ordinance Violation	0

Vehicle violations
Reckless Driving
Miramonte High School

Other criminal activity
Checks Non Suff Funds
Orinda Intermediate School
Fraud False Pretenses
20 Block Irwin Way

Identity Theft
Police Department
Petty Theft
100 Block Sleepy Hollow Ln. (2)
Petty Theft Purse Shoplift
Cvs

Warrant Arrest
Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante
Warrant Arrest
Safeway

Nuisance to the Community
Loud Music
Sleepy Hollow Swim And Tennis (2)

Loud Party
100 Block Overhill Rd.
30 Block Descanso Dr.

Vandalism
Unocal Station And Food Mart

Other
Death Unknown Causes
20 Block La Campana Rd.
Dependent Adult Abuse
10 Block Altarinda Rd.

Harassment
500 Block Moraga Way
Trespass
10 Block Orinda Fields Ln.

Letters to the editor

A Vote for Incumbent Cam Burks for Lafayette City Council

I encourage all Lafayette residents to cast one of our three City Council ballots for Cameron Burks this election.

Lafayette is fortunate to have a strong field of candidates willing to voluntarily perform civic service. Given that Cam is the only incumbent running, at least two elected candidates will necessarily lack continuity with the role, and all will join members who only commenced their first terms last year. Cam's record of leadership, integrity and effectiveness, and exclusive ability to provide continuity, makes his success especially important.

I came to know Cam during his 2016 Council campaign. Nobody worked harder to know the issues and engage with voters than Cam; that uber-preparedness was especially notable and noble given the reality that Cam ran unopposed. And yet, Cam rolled sleeves to not only understand our issues, but also develop deep substantive expertise, a commitment that endured throughout his first term, including as Vice-Mayor and Mayor.

It's been said that: "The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails." Cam is a true doer who understands our Community's pains and opportunities, and gets things accomplished. He's unquestionably earned a second term and my enthusiastic support.
Rob Sturm
Lafayette

Vote for Gina Dawson for Lafayette City Council

Gina's tenacious and herculean efforts to educate herself on gas safety issues long ignored in Lafayette, as well as to understand the clandestine reasoning behind PG&E's plan to cut down 272 trees has improved safety throughout Lafayette. She co-founded the environmental non-profit Save Lafayette Trees and established the Lafayette Gas Safety Alliance. She single-handedly stopped the unnecessary destruction of hundreds of heritage trees which bring natural beauty to our community. Her calm demeanor coupled with her ability to dig deep to research and analyze data, to listen, to communicate, and to advocate has proven successful in her dealing with PG&E and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Besides saving hundreds of our trees, her efforts through the Lafayette Gas Safety Alliance resulted in PG&E replacing approximately 1,000 feet of partially-exposed gas pipeline along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail and millions of dollars of unplanned investment to protect our community from the potential threat of an explosion, similar to what happened in San Bruno. Additionally, her efforts will result in an integrity management program audit of gas safety in Lafayette, an effort that rarely occurs. Safety is one of Gina's primary platform issues - she is our community safety watchdog and the premier expert in pipeline safety in Lafayette.

Gina brings a new voice, novel ideas, and a willingness to listen to all and collaborate for the betterment of our city. She has a proven track record of successes. All five existing City Council members endorse Gina in her bid for Lafayette City Council. I urge all Lafayette residents to vote for GINA DAWSON for Lafayette City Council!
Lynn Cass
Lafayette resident for 32 years

Sos, Onoda, and Stromberg for Moraga TC

Sos is brilliant and unmatched in graciousness. Onoda and Stromberg are also

very sharp, and all have proven their ability to work effectively with others, are compassionate, fair-minded, knowledgeable, firmly focused on fiscal restraint, politically savvy, and committed to finding the necessary balance of interests to protect our semi-rural environment without placing undue burdens on property owners.

However, Kendall Langan appears to me a wolf in sheep's clothing busily trying to charm the voters while hoping they fail to recognize what I see, which is that he appears to be a political agitator that: (i) will derail the current course of the TC, (ii) doesn't play well with others, (iii) is an admitted long-time drug user, and doesn't appear to have the skills, focus or analytical capacity to be an effective councilmember, and (iv) can't speak coherently about much (except his opinion that we should unincorporate Moraga, leaving ourselves to the mercy of a County that would provide fewer services and less protection for more money). As to Ursula Schilling: She has no apparent history of service in Moraga, and we know nothing about her values or opinions. About anything.
Kymberleigh Korpus, Mayor of Moraga

Yes on R

The fire danger is real. Already millions of acres in California have burned, lives ruined and lost, property destroyed. And it's only the beginning of the fire season.

Proposition R is a one-half cent sales tax increase (25cents on a \$50 purchase) to continue the much needed fire risk reduction, street maintenance and preparation for emergencies and disasters. Food and medicine are exempt.

Fire risk increases home insurances premiums and could even make fire insurance unavailable.

We all recall the terrible fire that destroyed homes and property just over the hill in Oakland. Don't let that happen here.

Vote yes on R
Jack D. Wickware
Orinda

Jex for MOFD Board

The current five-member board of MOFD is made up of three individuals with fire department pensions/jobs and two independent citizens with no such conflict. The board is currently negotiating the new labor contract with the union. One of the board members, an active firefighter, will be negotiating on behalf of MOFD with his own union president. Yes, the same person. Conflict much?

John Jex, the independent incumbent, is running for re-election. John's opponent is an active firefighter and a fireman's union member. His campaign is 100% funded by the Fire Fighter's Union. What possible reason could they have to spend thousands on his election? Is there any doubt which side of the negotiation he would favor?

John, as a retired Deloitte audit partner, has no tie to fire department unions or pensions, and is a 47-year resident of Moraga. John's campaign is 100% funded by local individuals. Who do you think will look out for Moraga's interests? John Jex is the independent voice for fiscal responsibility and long-term viability of our robust emergency services in Moraga. I urge a vote for John Jex for MOFD Board, Division #2.
Nathan W. Bell
Moraga

Anduri for Lafayette City Council

Carl Anduri has my vote for Lafayette City Council because he possesses the qualities and experience to be an effective, forward-looking, and collaborative leader. Carl has a passion for Lafayette, and a

deep desire to build upon what makes it a great place to live and work.

He has a vision for the future of Lafayette and the humility and understanding to know that he works for all Lafayette residents. He will represent and listen to the input of the entire community, his colleagues, and staff.

Carl is a lifelong learner, an active listener, and open to having his ideas, biases, and prejudices challenged. He will listen respectfully and weigh differing opinions when making decisions. Carl will always make decisions based on what's best for the community.

Ultimately, his vote will be based on the best interests of the city and its residents, while respecting the law, city ordinances, policies, and council protocols.

Carl has the humility, confidence, drive, and determination to be of service and continue to make a difference in our community. Please join me in voting for Carl Anduri, Lafayette City Council.
Teresa Geringer
Lafayette

Vote No on negative campaigning

The scurrilous and anonymous (what is PETT!?) "oh no" signs that have sprouted up recently in Moraga have convinced me to vote yes on Teresa Onoda for Moraga Town Council. Negative campaigning should have no place in politics. It certainly has no place in a local election for an uncompensated, volunteer position.

If this negative campaign succeeds, we can be sure we will see ever more of it in Moraga, to the great detriment of the town we all love. Good candidates will often choose not to run rather than subject themselves and their families to such tactics. Please vote against these tactics.

Moraga should remain an island of civility in an uncivil world.
Blair Hoffman
Moraga

Re-Elect John Jex for MOFD Board

I appreciate what Director Jex has contributed to the progress of our Fire District. He is a proven leader and experienced manager who understands what is needed to strengthen the MOFD organization to achieve its mission of excellent emergency services and a fire safe town. Jex has strongly supported the adoption of a new fire code and enforcing its requirements. He also supported the Chipper Program to keep our community wildfire safe.

We need Director Jex for four more years to secure our District's financial future and the protection of our town.
Greg Andrews
Moraga

A letter to the Orinda City Council

The article in the October 28, issue of Lamorinda Weekly, says you asked Jason Moody (consultant and Principal of the firm, Economic & Planning Systems), "what his thoughts are for when we go back to normal times..." His response, "retail is the eye of the storm, transforming significantly in a very short time," seems questionable, and one of multiple outcomes, but suggests the consultant does not recognize, nor admit, the downward decent of retail almost everywhere.

More importantly, to your question, dire economic times for the lower and middle class, unrelated to the manipulated stock market, are certainly possible, and seem more probable day by day. One would think it prudent for the city council, city manager, police dept., to at least develop some contingency measures, should unemployment and the real economy, temporarily propped up by massive "stimulus," continue to worsen.
Chris Kniel
Orinda

Renata Sos for Moraga Town Council

This is an especially important election, both nationally and locally. There's so much uncertainty these days, and I know Moraga has challenges ahead of it. I'm voting for Renata Sos for Moraga Town Council because I'm confident that she has what it takes to do what's best for our town. I've known Renata for over 15 years. Our kids grew up together. For years she coached my daughter in volleyball and basketball, and we worked together in the Moraga schools. My experience of Renata is that she's a smart and practical problem-solver who is also generous, compassionate and deeply committed to our community. She works really well with others but is not afraid to lead and to make her own decisions. She has a big heart and an open mind, and treats everyone with kindness and respect. She's a wonderful person and an outstanding public servant. I'm proud to call her a friend and to have her on the Moraga Town Council. Please join me in voting for Renata on Nov. 3 so that she can continue to serve the community we all love.
Kris Schaffel
Moraga

Vote Yes on Measure R to help keep Orinda safe from Wildfires

As I write this early in the second week of September the midday sky is a scary orange and I cannot see our neighbors' houses, just a couple of hundred yards away. This is all due, of course, to the fires raging throughout Northern California. This scene is likely to repeat.

Orinda's Measure R is designed in part to do something for wildfire prevention. It is imperative that we come together as a community NOW to take action to alleviate the serious threat wildfires pose to all of us.

I'm sure the residents of Paradise would tell us that a small sales tax increase for wildfire prevention is something they wish they could have had an opportunity to pay a couple of years ago.

Let's not dither over the details. Please VOTE YES on MEASURE R to help keep Orinda safe.
Bill Judge
Orinda Mayor 2006

Please vote yes on Measure R!

Beginning in 2003, Orinda began a comprehensive process to rebuild our residential roads, many of which had never been rebuilt since WWII. Savvy voters supported, and numerous citizens worked to develop, a detailed plan to fix Orinda's public roads and to maintain them into the future. Measure R is part of that plan and it will provide the funding to continue to maintain Orinda's investment in roads, and to repair storm drains. Having spent the money to bring our roads up to current conditions, we would be foolish not to keep them in decent shape; kind of like buying a new car and then not having it serviced or repaired! Measure R will also provide funding for fuel mitigation. Fire Chief Winnacker did a great job obtaining a grant to create the North Orinda Fire Break this year, and PG&E has also removed a lot of vegetation under their lines. But more needs to be done to trim, remove and replace vegetation in our lovely community. Please vote yes on Measure R for a Safer Orinda!
Victoria Smith (Former Mayor)
Orinda

... continued on Page A11

Vote to Re-Elect Inga Miller

www.IngaForOrinda.com



JOIN LEADERS IN ENDORSING INGA MILLER

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State Sen. Steve Glazer
Retired State Sen. Don Perata

COUNTY SUPERVISOR
Candace Andersen

ORINDA CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
Mayor Darlene Gee
Vice Mayor Amy Worth
Councilmember Dennis Fay
Councilmember Nick Kosla

ORINDA UNION SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS
President Cara Hoxie
Vice President Liz Daoust
Board Member Carol Brown
Board Member Jason Kaune
Board Member Hillary Weiner

ACALANES UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board Member for Orinda, Chris Severson

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Board Member Sarah Butler

COMMUNITY LEADERS
Toris Jaeger, Naturalist
Carlos Baltodano, President of the Orinda Association
Dick Burkhalter, Orinda Rotary
Chris Laszcz-Davis, Lamorinda Presents
Gene Gottfried, CERT, retired MOFD Board Member

FORMER MAYORS
Laura Abrams
State Sen. Steve Glazer
Joyce Hawkins
Bill Judge
Bobbie Landers
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AUHSD to implement hybrid back-to-school model in January, despite doubts

By Sophie Braccini

The Acalanes Union High School District board adopted a plan proposed by staff to reopen the three Lamorinda high schools along with Las Lomas in Walnut Creek at the beginning of the second semester, either on Jan. 5 or Jan. 19, two weeks after the return from the holiday break.

Over the last two weeks staff polled parents and staff on their preference: 78.25% responded they would support a hybrid model (no other option for returning to campus was offered) and 21.71% said they would not permit their children to return in person. Eleven percent of teachers indicated that they would not return, and planned to either retire or resign, taking COVID-19 leave, being afflicted by med-

ical restrictions.

The hybrid model that was defined last June divides students into two groups and offers a schedule where Mondays are an asynchronous learning day, and students will be on campus every other remaining week day for four blocks of time lasting about one and a half hours each. When not on campus, students will be expected to work independently or be taught online asynchronously.

Since many teachers will not teach on campus, administrative staff will have to review options and schedules for the next semester. The logistical challenge is quite serious. Due to types of accreditation it may not be feasible to have teachers not able to return to campus, simply teaching all students online.

Several teachers from the district spoke against the hy-

brid model. They asked that older teachers be exempt from the obligation to return; some believe that teaching behind a mask and shield to masked students will not be an improvement over online live teaching; others noted that the amount of asynchronous time will be higher for students; a science teacher noted that hands-on classes would be impossible live because of the small number of students who could be together at one time.

The board voted to support staff's proposal, but in the weeks to come the hybrid model will be reviewed and safety protocols will be tested by students who have already been invited to come back in small groups, mostly for support activities. The next board meeting is scheduled Nov. 4.

Locals find spooky, socially distanced ways to celebrate Halloween

... continued from Page A1

One social media poster declared that she was putting out a bowl of candy, with individual scoopers provided for the trick-or-treaters to take with them. Others said they'll put individual treat bags out, placing each one six feet from the other, use a grabber to place candy in bags or even tossing pieces out.

And then there's Sue Carlson, who, in past years has given out more than 500 pieces of candy. This year, with the help of her adult son, she'll be shooting candy through a lighted tube from the top step of her well-decorated Moraga home to the treat bags held by costumed trick-or-treaters down on the sidewalk. "Halloween has always been one of our favorites," Carlson said. "This year, more than ever, having a day we can celebrate something fun makes it all the more special. Families can spread joy by decorating, handing out candy safely or walking up and down the street in costumes and feel a sense of community as well as a little bit of magic."

Celebrations may be different but certainly no less fun. A.J. Brown and her family have, for the last eight years, gone to a party at the same friends' house. No party this year; instead she took her two kids to an immersive outdoor drive-in haunted house.

Mike Seitler and his family have also celebrated Halloween in the same way for many years: trick-or-treating

with a particular group of friends. But this year, all seven families are donning their costumes and going to play mini-golf. "It's a socially distanced activity," Seitler noted, "with each family at a different hole. We'll still be able to be together while apart." This will be followed by a "dark and spooky" candy hunt for just his two kids, who, like most others, are still excited about their favorite holiday.

Erin Roth said her 8-year-old twins, who usually trick-or-treat on Martha Street with throngs of kids, will be partying with their small pod in Orinda. They actually seem "super excited" about doing something different, Roth said. "At this age, the goal is to get candy and they don't really care from where. They want costumes and they want candy," she noted. "And they'll have both."

It appears there will be no lack of candy.

Zoonies, the popular Lafayette candy shop, sells Boo Bags that are meant to be given anonymously and include a "You've Been Boo'd" note and a suggestion to "keep the spirit going and boo your neighbors." These bags range in price and can be generic or custom made. Orinda's Glorietta Elementary School's PTA even sold Boo Bags as a fundraiser. (It may not be too late to get your own Boo Bags. Call Zoonies at 925-299-9866.)

Local real estate agent, Kristina McCann, put together Boo Boxes containing candy and small toys. "I did this be-

cause I knew many parents were feeling sad and unsure about what Halloween would look like this year. I wanted to provide a little something to make kids happy," she explained. A social media post offering her free Boo Boxes resulted in hundreds of requests.

The schools and local PTAs know their students are missing the typical costume parades, room parties and school carnivals so they, too, are creating a variety of fun virtual activities. There are pumpkin carving contests, themed craft projects, Zoom and drive-by costume parades, COVID-safe candy scavenger hunts and virtual as well as socially-distanced dance parties.

Finally, the city of Lafayette is getting into the Halloween spirit by sponsoring the "spooktacular" Lafayette Halloween Dress Up Drive, encouraging residents to dress up their houses, businesses and cars. Participants were asked to register and a map of decorated houses and businesses will be posted Halloween week. (love-lafayette.org). A ride around town on Halloween will provide another safe activity for Lamorinda residents.

Lamorinda has really come together for the kids. Moraga's Amy Sidensol notes that Halloween 2020 seems to be bringing out the best in parents. "The creativity is amazing and I can't help but wonder if this will be the start of some new traditions for future Halloweens."

DJ brings safe Halloween bash to local kids



Photo provided

DJ Ryan O hosts one of his many outdoor, socially distanced high-energy dance and game events.

Ryan Oettinger, better known as DJ Ryan O, has been providing socially safe, high energy, engaging entertainment throughout Lamorinda neighborhoods since COVID hit. With Halloween upon us, he's created a special "spooktacular experience" for "spooky and kooky creatures of all sizes."

DJ Ryan O will go to local "ghoulesacs, treats or graveyards" and provide Halloween-inspired, socially distanced outdoor dancing, games, activities and entertainment. He has dozens of fun activities, including Frankenstein Freeze, Winnie the Witch Says, Monster Shuffle, Musical Pumpkins and Pumpkin Patch Stomp. "I can entertain 10 kids or 25 kids for several hours," Oettinger said, "with spaced out curated activities themed to music." He'll be doing just that for a group of local second-graders. "We'll gather in a parking lot, the kids will all be safely spaced out and we'll do high-energy, high-impact Halloween-themed dances, activities and challenges."

For more information, check out www.driveupdj.com.

— D. Claytor

Letters to the editor ... continued from Page A9

Vote Jex to Fire Board for a Safer Moraga

I have followed with interest this year's contest for the MOFD Fire Board. It has become apparent as a resident of Moraga there is a real contrast between John Jex, running for re-election, and his opponent. One key difference is that John Jex's campaign is entirely community supported and funded by local Lamorinda residents who know John and respect the outstanding job he has done representing the best interests of Moraga. Jex has fought to maximize our taxpayer dollars, maintain our excellent fire and medical services, and protect our community against wildfires. I know my family will be safe with John Jex serving on the Fire Board. Rachel Erickson Moraga

Anduri for Council

Carl Anduri will be an excellent addition to the Lafayette City Council. As a former Mayor and City Councilmember, he has already shown his invaluable skills in the recent past. Unable to run again for another term in 2012 due to work demands, he is now retired and anxious to return to service for Lafayette.

He feels strongly about safeguarding the character of our neighborhoods and the semi-rural nature of our community; protecting our hillsides and open space. His past experience on the Planning Commission and legal experience will be important in dealing with the new state mandates. He has a clear vision of development for making our downtown vibrant and pedestrian friendly, as well as pursuing development of appropriate housing in our central corridor.

He is fair minded, and a good listener with strong leadership abilities. As a former Mayor I urge you to vote for Carl. More than ever we need Carl Anduri on the Lafayette City Council.

Anne Grodin
Former Mayor

Support for Gina Dawson

I join the chorus of voices in support of Gina Dawson for Lafayette City Council. One lesser known fact is that Gina comes from a mixed-race upbringing. Her dad immigrated from the Philippines, while she was born and grew up in the Bay Area. At a time when our City has taken on the bold and courageous task to address racial equity and justice in the months and years ahead, we would be strengthened to have her voice guide us. I also appreciate her passion for envisioning Lafayette as a city rich with trees, bike & pedestrian paths, and green buildings powered by 100% renewable energy. Wei-Tai Kwok Lafayette

Support for Carl Anduri

I am writing to urge a vote for Carl Anduri for the Lafayette City Council. Carl has served Lafayette and its citizens as a member of the Planning Commission, a member of several City task forces, and as a member of the Lafayette City Council

for ten years, serving twice as our Mayor. His previous experience will serve Lafayette well in the next four years as issues such as development, sustainability, traffic and parking, and financial management continue to be addressed. The Lafayette General Plan is due to be updated in the next five years so Carl's experience, expertise and vision will be invaluable. Mary McCosker Lafayette

Gina Dawson for council

My wife and I are supporting Gina Dawson for Lafayette City Council and I invite you to do the same! I have known Gina, and her husband Michael, for many years beginning with our involvement with Sustainable Lafayette. Among her many contributions while active with Sustainable Lafayette was co-founding the Lafayette Farmers Market, supporting annual Earth Day events, community outreach and much more. However, her greatest contributions to environmental sustainability and public safety have been co-founding "Save Lafayette Trees" saving hundreds of trees from removal by PG&E and her extensive efforts to improve natural gas pipeline maintenance and safety. Her efforts for gas line safety include co-founding the Gas Safety Task Force which resulted in important gas pipeline safety improvements and forming the Lafayette Gas Safety Alliance with residents, PG&E, the CPUC, and the City. The GSTF has provided important leadership while working with PG&E and the CPUC to understand how gas safety projects are evaluated and implemented within the City. As others have noted, Gina is practical, level-headed, and hands-on in her approach. Most important to me, she strives to build consensus when addressing complex issues. Please join me in voting to elect Gina Dawson to Lafayette City Council.

Bart Carr
Lafayette Resident
Co-founder, Sustainable Lafayette
Member, Lafayette Environmental Task Force

Vote for Dawson

Without hesitation, I encourage you to vote for Gina Dawson in the upcoming City Council election.

I've known Gina for 10 years. We met volunteering for Sustainable Lafayette. She's a wonderful mom, who cares deeply about people, public education, and protecting the environment.

Gina is a workhorse, who rolls up her sleeves and digs into the details— we can count on her to put in the work needed to make well-informed decisions on behalf of the community.

Gina's super power is connecting with people and building consensus—and she's a great listener — something that every city council needs!

So, when you cast your ballot, please vote for Gina.

To learn more about Gina Dawson, go to www.ginadawson2020.com/. Alicia Culver Lafayette

Re-open our Lamorinda schools

In last week's articles about school re-openings, you reported most parents and kids in the area want to be back in school, and that the teachers, not necessarily the school boards and districts, are delaying re-openings.

As a Campo HS parent, I support efforts to reopen schools as soon as possible. I was flabbergasted by one teacher's comment regarding her concern about the many people who want to return to school as soon as possible, stating that "it will be a lot of work for teachers, like starting the school year all over again."

"A lot of work" goes into keeping any business open during this pandemic - hospitals, grocery stores, delivery companies, restaurants, first responders, gyms, retail stores, etc. - every single business and employee is doing more work in order to stay open or re-open safely and still provide quality service.

If "a lot of work" is the reason our schools might not open until January or even March 2021, this is a disservice to all kids suffering academically, socially, and emotionally from unnecessarily prolonged distance learning. Area private schools are opening this month, surrounding public schools are offering hybrid classes already, and schools in other states have had hybrid classes since August! So why is it so difficult for Lamorinda schools to follow suit? If concrete plans to re-open were being developed over the past 6 months in anticipation of re-opening in the fall, then schools should be ready to open a few weeks (not months) after being cleared by the county health office.

There is no urgency on the part of Bay Area teachers to get back into the classrooms due to coronavirus safety concerns. Citing safety concerns would be more believable to me if it weren't known that some teachers are flying to other countries and states and "teaching" remotely from second homes and vacation spots.

Offering students safe in-person hybrid school, once cleared by the Contra Costa County Health Department, needs to be everyone's top priority, no matter how much "work" it will take to make it happen. Charlie Gruebele Moraga

Support for Carl Anduri

As a long time Commissioner on Lafayette's Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission, I am supporting Carl Anduri for the Lafayette City Council. Carl stands out among the candidates as by far the most knowledgeable and experienced candidate when it comes to our community's parks, trails, recreation and open space needs. When he was previously on the Council, Carl served as one of the liaisons to the PTR Commission and served on the Open Space Task Force.

I am supporting Carl not only for his knowledge and experience, but because he has the vision, temperament, collaborative spirit and character to put that knowledge and experience to work to get things done for the benefit of all of us.

Please join me in voting for Carl

Anduri.
Carol Singer, Commissioner
Lafayette Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission

Vote Yes on Measure R

I am voting "YES" on Measure R and urge my Orinda friends to do the same. The small sales tax increase will provide funds for continued public road maintenance, critical repair and replacement of public road storm drains and wildfire prevention by reducing flammable vegetation. No one in Orinda needs to be told how serious the wildfire threat is, the recent haze and smell from North Bay fires were daily reminders that the threat is at our doorsteps. Let's continue to be prepared and proactive, Measure R will help us do so.

Bruce Burrows
Orinda

Measure R – Need is Great, and Timing is Critical

As a longtime Orinda resident, I urge fellow Orindans to vote Yes on Measure R. Why? Because we all agree that the need is great – to address ever-increasing risks of devastating fire losses, not to mention old and deteriorating drainage systems and road maintenance. The only real issue is whether another parcel tax or additional bond measure is a better alternative. We need only look to our five City Council members for that answer – ALL SUPPORT MEASURE R. We live in a representative democracy and place our trust in our Council to make wise decisions. That they unanimously support this measure is a clear sign this is the best way to go.

They are indeed correct – this measure's half-cent increase in our city sales tax amounts to 50 cents on a \$100 purchase – and food and medicines are exempt. The Town of Moraga has the same sales tax. This will not damage our local businesses – our Orinda Chamber of Commerce President supports this measure. Most of the sales tax funds come from car purchases, and Orindans are not exactly averse to buying newer cars. Orindans of all ages can afford this – and we must act now, given the climate forecasts for more drought and the resultant increased risks of fire. This is precisely the time to act – not wait indefinitely and hope for the best.

Once the fire fuel load has been reduced, the sales tax will pay for continuing maintenance (plants grow), replacing failing storm drains, and keeping roads in good condition. Since we have now successfully fixed our City's road system, the last thing we want to do is let our roads deteriorate. These funds will be critical to long term road maintenance.

In short, this measure is fair to all, and is critical to our mutual safety going forward. Please join me in voting YES on Measure R. And the above are my personal opinions and in no way reflect or state any position of The Orinda Association. Thank you very much. Bill Waterman Orinda

... continued on Page A12

ELECT GINA DAWSON

Innovative, Collaborative, Proven Results

Gina works efficiently and effectively for so many of our shared community interests. I know that she will bring this same energy and focus to the other many issues facing Lafayette.

Susan Candell, Vice Mayor, City of Lafayette

Gina is a highly effective leader with a deep commitment to preserving open space, creating a sustainable, inclusive community, and advancing public safety. She will have a major positive impact on Lafayette as a member of City Council.

Steven Bliss, Lafayette City Council



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www.GinaDawson2020.com



VOTE GINA DAWSON
for Lafayette City Council

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Letters to the editor

... continued from Page A11

Vote Yes on Measure R

Multiple studies have shown that people who plan ahead for disasters are in much better shape mentally after a disaster does happen. People who expect that nothing bad will happen are more affected by stress, depression, and PTSD.

We as a community can stay healthier and survive better if we plan for wildfires ahead of time. This includes clearing defensible space, hardening our homes, and ensuring evacuation routes are clear. Measure R on the November ballot, a half-cent sales tax increase, will help us prepare, and now is the time. Let's make Orinda safer. It's up to us! Susan Anacker
Firewise Committee Chair -Orindawoods

Continued support for Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

I had high hopes for Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan when I voted for her in 2018 and she has absolutely delivered – 150%. I voted for Bauer-Kahan in 2018 because she promised to fight for a cleaner environment, champion new gun sense laws, and provide better access to healthcare. Within her first 100 days, she delivered on those promises, introducing a package of legislation that did precisely that. In her second year in office, she authored new bills to clean our air and water, preserve our open spaces, and protect our children from harmful vaping. An elected official who has the integrity to keep her promises? [That's the real deal.] She gets my vote, again. Stephanie L. Sandberg
Lafayette

Anduri for Council

Please vote for Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council. He is the candidate with the most experience that can lead our community. We need someone with knowledge about our city and one who has shown investment in our community by serving on countless committees, the planning commission and previously the city council.

I am 25 years old and was raised in Lafayette and went to Lafayette schools. Because of the housing policies backed by Mr. Anduri, I am now able to live in Lafayette and be a part of the community

I was raised in. Thank you Mr. Anduri! I ask that you vote for him so more young people and especially my friends I grew up with can afford to live in our community.

Frank M. Tinley
Lafayette

Vote for Carl Anduri!

Please join me in supporting the selection of Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council. Carl previously served on the City Council and was Mayor for several years. He provided a calm demeanor and level-headed approach when working with residents, City Council Members and City staff. He has a great understanding of the issues facing our city and he would be a welcome addition to our City Council.

Please vote for Carl!
Bill Bucher
Lafayette Resident

Vote for Carl Anduri, Lafayette City Council

The City of Lafayette and its citizens have faced many challenges over the past decade with more challenges to come in the coming years. The pressures from Sacramento, especially when it comes to growth, has driven a wedge in our community. It is critical to have a council member who has the historical perspective and served our City during an unprecedented time of planned growth as a council member & planning commissioner, the obvious choice is Carl Anduri.

With the departure of council member Mike Anderson, Lafayette's senior most Council Member, Lafayette will lose the historical perspective which Carl can provide serving on the Council.

As a long-time Lafayette resident, Carl has seen the evolution of our City as a Planning Commissioner from 1997-2002 and Council Member from 2002-2012. Carl has the historical perspective our City needs to lead us through the complex land-use and fiscal challenges our City faces now and into the future.

I strongly support Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council.
Larry Blodgett
Lafayette

Outside influences

The outside influences driving divisiveness in politics has reached the most local levels; the Acalanes School Board elections. One candidate, Christopher Groves, has accepted \$16,000 from "Leadership for Education Equity" (according to filings with the Contra Costa elections commission), a Washington, DC-based candidate factory. LEE's stated mission is "inspiring & supporting a network of civic leaders to end the injustice of educational inequity."

With this backing, Mr. Groves' comments in various candidate forums show his support of teachers and their unions, coordinating keeping our children out of school for political gains. Unions vote democratic, California politicians are majority democratic, and it's an opportunity to rally their base against Trump, who favors in-person education.

For a candidate running on an agenda of diversity, equity, and inclusion, supported by LEE, which espouses that "every child in every community across the nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education," Mr. Groves fails to acknowledge that the position of Acalanes' teachers' union creates a more significant disparity between the "haves" and "have nots" than distance learning.
Jeff Eyet
Lafayette

Sos for Council

In anticipation of the upcoming elections, I'm encouraged by the prospects for the future – not just nationally, but locally for the town of Moraga as well – and felt inspired to share my insight.

This fall, not only do we have the opportunity to vote for a president who will determine the direction and character of our country, but we will also elect 3/5 of our Town Council, which like the Presidential election, will likely impact us locally for more than just the next four years, but possibly for decades and generations to come.

That is why I believe it is so crucial to make sure Renata Sos will be elected to represent us. I have had the privilege and pleasure of knowing Renata for 17 years, since our family first moved to Moraga and our daughters went to Pre-

School together. Over the years, I have witnessed Renata's commitment to her family, her friends, to our schools, and to our community.

In the time I've known Renata, I've seen her dedication to whatever endeavor she's involved in, spending countless hours to ensure optimal results. I'm convinced her devotion to Moraga's future make her an indispensable candidate that we must elect to the next Town Council. So, if you haven't already, I strongly encourage everyone to make sure Renata Sos is one of your selections on the ballot.
Dave Parker
Co-Owner, Parkmon Vineyards
Founder, Lamorinda Winegrowers' Association

This teacher does her homework before voting

Although a retired school teacher, I continue to be connected with students, teachers, and parents. Quality public education is my passion and I only support those who share the same focus. I voted for Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan in 2018, in part, because our schools were a top priority. She delivered by passing a law to bring California's spending up to the national per pupil average or higher and remains committed to guaranteeing universal preschool. She is working to keep college affordable for every child, including passing a law removing income exclusions which penalize families on CalWORKs.

When Covid-19 forced school closures, she fought to direct millions from the state budget to the California Dept. of Education to close the digital divide for children statewide who are struggling to learn remotely. I heartily endorse the reelection of Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan. Our schools need her!
Linnéa Burnette

... continued on Page A13

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OUSD board excited about new cameras in classrooms ... teachers not so much

... continued from Page A7

Teacher Allie Bingham, said that, while she appreciates the board looking for solutions, she has concerns about privacy. "It feels like an invasion," she said. "Imagine having a Zoom going while you are teaching a live class," she added, and wondered if the cameras will remain after COVID-19.

Parents, however, seemed to like the idea of the cameras

very much. Juana Rudani thought that the camera looked amazing, and she has no concerns about her child's privacy. "You can mute him the whole time," if desired, she said. Sasheel Daswani agreed that the teachers brought up good points, including privacy, but added that "this is a world where there are trade-offs." He felt that teachers would be relieved of the duty to teach the same material twice, but

could see that there are issues about coordination. "Nothing will be as good as before the pandemic," he concluded.

The board members expressed sympathy with the concerns of the teachers, while also being enthusiastic about the potential uses of the cameras. Hoxie said, "I respect all of our teachers so much; I understand teachers feeling that they are on display, even on Zoom." Liz Daoust explained that the

camera discussion stemmed from concern about the workload of teachers in the hybrid mode, dealing with two sets of kids per day, and cleaning the school.

Shannon said that while teachers have really stepped up with the technology, and have shown an openness to trying new things, they have concerns. In his 32nd year of teaching, Shannon said, "there are things that happen that you don't want other

parents to hear." He also complained that teachers asked for air purifiers and were told that money was an issue. Hoxie explained that air purifiers and cameras are not an "either/or proposition." "We don't have the money for either," she said, "it means asking our parents."

Orinda is still asking, when is it safe to return to school?

... continued from Page A7

One study found that the majority of school outbreaks are staff to staff or staff to pupil, and according to CBS, Sacramento, California has seen no links between schools reopening and the spread of COVID. However the largest COVID-19 contact tracing study to date found children to be key to the spread of COVID, with evidence of superspreaders, according to the Princeton Environmental

Institute.

In order for children to return to school, several precautions are considered necessary, including COVID testing and a social contract, designed to ensure that family behavior outside of school, such as agreeing to keep kids home who have any symptoms, avoiding travel outside the community or, if travel does occur, quarantining after returning to the community. Other crucial elements to a return to school include

masking, reduced class size, desk spacing, cleaning protocols and proactive plans for when students or staff test positive.

According to Seaton, the community compact, which is being drafted by Weiner and Daoust, is one tool in the toolbelt for returning to in-school learning. "We want something our community is willing to sign; we're not a police state," Weiner said. The draft compact will be presented at the next board meeting and

Kaune suggested that the board invite community feedback on the draft compact.

The board also ratified an agreement with Frontline Education to provide OUSD with its School Health Management System with COVID-19 screening and contact tracing. In addition, the board is exploring a partnership with Agile Force, a company that is helping San Rafael and other school districts with on-site COVID-19 testing. The com-

pany is based in Los Angeles County and is reportedly helping to ensure that casinos are safe. The district plans to pilot COVID-19 testing with Agile Force next month and if all goes well, testing would probably be scheduled once every two weeks. Under the CARES act, all Americans are entitled to free weekly testing, to be covered by insurance. Agile Force will conduct the testing and will bill insurance companies, so no cost would be borne by OUSD.

Letters to the editor

... continued from Page A12

Open letter to Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

I was profoundly dismayed to find a reference to the Holocaust in your campaign flyers. The death of nearly 6 million European Jews, each with a face, a name, a life story, 6 million of my brothers and sisters annihilated in a planned program of total extermination is not a political prop. One need not be a second generation survivor, like I am, raised on stories of, murder, hunger, exile, disease, death, loss of loved ones to recognize that the memory of such horrific crimes and such immense losses ought not to be

used for political purposes.

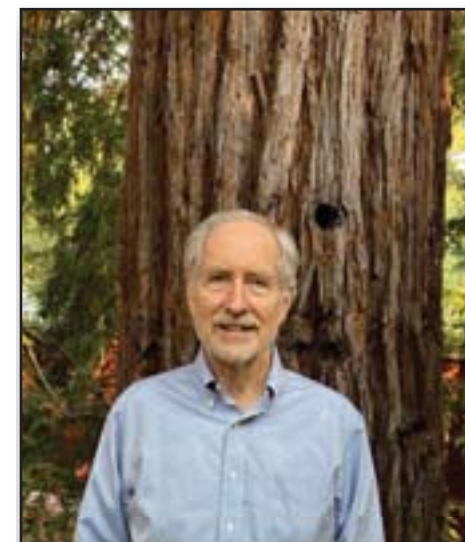
I would have let it go, were it not for two facts. The reference to the Holocaust was used to buttress your stand against "the Trump Administration's assault on civil liberties". Are you aware that Pres. Trump is the first president who recognized that Jews remain a vulnerable minority and extended the protections of title VI to Jewish students? Despite years of the well reported rise in antisemitism on university campuses, our previous president remained oblivious or unwilling to take action. It took Pres.

Trump to protect the civil rights of those who once again have become the most hated minority.

It was even more dispiriting to discover that you signed AB 331, the bill which would have institutionalized a mandated high school curriculum in ethnic studies in which Jews were declared "white", denigrated as oppressors and white supremacists. The history expulsions, persecution, exclusion, genocide of this vulnerable minority was not included in this curriculum. With your vote this curriculum would have been a graduation requirement for every high

school student in California, were it not for 86 Jewish organizations who appealed to Gov. Newsom to veto the bill. The Democrat governor vetoed a bill signed by all Democrats! I don't think that you can proudly say that you were on the right moral side of this issue. Chances are that you will be re-elected, even without my vote. I can only plead and hope that in the next term you will make more informed, more courageous and less partisan choices.

Rachelle Halpern MD
Orinda



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- Mike Anderson, Mayor, Lafayette

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- Anne Grodin, Former Mayor and Lafayette Citizen of the Year

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Orinda Intermediate School survey

... continued from Page A7

Board president Cara Hoxie said, "We are trying to do everything we can to mitigate the risks and find a route forward. We can't have school without teachers." Risk cannot be eliminated, she said. "I want to take care of the teachers," she said, "because they are freaking exhausted. If we send them back in the hybrid model they will be working twice as hard." Charles Shannon, president of the Orinda Edu-

cators Association, told the board that in the face of the global pandemic, teachers are experiencing fear and exhaustion. They are approaching their breaking point, he said, and are calling out for help. Many public speakers expressed views ranging from wanting an immediate return to the classroom, deeming it completely safe, to those who feel that teachers should not be forced to choose between their jobs and their health. Board member Jason Kaune agreed with Brown

that the board is at a turning point where they have to make a decision. "This is tremendously hard," he said. "The community is super divided, and that division is so prominent in all our communications, making it really hard for us to make the decision, but we have to make the decision." Board vice president Liz Daoust agreed, adding, "Nothing is going to be perfect, nothing is going to be ideal."

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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Cal Shakes prepares its unique 2021 season



Online captured photo of Sarah Williams, right, and Eric Ting, left.

By Sophie Braccini

California Shakespeare Theater, which has been producing Shakespeare and classic plays at the Orinda Bruns theater for years, is holding a series of town hall meetings to inform and keep its stakeholders engaged during this uniquely challenging time. The last town hall is scheduled from 5 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28. During the first town hall, Eric Ting, artistic director, and Sarah Williams, managing director, took stock of the devastation the pandemic has brought to most performance artists, and discussed avenues to continue

to be relevant and vibrant. There will not be a 2021 regular Shakespeare season, but Ting promises that the amazing outdoor Orinda amphitheater will be welcoming community partners.

Ting defined the pandemic as one of these rare moments in one's life when there is a defined before and after. "We are mourning the loss of a way of life, such is the magnitude of the destruction," he said. He added that he also believes in the resilience of the community and that he knows that Cal Shakes will re-emerged, probably changed by a new paradigm.

Cal Shakes started in

March by canceling its 2020 season, furloughing employees before having to let many go. It gave up its administrative and rehearsal space in Berkeley, and relocated the few remaining staff in the green room at the Bruns.

Ting and Williams said that the uncertainties of the time are such that they decided they could not put together a four-play summer 2021 season. Cal Shakes, through a partnership with the East Bay Municipal Utility District, has the use of the outdoor Bruns amphitheater. Ting said that Cal Shakes is reinventing what it means to be a nonprofit, and will be a resource for the community. He explained that his team is talking to other theater groups and community partners that share the same values, to give them access to the space, so they can strengthen their own community.

While there is no traditional subscription to be purchased for 2021, those who want to support Cal Shakes will be given other ways to invest. More information can be found at calshakes.org

Moraga Art Gallery Announces a new art exhibit

Submitted by Lucy Beck

The community is invited to meet the artists of the Moraga Art Gallery's new art exhibit, "Spaces, Inside and Out" – which will run through Dec. 24 – during a virtual open house at 5 p.m. Nov. 7. This will be a great opportunity to

meet the featured artists, Debby Koonce and Angélica Samame, and ask them questions about their art.

Koonce is a plein air painter who draws inspiration from natural settings reflecting the changing light of the day and season. Whether painting locally or while on travel, she is inspired by vis-

tas, architecture, quaint alleyways and park lands.

Samame enjoys painting women in colorful and multifaceted ways. She has found that being quarantined has a silver lining, since it has offered her the time and opportunity to experiment with new painting styles.

... continued on Page B4



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Whether for a main or side, this savory tart stands out



Photo Susie Iventosch

Caramelized red onion, blue cheese, walnut tart

By Susie Iventosch

The exceptional flavor combination of blue cheese, caramelized red onions and toasted walnuts is worthy of a few hours spent in the kitchen making this delicious tart. It really could stand on its own for a meal, but it makes a fantastic appetizer for a dinner party, or a great side for soup night!

Making your own crust is not that difficult and I suggest doing it, because it is the perfect backdrop to the filling. I find that I like to make sure

my crust is cooked all the way through before I add the filling, that way even the bottom and sides of the tart are nice and crispy.

Even though the name of this tart doesn't include pecans, I did use half pecans and half walnuts. They both add a certain flavor that works well together and complements the blue cheese-onion filling.

I just froze some for when the family is here over Thanksgiving, and I will report back how that worked out.

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>



INGREDIENTS - Crust

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 stick unsalted butter (6 tablespoons or 3 oz.) chilled and cut into small pieces
1 teaspoon cider vinegar
2-3 tablespoons ice water

DIRECTIONS - Crust

Spray a 9.5-inch tart pan with a removable bottom with cooking spray. Set aside for the moment. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Place flour and salt in a mixing bowl. Stir with a whisk. Add cut up butter and with finger tips or a pastry cutter, cut butter into flour mixture until butter is the size of very small peas. Sprinkle cider vinegar over and stir in with a fork. Now, stir in ice water, a little at a time and blend with a fork until mixture can be formed into a ball.

Flour the surface of a pastry cloth or cutting board, and roll dough in a circle, about 11-12 inches in diameter.

Transfer the dough onto prepared tart pan, and pat down into the bottom of the pan and up along the sides. Trim off any excess dough.

Using a fork, poke holes over the bottom and on the sides of the dough in the tart pan. (If you have pie weights or dry beans, cut a piece of parchment paper the same size as the bottom of the tart pan, and place it over the bottom of the crust, then sprinkle weights over the parchment paper. This keeps the crust from bubbling up and getting unshapely. If you don't have all this stuff, then just bake it with the holes in it and you will probably be good to go. That is what I did for this tart and it worked just fine.)

Bake tart crust for 15-18 minutes. Remove from oven and cool.

INGREDIENTS - Tart Filling

1/3 cup walnut pieces
1/3 cup pecan pieces
1 large red onion, very thinly sliced
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup dry sherry
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme, or 1 teaspoon fresh minced thyme
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
5 oz. crumbled blue cheese
2 eggs
2/3 cup heavy cream

DIRECTIONS - Tart Filling

Toast nuts in a dry pan over medium-low heat, or in 350 F oven until just beginning to brown and to release their rich, nutty aromas. This takes about 5 minutes using either method. Remove from pan and set aside to cool. (*Be sure to keep your eye on them ... they tend to burn easily the second you lose focus!)

In the same skillet, heat olive oil and add red onions. Cook over low heat until caramelized, about 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Depending on the burner, this could take more or less time, but I really like to caramelize the onions for a longer time on lower heat. They turn out perfectly this way. When onions are caramelized, add sherry and turn heat up to medium. Cook just long enough to deglaze the pan and allow most of the liquid to evaporate. This should only take about 2-3 minutes on medium heat. Remove from stove and cool.

Mix eggs and half & half in a small bowl.

To assemble tart, place prepared tart pan on a baking sheet to prevent spills in the oven. Spread onions evenly over the bottom crust. Distribute nuts evenly over that. Sprinkle blue cheese crumbles over nuts. Finally, pour egg mixture over everything.

Bake at 350 F for 30-35 minutes, or until center is set, slightly puffy and golden brown.

Allow to sit for 10 minutes before serving. Also delicious served cold.

Exploring the Mendocino Coast



Fort Bragg seaside cliffs

Photo Dan Miller

By Fran Miller

Bucolic, tranquil, and scenic. These Mendocino County attributes lure travelers seeking to truly get away from it all, and two special Inns along the coast more than deliver. Fort Bragg's The Inn at Newport Ranch is located a roughly 3.5-hour drive from the East Bay; it is part of a 2,000-acre coastal cattle ranch featuring more than a mile of ocean front cliffs, three miles of ridge tops with panoramic

coastal views, and 20 miles of world class hiking and biking trails threading through the redwoods. While children are welcome, it's worth noting that waivers are signed upon arrival due to the Inn's positioning along steep Pacific Coast cliffs.

Founder Will Jackson sought to replicate the spirit of 19th century westward expansion when he bought this land nearly 35 years ago. His desire to share the beauty and adventure of the topography culminated in his building of the sumptuous and inti-

mate boutique Inn. Stunning artisanal design that reflects the area's shipping and logging heritage includes headboards and furniture crafted from enormous felled redwoods, a 20-foot-wide walk-in stone fireplace, and a building supported from base to cathedral-like ceiling by 24 individual redwood trees. Guest rooms, suites, and a complete ranch house (several with full kitchens and some with private hot tubs), are all uniquely decorated in various Craftsman-esque themes and furnished to provide the ultimate in comfort.

Hike, bike, and horseback ride on the Inn's many trails, or better yet, explore the entire property via a guided UTV (utility terrain vehicle) tour. Throughout the two-hour adventure, the Inn's pro driver/guide will whisk you through cattle-grazed pastures, to coastline, to shaded redwood forests. Few other California locations provide this topographical diversity, and it's breathtaking. Make sure though to set out on foot to discover the property's multiple driftwood benches, each perched perfectly to capture dramatic views of the seaside cliffs and caves.

A 6 to 7 p.m. nightly happy hour features appetizers as well as a choice of local wines, beers and delicious crafted cocktails made with premium spirits, and offers the opportunity to either commune with other guests or enjoy the solitude of a coastal facing view from the large covered porch. A three-course dinner, if desired at \$75/person, follows; currently, guests are socially distance-seated either within the large dining room with floor to ceiling sliding glass doors open to the fresh air, or outside at tables of two with heat lamps warding-off the coastal chill. A bountiful made-to-order breakfast is included with each stay and includes a choice of sweet or savory items.

Heading south on Highway 1 in the tiny town of Elk is the boutique Harbor House Inn & Restaurant, best known for its Michelin-starred cuisine. Beyond its shingled, Craftsman-style façade, guests find one of the most glorious views along the Mendocino Coast. Reopened in 2018 after an eight-year restoration project, the luxury getaway features 11 guest rooms, each adorned with original artwork: six in the main historical building, four cot-



Inn at Newport Ranch Photo courtesy The Inn at Newport Ranch

tage suites on the bluff, and the new Madrone Guest Cottage featuring a king bedroom, two full bathrooms, dining room, living room, and private kitchen.

Chef Matt Kammerer, a 2020 James Beard Award semi-finalist and 2019 Food & Wine Best New Chef, forages and harvests the ingredients for Harbor House's restaurant – the first and only Michelin-starred restaurant in Mendocino County. His exquisite, up-to-12 course tasting menus are each a hyperlocal, coastal experience focused on seafood and vegetables. Ingredients are sourced from across Mendocino County, including live fish picked up from local fisherman at the dock. He and his team even make their own crème fraiche, butter, vinegars, and naturally leavened breads. The property features its own chickens, and 15 raised vegetable beds, planted and cultivated by the kitchen crew.

In addition to the lovely accommodations and the gourmet cuisine, Harbor House offers a slow-paced haven, the focus of which is its stunning coastal view. Grab a good read and lounge in a hammock, or claim an Adirondack chair, perfectly poised toward the sparkling Pacific. It's quiet here, the peace interrupted only by the sound of the wind, the crashing waves, bird calls, and maybe a clucking chicken from the on-site coop. A visit is not complete without a hike down to the Inn's secluded black sand beach, sprinkled with shimmering abalone shells. The 272-stair climb back to the Inn gets the heart pumping, and makes every bite of your multi-course dinner that much more enjoyable.

Scarecrows return to Orinda off-ramp



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Orinda Garden Club's annual scarecrow brightens up the off-ramp from Highway 24. Three scarecrows, appropriately wearing

masks and gloves, welcome visitors and residents to Orinda. -- S. O'Doherty

Is your child a cyberbully?



bigstock images

By Vera Kochan

With online learning and boredom from lack of physical contact with peers creating additional time spent on electronic devices, experts have seen a 70% increase in cyberbullying among youths since the start of the pandemic, according to Verywell Family, a website that provides information gathered from health professionals.

While there is a lot of information available about what a parent can do if their child is being bullied, what should parents do if their child is the cyberbully?

According to Marriage and Family Therapist and Lamorinda Weekly contributing writer Margie Ryerson, there are signs that a parent should be aware of when identifying whether their child is cyberbullying someone.

“Parents need to observe and listen to what their children are doing and saying,” she stated. “If parents overhear their child talking to friends and saying mean, disparaging remarks about another child, they need to check further to see if their child is engaged in cyberbullying.

Some other signs are if a child has a history of bullying or being bullied, or if he or she is extremely secretive while online and quickly switches screens when a parent is around.”

Ryerson suggests steps parents can take to curb bullying before it escalates. “The more empathy parents can help their child develop, the better. Starting at a young age, have your child imagine and talk about what it would be like to be in another child’s place,” she said, adding, “Find books to read and discuss examples of children who have certain challenges. For example, discuss how another child might feel who is being bullied or who has a disability or a serious illness. Volunteer with your child for various organizations that help disadvantaged people. Model being a compassionate person.”

If your child has been identified and verified as a cyberbully by another parent or school officials Ryerson states that it is important, as a parent of a bully, to cooperate in addressing the issue. “Unfortunately, sometimes parents will automatically become defensive and will refuse to accept that their

child is a bully. Unless parents cooperate, the child who is a cyberbully will be enabled to continue this destructive pattern of behavior.”

When asked whether some form of punishment for the cyberbully is in order, Ryerson responded, “It is possible that punishing a child who is cyberbullying will lead to more of the same behavior, and it will just become more hidden and insidious. Instead of being angry and punitive, parents can be more effective if they show disappointment in their child for his or her behavior. When parents get angry, often a child will respond with anger as well.” Ryerson adds, “Instead, parents can help instill responsibility and compassion in their child by showing surprise and sadness over the cyberbullying and avoiding an angry confrontation.”

Early intervention can equip cyberbullies with the skills they need to interact with others positively. The term “once a bully, always a bully” need not apply to an individual for the rest of his

or her life. Verywell Family states that “bullying is a choice. It is not caused by something the victim said or did, and people who bully others need to learn to take ownership of these choices.” Unfortunately, many children feel that they are entitled to behave the way they do. In this case, teaching them empathy may help to curtail the behavior.

Verywell Family suggests that many bullies lack impulse control and post hurtful things online without thinking of the consequences to the victim. It is important to find ways to curb those impulses and make better decisions. This method of lashing out may also signify a lack of self-esteem, which turns into anger and frustration toward others. Examining the bully’s strengths and weaknesses could help in determining what areas are positive points and what areas need attention.

Many times a cyberbully feels left out of a popular clique at school, and the jealousy may turn into anger

which can lead to lashing out. On the flip side, a bully can also be the most popular person in a clique who feels that being a bully will keep them popular. Verywell Family points out the importance of teaching children to develop bully-proof friendships that are healthy. Recognizing that everyone deserves respect teaches kids that their power can be used in positive ways.

“Of course in the case of extreme cyberbullying, such as a child encouraging another child to hurt himself or herself or someone else, parents need to take immediate and serious action,” warned Ryerson. “Some measures would include removing access to all social media, limiting and monitoring screen use, and insisting on individual and family psychotherapy.”

Margie Ryerson, MFT, can be reached at www.margiererson.com.

This article is a follow-up to Lamorinda Weekly’s Oct. 14 article, “Rise in cyberbullying among adolescents during COVID-19.”

California cookie tradition continues at Rheem



Photo provided

Submitted by Irene Jai

One of the memorable milestones in fourth grade is to learn the diverse and beautiful geography of California. Kids study for a test and once they pass the test, the coveted award is to make their very own California Cookie. Traditionally, excited fourth-graders at Rheem Elementary gather in their school auditorium and enjoy shaping and decorating their cookie dough together. It’s a celebratory occasion with many helpful parent volunteers onsite.

This year with distance learning, the remarkable Rheem fourth-grade teachers continued this cherished tradition by hosting an optional Zoom California Cookie Party. Some parents pivoted from the remote party to an in-person gathering, while adhering to social distance guidelines.

To make this event happen, parents and their fourth-graders prepared in advance by making dough, coloring sugar, and gathered specific decorations, some as basic as brown sugar for the desert, and other ingredients only found online such as red dots to mark key cities such as Sacramento and, of course, Moraga. On Oct. 13, parents’ hearts were warmed witness-

ing smiles and laughter from 10 fourth-grade Rheem boys as they each made their own unique California cookie in person. Many parents and kids have not seen each other in person for the last seven months, and the California Cookie Party made everyone realize that they love their community and are thankful for their friendships.

After the party was over, all departed and went home, but there was even more to look forward to. The raw cookie dough went in the oven for a slow cook to maintain high chocolate chip mountain tops and lush sugar green valleys. Once done, the last detail added was the blue icing to illustrate rivers and lakes. Admiring their edible masterpieces, parents asked their proud and salivating students about what each detail represented. Students impressed their parents by locating the Salton Sea, Mt Whitney, and the Mojave Desert on their California Cookies. Last but not least, the students ate their homemade Golden State. California never tasted sweeter.

Despite distance learning, Moragans are finding feasible ways to nurture and maintain our communities in meaningful and responsible ways, together.

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PLEASANT HILL

St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church
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Drop off and collection sites can be found here: <https://ggacbsa.org/scouting-for-food-2020>

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Sienna Ranch offers normalcy in stressful times



Photo Annette Dale, Sienna Ranch

Outdoors and masked, these kids are learning and connecting with nature, while playing, exploring and just, well, being kids.

By Pippa Fisher

The challenges of 2020 have been intense for everyone – most businesses have had to creatively up their game to survive the closures and restrictions imposed on them as a result of COVID-19 and children have had to adapt to learning from behind a computer. More than ever it has been crucial to give kids a break from screen time and get them into nature. One of the first places to offer that safely is right here in Lafayette – Sienna Ranch.

But it has not been without challenges.

Sienna Ranch lies tucked into the northeast corner of Deer Hill Road, backing onto Briones. The ranch, whose mission is to connect youth to nature through its array of educational

outdoor programs, was shut down in the spring for eight weeks. The small family-owned business established in 2008, offers programs to children from PreK up to ninth grade, including horse riding, archery, wood shop, pottery, gardening, art, and animal education.

“We just continually see firsthand how important outdoor education as a field is,” says Sienna Ranch Business Director Julie Sanders. “It is a sense of normalcy in a time of high trauma.”

“When they (students) come to Sienna Ranch they get to slide down hills, make woodshop-free build projects, build with clay, pet and interact with animals,” says Sanders, noting that at a time when kids may be feeling isolated, they make new friends and are reminded how to socialize.

Sanders explains the challenges of

the shutdown and the subsequent re-opening. The ranch has had to evolve the business structure. “We have seen operation costs increase due to COVID and also have had to be really creative and fluid and adaptive with our offerings in order to create new revenue. We have had to struggle balancing making revenue while also maintaining the safety of our staff.”

The ranch was forced to reduce hours during the spring to half time or less for all employees, managing to stay afloat with a PPP loan. At the end of the summer they had to do a series of layoffs and restructuring.

Initially in the spring the Ranch pivoted to online options for their classes, retaining about 70% of its enrollment, using Zoom for shorter sessions with instructors. Sanders says they created take-home kits for the classes to be able to do at-home challenges and activities with their teachers on Zoom, still using their hands and experiencing nature whether in their backyard, at a local park, or from inside looking out of their window.

“We had woodshop and pottery classes all building projects with their teachers over Zoom,” says Sanders. The only classes they were unable to transfer to the online model were horse and archery classes.

And Sanders is proud of Sienna Ranch for being one of first camps to develop in-depth COVID policies and procedures – one that other organizations and camps looked to for example.

“We are open about sharing our policies because we want others to be able to see them and use them as a framework to create their own,” she says. “We’ve continually adjusted our policies to adapt to the information we are learning about the virus and how our local health agencies are responding. Being agile and proactive has allowed us to adjust to the ever-changing landscape.”

Sienna Ranch classes have always focused on small student-to-teacher ratios and now those classes are offered in stable cohorts for 4-week sessions. Since COVID-19 started they have altered their cleaning routines, implemented temperature checks, provided guidelines and safety protocols for parents and a health and safety pledge for them to sign before joining any program.

Sanders has noticed that at first some kids have challenges remembering how to socialize with their peers. She says the need for these sorts of programs is greater than ever.

“There is a lot of anxiety from kids who are worried about the virus and we saw a lot of separation anxiety after being home for so long with only their parents. In the first couple of days of our in-person classes there were a lot of students who struggled emotionally with reintegrating into a group setting with peers,” says Sanders.

This has led to an adjustment of approach and ways in which the team connect with students. “We also have seen our mission and purpose shift,” notes Sanders. First and foremost a place to connect young children to nature, they have seen their roles as educators evolve to help provide social and emotional well-being also.

Parents interested in the full list of classes available can go online (see link below). Camp enrollment is extremely popular and camps sell out quickly. Currently Holiday Camps are available, but filling up fast.

As one third-grade student put it, “This is way more fun than my Zoom school – I love Sienna Ranch!”

Sanders takes the thought one further. “This place and our activities are a lifeline for kids who are living in highly isolated times.”

More information on Sienna Ranch can be found at <https://www.siennaranch.net/>

Hailey Coder is Mixologist of 2020

By Sora O'Doherty

Justin Cole of Joy in Motion was the Master of Ceremonies of the first virtual Art of Mixology competition on Oct. 16. All five finalists came away with awards, but the top honor went to Hailey Coder of Bar Cava in Martinez

for her cocktail, Two Faced. She won \$500 and a trophy.

The Audience Award, with a trophy and \$200 went to Independent Mixologist Brian Gamble for his cocktail, Fall'ifornia Dreamin. Second Place Sade Stamps of Sobre Mesa in Oakland received a certificate and \$300 for her

cocktail, Betty's 7 p.m. Ben Dimond, of Bardo Lounge and Supper Club, also in Oakland, took third place for Smog in the Noggin, taking home a certificate and \$150. Local mixologist of Canyon Club in Moraga, Mike Whipple's Chipotle Bloody Mary earned him fourth place, a certificate and \$100.

You can watch the winner making her cocktail at www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4yl-C97WEz0, and kits for all the winning cocktails may still be ordered until Oct. 30 from the Lamorinda Arts Council on their website, <https://lamorindaarts.org/mixology>

Boy Scouts emphasize “Zoom free” activities during pandemic



Photo provided

Assistant Scoutmaster Paul Mason instructs Scouts for the golfing merit badge.

Submitted by Dean Smith

Boy Scout activities during COVID-19? No problem for Troop 243 in Lafayette!

Troop 243 Scouts were out recently practicing their swings, drives, and chips, while sporting their masks and being physically distanced from each other. The golfing merit badge is an example of one of the many outdoor “Zoom free” Scouting activities organized by the Scouts during the pandemic of 2020. While some groups have emphasized Zoom meetings and remote learning programs, Troop 243 has tried to provide Scouts with a safe program to interact with their fellow Scouts in an effort to allow the Scouts to keep their bonds intact.

Paul Mason, assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 243, is the golfing merit badge instructor for the council. Two patrol meetings were dedi-

cated to learn the basics of golf, in addition to first aid and safety related to the merit badge. The Scouts are required to play 18 rounds of golf to complete the merit badge. This activity is an excellent example of a Scout related activity, conducted outdoors, and in full compliance with COVID-19 protocol. Each Scout brings his own clubs, and masks are mandatory at all times.

COVID-19 presented many challenges for camps, group activities and schools, but Troop 243 has addressed these incredible challenges by dividing up into small patrols and focusing on outdoor activities. With the county guidelines always being the roadmap for groups gatherings, the troop has strict activity options and the Scouts keep coming up with new ideas to keep them busy and working on advancement. Future plans for the patrols include Scout-

ing for Food, hiking local trails, mountain biking and community service projects.

“We feel strongly that students spend enough time online. Scouting can be an escape to meet in person, as long it meets local county and Scouting COVID-19 protocol,” said Dan Rogers, committee chair for Troop 243. “Over the last few months, four patrols have met weekly outdoors doing a wide range of activities. We are confident our formula is working, as the Scouts are excited to attend to get out of the house and see their friends!”

Since its formation in 1955, over 210 Scouts from Troop 243 have been awarded the Eagle Scout rank. Troop 243 is based at the Lafayette Christian Church at 584 Glenside Drive in Lafayette.

If you would like more information about joining Troop 243, please email Troop243CA@gmail.com.

Moraga Art Gallery Announces a new art exhibit



Debby Koonce, “Atop Old Borges Ranch,” Acrylic on Canvas



Angélica Samame, “Friends,” Acrylic on Canvas Images provided

... continued from Page B1

Starting in November, don't miss the gallery's Holiday Boutique, which will fea-

ture handmade gift items created by local artists including glass items, ceramics, beautiful wooden bowls, small paintings, decorative pillows,

holiday cards and jewelry. Moraga Art Gallery is a cooperative featuring the work of eighteen established local artists and artisans and five guest artists whose work

includes painting, sculpture, jewelry, print media, ceramics, photography and wood-working.

To safeguard gallery staff and visitors, everyone visiting

the gallery is required to wear a face mask and to maintain social distancing by keeping at least six feet apart. The gallery has hand sanitizer for guests to use when entering the gallery and gloves will also be available at the front desk for handling prints and ceramics. We are limiting the number of customers to four people at a time.

You will find the link to join the Open House reception on the Moraga Art Gallery website: <https://moragaart-gallery.com>. The Moraga Art Gallery located at 432 Center Street, Rheem Shopping Center is open Friday through Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. Starting in November the gallery will be open Thursday through Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. For more information, visit the website, call (925) 376-5407 or email moragaartgallery@gmail.com.

Not to be missed

ART

The Moraga Art Gallery announces a new art exhibit, "Spaces, Inside and Out" which will run from Oct. 16 – Dec. 24. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. Starting in November it will be open Thursday thru Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. There will be a virtual Open House on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 5 p.m. This will be a great opportunity to meet the featured artists and ask them questions about their art. Find the link to join the Open House reception on the Moraga Art Gallery website: <https://moragaartgallery.com>.

MUSIC

Gold Coast Chamber Players conclude their Fall virtual concerts on Nov. 8, at 4 p.m. with Bach Connections, the final performance in the three-part series, Bach Shorts it consists of three one-hour, live-streamed performances that seek to connect us through an intimate exploration of Bach's Cello Suites. Tickets are \$20 and the concert is live-streamed via YouTube LIVE. Purchase online at www.gccpmusic.com/bach-shorts or by calling (925) 283-3728.

THEATER

Shotgun Players presents "Citizen Brain" Oct. 30-31 at 7 p.m. both days; Nov. 1 at 5 p.m.; Nov. 6 - 7 at 7 p.m. both days; Nov. 8 at 5 p.m., on Zoom, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. Berkeley's favorite intellectual comedian and provocateur is back with an all new show! Cost: \$0-\$40. For more info see <https://shotgunplayers.org/>

online/article/citizen-brain or call 510-841-6500 or email boxoffice@shotgunplayers.org

Diablo Ballet and Macy's Walnut Creek present Live from the Runway. Join Diablo Ballet and Macy's Walnut Creek for their first ever Covid safe fashion show featuring Diablo Ballet dancers! Nov. 4, 12 p.m. www.eventbrite.com/e/diablo-ballet-and-macys-walnut-creek-present-live-from-the-runway-tickets-122489047037

Diablo Ballet Launches 2020-2021 27th Season this November with Julia Adam's The Nutcracker Suite, which also includes interviews and fun behind the scenes footage, will be filmed in Diablo Ballet's transformed black box theatre early November and streamed virtually to audience's homes on opening night Nov. 13.. The virtual link will be available for three days. Diablo Ballet will also present its annual Sugar Plum Party virtually this year on Nov. 14, at 3 p.m. This exclusive event via Zoom includes a virtual tea party with the Diablo Ballet Company dancers, a mini ballet class, Story Time and a Sugar Plum kit filled with goodies to make the day extra sweet. Tickets are \$25 per child and are packaged with the virtual performance. Virtual tickets are being sold one per household through the Leshar Center for the Arts and can be purchased by calling 925-943-SHOW (7469) or visit lesherartscenter.org.

The Orinda Starlight Village Players (OrSVP) return in October with a new Zoom Murder Mystery fundraising

event. Kelly Hansen stars as one of the suspects, Medisa Oggorn, in Halloween Haunts, Jaunts and Murder. For more information or to make reservations, visit www.orsvp.org or email info@orsvp.org.

Literature

November events at Orinda Books. Monday, Nov. 9 at 4 p.m. via ZOOM: Jess Walter, the best-selling author of Beautiful Ruins, will introduce his new novel, "The Cold Millions." This event is in partnership with the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation Distinguished Speaker Series. Buy the book in store, online (info@orindabooks.com) or by phone - 925-254-7606. After purchase, you'll receive a link to the Zoom event. November Artist of the Month at Orinda Books: Juanita Hagberg – enjoy her contemporary abstract and plein air impressions on our gallery wall in November.

Saint Mary's College School of Liberal Arts presents afternoon Craft Conversation with Marie Mutsuki Mockett, Nov. 11, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Location: online <https://stmarys-ca.zoom.us/j/97227300864?pwd=ZnROL0cwN0lsSEpiYTBKTRXSmRjUT09>. How to Write About Disaster. We are living through a disaster—but it's not the only disaster. This class will examine how to write about a disaster in ways that don't make the disaster feel overwhelming, or force the writer into a narrative that feels to pat. What are examples of good disaster writing and what is the writer's responsibility in his work

during times of disaster?

Other

Lafayette Physical Therapy is hosting a free Community Health Day on Nov. 11 (by appointment). We have all been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways and it is putting a strain on our health. LPT is offering a day of Complimentary Consultation appointments on Nov. 11. Make an appointment to meet with a licensed physical therapist to discuss your concerns and see if physical therapy and/or deep tissue laser therapy is a good option for you. Free deep tissue laser therapy demos available during the appointment. Call (925) 284-6150 to book your complimentary consultation. Lafayette Physical Therapy, Inc. 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite B110, Lafayette.

Las Trampas Campus Virtual Tour. Monthly tours show visitors the progress on the building project and introduce them to the various members of the team who are making the dream of our participants a reality. Our next tour will be on Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 3 p.m. Contact Sandra Cockrell at scockrell@lastrampas.org or 925-310-2362.

Free help with medicare plan changes for 2021. HICAP is a program of Contra Costa County Aging and Adult Services. HICAP is here to help you to figure out how these changes affect your coverage in 2021, so that you can make informed decisions. Visit www.cchicap.org for information on how to register for FREE one-on-one

Not to be missed

counseling, online talks, and updated Medicare plan information, or call (925) 602-4163.

6th Annual Hacienda Holiday Faire and our first Virtual Shopping Event! With so many changes in 2020 and the challenges with COVID-19 regulations, we wanted to offer our customers all of the one-of-a-kind handmade gifts and gourmet food items from local artisans, but in the comfort and safety of their homes. We will continue to host the Virtual Shopping Faire until the end of the holiday season. Thank you for supporting our local artisans! Hacienda Holiday Faire Site <https://haciendaholidayfaire.com/>

GARDEN

The Montelindo Garden Club Friday Nov. 20 at 10 a.m. on Zoom. Everyone is welcome. Presentation: Beauty and the Beast: California Wildflowers and Climate Change. Speakers: Rob Badger and Nita Winter. Rob and Nita, internationally acclaimed, award-winning wildflower photographers, will give us a spectacular view of California's wildflowers as both a cause for celebration and protection. They will talk about how climate change and other human impacts on the environment are threatening wildflowers and the life that depends on them. Their inspirational talk will weave art and science to spark hope and action. To request a Zoom link to attend this meeting, email: montelindogarden@aol.com

Lamorinda's Religious Services

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
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Virtual service at Sun. 9:00 AM
If someone would like to be added to our Zoom invitation please call 925-284-7420 or email cathy.w@stanselms.ws
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, www.stanselms.ws



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Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422
www.holyshepherd.org
ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Facebook Premiere Community Worship every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Go to facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/
Sunday Worship Services are accessible at our website at about 10:15 a.m. each Sunday (after they have premiered on Facebook). Visit our website to access the current and recent sermons.

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Moraga School District completes installation of security cameras donated by Moraga Rotary



Photo provided

Moraga School District Info Tech Manager Jim Bilafer (left) and Superintendent Bruce Burns discuss with Moraga Police Lt. Brian South (right) the capabilities of the recently installed external security cameras at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate school.

Submitted by Gary Irwin

Bruce Burns, superintendent of Moraga School District, met recently with Lt. Brian South of Moraga Police Department to inspect and discuss the eight newly installed external security cameras on the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School campus. This camera system allows authorized people to use the internet to see a view from any of the cameras on their computer, cell phone or other device, and to extract and save photos and video views as necessary, or export them to police or fire responders. Cameras can be remotely zoomed in for closer view.

The \$23,000 installation was funded by Moraga Rotary from funds donated specifically for this purpose by many participants at "A Nite at the Races" – a dinner/auction fundraiser held by Moraga Rotary in early March. Remaining designated funds from this event will be applied to similar camera installations at MSD

elementary schools, but still needs about \$13,000 to complete an expandable camera system at all three schools.

Moraga Rotary has also scheduled a second "Dinner with Rotary" for Thursday, Nov. 12, featuring a half-rack of smoked pork ribs, mashed potatoes, salad, and house-made cookie from Town Bakery & Café in Rheem. The cost per order is \$35, which includes a \$10 donation to Moraga Rotary, and orders of \$70 or more will receive a complimentary bottle of wine. For additional information and ordering instructions, contact moragarotary.org.

Moraga Rotary meets regularly at noon on most Tuesdays online via Zoom due to the pandemic. If you are interested in information about Rotary, or would like to donate to their worthy causes, please visit the website at moragarotary.org, or call Brian South, president, at (925) 888-7052.

DAR sponsors Wreaths for Veterans in Lafayette



Photo provided

Acalanes DAR Chapter Regent Mary Carillo, District Manager of the Alamo-Lafayette Cemetery Patty Howard, Historian Mary McCosker, and Acalanes DAR Vice Regent and event coordinator Terry Lucido

Submitted by Louise Diracles

The Acalanes Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will sponsor Wreaths for Veterans at the Lafayette Cemetery with Wreaths

Across America in December. At its Oct. 3 meeting at the cemetery, Mary McCosker spoke about the history of Lafayette, while Patty Howard, the District Manager of the Alamo-Lafayette Cemetery, showed the group some of the oldest tombstones.

AAUW-OML Announces Girls4STEM Webinars

Submitted by Lynda Leonard

The American Association of University Women Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch (AAUW-OML) is offering a new webinar series specifically for high school girls called Girls4STEM. This series introduces women working in STEM fields to girls who at this stage of their lives are making choices about what courses to take in high school and considering potential careers.

Finding opportunities to learn from working professionals can be challenging, however this program is a wonderful, accessible way to learn about a STEM career and to ask questions of real women, telling the story of their journeys to their careers. They share insights on their specific area of study as well as their experiences in pursuit of a career in historically male-dominated fields.

These webinars are a wonderful way to maintain interest in STEM fields and boost girls' confidence in pursuing these careers.

The first webinar, "Refinery 101," will be at 3 p.m. Nov. 8 featuring Christy Tormey, BSE in mechanical engineering from Duke. After an internship at Chevron oil refinery, she was hired by them and is now an operations specialist. Find out what a day in the life of a refinery engineer is like. Her favorite part of the day? "Suiting up in Tyvek and a respirator

and climbing through columns and furnaces."

The next webinar is "Engineering with a Purpose" with Adrienne Johnson on Nov. 22 at 3 p.m. Johnson is a civil engineer who earned an award in 2017 for designing a "Net Zero Building," and was named one of the "Top 20 Women to Watch" by Engineering Systems Magazine. On Dec. 8, Deb Martin, BS in microbiology and a Certified Industrial Hygienist, will present a webinar on her career from the lab to taking safe and sustainable consumer products to market. She will be followed on Jan. 13 by Dr. Rosalie McGurk, astrophysicist, who will talk about her education and career path and how to make a spectroscope.

The webinars are free. This series is made possible through a grant from the Bettelheim Family Foundation. To learn about the specifics of this new program for girls, including the profiles of the presenters, and to register for a webinar, visit the AAUW-OML website at oml-ca.aauw.net. You can also go to Girls4STEM Instagram page. The American Association of University Women advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. The Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch sponsors STEM-related community outreach projects, including Tech Trek and the STEM Conference at Saint Mary's College for middle school girls and Girls4STEM for high school girls.

JMIS student earns black belt in Karate



McKenzie Grace Kahn

Photo provided

Submitted by Colleen Kahn

After six and a half years of hard-work, McKenzie Grace Kahn (a 12-year-old from Joaquin Moraga) was awarded her black belt in Karate. The ceremony took place on Oct. 14 at the Karate and Fitness Place. For the past six years, McKenzie has been training 5-6 days a week. She continued to stay positive and excel through the pandemic and fires. McKenzie has been leading classes in the dojo for three years. She inspires younger and older students to push through even when times get tough. She is an excellent example of persistence and perseverance.

In Memory

Patricia J. Oas

June 1923 - October 2020



Pat Oas passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of Oct. 7. She was 97. She will be greatly missed by her daughters Jan Woods and husband Gene of Corvallis, Ore., and Karen Stockbridge and husband Kurt of Palos Verdes Estates, Calif. She is also survived by her grandchildren Katie Woods, Mark Woods (Sarra), Kyle Stockbridge and Phil Stockbridge and several nieces and nephews.

Pat was born and raised in Berkeley, Calif., the youngest daughter of Edith and Vincent Cooley. She attended business school, as her parents did not allow her to

attend college. After graduating, she went on to work for the railroad in San Francisco.

After the death of Jan's father, mother and daughter were blessed when Pat married Einar Oas Jr. (Hank) and after Karen was born they moved from Piedmont to Orinda where they raised their girls in a spotless home filled with love and happiness.

Pat was a member of Tilden Golf Course, Eastern Star, Newcomers and the Mercedes Club. She volunteered with PTA, as a Scout leader and at local hospitals. She played golf and liked nothing more than a good game of bridge. They both enjoyed the many friendships they developed in Orinda and Salem, Ore. She and Hank loved their annual trips to Twain Harte, Calif., and their travels around the globe.

After raising her girls, she spent quite a few years as a successful real estate broker with John M. Grubb until retiring in 1991 so she and Hank could move to Oregon to be close to Jan, Karen and her grandchildren.

Pat was beautiful and kind, a loving mother and wife. She was predeceased by her husband Hank of 41 years, her parents, brother Bob Cooley and sister Evelyn Traxler and Jan's father Weldon Cedarholm. She will be dearly missed and never forgotten.

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.



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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Miramonte's Mike MacDonald's career as a rugby player and coach



MacDonald on the U.S. national team

Photo provided

By Jon Kingdon

With such highly-rated high schools in Lamorinda, it's no wonder that so many people would like to attend either Acalanes, Campolindo or Miramonte and why it has become so difficult to transfer in from outside the district.

For Mike MacDonald, in the 1990s, it wasn't difficult to transfer in from out of the district: "Growing up, we had a family friend who had moved to Orinda and mentioned how great the education system was throughout Lamorinda. So, my parents (Mack and Maureen) got a head start on it and I was able transfer in from El Cerrito in the sixth grade."

When he began his freshman year at Miramonte, MacDonald was 5'8" and 235 pounds and would grow to just over 6 feet by the time he graduated. MacDonald was familiar with football when he began high school, but he would soon be exposed to two new sports, wrestling and rugby, both of which MacDonald would participate in with great success.

"When I was a freshman, Roger Durant was the wrestling coach," MacDonald said. "He needed a heavyweight on the team and told me that I was going to wrestle or get an F in physical education. So, I wrestled on the varsity as a freshman."

From such humble beginnings, MacDonald would

eventually finish third in the state tournament as a senior which he attributed to the quality of his coaches: "Mike Reamer and Dan Abina had been college coaches with a lot of wrestling experience. Jack Gonzalez, who was a student at Saint Mary's and had been a heavyweight wrestler himself helped me with throws and leverage. I also wrestled against Coach Abina who was lightning in a bottle. They would not allow me to be a big, lumbering heavyweight. They saw more than that in me and I went on to win the North Coast sectionals as a junior and senior."

MacDonald played on the offensive line for the Matadors under head coach Floyd Burnsed. As in wrestling, MacDonald was told to play a different position out of the blue: "On the bus heading to a playoff game my junior year, Paul Yrberri who was our defensive coordinator, told me we're going to play you over the center on short yardage plays and want you to bull rush. I went on to play both ways as a senior."

It was his sophomore year when MacDonald began playing rugby for the Lamorinda Rugby Club at the urging of his brother Joe, who was a senior, and it was love at first sight: "Joe taught me the basics like how to pass the ball and started my progression from there. Rugby is more than a sport. It teaches many things like problem solving on the run, not specializing on one thing and many life lessons."

It was the amalgam of wrestling and football that all came together for MacDonald on the rugby pitch: "It was a perfect storm where the leverage and explosion I learned in wrestling and the running contact in football were the perfect platform to lead me into rugby. My coach was Ned

Anderson who had been the head coach at Cal, and we ended up winning the state tournament and came in fifth at the nationals in 1998."

MacDonald was well prepared to go to UC Berkeley both academically and athletically: "All of the high schools in Lamorinda are excellent so they prepare you for anything you are going to do. Luckily enough, I was at Miramonte when the sports were firing on all cylinders. I was in the right place at the right time and with my major in American Studies."

MacDonald was recruited by schools to wrestle but California was his first choice where he played football as a freshman, but it was rugby that became his ultimate sport though it wasn't an easy transition from high school club to college rugby: "It was a huge eye opener for me. I had to learn that we don't play rugby to get fit, we get fit to play rugby. With the skill acquisition and improvement of my fitness, it was a steep learning curve for me."

Steep for some but not so much for MacDonald as he would go on to be named All-American for the next five seasons, with Cal winning the national championship four of those five seasons, accomplishments MacDonald attributes to his coaches Jack Clark and Tom Billups and his teammates: "I was blessed to have awesome players around me. One year in the national semis and the national championship, we started 28 out of 30 different players in the positions, which was an example of how great our teams were at Cal. I learned something from everyone in every aspect of the game."

While at Cal, MacDonald also played for the United States national team from 2000 to 2012, playing in three

Rugby World Cups in 2003, 2007 and 2011, where Clark was the team's general manager and the coach was Billups. When he was done, MacDonald held the U.S. record with 67 caps (appearances with the national team) and 11 appearances in Rugby World Cup matches.

After Berkeley, MacDonald chose to play professionally in England, something not a lot of Americans do, MacDonald said: "I did get plenty of shtick being the American on the team and initially heard that 'Yanks don't rugby' but I think that my teammates came to respect me and I proved that I belong."

MacDonald would play for Worcester for one year and went on to play for Leeds through 2012. "It was a fully professional outfit and I made enough to live and ply my trade day in and day out. I was very lucky to be able to play a sport that I loved while also being able to represent my country, so I was fortunate to have all of these things fall into place."

MacDonald did have to adjust to the weather in Leeds, coming from California: "I came from a place where it's sunny and lived in a place where for one third of the year, it was dark at 4 p.m. and sleeting. Leeds is the third largest city in England, and it was very metropolitan, and I enjoyed my time immensely there."

MacDonald was a key player for Leeds during the 2006-07 season, which saw Leeds win National League 1 and gain promotion to the premiership league. Other highlights for him were being named Leeds Player of the season twice in 2007-2008, as voted by the fans and players, and becoming team captain for the 2008-09 season.

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Miramonte's Mike MacDonald's career as a rugby player and coach



Mike MacDonald on the Cal rugby team

Photo provided

... continued from Page C1

For the last nine years,

MacDonald has been working as an assistant coach for California, an opportunity that ironically came about due to

an injury he had suffered while playing in England: "In my last season in England, I hurt my shoulder and had

surgery after the season so my playing options were limited. At this point, I was back in Berkeley getting rehab and was asked by Coach Clark and Coach Billups if I wanted to do some volunteer work with the team. I jumped at the chance and threw myself into it. Playing rugby is what I have done since I was 15 and it's something that I'm passionate about and I'm lucky to be able to continue to be affiliated with the game."

Lamorinda continues to be a source of talent for the California rugby team with three residents currently on their roster - Sophomore Miles Beaubelle (Orinda), senior Niki Moore (Moraga) and senior Kevin Tuholski (Lafayette). "With so many Cal graduates living in the area, there continues to be a great connection with the players moving on from Lamorinda to Berkeley," said MacDonald.

As with most players, it was something of a revelation

for MacDonald to discover the difference between coaching and playing: "It's the amount of detail that has to go into the preparation and how labor intensive it is. As a player, the game plan gets put in front of you and your job is to follow it."

MacDonald believes that it is the history and culture of the Cal program whose initial year was 1882, which is most important to the overall success of the program: "It's the way that everyone approaches the game with no one greater than the sum of its parts. Everyone buys into the system, the ethos of the team and staying humble and being known by your deeds. You learn to be grateful for everything and entitled to nothing. You're standing on the shoulders of the people that came before you. There's a lot on the plate for the players that walk in as freshman and sophomores and they soon realize that it's a real privilege to play for the team."

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

Feng Shui

Use fun layers to enhance your home this fall



Photo provided

By Michele Duffy

Fall seems like a logical time for adding layers, and what better place than our front entrances to receive additional adornment during the fall and winter holiday season with gourds, heirloom pumpkins and colorful mums. The harvest theme this time of year generally lingers through Thanksgiving, adding not only curb appeal but a festive energy that can help differentiate your home from others on your street.

While it is considered excellent Feng Shui to celebrate seasonal cheer, don't overdo the décor; work hard to avoid clutter and consider

the effectiveness of a few well placed design details for creating a home in tune with the seasons. Feng Shui is integrally aligned with our intention so we must be mindful, practice reverence, and make careful adjustments, moving things around to create subtle shifts in the improvement of Qi flow in the home. With perhaps more family in the home than usual right now, trust your intuition and lean in to create a home that works for you and invite a connection with the elements in nature.

Many of those who are inspired by the beauty of Feng Shui celebrate the harvest symbolism of fall and the prosperity of a strong harvest. Soy candles take off the chill in the air, a toasty fire frames family movie time, and warmer foods, beverages and baking enhanced with herbs like cinnamon, turmeric, ginger, and cardamom set the tone. Make it your weekly challenge to try a new dish to get your creative juices going and beat the menu doldrums. Fall may also nudge you toward a more tidy home, cleaning out closets or the garage on cooler days, and trading out light summer linens, throws and blankets for fuzzier, warmer varieties.

Color can also amp up the warmth as fall turns colder if you choose ginger, reds, tangerines, and neutral browns. Seasonal symbolism aligns your home to receiving the benefits of a good harvest with, for example, a whimsical pumpkin throw like the one used in a teenager's room of a Lafayette client. These adjustments bring strength and comfort into a space.

To locate the Bagua area associated with Fall/Metal, stand in the front entrance door looking into the home and note the middle right area, aptly named the "Children, Completion & Joy" Bagua area. The front entrance door is the most significant portal to your home and the first of the Three Pillars or "power" areas of the

home (the second pillar is the master bed, and the third is the stove). Extra attention, mindfulness, attention to curb appeal, and revisiting or tidying up is always recommended around the front door. If you sweep near the front door be sure to use mindful intention that you are making room for new possibilities (versus sweeping good luck away). The Water element sits along the front door wall, in the middle area location of Career/Life Journey. The single most powerful adjustment for the first pillar is a Feng Shui water feature (fountain), specifically, with the fountain water flow bubbling upward. This lifts and buoys the Qi for the entire home and provides the necessary flow of nourishment for all Bagua areas throughout the home, and water forcefully activates Careers for the household. You can also attract vibrant Qi toward the front entrance or front yard with seasonal layers like pumpkins and gourds on a front-facing mailbox.

If your front entrance door sits below the road or if your front door faces a steep uphill climb such as a mountain, the Feng Shui of placing a weathervane on the home's roof lifts the house Qi and counters some of the difficult Qi. This is especially important if the front door is below the road and also the backyard is steep, downhill, and falling away from the home. The weathervane we choose can also correspond to igniting Feng Shui in a Bagua yard area, like the example of a fire Red Cardinal in the wisdom area (door wall to the left).

Homes above the road have a higher vibration, improved natural light, and in general, are preferred. Placing flags in the front yard will further raise the home Qi and colorful greenery framing but not overwhelming the front yard and door entrance, and splendid outdoor lighting also add practical Feng Shui layers.

... continued on Page D4



Lafayette ~ 1055 Los Arabis Lane
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	7	\$659,000	\$2,245,000
MORAGA	4	\$530,000	\$1,710,000
ORINDA	13	\$1,154,000	\$2,915,000

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

- 1173 Bacon Way, \$1,180,000, 4 Bdrms, 1558 SqFt, 1954 YrBl, 09-16-20,
Previous Sale: \$818,000, 08-19-19
- 874 Las Trampas Road, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 1566 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 09-18-20,
Previous Sale: \$184,000, 02-10-12
- 2 Leeward Glen Road, \$2,245,000, 5 Bdrms, 3285 SqFt, 1975 YrBl, 09-16-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,900,000, 08-07-17
- 3242 Marlene Drive, \$659,000, 3 Bdrms, 1160 SqFt, 1972 YrBl, 09-09-20,
Previous Sale: \$435,000, 07-16-13
- 12 Moss Lane, \$1,060,000, 2 Bdrms, 1559 SqFt, 1987 YrBl, 09-10-20,
Previous Sale: \$537,000, 11-04-04
- 3235 Mt Diablo Court #101, \$1,875,000, 2 Bdrms, 2112 SqFt, 2019 YrBl, 09-10-20
- 209 Seclusion Valley Way, \$2,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 3902 SqFt, 2019 YrBl, 09-16-20,
Previous Sale: \$3,400,000, 08-16-16

MORAGA

- 122 Alta Mesa Court, \$1,145,000, 3 Bdrms, 1954 SqFt, 1974 YrBl, 09-18-20
- 119 Ascot Court #7, \$530,000, 3 Bdrms, 1320 SqFt, 1970 YrBl, 09-09-20,
Previous Sale: \$530,000, 08-26-20
- 118 La Quinta Street, \$1,710,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1981 YrBl, 09-15-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,575,000, 04-10-19
- 52 Lynwood Place, \$922,000, 4 Bdrms, 2275 SqFt, 1965 YrBl, 09-08-20

ORINDA

- 182 Ardith Court, \$2,718,500, 5 Bdrms, 2986 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 09-11-20,
Previous Sale: \$975,000, 03-09-06
- 33 Bates Boulevard, \$2,915,000, 4 Bdrms, 3321 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 09-11-20,
Previous Sale: \$2,320,000, 04-11-17
- 10 Bonita Lane, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2995 SqFt, 1936 YrBl, 09-11-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 12-20-04
- 112 Canon Drive, \$2,705,000, 4 Bdrms, 3863 SqFt, 1999 YrBl, 09-16-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,725,000, 08-22-12
- 23 Coffee Berry Lane, \$2,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 3512 SqFt, 2017 YrBl, 09-15-20,
Previous Sale: \$2,272,500, 02-13-18
- 70 Coral Drive, \$1,154,000, 3 Bdrms, 1419 SqFt, 1958 YrBl, 09-17-20,
Previous Sale: \$570,000, 04-18-00
- 84 Davis Road, \$1,615,000, 3 Bdrms, 2245 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 09-16-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,261,500, 01-26-18
- 43 El Toyonal, \$1,160,000, 4 Bdrms, 2680 SqFt, 1928 YrBl, 09-18-20
- 325 El Toyonal, \$1,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 2544 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 09-17-20
- 113 Fiesta Circle, \$1,355,000, 3 Bdrms, 1764 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 09-10-20,
Previous Sale: \$742,500, 04-16-12
- 9 Kittiwake Road, \$1,300,000, 2 Bdrms, 1564 SqFt, 1952 YrBl, 09-14-20
- 38 Linda Vista, \$1,691,000, 4 Bdrms, 2842 SqFt, 1946 YrBl, 09-14-20,
Previous Sale: \$875,000, 01-22-10
- 2 Lucille Way, \$1,395,000, 3 Bdrms, 1938 SqFt, 1992 YrBl, 09-15-20

Spectacular Lafayette Home



3217 Acalanes Ave

Stunning remodeled home with high ceilings, open floor plan and on a large level lot. This 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home is finished to the highest standards with exceptional attention to detail and design. The kitchen has all new appliances, designer lighting and an oversized island. The master retreat has a walk-in closet, access to patio and generous bathroom with large shower, free standing tub, double vanity on a beautiful carrara marble floor. The great room has vaulted ceilings, wide plank wood floors and opens to a beautiful level backyard with ample patio area for entertaining, level lawn and room for a pool. Conveniently located to Lafayette's award winning schools, freeway, and downtown.

Price \$1,898,000



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DRE 01894345



Leslie Lomond

650.799.2110
leslie.lomond@compass.com
DRE 01968517



Mary Staten

925.890.6875
mary.staten@compass.com
DRE 01947354



Dave Schurhoff

925.997.9569
dave.schurhoff@compass.com
DRE 01834201



Christine Frazier

925.550.2130
christinefrazier@compass.com
DRE 01949722



Brittany Hogan

925.233.9061
brittany@paddykehoeteam.com
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COMPASS



Kress & Larry
PRESENT

132 Greenbriar, Moraga

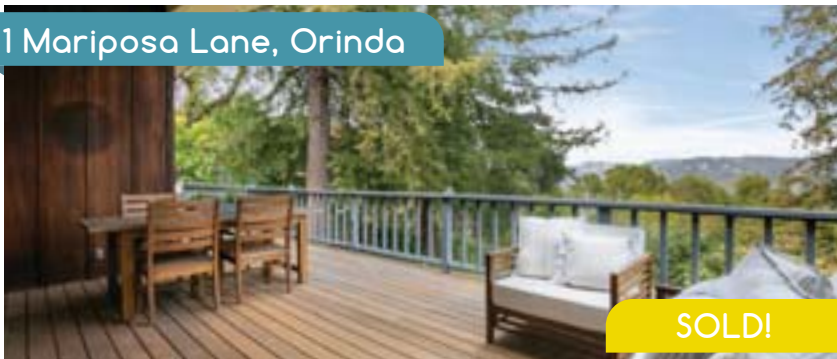


Super Sizing can be a good thing!

If you hunger for more elbow room, then this home is the perfect order. Country Club Lifestyle from the comforts of home. A quiet cul-de-sac and the natural surroundings create a relaxing reprieve from today's hustle and bustle.

3 BR | 2 BA
2,470 SF | 4,624 SF Lot
Offered at: \$1,295,000
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1 Mariposa Lane, Orinda



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21 Shetland Ln, Pleasant Hill



Coming Soon

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Feng Shui

Use fun layers to enhance your home this fall



Photos provided

... continued from Page D1

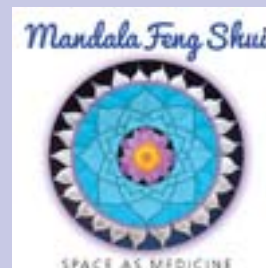
The path to the front door should be a meandering one, versus a straight path with rushing Qi. Always try to make sure to clear away vegetation so that the front door is prominent and visible from the street and that lighting is overhead or flanking the front door, as well as path lighting that lights the way to the door. If the front door is not visible from the street, include a well-placed 'welcome' sign or directional arrows signs to direct Qi, foot traffic and opportunities through gates toward the front door.

In each of the Three Pillars there is a dominant Yin or Yang characteristic, and the first

pillar at the front door is a decidedly Yang Qi area, with lots of movement to generate enough Qi flow to feed the entire home. Hanging a gentle Woodstock metal windchime from the eaves of the house, or a red hummingbird feeder in a nearby tree, all 'activate' the Front Door Yang Qi. If you enter home through a side or garage door try to at least use the front door as often as possible.

Listen to your home. Move, update, adjust, create, add layers, find joy, peace, repeat. Warm up your heart up at home and this fall, and make memories to last a lifetime.

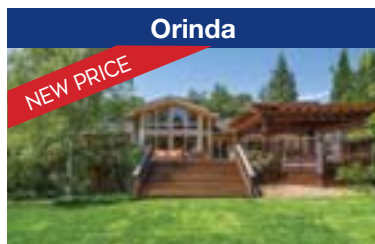
Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2020 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.



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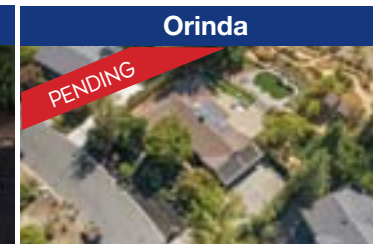
Orinda
20 Hacienda Circle \$3,825,000
 1.3-acre lot adjacent to Orinda Country Club's 13th hole
 Melanie Snow /Laura Abrams
 925-360-0344/510-697-3225
 20haciendacircle.com Lic#00878893/01272382



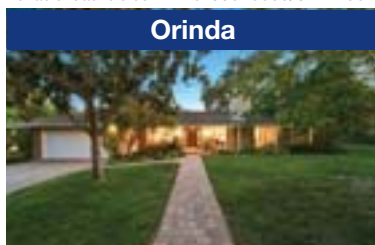
Lafayette
1 Dead Horse Canyon Rd \$2,495,000
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 Barn serves as ADU
 Suzanne Geoffrion/Dick Holt
 925.699.4832/925.297.9150
 1deadhorsecanyon.com Lic#01878803/ 00827803



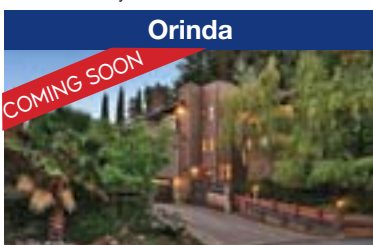
Orinda
37 Oak Road \$2,299,500
 Majestic Sanctuary. 5beds/4baths, 4672 sqft
 Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573
 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com
 Lic #01390784



Orinda
59 Martha Rd. \$2,225,000
 Rare 1.48 acre mostly level lot in Glorietta.
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 www.59MarthaRd.com Lic#01341390/01771736



Orinda
1146 Nogales \$2,195,000
 Truly lovely California country estate.
 Nancy Booth / Soraya Golesorkhi
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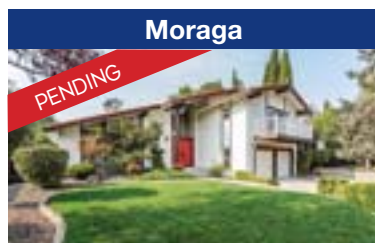
Orinda
19 Candlestick \$1,700,000
 Sophisticated Contemporary with pano views. 3,063 sq ft. 4 Bedrooms 3.5 Baths.
 Laura Abrams 510-697-3225
 Lic#01272382



Lafayette
866 Revere Rd \$1,695,000
 4 BR, 2.5 BA, Stylishly renovated, bocce court, spacious lawn and yard.
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Moraga
126 Brookfield Drive \$1,549,000
 Bright and contemporary single story home with flat yard on a cul-de-sac.
 Michelle Holcenberg 925-324-0405
 www.126brookfield.com Lic #01373412



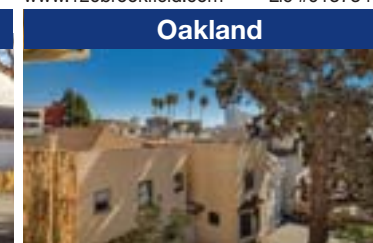
Moraga
3736 Campolindo Dr. \$1,295,000
 Moraga gem with convenient location
 4 BD/2.5 BA
 Yan Heim 510-499-4709
 3736campolindo.com Lic #01965925



Pleasant Hill
507 Masfield \$999,000
 Poet's Corner Beauty!
 5 bed/2 bath 1,727sf
 Suzanne Geoffrion 925-699-4832
 Lic #01878803



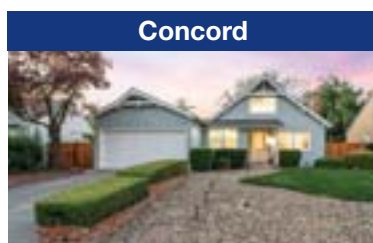
Walnut Creek
1112 Chiltern Dr. \$899,000
 3 Bd/2.5 BA
 2,055 Sq. ft with large patio!
 Suzanne Geoffrion 925-699-4832
 Lic #01878803



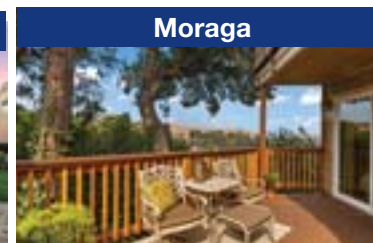
Oakland
2933 McClure St \$795,000
 3 Bd/2 BA. Elevator takes you to this Penthouse Condo great with views!
 Tom Stack 925-878-9964
 Lic #01501769



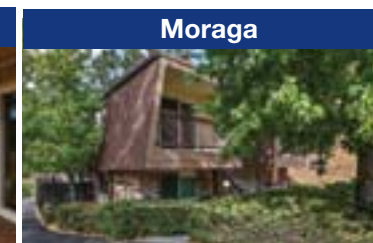
Concord
1021 Stimel Dr \$795,000
 Peaceful location bordering Len Hester Park, close to Iron Horse Trail. 6 BD/2BA, large yard.
 Laura Abrams 510-697-3225
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Concord
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 Charming 4 Bd/2BA Beautiful cape cod style home.
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Moraga
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Moraga
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\$1,690,000

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3 BATHS

2,989 SQFT

Sitting on a large .69 acre oak-studded lot in the coveted Glorietta neighborhood. The light and bright interior offers plenty of room to work, study, and play.



Go Bears!



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DIAMOND





34 La Cresta Road, Orinda



5 bd | 3 ba | 2367 sqft | .38 acre | \$1,499,000

Set on a lovely lot, this wonderful family home has great sun exposure, lovely views, grassy yards, a huge deck for entertaining, lush gardens, and exceptional allure for living both inside and outside. Walk to the very popular Dey Rey Elementary school and playfields so close by.



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HELPING CLIENTS make their MOVES



568 Merriewood, Lafayette \$2,150,000 Pending



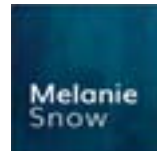
4 Haven Ct, Moraga \$1,850,000 Pending 6 days



3175 Surmont, Lafayette \$1,895,000 Pending



915 Matthews Ct, Walnut Creek \$2,200,000 Pending



Melanie Snow CAL BRE #00878893
 925.360.0344 cell
 melanie@melaniesnow.com
 MelanieSnow.com



Melanie was everything we could hope for in a sellers agent. She was always available, knowledgeable, and on top of things. Our house sold in a few days with multiple offers. We can fully recommend Melanie as the consummate professional who gets the job done. - M. Baker, Google ★★★★★ 7.15.2020

TomStack
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WON
 7 offers

870 Corcoran Ct, Benicia | List Price: \$689,000



WON
 6 offers

1489 Camino Peral, Moraga | List Price \$675,000



JUST LISTED

2933 McClure St, #14, Oakland | List Price: \$795,000

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 1 DAY

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IN LAMORINDA

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126 Brookfield Drive, Moraga



- 4 bedroom, 2 bath, 2,025 square feet •

Bright and contemporary single-story set on a cul-de-sac and remodeled throughout. Kitchen/great room opens to the flat yard, making it perfect for entertaining and indoor/outdoor living. Hardwood floor, vaulted ceilings and much more. Close to K-8 schools, the farmers market and Canyon Club Brewery.

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JUST SOLD

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Listed for 1,495,000. Sold for \$1,750,000.
3 bed, 2.5 bath, 2400+ sq. ft. Updated throughout. Represented seller.

149 Saddle Oaks Court, Walnut Creek



Sold for \$2,175,000
5 bed, 4 bath, 3510 sq. ft. Custom home on large flat lot. Represented buyer

www.holcenberg.com

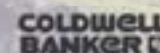
Michelle Holcenberg

Coldwell Banker Top 100 SF Bay Area

michelle@holcenberg.com

925-324-0405

BRE #01373412



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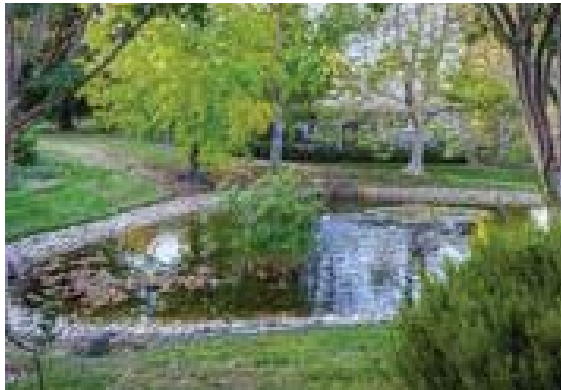
Picture Perfect PEMBROKE

on Lakeshire in Rossmoor!

New to market, this fabulous, well-appointed single story home on the fountains and pond of Lakeshire will surely impress! Over 2000 sq. ft. with an updated kitchen and 2 1/2 bathrooms, expansive living and dining room, extra den/office with fireplace, a premier bed and bath retreat with private patio and fireplace, two-car attached garage, and indoor/outdoor living for the most discriminating buyer.

Call for a tour now!

List price \$1,885,000



Check out the virtual tour and video at www.1902LakeshireDr.com.



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener Cynthia Brian

Nature's Halloween



Photos Cynthia Brian

Carve pumpkins and bake bread with ghoulish faces.

By Cynthia Brian

"Listen to them—the children of the night. What music they make!" ~ Bram Stoker

During this season, life is about the kids. This is a time of magic, wonder, and things that go bump in the night. Halloween has always been a favorite holiday for most children in the United States but this year, Halloween, the way it has been celebrated for decades, is canceled.

No random trick-or-treating, no gatherings, no haunted parties.

Since school has been online, kids yearn to get together to socialize with a bit of raucous fun – and candy. With COVID-19 isolation, this year's Halloween is going to be different ... very, very different.

For weeks families have been brainstorming innovative ideas to provide a safe, yet enjoyable experience for their children. Although most everyone has probably decided how to celebrate, I'd like to add a bit of nature to the mixture.

When I was raising my two

children, Halloween was always a major event, but not in the way that most kids participate. Every year our family would join with two other families to enjoy a full weekend of scary festivities in a circa 1900 Victorian in the middle of an isolated mountain forest that had been in the family of our friend for over 80 years. The drive to get to our destination was on a bumpy, winding, pot-holed road, with gnarled trees that jutted out of nowhere and deep canyons that could be perilous to the amateurish driver. The ride alone was frightening!

The house had no electricity (unless we used a generator) and the water was pumped from the creek. We always began our adventure with a hike to pick wildflowers and gather feathers, branches, colored leaves, and grasses to make decorations. Sometimes, we'd saddle the horses on the property to carry our bounty,

... continued on Page D14

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JUST
SOLD



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Patio Townhomes!



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2 Beds, 1.5 Baths, 1,253 sf

Beautiful Tahoe setting, top-rated Lafayette schools,
close to everything, garage + carport.

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1479 Quail View Circle, Walnut Creek
3 Beds, 2.5 Baths, 2,387 sf

Serene Quail Ridge retreat, just blocks from Lunardi's,
lives like a single family home.

Offered at \$915,000



Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener Cynthia Brian

Nature's Halloween



An alley of pumpkins invites trick-or-treaters into the garden.

... continued from Page D12

The landscape boasted a big vegetable garden that enthralled the kids. "What do you want for dinner?" we'd ask. Each child would grab a basket to pick their favorite vegetables. The fun began with the children helping to prepare our evening meal. On Halloween, we'd start the day picking apples in the orchard. We'd take the apples to the barn where we'd press them into apple cider, saving some to make apple pies. We would also play a fun game, Bobbing for Apples, giving prizes to the winner. (Not a recommended activity during this pandemic!)

Next was the pumpkin carving. Each person was given a pumpkin to carve or decorate. We saved seeds for roasting and some for planting in the spring. Again, the kids would go to the vegetable garden to pick their favorite vegetables. We'd craft with our found nature treasures and decorate the "haunted house." Everyone would get dressed in their home-made costumes, followed by our Halloween feast.

Of course, the best was yet to come. The kids, all decked out in their Halloween regalia, couldn't wait.

Trick-or-treating!

All the lights would be extinguished except for lanterns and candles. Darkness dropped with the haunting sounds of the night and a bit of help from the hidden boombox. One parent corralled the kids on the porch as the rest of the costumed parents hid behind doors of the house with bags of candy. On "go," the kids ran door to door knocking, shouting "trick-or-treat." An adult would jump out with a trick and fill their Halloween bag. After all the treats were distributed, like all kids, the trading and negotiating for candy began.

And, after the youngsters were totally exhausted, (and probably on a



Bedeck your yard with a bale of hay and big, bright pumpkins.

Photos Cynthia Brian

sugar high), we adults would celebrate Halloween, too.

The fond memories of these sacred Halloween traditions can be easily translated to our current situation with COVID-19 to ensure a safe and memorable Halloween. This year Halloween is on a Saturday. Make a weekend of it!

If you have a pod of people that you are already socializing with because you are all social distancing, one family could host the Halloween party. Or, make the Halloween event virtual to include more people.

- Plan and prepare a meal together.
- Dress in costume.
- Buy a few bales of hay to create a maze. (The hay can be used in the garden afterward as top dressing.)
- Carve or paint pumpkins.
- Save seeds for roasting and spring planting.
- Bake bread with menacing faces.
- Make a candy shoot out of PVC to send candy from one person to another yard.
- How about a slingshot to catapult candy across the street to your friends?
- For those with gardens, employ the kids to pick vegetables and fruits that are festive and fun. For example, guavas are self-harvesting now, so if someone has a guava tree, try a new recipe.
- Add a tiny pumpkin to an autumn floral bouquet.
- Have a nature scavenger hunt followed by a mask making shindig with found elements: feathers, bark, twigs, flowers, acorns, pebbles, leaves, and more.
- Press apples to make a brew of witch cider.
- Visit a pumpkin patch with social distancing.
- Howl at the moon with the coyotes!
- Hoot with the owls.

... continued on Page D15



A bucket of guavas with more self-harvesting on the ground.

... continued from Page D14

Adults can hide in closets, bathrooms, or behind any doors. Just make sure to have the treats and a few tricks! Make sure to include the spooky tunes.

Finally, don't forget the candy swap. Whether it is in person or virtual, swapping candy is an age-old tradition that every kid adores. Don't forget the toothbrushes!

Wearing a mask is always appropriate on Halloween and this year it takes on special meaning. Be creative and safe. Make masks!

Shake your broomsticks. A ghoulish, ghostly midnight jamboree may be right outside in Mother Nature at the witching hour. It's time for some hocus pocus.

Have a secure and joyful nature's Halloween.

Happy gardening. Happy growing. Make sure to VOTE!



Cynthia Brian's costume encourages voting!

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 and receive extra freebies, 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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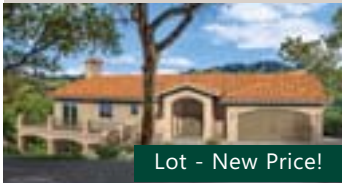
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