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Meat Manager Jim Gates holds a fresh turkey, alongside Diablo Foods Owners Dan Stokes and his sister Connie Collier.

Photo Pippa Fisher

Lafayette grocery store's decision benefits local restaurants

By Pippa Fisher

This year family-run Diablo Foods has chosen not to offer its traditional complete takeout Thanksgiving turkey dinners – a decision made specifically in order to encourage its customers instead to support local restaurants at a time when small businesses are struggling to stay afloat.

Not competing with local restaurants was an idea that came to Dan Stokes and was encouraged by his sister Connie Collier. Together they own and run the grocery store – a popular Lafayette mainstay.

“We just wanted to give back to the restaurants in town that have had such a bad break through all of this,” says Collier, adding that they feel so fortunate to have been able to keep their doors open and

to have kept all their staff employed through the crazy times.

Restaurants offering Thanksgiving dinners this year include Tutus, Metro, The Coop, Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa's The Park Bistro and Bar, The Main Kitchen Café, Out of the Cave Foods, and Whole Foods. Several sold out ahead of the holiday.

Diablo Foods will still be offering pre-cooked turkey and various prepared side dishes.

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We are grateful for our wonderful clients and community. Wishing you a safe and joyful Thanksgiving!



happy Thanksgiving Day



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MOFD lifts burn ban, offers Thanksgiving safety tips

By Nick Marnell

Though Contra Costa County reverted to a more restrictive ban on activities Nov. 17 due to a spike in coronavirus infections, a total gut punch was attenuated when the Moraga-Orinda Fire District lifted its two-month burn ban that same day. Thanks to the rains and changing weather conditions, open burning, recreational fires, campfires and fires in outdoor fireplaces are now allowed within the district for the first time since Sept. 7.

“We still would like to remind residents to use caution and follow basic fire safety guidelines when burning. Also please remember to check with Bay Area Air Quality to see if it is a burn day,” Fire Marshal Jeff Isaacs said.

The lifting of the ban does not apply to the outdoor burning of brush, vegetation and garbage,

which is still prohibited.

With the approach of Thanksgiving Day, the district offered a few tips on avoiding a catastrophe in the kitchen.

Turkey fryers can easily tip over, spilling hot oil across a large area. Use a turkey fryer only outdoors on a sturdy, level surface well away from things that can burn, and create a kid- and pet-free zone around the fryer to protect against burn injuries.

Be careful not to overfill a cooking pot so the oil will not spill over when the turkey is placed inside. Since a partially frozen turkey will cause hot oil to splatter, make sure the turkey is completely thawed before placing it in a fryer.

Check the temperature often with a cooking thermometer so the oil won't overheat. And be sure to use cooking gloves that protect hands and arms when handling the pot lid and handles.

When cooking a turkey in a fryer check the temperature often with a cooking thermometer so the oil won't overheat.

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Making the Holidays Bright!

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EVENT DETAILS

Sunday, December 6th at 6PM
 Learn more at LafayetteChamber.org/lights

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City imposes temporary cap on third-party food delivery services during pandemic

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette has become one of a handful of cities around the Bay Area to adopt an urgency ordinance establishing a 15% cap on service fees imposed by third-party food delivery vendors such as DoorDash, Uber Eats and GrubHub.

The city council voted unanimously Nov. 9 to pass the urgency ordinance,

which took effect Nov. 16 and will last until the city's local COVID-19 emergency ends. Other cities that have taken the same steps include Walnut Creek, Berkeley, San Francisco, South San Francisco, San Leandro and Fremont. The ordinance also imposes a 10% vendor fee cap on pickup orders.

City Manager Niroop Srivatsa explained in the staff report that while restaurants have been severely limited

from providing in-person dining, many have come to rely heavily on pickup and delivery orders to remain in business. As restaurants focus on these pickup and delivery orders, there is a greater reliance on third-party delivery services, which charge the restaurants between 10-30%.

Council Member Cam Burks initiated a discussion about the government's intervention in the market and

questioned its role in this issue, saying he felt conflicted about where government jumps in and where it shouldn't.

A letter to the council from Matt Pease warned that the city is opening the door for any business that is struggling to ask the city to help manage the costs of its suppliers.

Council members Teresa Gerringer and Steven Bliss shared Burks' concerns but

said that since this was a temporary ordinance, they found it reasonable as a way to help restaurants attempt to survive the winter.

Mayor Mike Anderson agreed and noted that the outside dining had made a difference, "but it's getting cold," he said, adding that although he is reluctant to meddle in the free market, their role may be appropriate at this time.

What's brewing in Lafayette?



Image provided

Headlands Brewery plans to open its doors in Lafayette in spring 2021.

By Pippa Fisher

Amid the selection of many eateries that line the streets of downtown Lafayette, there is one type of establishment

that has been notably absent – a brewery. That is set to change this coming spring.

The Headlands Brewing Company has announced it has signed a lease and begun the design and build phase for its new brewery, taproom and beer garden, which will be located at 3420 Mt. Diablo Blvd. next to Bonehead's Texas BBQ and Locanda Positano.

"Our first Bay Area home has been a long time coming, but patience has paid off and we are thrilled to have finally found the perfect spot to continue building our vision for Headlands and the adventurous lifestyle that we embrace in everything we do," said Alex Bru, General Manager of Headlands Brewing in a statement.

At the Lafayette location the award-winning brewery company will feature small batch ales along with guest beers, local wines and ciders, and a light "creative" food program. Headlands is currently recruiting applicants for its new brewing team in

advance of its spring 2021 goal for opening.

Headlands is partnering with seasoned bar and restaurant designers, Ben Frombgen of BCooperative and Joel DiGiorgio of Farm League Restaurant Group, tapping these two companies as they have worked together on other beer-related venues including Drake's Dealership and Arthur Mac's Tap & Snack in Oakland.

"Our indoor and outdoor design plan for the new brewery will feature a taproom with a 20-tap floating draught tower, two outdoor patios with fire pits and family-friendly open landscaping," says DiGiorgio.

Bru is looking forward to the opening. "The people of Lafayette and Contra Costa County have been incredibly kind to us and we're eager to celebrate and toast our passion for quality craft beer and outdoor adventure with them all."



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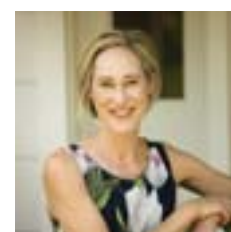
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Court orders PG&E to wait on tree removal, for now



Photo provided

Trees along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail are situated close to an underground high transmission gas pipeline.

By Pippa Fisher

A judge has once again called a halt, at least for now, to Pacific Gas & Electric Company's plans to cut down 17 trees on East Bay Regional Park District property within the city of Lafayette, issuing a preliminary injunction order that will remain in effect pending further court orders.

PG&E had notified the city Nov. 10 that it intended to begin removing the 17 trees, 12 of which are on the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail, within a few days as part of its Community Pipeline Safety Initiative. The city immediately filed a lawsuit against the utility in the Bankruptcy Court, contending that PG&E failed to comply with a 2017

Tree Removal Agreement obliging them to provide all information required by the city's tree protection regulations before cutting or removing trees within Lafayette. PG&E maintain that the tree removal is necessary to allow access to the underground high-pressure gas lines, and that tree roots threaten the pipes' safety – claims that a grass-roots organization called Save Lafayette Trees formed by residents initially out of concern for the trees, disputes. SLT says that although PG&E has met with residents, the city and the California Public Utilities Commission for two years, they have never been able to demonstrate how cutting trees improves gas safety.

... continued on Page A10

Lafayette lights up with Holiday cheer!



Photo Pippa Fisher

Twinkle lights shine throughout downtown Lafayette.

By Pippa Fisher

The pandemic has changed many things about this holiday season but it can't take the twinkle out of Lafayette. The switch to light up the tree in the Plaza Park on Sunday evening, Dec. 6 will be thrown at 6 p.m. and organizers hope that households will do the same, lighting up neighborhoods across the city at the same moment. For the past seven years the Dana Green Team and Branagh Development have

sponsored the twinkle lights up and down Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Their donation helps the Chamber of Commerce pay for the installation and maintenance of the lights. In previous years the lighting up occurs during the annual "It's a Wonderful Life in Lafayette" gathering. This year the event has been canceled due to shelter-in-place guidelines. However the Holiday Snow Globe will be available for holiday photos until Dec. 25, with social distancing safeguards in place.

Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council
Monday, Dec. 14, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m.
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Design Review
Wednesday, Nov 25, 7 p.m. Zoom
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

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Moraga Citizens' Network:
 www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Wishing the Lamorinda Community a Safe & Happy Thanksgiving!

Though it's been a challenging year for many, I hope the Thanksgiving holiday will allow time for you to reflect on all that you are thankful for. I'm grateful to the Lamorinda community for its ongoing support of my real estate business. If a change of address is something you are contemplating in the new year, please be sure to reach out. It's not too early to plan, and I would be happy to assist. **Happy Thanksgiving!**

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Town releases its 2020 audited financial report

By Nick Marnell

Further distancing itself from the fiscal emergency it declared in 2017, the town of Moraga unveiled its 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report in November, which showed the town not only adhering to its general fund balance policy of 50% of expenditures but also exceeding that figure by more than \$400,000.

The 2020 report also comes a long way from the 2017 financial audit that uncovered significant deficiencies in town internal controls, including a lack of supervi-

sion over outside debt management, investment in an unauthorized money market fund and numerous basic bookkeeping errors.

"During our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses," wrote Maze and Associates, the Pleasant Hill firm that audited the 2020 CAFR as well as the 2017 financial statements.

Moraga reports an unassigned general fund reserve balance of \$5 million, covering more than six months of annual operating expenses and exceeding budget by

more than \$120,000.

Town revenue increased 5.3% over 2019 thanks to higher than budgeted property tax and sales tax receipts, and significant growth in garbage vehicle franchise fees. Those three sources represent 82% of Moraga's 2020 revenue.

Expenses rose 12.1%. "The increase was due to higher health insurance premiums, benefits, pension costs and filled vacancies," said Norm Veloso, administrative services director. Pension costs of \$919,000 account for more than 10% of total town expenditures, and

pension costs are projected to increase again in 2021.


Capital assets, including land, buildings, storm drains and equipment, totaled \$64.5 million as of June 30, a \$7 million increase from the end of last fiscal year, mainly due to reimbursements for previous capital projects.

According to the town's statement of net position, net pension liability – the difference between the amount Moraga owes its pensioners and the amount of assets on hand to pay the bill – is the town's No. 1 long-term liability. The liability rose to \$7 million, up from \$6.1 million

in 2019, largely because of investment losses and incorrect cost assumptions by the California Public Employees' Retirement System, the town pension administrator.

Other long-term debt includes \$6.7 million for the Town Hall project and for 2013 infrastructure improvements.

In a refreshing bit of financial writing, the pandemic was not cited as the reason for any operational shortfall. In fact, neither the word coronavirus nor the acronym COVID appeared once in the entire 118-page CAFR.



Town Council Wednesday, Dec. 9, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission: Monday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 Special Board Meeting Tuesday, Dec. 8, 6 p.m.
 www.moraga.k12.ca.us. See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Town council attempts to further clarify development guidelines



Mixed Residential/Retail areas within the MCSP should be a unique combination of different land uses, including but not limited to retail, residential, office, commercial, service, entertainment, and recreation.

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga Town Council unanimously adopted a resolution Nov. 10 that established new guidelines for the aesthetic development of the Moraga Center, a 187-acre area of the town that includes the Safeway shopping center and adjoining roads and property.

The 121-page Town of Moraga Design Guidelines document, the culmination of numerous Citizens Advisory Committee, planning department and town council meetings, includes guidance to developers for what is appropriate in character and quality for the town, and assists the town in evaluating proposals for development. The guidelines align with but do not supersede local zoning standards.

The design guidelines feature eight guiding principles for town development,

including the maintaining of a semirural character, protection of ridgelines and hillside areas and "thoughtful design" to residential neighborhoods.

The guidelines are exhaustive, and include the design of landscaping, cul de sacs and even retaining walls. The document features not only detailed written descriptions but also visual examples. "The inclusion of photos is particularly helpful in illuminating the desired intent," Council Member Steve Woehleke said.

As the newly passed design guidelines are exactly that – guidelines – they are subject to interpretation for development approval. Two sentences on Page 11 of the design guidelines document further add to the subjectivity. "Compliance with these guidelines does not, however, guarantee approval. Similarly, needing to request an exception to the guidelines

does not mean that the application will be disapproved," the document reads.

"This is not going to be helping the town whatsoever," local property owner Dave Bruzzone said.

Mayor Kymberleigh Kopus summarized the council discussion, and she encouraged Bruzzone, the only member of the public to speak up, to collaborate with the town planning department. "We have a product that is going to work hand-in-hand with the (Moraga Center) zoning to encourage as much as possible the kinds of development that will work here," she said. "We've got a starting point. There is some discretion. There is flexibility."

Vice Mayor Mike McCluer concurred that the new guidelines were a start and not the final word on town development. "This is part of the journey, and this journey will continue," he said.

To view the guidelines discussed, visit the Town of Moraga website and download the agenda packet from the Nov. 10 council meeting:
<https://ca-moraga.civicplus.com/AgendaCenter/Town-Council-2>



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MSD makes last-minute decision to postpone in-person learning amid county COVID surge



By Jenn Freedman

The Moraga School District governing board made an 11th hour pivot Nov. 13 to hold off on hybrid in-person learning that was set to begin the following Monday. The emergency board meeting was held in response to information from Contra Costa County Health Services that the county was expected to move from the red tier to the purple tier, which denotes widespread infection rates.

At the weekly Nov. 10 board meeting, the board indicated its inclination of closing schools if the county moved to the purple tier. This led Superintendent Bruce Burns to bring a recommendation to the board that the MSD not open on Nov. 16 given the information of the impending shift to purple. "I have concerns over educational continuity," he explained, citing how students could potentially return

to school for as little as a week if the county in fact moved to purple on Nov. 24. The move came earlier than expected, however, when Gov. Gavin Newsom announced at a Nov. 16 press conference the move of Contra Costa County to the purple tier effective Nov. 17.

"We have said at each meeting that we need to be ready to pivot at any moment, as information is constantly changing," Burns said at the Nov. 13 meeting. "Well, we're at that point now."

Further debate ensued about using the purple tier as the trigger for closing. While the county moved toward purple, Moraga's numbers continued to be among the lowest in the county. Opening while in the red tier enables the district not to be tethered to tiers, as schools can remain open in the purple tier if they were open previously (following county guidelines). However, schools cannot open for the first time while in purple, even though the district has exceeded county guidelines with regards to safety measures, and public health experts have found little evidence that the virus is spreading in schools thus far.

On the flip side, additional concerns were raised with the purple tier beyond the safety and health of students and staff. Burns anticipated staffing issues in the purple tier, as several staff members were already

hesitant to return in lower tiers. He also believes some families may rethink sending their children to school in purple, which could further complicate logistics within the hybrid model. In addition, while Moraga's numbers are well below county numbers, some people who work and attend MSD schools live outside the town. Finally, COVID testing was a concern: specifically, because testing could not be offered at school sites until after Thanksgiving break, and generally, because testing cannot be mandated for children in public schools (unlike private schools).

About 20 community members, mostly parents, spoke at the meeting and expressed various perspectives. More than half of the speakers were in favor of continuing with plans to begin the hybrid model as scheduled, many of which expressed concerns

for the youngest students (TK-2) both academically and social/emotionally.

Board member Jon Nickens acknowledged, "I feel like there are no easy answers ... there hasn't been a day that has gone by over the past six months that I haven't contemplated this choice."

After an extensive, at times emotional, discussion, there was a consensus from the current four-person board to postpone hybrid in-person learning with the expectation that MSD will open as soon as possible once the county returns to the red tier. State guidelines say that the county must remain in red for two weeks before reopening, which realistically means January is the soonest students could begin phasing back.

For the latest information on school reopening, visit www.moraga.k12.ca.us.



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Orinda Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Dec. 1, 7 p.m.
 Regular Meeting
 By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only

Finance Advisory Committee

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m.
 By Teleconference Only



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Appeal of memory care facility raises doubts; proceedings continued to January



Considerable risks with traffic/blind curve illustrated in appeal presentation.

By Sora O'Doherty

Following an almost five-hour hearing on Nov. 17 and citing a lack of sufficient information to rule on the appeal of the approval of the memory care facility planned for 1 Wilder Road, the Orinda City Council requested that more research be conducted by staff into the legal issues raised by the appellant, and continued the hearing to Jan. 19.

The appeal has been brought by the Wilder Owners Association, represented by attorney Shona Armstrong, who gave a PowerPoint presentation to the council during the meeting, which was conducted on Zoom. Many residents of Wilder also addressed the council, expressing near universal objections to the proposed project. Although many residents of Orinda attended the planning commission meeting to support the facility, no one spoke in favor of the proposal on appeal.

The planning commission on July 14 approved the Countryhouse Memory Care project, which consists of 38 assisted living units in a one- to two-story, 32,084-square-foot congregate care facility. The project is proposed to be built

on a one-acre site at 1 Wilder Road, located between Highway 24 and the Wilder Subdivision. The project would be built by Agemark, of which one of the co-founders is Richard Weston, a longtime Orinda resident who has served on the Orinda Planning Commission and was named Orinda Citizen of the Year in 2012.

Several members of the Wilder Owners Association spoke in opposition to the project, stating that a survey of Wilder residents showed that 95% oppose the proposed development. Armstrong confirmed that more Wilder homeowners voted on this issue than on any previous HOA election. Many Wilder residents argued that the project would present traffic hazards, would endanger Wilder residents in the event of an emergency evacuation, and would unfairly benefit from the extra taxes paid by Wilder residents in accordance with the Development Agreement negotiated between the city of Orinda and the Wilder developers.

Emotions ran high at the hearing. Eric Egan complained that Wilder residents were being treated badly and their concerns are being

scoffed at while there is "special treatment of good old boys."

"If you don't grant this appeal," he said, "it will be considered pure corruption."

Kathy Finch said Wilder residents feel "beleaguered and unheard by the city." Several speakers reported that the proposed development is larger than the three biggest buildings at Wilder put together, the Art & Garden Center, the Quarry House and the Ranch House, and is approximately the size of Orinda Safeway.

One of the main objections to the project, as set forth in the appeal, is that there is a conflict between state and local law. Under the Orinda municipal code, the area is zoned PS, for public, semi-public and utility district developments. PS zoning allows congregate care facilities with a use permit. The definition of congregate care facility requires that each unit include a kitchen. State law, however, prohibits kitchens in housing for dementia patients and housing dementia patients is the sole purpose of the memory care facility. The developer, with the approval of the planning commission, argues that it is not in breach

of either law because each unit will contain a kitchen, but the kitchen will be locked, inaccessible to the resident and only accessible to staff and guests. However, the appellant points out that the Orinda law specifically defines congregate care housing as "small individual dwelling units ... with a small kitchen allowing for independent living." The appellant argues that the project, as approved, is inconsistent with PS zoning and/or the California Building Code and/or the California Code of Regulations.

Another point raised by the appellant that the city council considered warranted clarification is whether or not the property benefits from the Orinda geologic hazard abatement district (Orinda GHAD) or infrastructure that was developed to serve the Wilder project and that is funded by a Community Facilities District (CFD). Armstrong argued that allowing 1 Wilder to "piggy-back on Wilder's CFD and GHAD infrastructure jeopardizes the validity of the GHAD and CFD assessment authority." In Armstrong's presentation she pointed out that there is considerable magnitude of risk as there remains \$21 million outstanding on the bonds, which requires nearly \$33 million total debt service over the next 17 years.

Armstrong also maintained that the development is not a benefit to Orinda residents, but could provide some of the wealthiest residents of the entire Bay Area with luxury class services at \$12,000 a month, while not helping satisfy Orinda's requirement for affordable regional housing. The attorney and the Wilder residents present at the meeting offered a plethora of reasons why the city council should grant the appellant's appeal and disallow the project. The matter will be taken up by the council again in January, and a full hearing will be allowed.

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LAMORINDA FLOORS

Orinda garbage rates to increase by nearly 7%

By Sora O'Doherty

An increase in fees for garbage collection for Orinda residents will include an increase to the vehicle impact/street maintenance component charged by Orinda to RecycleSmart, which is passed on to rate payers. The proposed increase in Vehicle Impact Fees will increase annual pavement maintenance funding available by an estimated \$117,882 to maintain public streets.

The fee for garbage collection will impact rate-payers differently depending on the size of the containers they use, but will range from about \$3 to \$6.46 per month, with the majority of rate-payers at the lower end of the increase. For those with a 20-gallon trash container, the rates will increase from \$44.67 to \$47.69 per month, and for those with a 32-gallon container, the rate will

go up from \$51.05 to \$54.50 per month. The large majority of Orinda residents use those two sized containers. For the few who do use a 64-gallon container, the rate will go up \$6.46, from \$95.77 per month to \$102.23. Commercial rates will also increase by about \$40 to \$60 per month.

The rate increase is for trash collection; there is no additional charge for recycling pickup, although it is the recycling portion of the collection that accounts for the increase, according to the city council. This began in 2019 when China stopped receiving recycling materials from the United States and, as a result, local governments stopped receiving income from the sale of recycling.

In public comments on the proposed fee hike, Charles Porges complained, "The most important issues are always the last on the agenda." He explained his

position: "All of these funds are for public road maintenance. This is again hitting private road residents with a fee that they will get no benefit from." He urged the city council to take steps to address the inequity and allow private roads to become public. Porges asked the council, "What are you going to do?" Porges said that he has provided the council with a letter outlining the steps he believes are necessary, beginning with a study of private road conditions. The private roads supporter said he was very disappointed, after having given the council seven action items. Mayor Darlene Gee responded that she realized this is an important issue to Porges and many others and that the council is looking at its upcoming agendas.

If the charges are approved by the Joint Powers Authority, the rate increase will take effect in March 2021.



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OUSD and City Council adopt joint proclamation on diversity, equity and inclusion

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda's city council and its school board have adopted a joint proclamation on diversity, equity and inclusion as part of their efforts to cooperate on substantive initiatives and action to further these values. Orinda Mayor Darlene Gee and Council Member Inga Miller attended the Orinda Union School District meeting and OUSD Board Member Liz Daoust and Superintendent Carolyn Seaton attended the city council meeting. Daoust said that she personally so cherishes the

collaboration between the city council and the school board, and said the more we can do together, the better. Seaton spoke of the Joint Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Action, and emphasized that words are important, but action has to follow.

The joint proclamation resolves that the city of Orinda and the school board reaffirm their shared values of compassion, equity, inclusion and diversity, and their commitment to action to build a world in which everyone is valued and understood. They vowed to work to expand anti-bias training for elected offi-

cial, staff and the community. The joint proclamation also adopted the pledge previously signed by stakeholders in the OUSD as a part of the continued commitment to build awareness and increase tolerance. The pledge sets forth ways to include others and empower "myself and others" to stand up against hate. Some of the elements of this pledge include creating an accepting community and engaging in conversations to recognize and address bias, racism, and all forms of intolerance. In addition, the pledge includes protecting others from prejudice and

discrimination, objecting when someone is being bullied, and respecting and embracing everyone for who they are.

Recent city council candidate Latika Malkani said that she was really glad to see the city working with the school board on a series of town halls. She added, "I think that a lot of us would like the opportunity to work together and be involved in these meetings." Malkani is active in the Miramonte Parents Group.

Miller thanked the mayor for all her work with the OUSD, and for bringing the

proclamation to the city council. Council Member Amy Worth said, "We need to do this as a community for our children," and called for a whole community conversation. "We really want input from the public," she said. "Our engagement can really be strengthened by more input." She recalled a public rally last spring when all ages came together in a really heartfelt way following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Following a unanimous vote by both boards, Gee said she was very, very happy.

Orinda residents seem willing to trade off taller buildings for community benefits

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda city council and planning commission held a joint meeting Nov. 19 to host a well-attended workshop on downtown character areas as part of the continuing effort to

develop a downtown precise plan. The city's two consultants, Optics, working on the objective design standards, and Economic & Planning Systems, Inc., working on the economic feasibility study, gave presentations, after which the workshop was broken down

into breakout groups for discussion. Each group was attended by a member of the city council or the planning commission as well as having someone taking notes. When the workshop reconvened, reports of the breakout groups were given, and there was fur-

ther discussion, questions and comments by the civil groups and the public.

Optics principal Stefan Pellegrini focused on how buildings could be taller but not create a Manhattan canyon effect, which many on the council and in the public dis-

liked. The presentation, which is available online to the public, included many graphics illustrating set-backs from the street, building step backs in higher floors, plazas and courtyards.

... continued on Page A8

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To checkmate the 2021 fire season, ConFire beefs up apparatus fleet



Photo provided

Two more of these Type III wildland engines are on their way to the district.

By Nick Marnell

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District board of directors Nov. 10 unanimously approved a \$1.6 million purchase of emergency

firefighting apparatus, adding extra power to the district fleet to tackle an expected challenging 2021 fire season. "This equipment is purposed for our high-risk wild-fire areas, like in northern Lafayette," district spokesman

Steve Hill said. Fire Chief Lewis Broschard explained the specific uses for each of the five new emergency response vehicles. The district's first ever emergency crew transport vehicle will be used to support the Fire Control Worker program, allowing for the transport of an entire 12-person crew to an incident instead of relying on multiple smaller vehicles. The apparatus purchase includes two Type III wildland fire engines, a typical wildland engine used by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and often seen on the highways running between incidents. Two Type V wildland engines are also coming to the district. "These are the smallest wildland fire engines available," Broschard said. "They are more nimble, they are easier to get around and

they carry a little bit less water." Once these new units arrive, the district apparatus fleet will include 14 Type III wildland engines and four Type V wildland engines. Though the district had not appropriated funds for this major capital purchase, ConFire has the money available thanks to various budgeting adjustments. The district did not fill vacant positions, delayed promotions and postponed non-critical building maintenance projects. In addition, the district

reduced planned expenditures in its non-capital equipment and supply budgets. Those savings will be used to fund the additional apparatus purchase. "Overall, our objective is to ramp up our efforts to combat longer and more challenging fire seasons," the chief said. As there is lag of up to one year for delivery of these vehicles, the district expects that the new apparatus should be ready for at least the second half of next year's fire season.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Wednesday, Dec. 16, 6 p.m. For meeting times and agendas, visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1:00 p.m. For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



Orinda residents seem willing to trade off taller buildings for community benefits



Image provided

... continued from Page A7

Optics identified seven character areas, four in the village area and three in the Theatre district that included both the Downtown Commercial (DC) and the Downtown Office (DO) zones. The concept of "character areas" is that different parts of Orinda's downtown are suitable for differing treatments, and that a more pleasing overall effect could be accomplished by not having just one standard for all of the downtown. When asked how much downtown residential development is needed to drive retail development in Orinda, Jason Moody, managing principal of EPS, said he was not optimistic that adding retail

square footage could drive the type of retail development that Orinda wants. There would not likely be sufficient residential development to change the fundamental dynamics, he said, adding that success would be affected by Orinda's small population and nearby competition from Lafayette and Walnut Creek, both easily within reach of Orinda residents. However, he said the Downtown Precise Plan has good bones and community attributes, and that success could come from innovative tenancing and "place-making." Much of the discussion centered on using the offer of more height in exchange for community benefits, which included design features such as plazas, or area improvements,

such as creek restoration. Although one speaker said that creek restoration is not a priority in Orinda, several other speakers expressed support for the idea of daylighting San Pablo Creek as it runs through downtown Orinda. In terms of mixed use developments that combine retail and residential use, horizontal mixed use seemed to garner more support than vertical mixed use, with commenters suggesting that they favored residential development behind a facade of retail developments. Several lots that stretch from, for example, Moraga Way to the creek, or Moraga Road to Camino Pablo were suggested as areas that could have retail facing the street and residential development behind. An increase in allowable building height from the current 35 feet or two and a half stories to potentially 55 feet or four or five stories was discussed. Council Member Nick Kosla urged that the limits not be defined specifically as to stories, as stories can vary within the same height limit. Council Member Inga Miller asked if it would be possible, for example, to go up to 55 feet from the bottom of the lot currently housing BevMo, or was it suggested that the corner of that lot at Moraga Way, cur-

rently occupied by CVS go up to 55 feet. Pellegrini explained that they are not making a hard recommendation at this time, but that frontage along Brookwood would be appropriate for taller buildings. Pellegrini also said that three-to four-story buildings would not severely impact views, but that the council could consider extra height being allowed where some community benefit is provided by the developer. The EPS consultant also pointed out that most of the lots in Orinda already have existing development that provides a revenue stream for owners. "As a rule of thumb," he said, "a FAR (floor area ratio) below 0.5 indicates that a property is under-utilized and ripe for redevelopment." There are many such properties in downtown Orinda, he added, and other than the senior housing built in 2014, the last new buildings in Orinda were built in 1989, over 30 years ago. The city's current limits of 2.5 stories and 10 units per acre are probably a major hurdle to development, he concluded. The EPS presentation also focused on the economics of

parking, which he said can make or break a project. While most commenters favored wider sidewalks that could accommodate outdoor dining, for example, Moody noted this could come at the expense of parking. He added that Orinda does not offer an in lieu option for residential development. Paul Ugenti, the developer of the planned new development at 25A Orinda Way, The Station, commented that the only effective way to develop retail is to have housing. He said that parcels in downtown Orinda are very large and there are very few owners in town. He said he is excited about higher density and suggested developments that drive more daytime traffic, more restaurants, and more housing for those who want to downsize or for first-time owners. Local developer Bruce Burrows said that he is not a fan of mixed use, but likes the idea of housing in downtown Orinda. He agreed that retail success is more likely to come from innovative tenancing and creative retail marketing, with room for residential behind retail.

Both presentations from the workshop can be viewed at <https://cityforinda.box.com/v/CharacterAreaWorkshopPPT>

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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@cityforinda.org
Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 1 - Nov. 14
Alarms 32
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 15
Traffic 70
Suspicious Circumstances 9
Suspicious Subject 20
Suspicious Vehicle 8
Service to Citizen 48
Patrol Req./Security Check 46
Public/School Assembly Check 3
Supplemental Report 31
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 12
Ordinance Violation 1
Vehicle violations
Auto Burglary 800 Block Rosedale Ave. 1000 Block Dolores Dr. 1000 Block Via Roble 1000 Block N Thompson Rd. 1100 Block Sierra Vista Way (2)
Hit And Run Felony 3100 Block Camino Diablo
Hit And Run Misdemeanor 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Reliez Valley Rd./Almaden Ct.

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Petty Theft From Vehicle 3500 Block Hamlin Rd.
Reckless Driving Wb Sr 24 At Pleasant Hill Rd. Mt. Diablo Blvd./Acalanes Rd. Moraga Rd./Brook St. Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. St Marys Rd./Moraga Rd. Sweet Dr./Carlyle Terrace
Vehicle Theft 800 Block Santa Maria Way
Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses 1300 Block Sunset Loop
Grand Theft 3100 Block Camino Colorados
Grand Theft Veh Parts 3300 Block Sweet Dr.
Identity Theft Police Department (2)
Petty Theft Deer Hill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 1000 Block Dewing Ave. Police Department
Petty Theft Bicycle 100 Block Lafayette Cir.
Petty Theft From Building 100 Block Lafayette Cir.
Residential Burglary 1500 Block Rancho View Dr. 3400 Block Monroe Ave.
Shoplift 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (5) 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic 1000 Block Dewing Ave.
Disturbance-fight Round Up Lounge
Disturbing The Peace El Curtola Blvd./Wb Sr 24 3700 Block Mosswood Dr. El Curtola Blvd./Saranap Ave. El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24
Loud Music 3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Loud Noise 3300 Block Moraga Blvd. El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24
Loud Party 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct. 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct.
Public Nuisance 3400 Block Golden Gate Way 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
Vandalism 1300 Block Reliez Valley Rd.
Other
Brandishing Weapon

Dewing Ave./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Petty Theft From Veh 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
K9 Outside Assist Request Eb Sr 24 At St Stephens Dr., Ori
Trespass 2Nd St/Golden Gate Way 500 Block Mchride Dr. 900 Block 2Nd St. Deer Hill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 3800 Block Palo Alto Dr. 3600 Block Deer Hill Rd.
Unwanted Guest Lafayette Cemetary
Violation Custody Order Police Department 1200 Block Warner Ct. (2)
Violation Restraining Ord 600 Block Sweet Ct. 3700 Block Highland Ct.
Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 3 - Nov. 16
Alarms 13
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 9
Traffic 39
Suspicious Circumstances 8
Suspicious Subject 0
Suspicious Vehicle 1
Service to Citizen 36
Patrol Req./Security Check 14
Supplemental Report 9
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 8
Ordinance Violation 0
Vehicle violations
Dui Misd Moraga Rd./Via Granada Moraga Way
Excessive Speed Moraga Rd./Commons Park Moraga Rd./Buckingham Dr. Moraga Rd./Woodford Dr. St. Marys Rd./Stafford Dr. Moraga Way/Eastwood Dr., Ori Moraga Way/Camino Ricardo St. Andrews Dr./Augusta Dr. Moraga Way/Ivy Dr. (3) Moraga Way/Miramonte Dr. Moraga Way/Moraga Valley Ln. (2)
Moraga Way/Coral Ascot Dr./Moraga Rd. Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr.

Petty Theft From Veh Not Available
Reckless Driving Moraga Rd./Corte Santa Clara Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd. Rimer Dr./Camino Pablo Moraga Rd./St. Marys Rd.
Tc - Property Damage Safeway
Traffic Hazard Calle La Montana/Corte Aires
Vehicle Theft 20 Block La Salle Dr. Valle Vista Staging Area Ebrp.
Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses 50 Block Laird Dr. 20 Block Hetfield Pl.
Identity Theft 10 Block Carey Ct. 1000 Block Sanders Dr.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic 600 Block Carroll Dr.
Loud Music 1900 Block Ascot Dr. 90 Block Miramonte Dr. (2)
Loud Noise Not Available
Loud Party 2000 Block Ascot Dr. Donald Dr./Fernwood Dr.
Public Nuisance Fire Station 42
Other
Fireworks 1100 Block Rimer Dr. 1600 Block School St.
Harassment Post Office
Probation Home Search 200 Block Corliss Dr.
Trespass Donald Pl./Donald Dr.
Violation Restraining Order 50 Block Miramonte Dr.

ORINDA POLICE
Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 8 - Nov. 14
Alarms 18
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 4
Traffic 2
Suspicious Circumstances 0
Suspicious Subject 0
Suspicious Vehicle 5
Service to Citizen 33
Patrol Req./Security Check 45
Public/School Assembly Check 3
Supplemental Report 2
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 2
Ordinance Violation 0
Vehicle violations
Accident Property 400 Block Moraga Way 10 Block Cedar Ln.
Auto Burglary El Nido Ranch Rd./St. Stephens Cir.
Petty Theft From Vehicle 10 Block Paintbrush Ln.
Reckless Driving Camino Pablo/El Toyonal
Tc - Property Damage Monte Vista Rd./Camino Pablo San Pablo Reservoir Rec Area
Traffic Hazard 100 Block Camino Sobrante Rheem Blvd./Zander Dr.
Other criminal activity
Petty Theft CVS
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic Country Club Plaza/Orinda Way
Loud Music Tiger Tail Ct./Gardiner Ct.
Public Nuisance 10 Block Moraga Way
Vandalism 10 Block Harran Cir.
Other
CCovid19 Violation 10 Block Martha Rd.
Trespass Orinda Country Club

Local schools shelve plans for return to campus as county moves back to purple tier

By Sora O'Doherty and Sophie Braccini

All four local school districts – Orinda Union, Lafayette, Moraga and the Acalanes Union High School District – had been about to launch a limited return to school when Contra Costa County announced that the county would return to the purple tier of COVID-19 risk Nov. 17. Some schools that had already returned to the classroom, such as St. Perpetua in Lafayette, are allowed to remain open, but any schools that had not yet returned are now prohibited from doing so until the county's level of illness permits a return to the red tier designation.

AUHSD Superintendent John Nickerson drew the

board's attention at its Nov. 18 meeting to the fact that Lamorinda and Walnut Creek were not immune to the new uptake in cases at this time and pleaded for the community to "do the right thing," limiting social contacts and large gatherings, and always wearing a mask.

The AUHSD board decided to reopen as soon as the county returns to the red tier for two consecutive weeks, and no earlier than Jan. 5. Like his colleagues in the other Lamorinda districts, Nickerson explained to his governing board that since the county had now exceeded the thresholds of the red tier (more than 7 daily new cases per 100,000 and more than 8% positivity among people tested for COVID-19), the county health authority pre-

cluded school districts that had not yet reopened to wait until the figures got consistently better.

In the meantime, AUHSD staff continues to prepare the schools for a hybrid teaching model starting at the beginning of the second semester. The school site and classroom safety protocols and procedures are being finalized, while training will be provided to staff and students prior to the return to school. Parents are going to be asked to make a declaration, by Dec. 2, indicating if their student(s) will participate in the hybrid model alternating with on campus and at-home instruction, or will continue with remote instruction five days a week when schools reopen.

Online parents' forums will be organized by the dis-

trict and each of the schools before Dec. 2 to answer questions. Staff also perfected the hybrid educational model to maximize the contacts with the teachers. For example, both cohorts of the same class, students at home or at school, will start each teaching period together. How long they remain together and how the teaching is structured will depend on the teacher and the subject matter. When teachers are immuno-compromised and have to stay away from school, they will continue to teach their classes while substitutes will assist with in-class instruction.

As cooler and rainier weather becomes more prevalent, the return to the purple tier will also restrict to "outdoors only" worship ser-

vices, movie theaters, museums and exhibit spaces, as well as institutions of higher education, which may only hold lectures and student gatherings outdoors.

Despite rising numbers, Lamorinda remains at comparatively low levels. As of Nov. 23, Lafayette stood at 228 total cases, with 38 new cases in the past fortnight; Orinda had 170 total cases, with 19 new cases in the past fortnight, and Moraga had only 99 total cases and just 7 new cases in the past fortnight. This compares with much higher numbers in the county, such as Richmond with 4,149 total cases and 341 in the past fortnight, or Antioch with 3,005 total cases, and 303 cases in the past fortnight.

Letters to the editor

Have emergency lights at the ready

The latest bill from PG&E reminds us that we should have emergency lights at the ready because "severe weather can cause unexpected power outages." Moragans can find an extensive collection of flashlights at Moraga Hardware. The products available today are much better than those we had in the past, and the variety is remarkable. Particularly impressive is the amount of light that even very small flashlights generate. I did some of my Christmas shopping there recently while my wife was doing the same in Across the Way. It's good to have these quality retail stores so handy. Let's help them survive.

Dale Walwark
Moraga

Reopening schools

I just wanted to respond to the topic of schools reopening and to voice my opinion on the article. I am a ninth-grader, and I go to De La Salle High School in Concord. We are already doing a hybrid model at this school, with half of the students going on Monday and Tuesday, and the other half going on Thursday and Friday. While it doesn't have the same feeling as starting school before COVID-19, it's nice to finally meet some of the people who share the same classes as me and to make new friends.

I believe that schools should not reopen at full capacity and I support the notion to try safely and slowly to open up the rest of the schools in Contra Costa County and hopefully the rest of the country as well. The threat of an infection hangs over everyone like an impending storm, but with the right planning and safety measures like they have at De La Salle, the spread of Covid-19 can be avoided, while students get some in-person learning too.

Thank for editing the Lafayette Weekly and helping me and other students all have a little bit more hope of returning back to school.

Milan Reimer
Lafayette

Do not reopen classes in Orinda

Covid is back. In the past month new daily cases have doubled in Contra Costa from 5 per 100,000 to 10. Contra Costa is leading the Bay Area in new cases. Well below July's peak of 20 but heading in the wrong direction. This is a world apart from the worst places in the nation (170 per 100,000 in North Dakota), but that should not be our benchmark.

The Weekly reports on Orinda's plan to phase in class re-openings. This is the wrong plan at this time. I understand that staying

home and distance learning is hard on kids and families. My daughter is a third grade teacher and she says this is the toughest year of her career. But to open one more vector of infection, and a huge one at that, is beyond irresponsible. The virus does not consider California or Orinda as exceptional. It is an equal opportunity destroyer. Maybe rich people do not die from it as frequently as the less fortunate, but its long term effects are both unknown and frightening. It's not worth the risk.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Our community

To find meaningful solutions to our problems of inequality or injustice we must discard our emotions and think critically. The following facts and questions should not anticipate answers - they should solicit thought for open dialogue to a better way and recognize how far we've come.

- We have a black mayor.
- America didn't create slavery, it abolished it. Within the first ten years slavery was abolished in most northern states - it took another 80 years and a civil war to finally rid ourselves of that evil completely.
- Implicit bias is not scientific fact. Social scientists have not proven that the Implicit Association Test measures unconscious racism and have failed to rule out alternative explanations. Real scientific debate exists; it's not proven. How does this fact affect the theory of institutional racism?

- What about the family unit? Eighty percent of young black men are fatherless. In fact, President Obama had the facts when he stated, "children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of schools and 20 times more likely to end up in prison."
- What about making good choices? According to the Brookings Institute by doing three things only about 2% of people remain in poverty and nearly 75% join the middle class. Finish high school, get a full-time job and wait until age 21 to get married and have children.

Is our world perfect? Absolutely not, but we must remember that we're all in this together and we've made significant progress.

I am not my color or my sex, and my sexual choices are no one's business. I grew up poor, made a life for myself and I hold my life accountable to God. I am an American; we all are. Let's stop dividing ourselves and solve our problems together with hope and understanding.

Jared L.
Lafayette

Flag display

The story about the commendable Rotary Club effort to foster the display of the American flag on Veterans Day deserves comment. Rotary and its members deserve commendation. However the article implies that Lafayette would not allow the American flag to be displayed in the plaza. "After consultation with the city attorney, the council advised her that the city would not permit it..." If true the city officials deserve the opposite of a commendation. I like many others served and in combat. I am appalled that for any reason an American city would refuse a request, let alone a request from a reputable service group, to display the American Flag on Veterans Day. To refuse out

of fear of the consequences is cowardly not prudent. Are we so afraid or ashamed of our national emblem that we won't defend it? The Marquis de Lafayette would turn

away from his namesake town.

David Gow
Moraga

Service Clubs Announcements



Zoom Meetings Every Friday at 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
<https://lamorindasunrise.org/speakers>

December Weekly Speakers

- 4: MyKayla Skinner and Sophia Serseri , Olympic Athletes
- 11: Tyler Schultz, Theranos Unraveled!
- 18: Skip McCowan and Avi Mylrea, Common Hope
- 25: No meeting

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Tania DeGroot
925.259.1380

I love to count my blessings this time of year, and they include friends who have worked with me and/or given me referrals—thanks so much! One common question sellers ask revolves around preparing a home for sale, especially now that the market is shifting. I'm happy to share my strategies and suggestions to help you make the best decisions, whether you are renovating to stay for a while or to move next year. Feel free to reach out any time!

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Court orders PG&E to wait on tree removal, for now

... continued from Page A3

"The CPSI doesn't make safety sense to us – tree root threat is neither specifically identified nor addressed and some supportive data is invalid, making us wary of other PG&E data provided to us and the CPUC," explains Gina Dawson, co-founder with her husband Michael of SLT. "We believe to best protect community safety, untested pipeline needs to be lawfully examined and this should take priority over a discretionary tree removal program founded on unspecific, unverified, and invalid data."

SLT's involvement which started in 2017 when removal of close to 272 trees was first proposed, led to the group's larger concerns about pipeline safety and led to the formation of the Gas Safety Task Force.

"Nothing is more important than the safety of our customers, employees and communities we serve," says PG&E Spokesperson Tamar Sarkissian. "As part of PG&E's Community Pipeline Safety Initiative, we identified 17

trees on East Bay Regional Park District property within the city of Lafayette that are located too close to the gas transmission pipeline and need to be removed for gas-related safety reasons."

Sarkissian says, "While we continue to believe it is important that we complete this necessary safety work, per the court ruling on Nov. 20, we will not proceed with this work at this time."

Michael Dawson says he is happy with the latest court order to halt proposed tree cutting in Lafayette.

"With PG&E's rush to cut Lafayette trees, they were not only breaching their agreement with the city, they were acting against the concern of residents who have highlighted many important community safety concerns," says Michael Dawson, adding, "No tree has caused a transmission pipeline accident, but PG&E may be stressing old welds with large tree weight displacement, and creating a corrosive underground environment by introducing many new dead tree roots."

Earlier in the year the GSTF requested a pipeline safety audit out of safety con-

cerns for the aging pipeline. The first week of the CPUC audit was in June with a second week scheduled for December. Gina Dawson says that they had hoped PG&E would postpone tree removal until after the CPUC audit.

"The CPUC audit would give us some assurance that PG&E is currently in compliance with safety laws or otherwise on track to do so," says Gina Dawson, noting that "The Alliance (a partnership of the city, PG&E, and the CPUC) was formed in hopes to rebuild community trust in PG&E safety priorities and integrity. Postponing tree removal in the spirit of the Alliance would have gone a long way."

The issue is unlikely to drag on too long. The judge expects PG&E to submit the required site plan and mitigation plan to the city and for the city council to conduct an expedited review of the plan.

According to a statement released by the city, "While there is no expiration on the preliminary injunction, the judge told PG&E that the utility could seek a hearing on an expedited basis if there were delays in the proceedings."

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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Miramonte student strives to 'create curiosity' through the lens



Miramonte High School junior Thomas Edwardson



Crab spider inside California Poppy, UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, Santa Cruz, CA



California Quail, Valle Vista, Moraga, CA

Photos provided

By Diane Claytor

It's often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. If someone wanted to use words to describe photographs taken by Miramonte High School junior Thomas Edwardson, "breathtaking," "beautiful," "awesome," and "unbelievable" would likely be the ones most frequently uttered.

The 17-year-old, who has only been a serious nature and wildlife photographer for approximately four years, has an incredible eye and true gift for capturing the ordinary in a unique and creative way.

Edwardson credits the movie "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" as the catalyst for his interest in photography. "There's this one scene in the movie," he remembers, "where there's a photographer waiting and waiting to get a shot of a snow leopard. He has all this amazing gear. But surprisingly, once the animal appeared, he didn't take the picture, saying that he just enjoyed the moment he shared in the presence of the beautiful animal." This resonated with Edwardson, who has long had a fascination for wildlife, nature and conservation. This may have started from the many nature shows he watched as a boy, or perhaps the weekends spent going to different zoos.

Borrowing his mother's

camera one day, Edwardson went for a walk and took his first nature photo: a picture of moss. That was the beginning of his journey. Photos of flowers, leaves, bugs, birds, plants and animals followed. He put together his first book of beautiful photos, "Fragile Beauty," filled with pictures of living things found in nature.

He studied on his own, learning about the camera, techniques, lighting and the surrounding ecosystem. He took classes and workshops. "I really want to give credit to one man in particular," Edwardson states, "National Geographic photographer Frans Lanting," who served as the publication's photographer-in-residence and whose incredible nature photos have been featured in numerous publications. Lanting, based in Santa Cruz, holds regular workshops for small groups of photographers, most of whom are professionals. Edwardson, who calls Lanting his mentor, says "getting to work with him has been amazing. He has been my inspiration."

Edwardson likes to take pictures from different, but revealing, perspectives. "I want to create curiosity. I like to get up close to something to show its true beauty because I don't think most people typically look hard enough for that," he explains.

... continued on Page B5



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The perfect breakfast muffin to follow a filling Thanksgiving feast



Homemade Cinnamon Raisin English Muffins Photo Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

I was looking for bread recipes when I stumbled upon this great recipe for English muffins on Valerie's Kitchen cooking blog. It sounded like such a fun thing to do and so I went straight to it! They were delicious and the only thing I could think of to improve the recipe was to add raisins and cinnamon to her plain English muffins for a different kind of breakfast treat. The result was amazing and I think that you could probably add dried blue-

berries, cranberries, or whatever dried fruit you like to create your own version.

Made with yeast dough, these English muffins need to rise twice, and they also have two baking sessions. The first baking actually takes place on the griddle on top of the stove and then they're finished off in the oven. It's so much fun to see this soft, sticky dough come together as a batch of English muffins. They are super crispy and delicious and you can add just a hint of butter or your favorite jam for the perfect breakfast!

For Valerie's recipe:

www.fromvaleriskitchen.com/homemade-english-muffin

Homemade Cinnamon Raisin English Muffins

(Makes 16 English muffins)

INGREDIENTS

5 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
4 1/2 teaspoons granulated sugar
4 1/4 teaspoons yeast
2 3/4 cups warm water (about 110 F)
1 cup raisins
1 cup boiling water (for reconstituting raisins)

DIRECTIONS

Place raisins in a small bowl. Pour about one cup of boiling water over raisins. Allow to sit for about 20 minutes to soften and reconstitute raisins. When cool, squeeze the liquid from the raisins and discard the liquid. This process allows the raisins to stay nice and plump during the baking.

Mix flour, salt, cinnamon, sugar, yeast and raisins in a large mixing bowl. Blend with a whisk. Using a wooden spoon, slowly add water and mix until all of the dries are moist and there are no dry pockets of flour. The dough will be quite sticky at this point.

Keep dough in the mixing bowl and cover with a damp cloth. Place in a warm, draft-free spot in the house, (not in a heated oven) and allow to sit until double in size. This will take about one hour.

While the dough is rising, line two baking sheets with parchment and sprinkle them generously with corn meal.

When the dough has doubled in volume, divide it into 16 evenly sized balls. You will need to spray your hands with cooking spray or rub them with oil to keep them from sticking while you form the individual English muffins.

Form each muffin into a round and place them on the trays. Tuck in the edges as necessary to keep them round in shape. Flatten the dough slightly to be about 1/2-inch thick. Sprinkle the tops of the muffins with a little more corn meal.

Again, place the trays in a warm, draft-free place and allow to rise for another 20-25 minutes, until puffy.

Preheat oven to 375 F.

Preheat a cast-iron griddle on the stove over medium high heat. Spray the griddle with cooking spray and with a spatula transfer the muffins from the baking sheet to the griddle and cook until slightly browned. Flip and repeat. Once the muffins are browned, transfer them back to the baking sheet and bake in the oven for another 5 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from oven.

If you're ready to eat the English muffins right away, fork split them and toast them in the toaster or toaster oven. By fork splitting, I mean take a dinner fork and poke towards the center of the muffin all the way around. This will allow you to split them in half and it also yields a nice nubby surface with nooks and crannies that will be perfect to receive butter, peanut butter or jam.

Store unused muffins in a Ziploc baggie or a plastic container in the refrigerator until ready to use. Or, you can freeze them for several weeks, too.



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>

Mother was sweet and now she is angry

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson

"Since my mother has shown signs of dementia, now confirmed as Alzheimer's, she seems to get angry all the time."

"Dad seems to be blaming me for everything that he can't remember and has a tendency to wander off if he is upset."

Family caregiving does not come with a manual; it is often by trial and error that primary caretakers learn what is upsetting the individual with a dementia to cause that person's reaction in an angry or hostile manner. Sometimes, it takes a lot of detective work trying to find the "trigger" to a behavior.

This anger can be expressed by shouting, screaming, pacing, wandering or striking out if someone is trying to restrain them. This type of behavior is difficult to understand and in order to find solutions, it takes some sensitivity and exploration. Understanding more about the individual with the dementia will help family and preserve the dignity of the individual, reducing stress for everyone.

Those with dementia aren't intentionally being dif-

ficult. It is more about the process of the illness and how it affects the ability to communicate thoughts and feelings. As dementia progresses, both receptive and expressive language skills decline. So, the result is that they don't understand what you are saying and they don't have the skills to find words for their feelings, which results in frustration and anger toward you.

In a recent support group session I did on Zoom, a couple attended, one with dementia and the other the caregiver. The individual with dementia had been in the health field as a professional. However, she was at least six years into the dementia journey. She heard a name spoken that was the same as a deceased relative (it was only the name of a participant) and she heard participants talk about caring for their mothers as well as spousal members talk about the burdens of caregiving. After the session, the caregiver said that the spouse was grieving the loss of the person's name she heard as if it was her family member all over again. She was also fearful she would lose her spouse, and wanted to go care for her mother who had died many years before.

You can see from this example that "triggers" to behaviors can come from the environment: situations in which they don't understand the conversations that may be outside their own experiences. This reaction should inform the family that they as much as possible will need to protect this person from situations that can cause triggers for her to want to be a helper, and those that cause her to feel sad because she thinks she is a burden.

Some tips to avoid negative/angry outbursts:

1) **Environment:** Be consistent with a routine. Do activities of daily living the same time every day. If you bring in a new item or person to the routine, expect some type of behavior change and reassure the person with dementia that they are safe. Physical changes like heat or cold can cause negative reactions such as is being hungry, thirsty or needing to use the bathroom and not being able to communicate that to you.

2) **Rationalizing:** Make your explanations simple. Don't give lots of information that could be hard for the individual to understand. For example, if you are needing to leave for an appointment, say something like, "We need to

leave early today because of traffic on the roads." Don't go into detail about why you need to get to an appointment early - make up a simple story that is easy to understand.

3) **Refusing:** This is more about confusion. So, when asking the person to do something, like eat breakfast, be sure to use a calm voice and not push. Instead of using the word breakfast, use the name of food you are serving, such as, "Your oatmeal is ready." Go away if that doesn't work and come back with a different soft approach.

Mood swings become more prevalent as the disease progresses. Each individual might have different triggers, so avoiding those will help you care for your family member longer and with less stress. Sometimes it can be a mystery for family to see what might be a "trigger." When this is the case I recommend working with a Professional Geriatric Care Manager and/or attending support groups and classes offered in your community or through the local Alzheimer's Association.

We have a team of four highly experienced Care Managers at Home Care Assistance, a monthly Zoom support group, and I offer a variety of classes. On Jan. 8 at 11

a.m., I will be doing a Zoom class specifically on "The Road Map from Diagnosis to Family Care." These support groups and classes are free and educational. Please give our office a call at (925) 937-2018 or email me at LFJohnson@HomeCareAssistance.com.

Get your "Flu Shot" and continue to social distance, wear masks and wash those hands.



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989. Eldercare Services is now a division of Home Care Assistance and continues to provide Bay Area families with care management, advocacy, counseling, support groups and education.

Battling cancer, stroke for stroke



Photo provided

David Miller at the Soda Aquatic Center in Moraga.

By Jon Kingdon

Hellen Keller once said, "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all." It's a phi-

losophy that David Miller has taken to heart.

A Buffalo, New York native and graduate from the University of Michigan, Miller

worked in the health and fitness industry for 25 years doing everything from sales and marketing to club design, management and consulting. Miller originally came to California in 1986, lived briefly in San Diego before moving to Stockton, working for Abbott Laboratories. Miller then went on to work in Paris, Nairobi and Mexico City before returning to Orinda in 2013 and eventually settling in Montclair.

When Miller turned 50, his original idea was to do 50 triathlons in 50 weeks but the schedule could not be worked out. It was his sense of wanderlust that sent him off on a bicycle trek through all 50 states. So as not to be lonely, he brought along his pet weimaraner, Max. "My attitude was that I had to do something challenging. Max and I were like a little train going down the highway," said Miller. I had a mountain bike outfit with road tires. I was pulling Max in a dog carriage with a second trailer carriage carrying all my gear."

After this odyssey, Miller returned home and took on a number of jobs: "I've been tutoring French and Spanish, doing some translation work, working at a tennis club and as a lifeguard at the Campolindo High School's Soda Aquatic Center."

While working at the pool, Miller met a senior swimmer named Steve Steward, an avid daily swimmer who, on his own, committed to and completed a mission to swim 750,000 yards in one year. It was Steward's accomplishment that struck a chord for Miller, who set a goal for himself to swim a million yards the following year. However, for Miller, there had to be purpose to undertake such an effort.

That purpose was to raise funds for the Cancer Research Institute, which focuses on immunotherapy in the treatment of cancer. "As I was looking to start this project, I knew that the fight against cancer had to be the focal point," said Miller, whose father passed away from cancer,

sister had a bout of cancer, and mother had three bouts of cancer - and the list goes on and on with other friends and family.

No matter how you look at it, a million is a big number and even bigger when you attach yards to it. Add in further roadblocks with the temporary closure of the pool, the coronavirus and the poor air quality due to the fires in the area and it became that much more of a challenge for Miller.

Since January Miller has been swimming laps 22 to 24 days a month for about 1 1/2 hours each day. Each length of the pool is 25 yards and he swims each length 160 times for a total of 4,000 yards a day. Fortunately for Miller, he has the ability to stay on track and not lose count of his laps: "This is my meditation as I watch the pace clock and I count my laps."

Though he began swimming Jan. 1, Miller's intention was to begin his fundraising campaign a couple of months later:

... continued on Page B5

Rotary Clubs unite to present big payday for local food bank



Photo provided

One of two \$25,000 checks jointly presented to the Food Bank by two Rotary clubs – Lamorinda Sunrise and Clayton Valley Concord. From left: Joel Sjostrom, president and CEO of Food Bank Contra Costa and Solano Counties; Jovi Comfort, 5; Vicki Sexton, president of Clayton Valley Concord Rotary; Ellie Comfort, 9; and Michael Chapin, regional core account manager for Copart Auto Auctions. The auction house partners with the two Rotary clubs in processing vehicles for resale. The two girls are grandchildren of Sexton.

Submitted by Thomas Black

Two Rotary clubs – Lamorinda Sunrise and Clayton Valley-Concord Sunrise – have stepped up to the plate by donating a total of \$50,000 to the Food Bank of Contra Costa Counties.

The money derived from a novel fundraising initiative in which the two clubs participate, called Cars2nd-Chance, recycles privately donated motor vehicles by reconditioning them and reselling them to the public. Begun in 2008, C2C has generated to date a remarkable \$1,203,924 in gross revenue, or approximately \$100,000 per year. (Although all proceeds are currently earmarked for the Food Bank, there are other beneficiaries.)

Dave Kemnitz, credited with launching the initiative 12 years ago, rehabs vehicles as needed at his auto repair shop, D&H Enterprises, in Concord.

The \$50,000 Rotary donation came in the form of two giant-sized checks of \$25,000 each. A show-and-tell photo op surrounded each presentation.

Cars2ndChance accepts for dona-

tion any motor vehicle – automobile, truck, RV, motorcycle, watercraft – that has a title. It need not be in running condition, although “more warmly welcomed,” said Kemnitz, if it is. “We plan to keep C2C running till the cows come home,” he added.

Vehicles may be donated via the website – www.cars2ndchance.com or by phoning (925) 326-5868. Donations are tax deductible as provided by law.

Because of the coronavirus and the consequent spike in unemployment, the Food Bank is experiencing unprecedented demand. According to Joel Sjostrom, president and CEO, the demand has increased by 65% in recent months. “A year ago we were feeding about 178,000 needy people in the two counties. Today it is up to 230,000 and counting,” he said.

Every dollar donated equates to two meals. The \$50,000 donated by the Rotary clubs will feed 100,000 mouths. In addition to dollar donations, the Food Bank is looking for volunteers. To volunteer, call (925) 676-7543 or visit www.foodbankccs.org. Measures are in place to ensure the safety of volunteers.

Moraga Rotary completes ‘Peaceful Community Center’ in Sierra Leone, Africa



Photo provided

Submitted by Gary Irwin

The “Peaceful Community Center” in Makeni, Sierra Leone, Africa, begun in 2018, has been successfully completed. Moraga Rotary Chairwoman and Past President Dianne Wilson states that the project, once conceived as an orphanage for children of Ebola victims, expanded into a two-building community center complex costing \$140,000. This center is managed by Jacob & Tess Conteh, prominent citizens of Makeni and operators of the private International School, which orphans attend. This center will provide the 2000-plus area residents increased learning and vocational opportunities. The opening of the center was attended by the Paramount Chief of the district, a Government Minister, and many NGO leaders.

The newly built Learning Center has programs which will include adult remedial education, science programs for girls, a women’s small business

project, and a facilities management apprentice program. An existing western-style home is also on the property with a full complement of furniture and furnishings. The home consists of a gathering room, three bathrooms, 11 beds, a kitchen and outdoor screened gazebo. The home will be used to house homeless children and families in transition. The property also has a garden, planted by students and staff, for agricultural science and to provide food for the home.

Moraga Rotary is a 53-year-old service club within Rotary International, one of the four clubs in Lamorinda, and one of about 33,000 Rotary Clubs in about 200 countries. Regular meetings are held 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.

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.

Strength in numbers, a town effort



Photo provided

From left: Jim O’Bryent, President Moraga Kiwanis, and John Haffner, Coordinator for Kiwanis project

Submitted by Linda U Foley

Never has it been more evident that there is strength in numbers as when the Moraga Garden Club, the town of Moraga and the Kiwanis of Moraga Valley came together to transform the pie-shaped island intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road, commonly referred to as the Triangle.

The Moraga Garden Club – celebrating its 50th year amidst the throws of a debilitating virus – is stronger and working harder than ever.

Darlene Haffner and Jessica Fleming combined their ideas to plan a long overdue facelift to the Triangle. While this area had been tended over the years by various Garden Club members, it began to lack a cohesive look, appearing overgrown and tangled.

Haffner approached the town with their brainchild and was rewarded not only with the necessary funds from the Moraga Parks and Recreation Foundation but also with physical labor to clear, remove and ultimately fill three dump trucks with vegetation debris. Haffner says, “The work of Kyle Salvin and Ruben Ochoa of the Public Works Department was simply invaluable. The earth was hard as rock.”

Fleming, a master gardener, put her expertise to work to come up with a viable plan for plantings that would not only be resilient but provide color throughout the seasons. Ever helpful Kenny Murakami, owner of the Moraga Garden Center, provided assistance and

stored the plants until the Triangle was properly prepared.

It took two full days of many hands to complete the plantings which could not have been carried out without the additional strength of several husbands including John Haffner, who motivated and coordinated fellow Kiwanians to participate.

Once plants become established, everyone will be able to enjoy the fruits of collaborative volunteerism.

In addition, the Garden Club has worked diligently to rejuvenate the four historic Country Club Drive urns (built in 1915), maintain a fifth urn in front of the Library and parts of the Commons, and develop a perennial garden at the Hacienda. Kudos to Julie Stagg, Carolyn Westhoff, Connie Coutts and Rena Munson – the respective chairs for each project. Ochoa and Salvin of the Public Works Department supplied much needed support for each.

Be sure to drive by and enjoy the solar lighting which encircle and enhance the CC Drive urns.

The volunteer collaboration will continue into next month when the Moraga Garden Club will again join forces with Kiwanis on Dec. 5 to plant additional daffodil bulbs for all residents to enjoy in the spring.

The Moraga Garden Club has continued to be active during these restrictive times. Nonetheless, we welcome new members. For more information, visit: www.moragagardenclub.com

Veterans honored in Moraga Nov. 11



Photo Melinda Davis

Honor guard presenting the colors: Andrew, Elizabeth, and James Davis under command of LTC Karl Davis, USA.

Submitted by Michael Metcalf

The morning on Nov. 11 was chilly and overcast. The air at the Moraga Commons at the Veterans Memorial was inviting for the small gathering of Moraga veterans and several others who assembled to honor our nation’s veterans. This was not the customary Veterans Day ceremony; public safety concerns arising due to the coronavirus pandemic necessitated changes to the proceedings. Karl Davis, retired Lt. Colonel, US Army Corps of Engineers and John Haffner, retired Captain, US Navy Supply Corps, and Michael Metcalf, former Lieutenant, US Navy Seabees, planned for an event of approximately 30 persons, spread out before the Veteran’s Memorial rock, which had been designed and constructed by Boy Scout Tony Knox as his Eagle Scout project in 2010. In the event, 40 persons participated, all wearing appropriate face masks and maintaining suitable distances from one another.

The brief ceremony began promptly at 1100 hours, with a call from LTC Davis for the bugler, Quinn Ricketts, to sound Assembly. The colors were trooped to the memorial by an honor guard comprising Elizabeth, Andrew, and James Davis. The Invocation was delivered by Capt. Tom

Marnane, retired US Navy. Capt. Haffner then recited important points of history of Veterans Day: Established as a national holiday in 1938, it was then known as Armistice Day. On that day, the Allied armies, including the United States, met with their German and Austrian foes and agreed to an armistice calling for peace and an end to the Great War (World War I). That was at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. The day was subsequently nominated “Veterans Day” by the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s, in order to cover World War II and the Korean War, and now the wars in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and in other parts of the world.

Capt. Haffner then introduced Michael Metcalf who delivered remarks entitled “The Power of Their Service,” in which he explained how the men and women of the armed forces – Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine – all serve their communities by applying themselves for the maintenance of our freedom through application of their talents and their efforts, and their sacrifices. It is to honor all the veterans that this ceremony was being conducted.

A closing prayer was offered by Chaplain David Peery, VFW Post 8063, followed by the bugler sounding “Taps.” With this the ceremony was closed.

Campo students trailblaze new pathways into nature



Submitted by
Laura Kindsvater

Save Mount Diablo is inventing new ways to connect young people to nature by keeping students safe as they get outdoors during the pandemic and learn together about the natural world. “Kids get it,” said Ted Clement, Executive Director of Save Mount Diablo. “They know how to adapt. So when we had to change the way we deliver our experiential Conservation Collaboration Agreement education program, they and their teachers took up the challenge and are making it work.”

Campolindo High School and Save Mount Diablo have successfully completed Conservation Collaboration Agreements (CCAs) before. In 2018 and 2019, Campolindo students took part in Save Mount Diablo’s traditional multi-day CCA program of classroom and outdoors learning experiences. Now, this year’s class of 150 AP Environmental Studies students is casting a new mold shaped to the demands of social distancing and, for now, shuttered classrooms.

They have a high standard to meet: Previous classes participating in the program seriously boosted their knowledge levels and intentions to spend more time outdoors. This is important because youth today “spend less time outside than prison inmates, with the average child playing freely outside for just four to seven minutes a day,” according to a 2017 report commissioned by REI Co-op, The Path Ahead. This report notes that the average American now spends about 95% of their life indoors. It further reports that we are becoming an “indoor species,” which comes with consequences: “Our health and well-being may suffer. And the less we value our outdoor spaces, the less likely we are to protect them.”

Each Conservation Collaboration Agreement has three basic parts, starting with an in-class presentation by SMD staff introducing students to

Mount Diablo land conservation. This year, to keep students safe, SMD gave a Zoom presentation instead.

For the second part of the agreement, students typically spend a full day outdoors. They go on an interpretive hike led by a trained naturalist and SMD staff, complete a nature service project such as planting native grasses, hear a local ecology lesson, and conclude with a solo writing exercise reflecting on their part in nature. But nature intervened with a surprise windstorm that made outdoor time on the planned day too dangerous.

Undaunted, everyone quickly pivoted to Plan B. Instead of the usual program, students were able to choose a project, do a contemplative solo, and complete both on their own in the outdoors near their homes. Save Mount Diablo provided guidelines and suggestions for projects.

Students’ projects ranged from gathering and planting acorns, to transforming trash into art, to cleaning out the gutters on a neighborhood street. The class described their solo experiences, and some shared their journal entries. One commented, “I went up on this hill behind my neighborhood. It was completely silent. It gave me a chance to think. ... My role in nature is to enjoy it but more importantly to protect it.”

Tren Kauzer, one of the participating Campolindo High School teachers, stated, “With distance learning, students have been spending countless hours in front of screens. By partnering with Save Mount Diablo, Campolindo AP Environmental Science students had the opportunity to experience a respite from screen time, a moment to quiet their minds and recharge in nature during these stressful times.”

In the final portion of the CCA program, designed to engage students in educational and participatory philanthropy, the class worked to raise funds to become members of SMD through SMD’s discounted youth membership program.

Giving during COVID-19 pandemic



Photo provided

From left: Lani Balinag, Sutter Armistead, Scott Linden, Amelia Asuncion

Submitted by **Bob Murtagh**

The Lamorinda Lions Club and the Campolindo High School Leo Club have teamed together to create Care Bags to help people in the community cope with the virus. Each Care Bag contains useful information on the many services offered in the county together with a message of encouragement and appreciation. Also in the

bag is a mask, sanitizer and treat. To date, over 500 Care Bags have been delivered to seniors, teachers, police officers and others on the front lines who are helping people deal with this deadly virus. Seventy Care Bags were presented to the 70 nurses and staff at Post Acute Care facility in Rheem on Oct. 27.

For more information about the Care Bag program, contact Lion Bob Murtagh at rmurtagh62@yahoo.com.

~ Season of Giving ~

Food pantry donations at MVPC

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church (MVPC) is seeking non-perishable food donations for its local food pantry that serves the Lamorinda Community. Please deliver peanut butter, tuna fish, beans, rice, pasta, canned fruit and vegetables, cereal, mac-n-cheese, or granola bars to the church office location at 10 Moraga Valley Road, Rooms 201-202, on the lower courtyard. The pantry is open from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. MVPC supports many local and international service organizations. Please visit the online market at: www.mvpctoday.org/mission-market/ to donate money or a gift in honor of a loved one. For more information, please contact: rbassett@mvpctoday.org

Cycle Recycle donations accepted through November

For the 23rd year, Bobbie and Tom Preston will be holding the Cycle Recycle, collecting repairable bikes to be refurbished and given to charitable groups. To date, over 3,600 bikes have been collected. This year the recipient organizations include Oakland International High School’s Earn-A-Bike program, The Bike Charity Institute of Alamo, Keeping our Promise (supports Afghan immigrants that served the U.S. government in Afghanistan), Waterside Workshops (provides bikes, bike mechanic training and outdoor recreation for over 250 youth low income and disconnected youth from across the East Bay), and the Lake Merritt Community Cabins (transitional housing for previously homeless adults while permanent housing is arranged). Deliver new or used working or repairable bikes and useable bike parts to the side driveway of 1307 Larch Avenue in Moraga through the month of November only. No skateboards, trike, or plastic bikes please. No need to call but for more information, call (925) 376-8474

Help Lamorinda Village help older neighbors in the community

Your older neighbors are still stuck at home with no end in sight as we wait for a vaccine. Lamorinda Village supports these neighbors who do not have family nearby and work to be independent. Grocery and medication deliveries, Zoom events, meditation and yoga classes prevent this endless isolation. Lamorinda Village held informative election classes with the League of Women Voters to discuss Propositions and delivered mail-in ballots to ballot boxes. Buddies have been assigned to make check-in calls during the wind and power outages, ensuring everyone is safe in recent heat waves. In the event of an evacuation, we identified who may need help and matched them with a CERT volunteer. It’s not over! Your older neighbors continue to need your help as we move into 2021, still sheltering in place because of COVID-19. Your financial donations ensure our cherished friends stay engaged with connections to each other and our exceptional volunteers, preventing debilitating isolation and compounded health issues. Our commitment to our community is what makes it so vibrant and caring. Your gift directly benefits your neighbors and can be mailed to Lamorinda Village. P.O. Box 57 Lafayette CA 94549.

Help save the Joaquin Moraga Adobe – donate to the Moraga Historical Society

This is a now-or-never opportunity. By acting now, the historic Moraga Adobe will be preserved as a Museum and Learning Center for the enjoyment of current and future Lamorinda residents. Built in 1841, the Adobe is the oldest surviving structure in Contra Costa County.

The need is urgent. A developer has acquired the Adobe property and is building on the surrounding land. The developer is required to restore the Adobe. If an additional \$250,000 is raised between now and Sept. 21 of next year, the developer has agreed to sell the restored Adobe and the two-acre site on which it sits to Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA) for future public use. If that goal isn’t reached, the Adobe will be permanently closed to public access and use.

The Moraga Historical Society has launched a \$100,000 public campaign to support FJMA’s acquisition of the Adobe. Nearly one-half of our \$100,000 goal has been raised. We need your help to reach the finish line!

Please make checks payable to “Moraga Historical Society”, indicate your donation is for the “Moraga Adobe Campaign” and mail to: Moraga Historical Society, P. O. Box 103, Moraga, CA 94556.

Hope Solutions’ Spirit of Giving program

Hope Solutions, formerly Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, is committed to healing the effects of homelessness by providing permanent housing solutions and vital support services to highly vulnerable families and individuals. This work would not be possible without the support of individuals like you. With COVID-19 cases expected to rise, helping and supporting each other through these times is more critical than ever.

Hope Solutions’ Spirit of Giving program helps alleviate the financial stress of the holidays by matching supporters with clients to purchase gifts for the families and individuals we serve. However, Spirit of Giving is not the only way to get involved! We are also in need of new bedding donations, such as mattresses, pillows, blankets and sheets, as we believe that a warm bed to sleep in is a comfort that every person deserves.

If you would like to help by donating new bedding items, or by providing holiday gifts for a family or individual through our Spirit of Giving program, please contact Mariel McMIndes at mmcmindes@hopesolutions.org. Your support means the world to us, and we wish you the happiest of holidays!

See’s Candies online holiday program

Moraga Kiwanis Club relies on our annual pop-up store and See’s candy fundraiser that generates funds that we give to local charities. For safety considerations, this year we’re only participating in the See’s Candies online holiday program. It still enables us to safely purchase See’s Candies at the same price as See’s factory stores and still help support the worthy charities our club supports. Our charities need help more than ever during COVID. Please support this online fundraiser and visit the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley web site <https://moragavalleykiwanis.org/>! Thank you Lamorinda, for your ongoing support!

Rediscover charming Solvang



Photos Dan Miller

By Fran Miller

Most know Solvang merely as a sugar stop along Highway 101. This Danish capital of America has long served as a brief road-trip detour for butter cookies, butter rings, kringle, and cinnamon crisps. But Solvang has evolved. Hip lodging options, fine wine, and Michelin level cuisine now find a home here alongside the venerable bakeries and clog shops. It now takes more than a pit stop to fully explore the small town and its many offerings. If

you've not been lately, Solvang is worthy of a fresh look. Here are some of our favorite things:

Stay: One peek at The Winston, the town's new, upscale boutique hotel, and you'll want to spend one night in each of its 14 fabulous rooms. Each is distinct in size and layout and each features dazzling décor in vibrant hues. Housed in the town's historic Old Mill Clock Tower, this 'invisible service' hotel combines old world charm with modern amenities. The Winston believes that the best

way to help its guests get the most out of their stay is to simply get out of their way. Rather than a standard check-in process, it provides unique access codes. Rather than a loud, public lobby bar, it stocks a private, guest-only honor bar. And complimentary breakfast is delivered discreetly to your door.

Dine: It remains that no trip to Solvang is complete without a pastry purchase. Birkholm's Bakery & Cafe has been a Solvang mainstay for generations of visitors. Third generation baker Thomas

Birkholm now mans the bakery that his grandfather established nearly 70 years ago, where you'll find all of the Danish originals.

Restaurant industry duo, chef Michael Cherney and his wife Sarah bravely opened peasants FEAST mid-pandemic and Chef Cherney's Solvang Hot Chicken, Meatball Sandwich, and the popular Pastrami Smoked Salmon Sandwich have proven to be a hit. A roomy outdoor patio surrounds the indoor dining room, which is housed in a circa-1970s greenhouse, one of Solvang's iconic buildings.

The owners of Ramen Kotori possess impressive culinary pedigrees and their experience is evidenced in every bowl of delicious ramen. The impassioned partnership between Chef Budi Kazali, owner/operator of Santa Ynez Valley's award-winning Ballard Inn and onsite restaurant The Gathering Table, and husband and wife team, Francisco and Erica Velazquez has transpired into one of Solvang's most popular eateries.

The only restaurant in the Santa Ynez Valley to receive a Michelin Plate honor, First & Oak is the creation of Jonathan Rosenson who serves as its sommelier. The charming restaurant features beautifully plated menu items featuring locally sourced ingredients. The restaurant's wine list is interesting and approachable, with a number of selections from the Rosenson family's own CCOF Certified Organic Coquelicot Or-

ganic Estate Vineyard, located within walking distance of the restaurant.

Wine: Solvang is home to more than 20 tasting rooms within its 2.4 square miles. Varietals from the Santa Ynez Valley, Santa Maria Valley, and Sta. Rita Hills are featured amongst well-known labels and those waiting to be fully discovered. Some of our faves: Visitors to the Lucas & Lewellen and Tuscan-flared Toccata Tasting Rooms can sample more than 20 world class wines, as well as shop a variety of gourmet foods, gifts, and unique wine related items. At Dana V. Wines, proprietor and seasoned winemaker Dana Volk can be found pouring her outstanding Pinots, Chardonnays, and Bordeaux Blends on her front patio where fire pits ward-off evening chill.

More: Hans Christian Andersen Park features a lovely 1.3-mile hiking trail within its wooded grounds; during summer months, keep an eye out for the 100-plus goats that are brought in to provide weed abatement. Find fresh cut artisanal cheese, charcuterie, fresh bread, and accoutrements at the Cailloux Cheese Shop, an upscale, European-style specialty food retailer. The Solvang Spice Merchant specializes in premium spices, teas, salts, sugars and fun gifts. When indoor museums are once again open, the Elverhoj Museum of History & Art and its Rembrandt exhibit (through the end of this year) are a must.



Miramonte student strives to 'create curiosity' through the lens

... continued from Page B1

"I strive to create dialog and encourage others to preserve, appreciate and take care of our natural world.

"During these challenging times of climate change and habitat loss," Edwardson continues, "I hope to create curiosity about our wild and natural spaces. I hope to be able to capture what I can of the beauty of our delicate ecosystem and share my appreciation for the special place in which we live."

A serious photographer must have a considerable amount of patience because so much time is spent waiting for that perfect photo opportunity. Edwardson does. "One time in the Truckee area," his

mother, Antonia, recalls, "Thomas stood in the middle of Webber Lake, chest deep, for two hours, waiting for the ospreys to come down and pick up the fish. He got the picture but I just kept thinking, 'Is that camera insured?'"

And like that photographer in "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," Edwardson admits to having had times when he's waited to take a picture, only to let the opportunity go by as he simply appreciated the beauty of his subject.

A trip to the Santa Cruz area to see the forests that were burned by the recent fires resulted in incredible photographs showing both the devastating effects of wildfires and the resilience of

nature. "I got a picture of green shoots peeking through the burnt out plants and trees," Edwardson says. "In the contrast of the green against the blackened trees, you can see how nature is resilient and how life always finds a way."

Edwardson and his brother, Will, a Miramonte freshman (and, according to Edwardson, an insect fanatic), both volunteer at the Lindsey Wildlife Experience and the Oakland Zoo, sharing their passion for nature, wildlife protection and conservation.

Although still in high school, Edwardson's dream is to one day become a professional nature photographer. It appears he's well on his way!

As Seen in Lamorinda



A perfectly camouflaged turkey hides among branches in the Moraga backyard.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Battling cancer, stroke for stroke

... continued from Page B2

"I was going to swim for a couple of months to show people that I was dedicated and it was a realistic goal and that I was on pace to make it successfully. However, with all of this year's complications, I had to put things off in setting up a way for people to contribute. Everyone had other things in their lives that became their priorities."

Miller's fundraising campaign became far more public on different levels starting Nov. 1 when the Aquatic Director at the Soda Aquatic

Center, Andrew Morris, and the General Manager of the Chabot Canyon Racquet Club, Steve Squire, sent out emails to all of their respective members informing them of what Miller was looking to accomplish and what he was raising money for. There is also an announcement on the video screen at the Soda Center which periodically displays what Miller is doing.

In the short period since the fundraising campaign has begun, there have been more than 100 donors totaling over \$13,000.

Jonathan Winter, from

Moraga, is a twice-a-week swimmer at the Soda Center and has come to know Miller well: "David is the person who originally encouraged me to swim more than once a week. He is always positive and encouraging and always makes the swimmers feel welcome. It's only recently that we became aware of David's goal and I have contributed to his account."

Even when the pool was shut down due to the air quality issues and it was no longer heated, Miller did not let that stop him. "I did not lose much time at all," Miller

said. "I simply pulled out my wetsuit. I might have lost a week here and there but I was able to keep swimming."

Miller is expecting to cross the million-yard finish line Dec. 27 and is hoping to have people swimming along with him. "There are 34 lanes in the aquatic center. My plan for the last day of swimming in this project is to invite or auction off the swimming lanes," he said. "I'm hoping that I will have 33 other swimmers that will donate \$250 to swim with me on the day that I reach a million yards."

To learn more about Miller and his quest, he has set up a website called Swimamillion.org. It reports his monthly progress, explains his reasons for such an undertaking, lists all of the relatives and friends who have dealt with cancer, some of whom have lost that battle, and a way to pay tribute to Miller's efforts by making a contribution to the Cancer Research Institute.

Not to be missed

ART

The Moraga Art Gallery announces a new art exhibit, "Spaces, Inside and Out" which runs through Dec. 24. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. Starting in November it will be open Thursday through Sunday, noon to 3 p.m. For information, visit the Moraga Art Gallery website: <https://moragaartgallery.com>.

Valley Art Gallery 55th Annual Holiday Collection for artful giving! Gallery Artists through Dec. 26. Special holiday gift Trunk Shows Dec. 3-6 (jewelry by Kelly Clausen) and Dec. 10 - 12, (wood art by Robert Nolan.) 2020 marks the 55th Annual Holiday Collection at Valley Art Gallery, and we have a lot going on! Our new gift exhibition includes a wide variety of beautifully crafted, ceramic, wood and glass pieces, original designer jewelry, small paintings and many other unique, one-of-a-kind gift items. Free, open to the public. 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek; www.valleyartgallery.org; (925) 935-4311

MUSIC

St. Paul's Concert Series is excited to present Harpsichordist/ Organist Arthur Omura in a solo performance broadcast live from St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28. This live performance will be broadcast online. To register for tickets and receive the live link, go to Arthur

Omura Concert Registration at <https://stpaulswc.org/august-29-online-concert-with-anna-maria-mendieta/>.

Saint Mary's College Dance Company Presents "VIII: a Virtual Dance Performance" at 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21. Join us for "VIII," the fall dance concert choreographed by eight Dance Majors from the Saint Mary's College Dance Program's Class of 2021: Molly Buzanis, Sophia Courtemarche, Emily Mootz, Alyssa Plummer, Jenny Rinefort, Madison Roethler, Kara Townsend and Holly Welpott. The concert also includes an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement by SMC dancer Maya Diaz-Villalta, and new works by Guest Artist and SMC Alumna Micah Sallid, Professor Jia Wu and Professor CatherineMarie Davalos. To create the dance concert this semester, the students, faculty, and creative team reinvented the rehearsal and production process to make this exciting show full of creativity, stunning dancing and thoughtful research. "Doors" open at 3:30 p.m. with the senior slideshow: twitch.tv/smcdancecompany

The Peter Pan Foundation presents "Winter: A Season of Virtual Entertainment and Inspiration," featuring local youth and teen performers, professional headliners and special guests from the Broadway stage in a heartwarming series of winter-inspired showcases you won't want to miss. Sunday, Dec. 6 at 2 p.m. - Frozen Matinee; Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. - Radio Hour Matinee.

Evening shows: Friday, Dec. 4 at 5 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 5 at 5 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 11 at 5 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 12 at 5 p.m.; and Friday, Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.peterpanfoundation.org. In addition to our virtual Winter show, the PPF is busy creating and sharing music and magic throughout the season!

LITERATURE

The first spark-brary has arrived at the Lafayette Community Center, right next to the Tot Lot! It is a collection of books focused on social justice, equality, and racism. There are great titles for kids, teens, and adults, that have been selected to spark discussion and action in our community. Just a few of the books you'll find include "White Fragility," "Becoming Nicole," and "A Kids Book About Racism." So if you are a little early in picking up your children from class, or just want a place to relax, come and enjoy some books that are sure to get you thinking. As the 1800s English writer, Martin Farquhar Tupper once wrote "A spark is a little thing, yet it may kindle the world." For more information, or if you'd like to donate a book, please visit www.spark-brary.com.

OTHER

Diablo Foods Floral Department is conducting a webinar on how to create a festive arrangement of flowers. Learn some tips, gain some

confidence, and get ready for the holidays from this team of experts. Proceeds to benefit the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County. For tickets and more information, visit: <https://capc-coco.org> and click on "Buy Tickets." Webinar is Thursday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. Cost is \$25.

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

6th Annual Hacienda Holiday Faire and its 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/>

See's Candies online holiday program Moraga Kiwanis Club relies on our annual pop-up

store and See's candy fundraiser that generates funds that we give to local charities. For safety considerations, this year we're only participating in the See's Candies online holiday program. It still enables us to safely purchase See's Candies at the same price as See's factory stores and still help support the worthy charities our club supports. Our charities need help more than ever during COVID. Please support this online fundraiser and visit the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley web site <https://moragavalleykiwanis.org/>! Thank you Lamorinda, for your ongoing support!

Hospice East Bay Moraga Tree of Lights: Live Streaming at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13. This free ceremony provides a way for families and friends to honor their loved ones and find solace in the symbolism of light as the names of their loved ones are read. The Live Stream is instead of the usual Moraga Country Club ceremony. Hospice of the East Bay provides hospice care whether or not patients have insurance and allows additional services, such as music therapy and children's grief programs, which are not covered by Medicare. For the link to the event go to: <https://hospicee.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/2020TreeofLights/Schedule/tabid/1158145/Default.aspx>

Please submit events:
calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com

Lamorinda's Religious Services

We're all in this TOGETHER!
Join us for worship online
LOPC.ORG
Sundays at 9 a.m. or any time you wish!

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
49 Knox Drive • Lafayette, CA • (925) 283-8722

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.

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

An Open, Affirming & Loving Community
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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All Are Welcome

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All are welcome to our on-line services

Sunday Service 10 - 11 am

Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm

See website and join us through Zoom
www.christianscienceorinda.org



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mvpcc

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Go to to our YouTube Channel:

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Lamorinda Weekly

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

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Photos: Tod Fierner, Gint Federas
Layout/Graphics: Andy Scheck. Printed in CA.
Mailing address: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C202, Moraga, CA 94556 Phone: 925-377-0977; Fax: 925-263-9223; email: info@lamorindaweekly.com
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LAMORINDA SPORTS

A new year with new challenges and new optimism for Saint Mary's men's basketball



2020 SMC men's basketball team

Photo Tod Fierner

By Jon Kingdon

During the 2019-20 season, the Saint Mary's men's basketball team was gripped by ecstasy and then agony. This year it's all about the pandemic, patience, and practice. Last year the team went 26-8, qualifying for the NCAA tournament for the seventh time in coach Randy Bennett's 19 years of leading the Gaels. The ecstasy came to a sudden end when the coronavirus pandemic caused the cancellation of the NCAA Tournament.

With the upcoming 2020-21 season, it's been far from the usual off-season for Bennett: "This has been the longest preseason I've ever had without a scrimmage. The coaches and staff all have to wear masks during our practices, and we follow all of the safety protocols. Still, we've put in our offensive plays and defensive sets. For the most part, our practices have been the same. We have spent a lot of time in Madigan Gym because it was a safer move to practice and also to lift weights in the same space. Our guys were in really good shape and we've been healthy, and it's been a productive five weeks so far."

Besides the offseason and preseason preparations, there are many changes on the team's roster. Despite

losing 72% of scoring from last year's offense, there is a core of seven veterans that have taken on the responsibility of instilling into the five freshman and one redshirt player, the team's system and work ethic, Bennett said: "I'm proud of our veterans. They have done a great job with the young guys. They are doing a good job of leading while developing their own games. That is why I feel good about this group - they want to make it work. It won't be easy, and it never is but they're giving it their best shot."

Bennett has had center-oriented and guard-oriented teams in the past, but this is a team whose identity is still to be determined. "We don't return an all-league guy or a top scorer," Bennett said. "We're going to be more balanced. More guys will contribute though it won't be equally and that will take shape as we go. It won't be like last year when we played off (Jordan Ford (21.9 ppg) and (Malik) Fitts (16.5 ppg). On this year's team, every position can score pretty well, and we definitely have better passers. In our normal offense, our guards get a lot of opportunity to score. That's where I think it will be more balanced with more double-digit scorers."

Originally a walk-on, senior guard Tommy Kuhse will be running the team's offense this year. "Tommy's

made a huge jump," Bennett said. "He just kept getting better and better and I think he going to have his best season this year. I'm proud of him."

The other starting guard will be Logan Johnson a transfer from the University of Cincinnati. Without a redshirt year and absent during the summer, it was a tough adjustment for Johnson to fit into the offense, according to Bennett: "We threw Logan into a situation that would have been tough for anyone. He's the whole package now. He's athletic and quick, has a good nose for the ball, and is not afraid to go get it. The best thing about him is that he competes. He'll bring it. I feel confident with him and Tommy in the backcourt. They're gritty and tough."

The backup guards bring a lot of size. Freshmen Jabe Mullins (6'6"), Judah Brown (6'5") and Lemmett Bockler (6'7") have all shown the potential to get playing time this year. "They're all bright, talented kids," Bennett said. "Judah is a wing player who is an elite athlete and Jabe has a quick release and his style reminds me of Delavadova, and I don't throw out that comparison very often. Bockler can be a top scorer but he's got to figure out the other things." Sophomore Quinn Clinton, who is coming off a foot injury, is a top shooter and he has also been playing very well.

In the frontcourt, Dan Fotu and Alex Ducas got a lot of playing time last season and they will be starters when the season begins. When Tass went down with his injury last season, Fotu (6'7") was called upon to play center a number of times, an experience that has helped his overall game, according to Bennett: "It made Dan a better scorer in the post as a drive and finish player. He shot 65% playing at the five and he will shoot more threes this year as he has developed that part of his game. He has an inside out game and the ball will be in his hands a lot."

Ducas will be lining up as a guard/forward. "Alex is a sneaky, good defender and rebounder and is a good passer that can score," Bennett said. "He's a smart player that makes good decisions and has a good feel for the game." Kyle Bowen who played in every game last year will be the first backup forward. Freshman Luke Barrett out of Piedmont will also be com-

peting for playing time.

Returning as the starting center is Matthias Tass who suffered a torn ACL in the 14th game last season. So far, Tass appears to have made a complete recovery and is being counted on by Bennett to be more of a force on offense this year: "You wouldn't know Matthias was coming off a surgery in the way that he is moving other than his wearing a knee brace in practice."

Freshman Mitchell Saxen (6'10") who has a similar style to Tass will be his first backup and may also play some forward. Matt Van Komen (7'4"), who transferred in from the University of Utah, is coming off ankle surgery so his development has been a bit delayed, but is someone that Bennett is looking to contribute down the line: "Matt is a changeup for us. He is a big presence inside that can make baskets. He's starting to get it. We will need all three of our centers to play this season."

With this balanced offense, Bennett has a lineup that knows how to share the ball at each position: "Kuhse and Johnson can play pass first as well as looking to score. Ducas and Fotu are both good passers with good vision and Tass is a really good passer at the five. I just feel it in practice. The ball moves better, and more guys are getting an equal amount of shots."

Last year, Saint Mary's held their opponents to 66.9 points per game and the team had more steals and forced more turnovers than their opponents. Still that was not good enough for Bennett and he has made excellent defense a priority for this year's team: "We need to improve our defense and that's on me. We were small when we lost Tass last year and our guards were not big. We were really good offensively and that saved us last year. We weren't up to the level where we should have been on field goal percentage defense overall and from the threes. We weren't there on rebounding either. Those are two areas that we've been pretty consistent at over the years and we are going to get back to that."

Historically, Bennett has preferred to have a rotation of eight players on the team but without any scrimmages, it's going to be a constant process to establish who those players will be.

... continued on Page C2

Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROVISIONAL APPOINTMENT TO THE MORAGA SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD The public is hereby notified that the Moraga School District approved the provisional appointment of Larry Jacobs, as Board member on November 19, 2020, to fill a vacant position created by a Board member's resignation on October 7, 2020. Unless a petition calling for a special election, containing a sufficient number of signatures is filed in the office of the county superintendent of schools within 30 days of the provisional appointment, it shall become an effective appointment.

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A new year with new challenges and new optimism for Saint Mary's basketball

... continued from Page C1

"Our new players are going to have to be a part of our top 10 this year so how fast we can get them up to the level they have to be against good teams is the question," said Bennett. "They're learning and catching on quick and will help us. We should get better as the

season goes on because they are some of our top talent." Under these trying conditions, team unity is that much more difficult to maintain, but Fotu hasn't seen that as a problem: "The new players have adapted to our system and culture. They're seeing that it's a family mentality here and we push each other to be our best."

It's not by accident that these are the types of players that are on the Gaels' roster, Bennett said: "That's how we run our program. We recruit guys who value and want that culture. We look out for one another and care for one another and spend a lot of time together. These guys have gone through something that's been tough for all of us

and they have had to fight through it all summer and fall, so when you go through tough times together, you become pretty tight. This will be a tough and gritty team. There are several guys on this team that see themselves as hard-nosed, tough and competitive and hang their hat on that and I feel it in practice every day."

Saint Mary's will open their season at the Bad Boys Crossover Classic in Sioux Falls, South Dakota against the University of Memphis. The team's first home game will be on Dec. 1 against Nicholls State and its first league game will also be at home against Pepperdine on Jan. 2

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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 14 Issue 20 Wednesday, November 25, 2020



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Fall fireworks



By Cynthia Brian

"Let the beauty we love be what we do."~ Rumi

Sitting on my balcony, watching the ginger orb of the sun shoot sparkles and glitter throughout the dusky sky, I am besotted with the fireworks of fall foliage on the horizon. The colors and intensities change daily as I attempt to capture the essence of their beauty in my camera lens.

A red-branched Japanese maple is glimmering gold one day. Four days later it is pumpkin spice orange. My liquid amber tree leaves are progressing from buttery blonde to tangy tangerine to burning scarlet. Even the green vegetation on my lamium has turned magenta. My garden is a display of fall fireworks.

It's been a busy year. Since the onset of the pandemic, every day I have worked many hours to improve my landscape: pruning dead limbs, repairing stairs, rebuilding arches, eradicating weeds, planting new specimens, fertilizing, firescaping, reseeding, and adding amendments. After reseeding my lawns, I covered the grass with enriched soil which will bolster root establishment. My back aches from the yards of amendments I've wheelbarrowed to the garden beds and there is still more to shovel.

To provide a respite from the labor, I added a bench on my hill overlooking my recently cleared oak tree meadow. The creek will flow during the winter but for now, it's relaxing to sit for a bit to watch the deer

munching on the shoots sprouting after the recent rains and the squirrels scampering about collecting acorns. Peace and serenity increase my gratitude for living in such bucolic surroundings where I can breathe fresh air and listen to the sounds of silence. It's quiet, that is until the wild turkeys descend and start a raucous. Several Toms started fighting with the hens squawking a few feet away. Thanksgiving has arrived!

When I planted the three vines of wisteria, grape, and pink bower on my pergola, it was an experiment in competition. All three are aggressive growers, but I was certain that the victor would be the wisteria who would choke the other two. I'm glad that I'm not a betting woman, or I would have lost.

Much to my sheer delight, after 15 years of cohabitation, the three have become symbiotic siblings supporting one another's expansion. The three vines have intertwined and mingled in the magnolia, fruitless pear, and loquat tree creating a beautiful privacy screen that frames my backyard.



A close-up of the Japanese maple tree looks like a painting.

... continued
on Page D4

Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	40	\$595,500	\$5,000,500
MORAGA	24	\$352,000	\$2,105,000
ORINDA	30	\$1,110,000	\$8,360,000

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

- 850 Acalanes Road, \$1,500,000, 2 Bdrms, 2081 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$820,000, 06-18-13
- 884 Acalanes Road, \$1,510,000, 3 Bdrms, 1922 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$709,000, 05-18-03
- 16 Almaden Court, \$1,385,000, 3 Bdrms, 2241 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-22-20, Previous Sale: \$770,000, 06-11-09
- 30 Ariey Lane, \$3,225,000, 5 Bdrms, 4490 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 09-28-20, Previous Sale: \$2,345,600, 06-18-14
- 1202 Bacon Way, \$1,130,000, 4 Bdrms, 1573 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-24-20, Previous Sale: \$1,130,000, 07-21-20
- 1100 Brown Avenue, \$1,070,000, 2 Bdrms, 1588 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 09-30-20
- 3208 Camino Colorados, \$982,000, 3 Bdrms, 1184 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-05-20
- 3971 Canyon Road, \$3,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 3807 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 09-28-20, Previous Sale: \$193,000, 09-01-77
- 4174 Canyon Road, \$4,450,000, 5 Bdrms, 5364 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-30-20
- 1162 Crescenta Court, \$1,700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1929 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-28-20, Previous Sale: \$720,000, 07-02-02
- 919 Dewing Avenue, \$885,000, 2 Bdrms, 1257 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-23-20, Previous Sale: \$588,000, 05-07-13
- 900 Diablo Drive, \$1,594,000, 3 Bdrms, 2627 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$185,000, 07-01-78
- 3270 Elvia Street, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 3605 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 10-08-20, Previous Sale: \$1,400,000, 03-07-17
- 514 Florence Drive, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1097 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-07-20, Previous Sale: \$605,000, 08-25-05
- 1676 Foothill Park Circle, \$2,050,000, 6 Bdrms, 3119 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-06-20, Previous Sale: \$1,135,000, 02-28-12
- 1154 Glen Road, \$4,075,000, 4 Bdrms, 4460 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-09-20, Previous Sale: \$3,525,000, 06-19-17
- 3131 Gloria Terrace, \$1,850,000, 5 Bdrms, 4415 SqFt, 2007 YrBlt, 09-29-20, Previous Sale: \$1,110,000, 06-21-11
- 929 Hough Avenue, \$1,509,000, 4 Bdrms, 2235 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 10-06-20, Previous Sale: \$370,000, 05-01-89
- 639 Laird Lane, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-02-20, Previous Sale: \$615,000, 01-27-10

... continued on Page D12



During this time of year, we can't help but think of how grateful we are

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As so many families and friends are brought together during this magical time of year we want to remind you that it's about being together, making those lasting memories, catching



up during a walk around the reservoir, creating that favorite family dish with a child, or repeating that silly holiday story for the umpteenth time. The holidays are a time to reflect, relax and rejoice. Happy Thanksgiving!



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Fall fireworks

... continued from Page D1

Each boasts distinctive features. The wisteria and the grape are deciduous and will shed their colorful autumn leaves soon while the bower vine is evergreen with blooming pink flowers. In winter, the shiny bright green foliage of the bower vine covers the bare branches of the other two. In spring, the wisteria bursts into glorious purple blooms followed by the bud break of the grapevine. Throughout the summer months, their leaves cover the pergola with much-needed shade and in September, I harvest grapes. What a fruitful collaboration of nature.

Today as I was doing a final edit of this column, the sky clouded gray and the waterworks flowed. How thrilling to finally have rain! I put on my rain boots, hoodie, and slicker to fertilize the grass and I finished covering the patio furniture. Winter is a mere four weeks away, yet I still have a few more autumn tasks to accomplish including planting additional bulbs on the hillside. Daffodils from previous years have already sprouted and will begin blooming in December. With the ground moist, digging is easier.

After three hectic seasons of heavy garden exertion, I am looking forward to listening to the rain as I read a book in front of a blazing fireplace with a cup of hot chocolate. For now, I'll savor the fireworks of the glowing fall leaves from my balcony.

Happy gardening. Happy growing. Happy Thanksgiving.



Reflection of the beautiful fall trees in a pond.

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To my family, friends and clients who helped brighten my 2020, thank you.

—Emily

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Season of Gratitude

We are grateful for all the families we've been able to help this year. Now more than ever, we appreciate your continued support and wish you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season!

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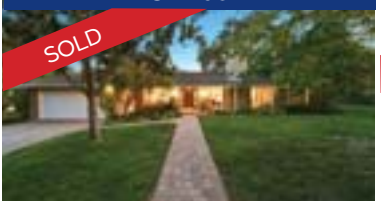

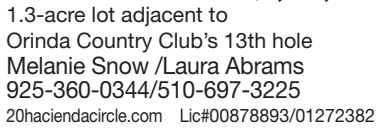
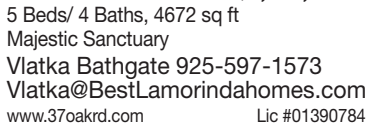

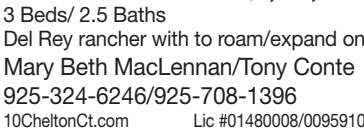






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We are thankful for the opportunity to serve our truly special Lamorinda community.
Happy Thanksgiving!

<p>Orinda</p>  <p>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</p>	<p>Orinda</p>  <p>SOLD 37 Oak Road \$2,299,500 5 Beds/ 4 Baths, 4672 sq ft Majestic Sanctuary Vlatka Bathgate 925-597-1573 Vlatka@BestLamorindahomes.com www.37oakrd.com Lic #01390784</p>	<p>Orinda</p>  <p>SOLD 1146 Nogales \$2,195,000 4 Beds/ 4 Baths on almost ¼ acre lot Truly lovely country estate Nancy Booth / Soraya Golesorkhi 925-212-8867/ 925-808-8390 vimeo.com/469244826 Lic#01341390/01771736</p>	<p>Orinda</p>  <p>PENDING 10 Chelton Court \$1,079,000 3 Beds/ 2.5 Baths Del Rey rancher with to roam/expand on Mary Beth MacLennan/Tony Conte 925-324-6246/925-708-1396 10CheltonCt.com Lic #01480008/00959101</p>
<p>Lafayette</p>  <p>1201 Cambridge \$3,195,000 4 Beds/ 3 Baths. Happy Valley Elegance including an extra 600 sq ft Guest Cottage Melanie Snow 925-360-03440 www.1201cambridge.com Lic #0878893</p>	<p>Lafayette</p>  <p>PENDING 1 Dead Horse Canyon Rd \$2,495,000 Ultimate Shelter in Place Home! Barn serves as ADU Suzanne Geoffrion/Dick Holt 925-699-4832/925-297-9150 1deadhorsecanyon.com Lic #01878803/00827803</p>	<p>Lafayette</p>  <p>NEW LISTING 1076 Serrano Court \$1,485,000 3 Beds/ 2 Baths. Quintessential Lafayette rancher with Farmhouse style charm. Laura Abrams 510-697-3225 Lic#01272382</p>	<p>Moraga</p>  <p>PENDING 126 Brookfield Drive \$1,549,000 4 Beds/ 2 Baths on a cul-de-sac. Updated single-story contemporary Michelle Holcenberg 925-324-0405 www.126brookfield.com Lic #01373412</p>
<p>Moraga</p>  <p>212 Sheila Court \$1,475,000 4 Beds/ 2 Baths. Single-story home on cul-de-sac with gorgeous resort-like pool Michelle Holcenberg 925-324-0405 Lic #01373412</p>	<p>Moraga</p>  <p>SOLD 3736 Campolindo Dr. \$1,340,000 Moraga gem with convenient location Yan Heim 510-499-4709 3736campolindo.com Lic #01965925</p>	<p>Moraga</p>  <p>142 Ascot Court, #3 \$499,000 2 Beds/ 2 Baths Fabulously updated condo Mary Beth MacLennan/Tony Conte 925-324-6246/925-708-1396 142ascotct3.com Lic #01480008/00959101</p>	<p>Walnut Creek</p>  <p>PENDING 14 Edmund Court \$1,195,000 3 Beds/ 2 Baths No expense spared remodel! Soraya Golesorkhi 925-808-8390 sg@soraya4homes.co Lic #01771736</p>



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*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it
is like wrapping a present and not giving it."*

- William Arthur Ward

Our gratitude goes out to
you and your family this Thanksgiving.
Thank you for your business in 2020!

If you are thinking of selling in 2021,
now is the time to start planning.
Our pre-marketing plan is a proven strategy to
build anticipation, drive demand and
help you get the best offer faster.
Let us help you prepare your home now
for the 2021 spring market!

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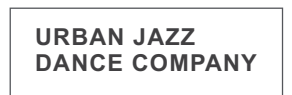
MICHELLE
HOLCENBERG
REALTOR

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ONE HOUSE AT A TIME**

I'm grateful to be part of this community. Thanks to the support of my wonderful clients I was able to launch the **Local Giving Project** in 2020 and donate more than \$10,000 to local organizations.



More information about the program can be found at: www.holcenberg.com/givingback

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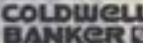
Michelle Holcenberg

Coldwell Banker Top 100 SF Bay Area

michelle@holcenberg.com

925-324-0405

BRE #01373412





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Lamorinda home sales recorded ... continued from Page D2

LAFAYETTE ... continued

639 Laird Lane, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-02-20, Previous Sale: \$615,000, 01-27-10
 1238 Laurel Lane, \$1,530,000, 5 Bdrms, 2526 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 09-25-20
 3934 Leroy Way, \$1,900,000, 2 Bdrms, 2387 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-02-20, Previous Sale: \$850,000, 06-29-00
 3951 Los Arabis Drive, \$2,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2833 SqFt, 2007 YrBlt, 10-01-20, Previous Sale: \$1,615,000, 05-02-12
 3 Middle Road, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 3537 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-09-20
 730 Moraga Road, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3458 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 10-08-20, Previous Sale: \$352,500, 09-01-86
 672 Moraga Road, \$1,925,000, 3 Bdrms, 2116 SqFt, 2011 YrBlt, 09-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,164,000, 02-01-13
 3235 Mt Diablo Court #210, \$595,500, 2 Bdrms, 1084 SqFt, 2019 YrBlt, 09-23-20
 887 Oak Street, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 2511 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-29-20, Previous Sale: \$1,102,500, 07-19-19
 3842 Palo Alto Drive, \$5,000,500, 4 Bdrms, 4293 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-24-20, Previous Sale: \$886,000, 08-02-00
 1575 Pleasant Hill Road, \$841,000, 4 Bdrms, 2061 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 09-30-20
 1294 Quandt Court, \$1,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 1656 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-24-20, Previous Sale: \$1,051,000, 06-05-13
 1268 Redwood Lane, \$4,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 5034 SqFt, 2012 YrBlt, 10-08-20, Previous Sale: \$3,700,000, 09-15-16
 3097 Sandalwood Court, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 2184 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-23-20, Previous Sale: \$1,225,000, 04-09-15
 3397 Silver Springs Court, \$3,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 4530 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 09-22-20, Previous Sale: \$2,750,000, 05-02-16
 3 Songbird Court, \$749,000, 1 Bdrms, 750 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 09-28-20, Previous Sale: \$309,000, 09-21-09
 3220 Surmont Drive, \$1,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 2773 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 10-02-20
 1651 Taylor Boulevard, \$1,725,000, 4 Bdrms, 2887 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$368,500, 07-01-87
 1062 Via Baja, \$1,675,000, 4 Bdrms, 2947 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$1,340,000, 03-05-12
 109 Villa Court, \$956,000, 4 Bdrms, 2121 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-06-20, Previous Sale: \$720,000, 06-16-10
 1003 Woodbury Road #302, \$949,000, 2 Bdrms, 1110 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-06-20
 3361 Woodview Drive, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1803 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 10-09-20, Previous Sale: \$935,000, 07-29-14

MORAGA

126 Ascot Court #D, \$405,000, 1 Bdrms, 858 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 10-07-20, Previous Sale: \$295,000, 06-02-15
 148 Ascot Court #1, \$470,000, 2 Bdrms, 945 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-28-20
 1971 Ascot Drive #D, \$455,000, 2 Bdrms, 938 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$140,000, 07-23-99
 1986 Ascot Drive #D, \$585,000, 3 Bdrms, 1473 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-30-20, Previous Sale: \$580,000, 08-04-17
 839 Augusta Drive, \$1,165,000, 2 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-02-20, Previous Sale: \$960,000, 03-24-08
 67 Buckingham Drive, \$1,435,000, 4 Bdrms, 1987 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 09-28-20, Previous Sale: \$1,182,000, 02-17-15
 1351 Camino Peral #B, \$880,000, 3 Bdrms, 1716 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$725,000, 07-10-18
 1475 Camino Peral, \$575,000, 2 Bdrms, 1265 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 10-01-20
 3800 Campolindo Drive, \$2,105,000, 5 Bdrms, 3870 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 10-02-20
 7 Carey Court, \$1,575,000, 4 Bdrms, 2543 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 09-22-20, Previous Sale: \$1,130,000, 03-10-15
 39 Corte Del Campo, \$2,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 2743 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 10-08-20, Previous Sale: \$496,500, 11-23-98
 785 Country Club Drive, \$1,167,500, 3 Bdrms, 1984 SqFt, 2019 YrBlt, 10-08-20
 440 Deerfield Drive, \$1,695,000, 5 Bdrms, 2969 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-21-20, Previous Sale: \$1,400,000, 07-17-15
 123 Devin Drive, \$1,115,000, 3 Bdrms, 1356 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-24-20, Previous Sale: \$780,000, 06-18-13
 218 Fronteras Drive, \$1,985,000, 4 Bdrms, 3270 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 09-29-20
 472 Kingsford Drive, \$1,435,000, 4 Bdrms, 2405 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-22-20, Previous Sale: \$288,000, 01-01-86
 1156 Larch Avenue, \$1,480,000, 5 Bdrms, 2206 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 10-09-20
 101 Merion Terrace, \$1,215,000, 3 Bdrms, 1833 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 09-30-20, Previous Sale: \$755,000, 06-12-12
 135 Miramonte Drive, \$857,000, 2 Bdrms, 1514 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-23-20, Previous Sale: \$821,000, 05-23-17
 3914 Paseo Grande, \$1,255,000, 4 Bdrms, 1947 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 10-09-20, Previous Sale: \$600,500, 12-11-00
 8 Ravenhill Lane, \$1,575,000, 5 Bdrms, 2385 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 09-25-20, Previous Sale: \$1,311,500, 09-21-16
 284 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,610,000, 4 Bdrms, 2174 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-22-20, Previous Sale: \$804,500, 05-23-12
 18 Sea Pines Street, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 09-23-20, Previous Sale: \$685,000, 11-12-99
 1076 Sanders Drive, \$352,000, 4 Bdrms, 1854 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-07-20

ORINDA

184 Alice Lane, \$3,015,000, 3 Bdrms, 3821 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 10-09-20
 51 Camino Don Miguel, \$2,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 2759 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 10-05-20, Previous Sale: \$2,375,000, 08-08-18
 95 Camino Encinas, \$2,050,000, 5 Bdrms, 4073 SqFt, 1933 YrBlt, 09-29-20
 100 Casa Vieja Place, \$1,824,000, 4 Bdrms, 2607 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 10-06-20, Previous Sale: \$1,303,000, 06-17-15
 50 Charles Hill Road, \$2,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 3013 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-08-20
 4 La Plaza Drive, \$2,450,000, 5 Bdrms, 3541 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 09-30-20, Previous Sale: \$1,803,000, 07-12-12
 146 Canon Drive, \$1,995,000, 2 Bdrms, 2673 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 09-21-20, Previous Sale: \$812,000, 05-14-14
 403 Dalewood Drive, \$1,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 5583 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 10-09-20, Previous Sale: \$901,000, 01-28-11
 53 Knickerbocker Lane, \$2,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 3360 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 10-07-20, Previous Sale: \$1,450,000, 11-30-10
 7 La Encinal, \$1,595,000, 4 Bdrms, 3212 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-23-20, Previous Sale: \$1,230,000, 11-17-14
 17 Lavina Court, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1391 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 10-07-20
 29 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,330,000, 3 Bdrms, 1468 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-28-20
 1 Mariposa Lane, \$1,527,500, 3 Bdrms, 1998 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-09-20
 26 Martha Road, \$2,450,000, 5 Bdrms, 2429 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 09-24-20, Previous Sale: \$1,235,000, 04-11-16

... continued on Page D13

Lamorinda home sales recorded

ORINDA ... continued from Page D12

605 Miner Road, \$8,360,000, 4 Bdrms, 5102 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 10-09-20,
Previous Sale: \$2,605,000, 09-14-05

645 Miner Road, \$3,185,000, 5 Bdrms, 4741 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-01-20,
Previous Sale: \$2,650,000, 06-10-14

124 Moraga Way, \$1,725,000, 3 Bdrms, 2251 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 10-07-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,085,000, 07-29-13

576 Moraga Way, \$1,110,000, 3 Bdrms, 2011 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-23-20

44 Oak Drive, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 3094 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 10-09-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,825,000, 08-02-18

78 Oak Road, \$2,050,000, 5 Bdrms, 3580 SqFt, 2011 YrBlt, 09-29-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,700,000, 04-17-13

27 Overhill Road, \$1,345,000, 2 Bdrms, 1821 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 10-09-20

213 Overhill Road, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2348 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-24-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,787,000, 06-03-16

6 Saint James Court, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2488 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-25-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,180,000, 02-20-20

76 Scenic Drive, \$2,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3161 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-06-20

14 Silverwood Court, \$2,695,000, 5 Bdrms, 4708 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 10-09-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,545,000, 04-22-14

7 Snowberry Lane, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 2238 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-28-20,
Previous Sale: \$275,000, 12-01-86

45 Tara Road, \$2,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 2904 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-23-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,850,000, 05-06-19

5 Van Ripper Lane, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1814 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-06-20

300 Village View Court, \$2,020,000, 2 Bdrms, 2465 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 09-25-20,
Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 04-25-05

19 Wilder Road, \$2,680,000, 5 Bdrms, 4576 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-01-20,
Previous Sale: \$2,479,000, 12-12-17

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Cynthia Brian's End of November Garden Guide

- **PROTECT** patio furniture by covering with machine-washable covers or clear plastic or put away for the winter in a storage shed.
- **DIG** bulbs now. Bulbs that do well in our area, including tulips, crocus and daffodils, are available in nurseries and garden centers.
- **FERTILIZE** lawns.
- **PHOTOGRAPH** the changing colors of the autumn trees and shrubs.
- **RAKE** leaves and add to your compost pile.
- **TOP DRESS** garden with mulch and amendments.
- **PULL** out dead annuals.
- **DEADHEAD** roses to continue the blooming season.
- **ADD** solar-powered, weather-resistant garden lights to illuminate paths for winter darkness.
- **CLEAN** gutters and make sure downspouts are unclogged.
- **FIX** vent screens, broken foundation, and roof shakes and remove brush and wood piles from the perimeter of your house to deter mice and rats from building their winter abode.
- **REPAIR** garden tools and equipment before storing.
- **MOVE** containers of frost-prone plants to a covered area near the house or wrap with burlap.
- **THANK YOU** for being such dedicated readers of Digging Deep. I wish you a very healthy and happy Thanksgiving.



The mustard yellow leaves on the Japanese Maple.



Four days later, the yellow leaves have turned to burnt fireworks orange.



Top dressing on lawn to enrich the soil and cover the seeds.



Tom turkeys fighting before Thanksgiving!



Three intertwined vines on the pergola include grape wisteria, and bower.



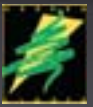
Cynthia Brian wishes you a Happy Gratitude Day.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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10 La Punta

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\$6,250,000

ORINDA



33 Dias Dorados

Lovingly restored Spanish-Mediterranean 6 bed/ 6 bath/ 2 half bath home w/ guesthouse on 1.67 gated acres.

\$4,350,000

ORINDA



32 Heather Lane

Well maintained 6 bed/ 4.5 bath home w/ separate apartment & private bonus in-law suite on .80 acre knoll.

\$1,699,000

ORINDA



Lot

20 Oak Court

One of Orinda's last near-acre VIEW properties that is ready to build on & is in a mature neighborhood. Great views!

\$875,000

ORINDA



Lease

387 Camino Sobrante

Pristine Modern 5 bed/ 3 bath/ 2 half bath Farmhouse in heart of Orinda Country Club on over .5 acres.

\$12,000/ Monthly

ORINDA



New Lease

8 Via San Inigo

Beautiful 4 bed/ 3 bath home w/ great commute, flat yard space, solar panels, electric car charger & views!

\$6,350/ Monthly

ORINDA



New Lease

4 Los Dedos Road

Spacious 4 bed/ 3 bath home located in Orinda Country Club. Includes laundry room & separate work shop.

\$5,900/ Monthly

MORAGA



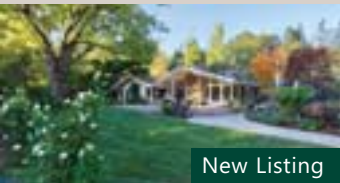
New Listing

124 Greenbriar

3 bed/ 2 bath sqft home updated throughout in Moraga Country Club. Garage accommodates 2 cars plus a golf cart.

\$1,349,500

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

4087 Happy Valley Road

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\$3,499,000

LAFAYETTE



21 Hidden Valley Road

Custom 4 bed/ 3 bath 3679 sqft home on .48 acres minutes from commute, BART, shopping, & top rated schools.

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LAFAYETTE



1004 Woodbury Road 301

One level 3 bed/ 3 bath penthouse in Lafayette's ultra exclusive Woodbury. Designer upgrades throughout!

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LAFAYETTE



1470 Sunset Loop

Updated 5 bed/ 3 bath 2523 sqft home on .23 acres minutes to downtown Lafayette & 12 years of top-rated schools.

\$1,549,000

LAFAYETTE

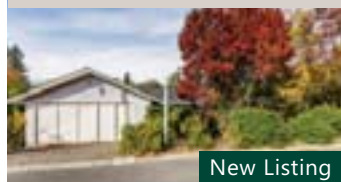


1000 Dewing Avenue #307

Single level 3 bed/ 2 bath 1568 sqft condo close to vibrant downtown Lafayette w/ private patio & in-closet laundry.

\$1,185,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

1231 El Curtola Boulevard

Located in the Sun Valley Estates neighborhood, this 4 bed/ 2.5 bath, 1845 sqft home sits on a .26 acre private lot.

\$925,000

LAFAYETTE



New Lease

3590 Walnut Street

Charming 2 bed/ 2 bath duplex w/ stackable washer & dryer, fenced-in yard, & attached garage.

\$3,400/ Monthly

MARTINEZ



114 Stonehurst Court

Gorgeous Alhambra Valley 5 bed/ 3.5 bath 5550 sqft home w/ pool, spa, outdoor kitchen & 360 degree views of Mt. Diablo.

\$2,695,000

The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby

Patricia Battersby

Shannon Conner

Meara Dunsmore

Linda Ehrich

Emily Estrada

Joan Evans

Linda Friedman

Claudia Gohler

Dexter Honens II

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Altie Schmitt

Judy Schoenrock

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Molly Smith

Jeff Snell

Lynda Snell

Steve Stahle

Clark Thompson

Angie Evans Traxinger

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Village

ASSOCIATES

It's Village. Of Course.

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