

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Dying Monterey pines clustered near Briones Reservoir in Orinda.

Photos Nick Marnell

Thousands of dead trees pose extreme fire risk in Lamorinda

By Nick Marnell

You do not have to drive very far in Lamorinda before you see dead or dying trees. “I removed thousands of dead trees in Lamorinda last year,” said Brian Gates of Expert Tree Service in Orinda. “By summer, there will be thousands more.”

And that is precisely what officials of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District fear: That thousands of

dead trees, particularly Monterey pines, will mar the district landscape, adding yet another hazard to a potentially catastrophic fire season ahead.

The problem of dead and dying trees is not restricted to the summer. Tom Smith of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection toured the Northern California region in December, stunned at the number of sick and dying bay laurel and Monterey pine trees. “There is a lot of death and destruction here,” he said.

Residents of Moraga and Orinda have recently reported hundreds of these dead trees to the fire district. “There was enough of an uptick that we took notice,” said MOFD Fire Marshal Jeff Isaacs, who plans to ramp up enforcement of tree removal this year. “Dead trees equal dead fuel. Even a healthy Monterey pine drops a lot of material, and it can land on a roof. When Monterey pines are dying, it’s dead fuel dropping.” ...continued on Page A8

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Community partnership brings vaccines to local seniors



Photo Pippa Fisher

Seniors aged 75 and older roll down their windows to receive vaccinations Jan. 16 at a drive-through event.

By Pippa Fisher

Hundreds of seniors were able to get their first round

of COVID-19 vaccinations at a drive-through event that was the result of a true community partnership.

In an effort coordinated by Lafayette resident Suzy Pak, Dr. Rebecca Parish and Dr. Denise Hilliard, both of Comprehensive Wellness, partnered with Lamorinda Village Operations Manager Kathryn Ishizu, and City of Lafayette Parks, Trails and Recreation Director Jonathan Katayanagi, to request an allotment of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for distribution to members of the community aged 75 and older.

The event was put together in less than a week following a conversation Pak had with Parish who was wondering how best to get the vaccines to those most in need. Pak, through her work with Lamorinda Village, said she realized LV had the seniors and could play a key role.

“Having the personal

connection to these folks made all the difference,” explained Ishizu. “We were able to tell our members, and help them go online to register.”

Having secured 500 doses, the drive-through took place Jan. 16 and 17 at Stanley Middle School and required the logistical help and support of many including the Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department, Lamorinda Spirit Van, Lafayette Police Department and Public Works, as well as local school personnel. Lamorinda CERT provided volunteers, working shifts to ensure a smooth operation.

With volunteers organized by Ishizu, and a team of volunteer medical personnel on hand to administer the shots, the cars came by at their appointed times in groups of eight. They showed

their paperwork, drove to the next station for the shots, and then moved to a “recovery” station.

Due to limited supply the event was promoted first to Lamorinda Village, the Spirit Van and Lafayette Senior Services members and required pre-registration. All slots were quickly taken. Pak says those who qualify for the shots if interested, and those wishing to volunteer to help, should contact Lamorinda Village at <https://lamorindavillage.org>.

Pak says the plan is to continue the effort as long as they can secure vaccines.

For more information about changes to state regulations regarding the vaccine and its distribution, see the story on Page A8.

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New mayor lays out goals for 2021



Photo provided

Mayor Susan Candell

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette's newly elected mayor laid out her goals for the coming year during the final meeting of 2020, highlighting public safety, housing, wildfire safety, term limits, and equity and inclusion.

Amid the challenges that

continue to face the city during the pandemic, Mayor Susan Candell expressed confidence in the new city council at the Dec. 14 meeting.

Candell's first priority is public safety. "I would like to take this year to examine inexpensive and fast solutions addressing public safety and take action," she said, noting that she thinks the city has not been keeping up with public safety improvements around schools.

Next on her list of priorities was the upcoming housing element update, due in two years. Candell said the city must work out where to put 1,660 new housing units, increasing the current housing stock of 10,000 total units by almost 17% over the next eight years.

"But it's worse than that," said Candell, "because we only get about 15% affordable units per market rate unit, so in or-

der to add the mandated 1,000 affordable units, we would need to add possibly 5,000 market rate units, which is 50% of our current housing stock."

Candell said she hopes the public and the new council members will weigh in on the direction of growth in the city, and while on the subject of housing, she included what she describes as "the issue of state housing mandates and the incessant attempt by Sacramento to remove local control for our cities," adding that as a city official, she expects that if the city is given a state mandate it should be accurate. "And all of us as taxpayers must demand that when a non-elected state agency interprets a mandate, we have every right to ensure that they have done their job correctly. Currently there is a coalition of city officials from both Northern California and Southern California looking

into this issue," she said.

Noting that about half of the city falls into a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Candell said that wildfire safety was another priority for her, and she said, referring to a bill vetoed by the governor last year, that she would like to adopt parts of SB 182 to protect the city. Additionally she would like to see "Firewise," a certification program that neighborhoods can achieve to harden homes against fire, as they have done in Moraga and Orinda.

Candell, noting that she was a big fan of term limits, said she would like to explore whether there is any interest in pursuing this. "It can be a vote of council, or we bring it to the residents as a ballot measure in the election."

Finally Candell said she hopes to continue making progress with the work on the

Equity and Inclusion Task Force addressing both inclusion and systemic racism and said she hopes to make this an all Lamorinda effort, reaching out to all of the community groups who promote diversity, equity and inclusion locally, and possibly creating a coalition to empower these groups.

"I'm going to take a moment to acknowledge that we are a deeply divided country based on our political parties," said Candell. "I include political intolerance from both sides as breaking down our quest to be a more inclusive city."

"So often what divides us is much smaller than what unifies us," said Candell, suggesting that both sides should bring the temperature down and simply allow each other to agree to disagree and to do so with tolerance, kindness and inclusion.

Lamorinda Village honors Lafayette resident Suzy Pak



Photo provided

Suzy Pak is this year's Ed Stokes Volunteer of the Year award recipient.

By Pippa Fisher

A global pandemic isn't going to deter one of Lamorinda's most proactive seniors organizations from celebrating the year and honoring all the volunteers on whom they rely. This year the Ed Stokes Volunteer of the Year award went to Suzy Pak at the meeting held over Zoom Jan. 14.

This was the sixth year for Lamorinda Village's event known as the Afternoon of Gratitude. The special award was inspired by and is given in memory of Diablo Foods founder Ed Stokes who was very involved with the community throughout his entire life. Diablo Foods remains very committed to its partnership with Lamorinda Village.

More than 200 shopping trips for seniors who are sheltering in place for groceries and prescription pickups, averaging at least six deliv-

eries a week, earned Pak the award along with a proclamation read out by Lafayette Mayor Susan Candell.

Pak, who also serves on the Lafayette School District Board of Governors, and volunteers for the Spirit Van program, was characteristically modest, saying it was her privilege and that it helps her to be able to give back during hard times, working hard in memory of her own parents.

The nonprofit organization also honored volunteers Andy Nguyen, and Andrea Appleton who volunteers with her teen daughter Avery, for their work.

Board President Larry Toy said that when the pandemic started LV stepped up and proved what they could do together. Serving a membership of 300 seniors, helping them to remain in their homes in various ways, LV started the year with 40 volunteers and now has around 200.

They started doing "check-in" phone calls to seniors and have started many friendships. Working with the National Charity League, they provided over 200 emergency go-bags, and now hold meetings over Zoom, including meditation classes and chair yoga classes. The village is currently partnering with several other organizations to bring COVID-19 vaccines to their members (see story, page A1).

LV Operations Manager Kathryn Ishizu says that facing the difficulties together has added a new level of genuine camaraderie amongst their members.

"Zoom has enabled us to be a close virtual village," says Board Member Andy Amstutz. "Lamorinda Village has matured into a real community, and the fundamental village concept has been demonstrated and proven."



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Limited number of affordable homes now available at Woodbury Highlands



Photo courtesy Hello Housing webpage

Six BMR homes are available at Woodbury Highlands.

By Pippa Fisher

The chance to apply for a new below market rate home in Woodbury Highlands is being offered now but the current pre-application period is set to close soon.

Woodbury Highlands, the 99-unit luxury condominium complex located just west of the downtown area near the reservoir built by Davidon Homes is offering 15% of the homes to income-restricted households. Six units are available now with an additional nine homes to be released in 2022 and 2023 for a total of 15 BMR homes in this development.

Program Manager Zoe McGeary for Hello Housing, the nonprofit company working with the city to manage the process, presented the format for applications to the city council at the Jan. 11 meeting.

McGeary explained that six brand new two- and three-bedroom homes are available for sale this year to be affordable to households of between two and seven people at 50% and 120% of area median income, with 3% of the purchase price as a down payment. She said there are no preference points required, such as already living in Lafayette.

The pre-application phase will close on Jan. 25, and if eligible, applicants will be placed in a lottery for a random drawing to get a lottery ranking. McGeary expects to receive hundreds of applications, telling the council at the meeting that Hello Housing has already received around 400 since Jan. 4 when pre-application opened.

More information can be found on the Hello Housing website www.hellohousing.org/woodburyhighlands/

Lafayette mayor addresses concerns on overpass protest tensions



Trump supporters on the overpass Jan. 15. Photo Pippa Fisher

By Pippa Fisher

Prompted by reports of violence and intimidation on the El Curtola overpass, which has been the scene of pro-Trump protests for several months, Lafayette Mayor Susan Candell released a statement expressing concern, and reassurance that police will continue to monitor the area during the protests and will increase patrols if necessary.

Several members of the public spoke out at the Jan. 11 city council meeting, alleging incidents of harassment and physical attacks, as well as safety concerns over the potential for the large flags hanging over the busy freeway to fall.

"I wish to address some of the concerns raised over reported conduct on the overpass," said Candell in the statement, released by the city Jan. 14. "Along with our city manager, city attorney, and police chief, I have carefully reviewed the range of lawful responses that we, as a city, can implement concerning events on the El Curtola overpass. I can say with full confidence that the response by our police department has been appropriate and timely. When violations of the law have been reported, including allegations of assault, the police department has made arrests and our judicial

system is processing these matters."

Noting that peaceful forms of protest in public spaces are a bedrock of democracy, Candell said that First Amendment rights must be upheld for everyone, both those living in Lafayette and those who come to Lafayette to express their views.

Addressing calls for the overpass to be closed, Candell said, "Under the law, however, we cannot do this and prohibit lawful protests. Likewise, the city cannot limit access to the overpass to only residents, as has been suggested. All members of the public, no matter where they live, have the right to peacefully assemble on the overpass. If the City of Lafayette were to hinder those rights, it could expose the city to significant legal challenges and, perhaps, make Lafayette a focal point for future protests."

Candell said the city, working with the police will continue to monitor events and will make arrests should any law be violated.

"Let us all do our part to uphold the First Amendment and to deescalate a sensitive situation," said Candell, closing out the statement. "I know that nerves are frayed. But we must come together to ensure that our democracy functions peacefully and respectfully."



Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting
Monday, Jan. 25, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 1, 7 p.m.
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Design Review

Wednesday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m. Zoom
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

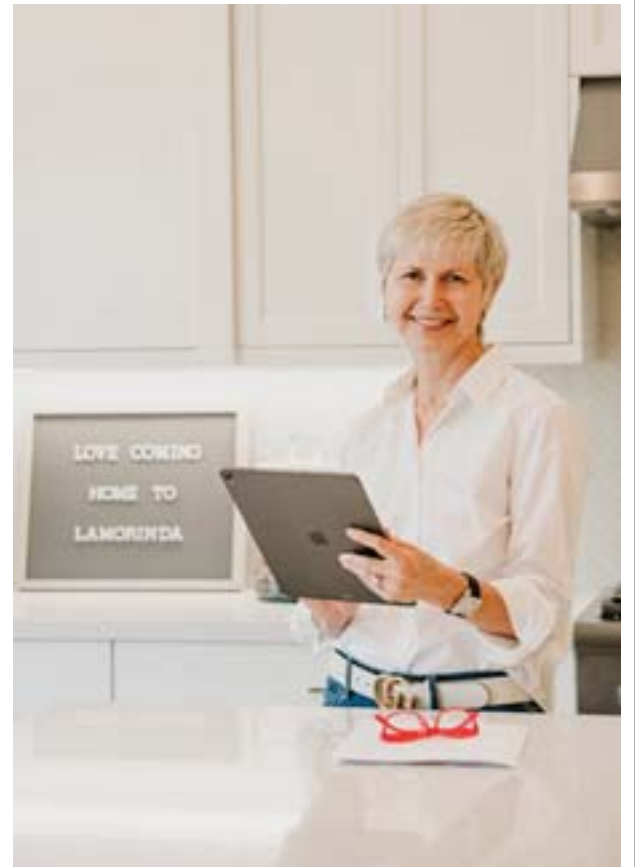
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New Moraga mayor looks forward to serving the community



Photo provided

**Moraga mayor Mike McCluer
 By Vera Kochan**

Mike McCluer was officially nominated and elected mayor of Moraga during the Dec. 9 town council meeting with Steve Woehleke nominated and elected as vice mayor. McCluer grew up in Pennsylvania and Chicago but

moved to Moraga with his family in the 1970s where he went on to attend Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. "My career took me east, then the Midwest," he said. "During this time I would visit my family annually in Moraga and continue to monitor its progress. I returned to Moraga in 2002 with my daughters going to JM and Campolindo, so I've known this town for decades and have lived in town for over 25 years."

With a 30-year career in finance, McCluer began serving Moraga as a member of the Planning Commission and was later elected to the town council in 2018. His desire to be a community volunteer grew from concerns about the direction the town was taking and his aspiration to help.

When asked what aspects of his initial campaign platform he hoped to accomplish

as Moraga's new mayor, McCluer replied, "Well first, the goals we seek to accomplish are achieved as a team with my town council colleagues and our great staff. Having said that, I hope our team can continue on the progress of the last two years and focus on unfunded financial needs, fire prevention, traffic safety/congestion, attracting retail, preserving our semi-rural culture, recreation, and participate with community groups to address diversity and inclusion." McCluer added, "And, I feel it's incredibly important to continue our efforts to enhance communication with full transparency in everything we do!"

McCluer feels that his experiences on the town council, in addition to keeping an open channel with the community, have helped prepare him for his role as mayor. He does believe that "there are

always opportunities to continue learning, apply new skills, as well as sharpen skills, especially in a new role."

Some attributes McCluer credits himself with are a strong passion and skill set with regards to listening and understanding residents' issues in addition to working with a team to find solutions. "The most important requirement of a town council member is leadership," he stated. "Acting as the board of directors for the town, we have this responsibility to lead our community. And, I believe in the concept of a servant leader, a person who leads to serve the residents." McCluer is open to citizen input and is honored to lead his team in working for the community and making Moraga a better place to live.

Town council establishes a Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee

By Vera Kochan

In a year full of unprecedented global turmoil and disruption, and in response to local efforts to increase awareness about diversity issues, the Moraga Town Council formed a Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee Jan. 13 during its first meeting of the year.

Numerous national and local events were the driving force behind the need for such a committee, according to town staff, beginning with the May 25, 2020 death of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers.

In response to that event, Campolindo and Miramonte high school students organized a peaceful rally in Moraga Commons Park on June 4, which drew approximately 500 Lamorinda residents, council members and town staff.

Shortly thereafter, Moraga Police Chief Jon King expressed his dismay over the actions of the Minneapolis police officers during the June 10 town council meeting and presented an update that included MPD's mission statement, policies and approach to the 8 Can't Wait police use of force campaign concerns.

On July 15, town staff attended a mandatory workshop on "Understanding and Mitigating Unconscious Bias." An optional "Allies and Accomplices" workshop was offered on Nov. 5.

In October, Campo students participated in a school cultural survey entitled "Campolindo Student Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Survey." The purpose of the survey was to gather data on the progress of the school's newly updated mission statement: "Campolindo strives to inspire and empower every student by fostering belonging, well-being, and accountability in an equitable learning environment." The survey revealed that 59% of students witnessed a racist act by another student either on campus or at a school event. Additionally, 52% of students surveyed witnessed a racist incident in Moraga perpetrated by a non-student.

The Campolindo Diversity and Inclusion Committee sponsored a Dec. 2 virtual film screening event and discussion with the founder of the national Not In Our Town movement, which attracted approximately 75 Zoom attendees.

A Dec. 4 incident, whereby a Black faculty

member's tire was allegedly vandalized while parked in Campolindo's parking lot, prompted nearly 30 participants during the Public Comment portion of the Dec. 9 town council meeting, with even more viewers watching the virtual proceedings. The common thread of outrage and pleas for the formation of an ad hoc committee to be discussed on a future agenda was quickly realized. According to King, as of Jan. 14 the investigation into the incident remains ongoing.

Moraga's town council voted unanimously for the formation of a Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee, composed of Mayor Mike McCluer and Council Member Renata Sos, in order to participate in the community-wide efforts to raise awareness about and address issues regarding diversity and inclusion in the town of Moraga.

The committee members will represent the town council at community meetings, discussions and workshops and report back to the council, as needed. The communication between the council and the community has a temporary term beginning Jan. 13 through June 30, 2022. There is no direct fiscal impact to this action.

Moraga's electric vehicle charging stations are up and running



Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

In keeping with the town's Climate Action Plan goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, four electric vehicle charging stations are now fully functional within Moraga.

Two of the chargers are located in the parking lot of the Town Offices at 329 Rheem Blvd. The other two are in the main parking lot of Moraga Commons Park located at 1425 St. Mary's Rd.

The project fell behind schedule due to COVID-19 shelter-in-place mandates which delayed not only the construction and installation of the stations, but also delayed the permitting process.

The SemaConnect stations can be located through various free applications such as ChargeHub EV Map, PlugShare and the SemaConnect app. Additionally, users can see the availability of individual stations before making the trip out, only to discover that all ports are in use.

The town-owned stations are currently charging a tiered rate based on the time of day as shown in the attached table.

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10 p.m. to 8 a.m.	\$0.31

Moraga Commons Park EV charging stations



Town Council
 Wednesday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission:
 Monday, Feb. 1, 7 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission:
 Tuesday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.,

Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 Special Board Meeting
 Tuesday, Feb. 9, 6 p.m.
 www.moraga.k12.ca.us
 See also AUHSD meeting page A2



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Longtime Public Works employee retires after 25 years on the job



Steve Reichhold on the job.

Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

Not many towns or cities can boast about an employee that's been on the job for 25

years. Moraga's Public Works/Parks Maintenance crew member Steve Reichhold has decided to hang up his safety vest in favor of

retirement.

Reichhold began his career in 1995 at age 37 in Moraga doing grounds work and park maintenance. "There was no special reason for coming to Moraga other than I needed a job," he recalled. "I had done that type of work in Oakland, and before that, I did it as a kid for my parents and grandparents." His position later merged into the Public Works Department where he began working on potholes, litter maintenance and fallen tree removal.

According to his immediate supervisor, Public Works/Parks Maintenance Manager Kyle Salvin, "Steve was a very dedicated worker. The majority of his 25 years of service Steve was tasked with covering the weekend shifts and never missed a day. He supervised the Work Alternative Program (Work Furlough), which at times required him to oversee more than five workers at a time. Not an easy task for one person." Salvin added, "Steve liked to interact with the Moraga residents and valued the relationships he found here," noting that Reichhold

always displayed a kind and gentle manner.

Reichhold remembers many times getting a call late at night or in the early hours of the morning to help during some of Moraga's more recent disasters. "I once had to remove a 60-year-old tree that fell onto St. Mary's Road at 3 a.m. When the first Rheem sinkhole happened I was called to put up pedestrian barricades with the Work Furlough crew. I told them, 'This sidewalk won't be here by tomorrow' – and it wasn't."

Other memorable moments on the job include one of Moraga's wettest winters. "I was told there were 24 mudslides around town," recalls Reichhold. "The bulldozers had to push everything back, and it took days for the dump trucks to get rid of all the mud on the roads. It was the longest two hours of my life standing in the pouring rain holding a sign for drivers to slow down. After that was the Canyon Bridge closure. We had to put up the same kind of barricades as were used for the sinkholes."

Reichhold stayed on the job for so long because he felt

it was a fun place to work, and over the years he grew to think of his co-workers as family: "I feel that I contributed my share. I liked the work, but it got tougher as I got older."

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp stated, "Working for a public agency is truly a life's calling, especially for us in Public Works. For Steve, he has dedicated over 25 years of his professional life to one community, Moraga. This is a rare thing in today's world. Through all kinds of weather, all types of issues and all through the year, Steve dedicated himself to Moraga and its residents. We cannot say enough thanks and appreciation to Steve. We are wishing Steve the best in his well-deserved retirement."

Reichhold plans on keeping busy in a leisurely fashion by doing a lot of hiking, line dancing, biking, reading and possibly RV-ing. And, just so that he doesn't lose the skills he honed for over 25 years, he'll continue to garden around the house.

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www.orindaassociation.org

Orinda Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting:
Tuesday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only

Please...



Orinda honors volunteers and PG&E friend



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Tom Guarino, who recently passed away, works with residents at the Lost Valley substation, November 2016.

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda city council took the opportunity on Jan. 12 to honor some people who have contributed to the quality of life in the city.

"Mark Roberts has served this community for so many years in so many capacities," Mayor Amy Worth said by way of introduction. While the council was specifically honoring Roberts for his service on the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Worth praised him for all of his volunteer efforts. Worth recalled that former mayor

Victoria Smith recommended setting up a citizen committee to respond to neighbors' safety concerns.

"Mark has been instrumental, has been like a rock on that committee," Worth said. But he has worn many hats in Orinda. Roberts was presented with a certificate honoring his many years of dedicated service on TSAC. "Volunteers like you make Orinda such a wonderful place to live," Worth concluded.

Vice Mayor Dennis Fay added his thanks, and Council Member Darlene Gee told

Roberts, "You are really, really the living embodiment of what Orinda is like with volunteers," adding that she could hardly think of anything that his name has not been associated with over the years.

Council Member Inga Miller told Roberts, "You are such a warm spirit; you are always surrounded by your friends," and hoped that the city would continue to see him at the annual Fourth of July parade.

Jane Wiser accepted honors for the Orinda Garden Club for its holiday wreath program. The mayor told Wiser, who accepted a proclamation for the hand-decorated wreaths, that she was particularly grateful for the beautiful wreaths that adorned the community during the holiday season.

"During COVID-19," she wondered, "how do we make it feel like there is some sense of joy?"

Worth said that the wreaths helped people feel a sense of place, and hoped that they encouraged people to shop locally.

Wiser said that this was the ninth year of the program, which was started because the garden club wanted to do something for the community. "The image of the wreath represents friendship," she said, "the circle of life." She thanked the director of Parks and Recreation for giving the garden club a safe place to assemble the wreaths, on tables set up outside of the community center. Wiser also gave a shout out to the clubs plant sale, which will take place April 17 at the community

center. Club members are busy propagating plants from their gardens now. She concluded her remarks by telling the council that the recognition "means the world to us, and your appreciation means so much to us."

Council Member Nick Kosla said that his children are 11 and 14 and have grown up with the tradition of the wreaths around Orinda. "This year, so many traditions didn't happen because of COVID," he said, "but this was a lovely tradition."

Agreeing that the wreaths were incredibly special, Council Member Darlene Gee said, "They are always nice, but this year it gave everybody an extra boost. Things were a little more normal and it made the holiday a little bit special." She said that the extra effort meant a lot to everyone.

The meeting was closed in honor of PG&E Senior Government Relations Representative Tom Guarino, who recently died of COVID-19. Worth said that the pandemic is so much more real when it strikes so close to home. The mayor said of Guarino, "He made us look like miracle workers." He was, she said, a tremendous friend of local government, and his loss was tremendous.

Worth recalled that Guarino was extremely supportive of charities. "He will be greatly missed," she concluded, as she adjourned the meeting in his memory and in grateful appreciation to his service to all our communities. The city of Lafayette also adjourned its recent council meeting in honor of Guarino.

No plays in the park? Enjoy 'Pinocchio' online



"Pinocchio" cast

Photo provided

By Sora O'Doherty

Recognizing that fans are missing live performances at Orinda Community Park, the Orinda Starlight Village Play-

ers (OrSVP) has released a video of its 2015 production of "Pinocchio." The free video is available through the end of January.

This year would have marked OrSVP's 37th year

producing shows in the Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater. According to Malcolm Cowler, director of 2015's "Pinocchio," "We want to offer this delightful play for your enjoyment in

this new year."

The theater group sincerely thanked all who have joined them for Zoom murder mysteries and its Christmas show. These generous donations have made it possible for the group to continue to pay rent for storage.

Next month OrSVP will have a new online, interactive Zoom mystery, "Valentine Mobsters, Molls and Mayhem."

Marketing Director Suzan Lorraine has set up a GoFundMe page to help raise needed monies to support the little theatre company through the year. Visit www.gofundme.com/f/Orinda-Starlight-Village-Players for more information.

Visit www.orsvp.org to access the video of "Pinocchio" and also for additional donation options.

Orinda changes approach to road maintenance

By Sora O'Doherty

The city of Orinda, which was incorporated in 1985 primarily

to deal with the horrendous condition of its roads, is now taking a major step in adopting a new policy for how it will deal with road maintenance. Until the end of 2020, the focus was primarily on repairing residential roads, with those characterized as "arterials and collectors" scheduled for attention following the work on residential roads.

The new policy, adopted by the city council at its Jan. 12 meeting, was accepted by the outgoing Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission last July. The CIOC requested that the council approve the policy.

The old residential street policy used as its primary selection criterion working first on those streets in the worst condition. However, since all the public residential streets in Orinda have now been rehabilitated, this criterion is no longer necessary. The new policy allows the city to use StreetSaver - a pavement management program authorized by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission - for all public roads in the city. This computer-based program

uses data regarding a street's current pavement condition, maintenance and rehabilitation history, potential rehabilitation treatment, and the city's budget to provide broad level recommendations for pavement maintenance.

Field inspections of pavement condition are made every two years for arterial and collector roads, and every four years for residential/local roads and generates a pavement condition index for each public road section. The data is updated and reviewed every two years.

The new, unified policy calls for city staff to prepare a three-year rolling paving plan, using the procedures in the policy to select which streets to include in recurring pavement projects. The successor to the CIOC would review the annual projects' street lists on an annual basis and then forward to the city council for approval. Staff would obtain this approval via the Capital Improvement Plan process, which is updated annually, by including the street lists as an exhibit to the project description pages.

Although the plan is prepared annually, it should be noted that staff may determine it to be advantageous to skip doing an annual paving project in some years, and do one every other year, which would allow some flexibility in changing program priorities to perform some wildfire mitigation work.

In public comments, Charles Porges questioned how the new policy would deal with private streets, and also urged that human judgment take priority over StreetSaver. Chair of the CIOC Judd Hammon assured the city council that the members of the CIOC are all comfortable with the new policy, and assured the council that the policy does provide that human judgment will be taken into account.

Mayor Amy Worth pointed out that StreetSaver is provided free by the MTC, and thanked staff for its thoughtful analysis. The matter passed unanimously.

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LAC keeps Orinda galleries going virtually



Rajesh Blues_Perception



Rajesh Serenity

Images provided

By Sora O'Doherty

The Lamorinda Arts Council, which manages both the gallery at the Orinda Library and the gallery at the Wilder Art & Garden Center, continues to offer online gallery exhibitions in the month of January: "African Wildlife in Photographs" at the Library Gallery and a virtual exhibit featuring 12 watercolor and oil paintings by Rashmi Rajesh at the Art Gallery at Wilder.

The Library exhibit features five local photographers – Maggie Boscoe, David Fleisig, Pam Hall, Jeffrey Halliday and Maureen Rosati-Wee – who present photographs taken on safari. Their exhibit includes the exotic animals, birds and landscapes each photographer encountered on their travels. The Wilder exhibit features Rajesh's florals, landscapes, abstracts, and still life works.

Rajesh's work can be viewed at www.rashmisartcarte.com. The Lamorinda Arts Council's retail gallery and online exhibits may be viewed at www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries/.

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Firefighters called upon to distribute COVID-19 vaccine

By Nick Marnell

Acknowledging that the initial phase of the COVID-19 vaccination rollout has moved slowly, Contra Costa Health Services announced Jan. 11 that it will use firefighter-paramedics to help distribute the vaccine within the county.

Since mid-December, the county had administered 36,000 doses of the vaccine as of Jan. 15. At that rate, with the county's professed goal of vaccinating 725,000 residents within six months in order to achieve herd immunity levels, the job would not be completed for two years. CCHS says it will require a major escalation of vaccinations to reach the county goal, jumping from approximately 1,200 vaccinations a day to 7,000 a day.

"We continue to redirect every resource available to getting shots in arms," Dr. Ori Tzvieli, Contra Costa County Deputy Health Officer and COVID Operations Chief, said in a statement. "At the same time, we are developing partnerships and networks that will ensure every pharmacy and healthcare provider in the county can provide the vaccine as more and more people are eligible to receive it."

To that end, along with opening more vaccination sites and activating its medical reserve corps, the county will enlist the aid of firefighter-paramedics to ramp up vaccination efforts.

Both the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District are on board to

help administer the vaccine. "ConFire is working closely with Contra Costa Health Services to determine how and when our cadre of 300-some EMT and paramedic firefighters can support distribution plans for the COVID-19 vaccines," said Steve Hill, district public information officer. "We are eager to leverage our frontline patient care providers to further the health and safety of the communities we serve across the county."

"Anything we do to assist vaccine distribution will be done in support of County Health's plan," said MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker, though as of mid-January it was too early to say exactly what will be asked of the county fire agencies. The likelihood was that fire per-

sonnel would assist with inoculations at the county health sites rather than at independent fire agency locations, the chief said.

The county expects to have administered all of its 72,000 allocated vaccine doses to most members of Phase 1A and 1B priority groups "in the coming days and weeks," Tzvieli said on Jan. 15. Into early January, healthcare workers, employees and resi-

dents of long-term care facilities, and people aged 75 and over were eligible to receive the COVID vaccine in Contra Costa County.

On Jan. 13, the state added people 65 and over to the eligibility list, further straining the county distribution network. "We've been getting about 1,000 requests per hour on our website," said Anna Roth, Contra Costa County Health Director.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors
Wednesday, Jan. 20, 6 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.mofd.org

ConFire
Board of Directors
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 1:00 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



Upcoming Community Wildfire Prevention Plan meetings

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District released a draft of its Community Wildfire Prevention Plan in December and

plans to host community meetings throughout the district to take feedback. The meetings are scheduled for

Orinda Jan. 21, Canyon Jan. 28 and Moraga Feb. 4. All meetings will be held via online conference at 6 p.m.

For more CWPP information, go to the MOFD website: <https://www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention/community-wildfire-protection-plan-cwpp>

Thousands of dead trees pose extreme fire risk in Lamorinda

... continued from Page A1

Adding to the nuisance value of Monterey pine trees, the U.S. Forest Service says that Monterey pine wood is light, soft, and coarse grained, with little commercial value in the United States except as fuel wood.

According to the fire district, the red needles from Monterey pines will dry as summer approaches. The needles are highly flammable, and when fire climbs into the tree, the needles can detach and become firebrands or embers, capable of igniting downwind fires. These spot fires can start anytime, with burning embers landing in fuel beds and carrying as far away as a mile.

Trees die largely due to old age, lack of water or "forest pests," Isaacs said. When Monterey pines get dehydrated, the pine bark beetles attack, setting the stage for the trees' demise.

"Dead trees can overwhelm the system come spring and summer," Isaacs said. "Dead trees unattended are a violation of the fire code. They can make fire season even worse."

To keep the dead tree problem from spiraling out of



Dying Monterey pines in an Orinda backyard. Photos Nick Marnell



Removal of eucalyptus tree on Camino Pablo in Orinda Jan. 11.

control into fire season, fire district employees will begin their annual vegetation man-

agement inspections in the spring and issue citations for properties that are not in

compliance. Isaacs urged residents to assess their property for pines with telltale red

needles and arrange for tree removal as soon as possible before demand spikes in the spring and summer.

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

Public Safety

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Lafayette Police Department:
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt
925-299-3221

Police Department Tip Line
94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues
94549Traffic@gmail.com

Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049

Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, David M. Cook
925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary
Report
Dec. 27 - Jan. 9



Alarms	33
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	7
Traffic	20
Suspicious Circumstances	12
Suspicious Subject	21
Suspicious Vehicle	12
Service to Citizen	36
Patrol Req./Security Check	45
Public/School Assembly Check	5
Supplemental Report	28
Vacation House Check	19

Welfare Check 18
Ordinance Violation 1

Vehicle violations
Auto Burglary
3500 Block Brook St.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Reckless Driving
Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24
Olympic Blvd./Olympic Oaks Dr.
900 Block Moraga Rd.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Upper Happy Valley Rd./El Nido Ranch Rd.

Laurel Dr./Deer Hill Rd.
1st St./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Tc - Property Damage
Pleasant Hill Rd./Reliez Valley Rd.

Vehicle Theft
1000 Block 2nd St.,Laf
30 Block Chapel Dr.
3500 Block Brook St.,Laf
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Other criminal activity
Fraud False Pretenses
3600 Block Madrone Dr.
Identity Theft
3200 Block Andreasen Dr.
3300 Block Springhill Rd. (2)

Petty Theft
400 Block Helen Ave.
3100 Block Sunridge Ct.
Petty Theft Veh Parts
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Terrace Way

Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Theft Access Card
3200 Block Driftwood Dr.

Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
3600 Block Brook St.

100 Block Greenbank Dr.
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.
Disturbing The Peace
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Police Department

Loud Noise
200 Block Lafayette Cir.
Orchard Rd./Oak Hill Rd.
2Nd St./Golden Gate Way

Loud Party
1000 Block Carol Ln.
1000 Block Dewing Ave.

Public Nuisance
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Vandalism
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.
900 Block Acalanes Rd.
3500 Block Golden Gate Way
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1200 Block Warner Ct.
Eb Sr 24 At El Curtola Blvd.

Other
Covid-19 Violation
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Fireworks
3100 Block Lucas Dr.
Harassment
Acalanes Rd./El Nido Ranch Rd.

Surveillance
El Curtola Blvd. Overpass (7)
Threats
900 Block East St.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Trespass
3300 Block Sweet Dr.
Violation Custody Order
3300 Block Springhill Rd. (2)
Violation Restraining Order
3300 Block Springhill Rd.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report



Dec. 29 - Jan. 11

Alarms	12
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	4
Traffic	31
Suspicious Circumstances	7
Suspicious Subject	3
Suspicious Vehicle	6
Service to Citizen	27
Patrol Req./Security Check	20
Supplemental Report	5
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	4
Pubic/School Assembly Check	1

Vehicle violations
Excessive Speed
Moraga Way/St Andrews Dr.
Old Moraga Trail/Sanders Range
Moraga Way/Canyon Rd.
Canyon Rd./Sanders Dr.
Moraga Way/Viader Dr.
Moraga Way/School St
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr. (5)

Reckless Driving
Camino Pablo/Rimer Dr.
School St./Country Club Dr.
Campolinoo Dr./Moraga Road

Vehicle Theft
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Other criminal activity
Burglary
Not Available
Grand Theft
90 Block Brookfield Dr.

Identity Theft
Police Department
50 Block Ashbrook Pl.
20 Block Fleuti Dr.
1300 Block Larch Ave.

Petty Theft
100 Block Calle La Mesa
Rape
St Marys College

Residential Burglary
Not Available (2)
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
2100 Block Donald Dr.

Drunk In Public
1300 Block Camino Peral
Loud Party
Not Available

Other criminal activity
Fireworks
Tharp Dr./Deerfield Dr.
2000 Block Ascot Dr.

H&S Violation
Safeway
Ordinance Violation
Ivy Dr./Miramonte Dr.

Other Infraction
500 Block Butterfield Pl.
Possession Of Burglary Tools
St Marys College

Possession Of Stolen Prof.
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Unwanted Guest
1400 Block Moraga Way



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back next time

Closing for good, Sewnow says goodbye



Sewnow will be closing at the end of January. Photo provided

By Pippa Fisher

It is a business that has touched countless young lives, giving them skills and perhaps

more importantly a safe, “happy place” for over 14 years. But like several other Lafayette institutions, Sewnow will be closing for good at the end of January.

Fashion studio Sewnow owner Susan Goldie explained in a letter to loyal students and families that it is not possible to sustain an in-person business in the current pandemic. For 14 years Goldie has taught professional design fashion, traditional sewing skills, and techniques for creating unique clothing. But for many, it was much more than just sewing lessons.

Karin Husch, whose daughter Julia attended Sewnow and went on to teach there during college vacations while studying at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, says that Goldie created a nurturing environment where kids learned to sew at their own pace.

“I enrolled Julia at Sewnow at age 9 (within the first year Susan opened the studio),” says Husch. “It was instantly her ‘happy place’ and I recall wanting her to always be enrolled in a class there; being at Sewnow was essentially Julia’s ‘recharge’ time.”

“There’s almost nothing as

happy as a group sewing bee with everyone using their creative skills to help out and with happy chatter exchanging all kinds of stories in the room,” says Goldie.

Over the years Sewnow has worked with Boy and Girl Scout troops, helped Stanley students make hand embellished chitons for the Greek Festival, sewn tote bags for tsunami victims in Japan, facilitated group quilt projects for school auctions, hosted workshops for Dress a Girl Around the World, made NICU baby blankets and NCL stockings and more. At the beginning of the pandemic Sewnow turned to making and donating face masks for essential workers.

Julia Husch credits Goldie with nourishing her fashion education, personal growth and career endeavors.

“As a longtime Sewnow student and instructor I hope the passion Susan has instilled in this community’s youth will continue to flourish once the Sewnow doors shut,” says Julia. “I know I will continue to expand my love of creating and pass on the skills and

lessons she has taught me to future young people. I am honored to call Susan Goldie a dear friend.”

Goldie says the best part of the business was always the connection to families, kids, and community. “It’s the a-ha moments, and the huge ‘look what I made’ smiles, that have made our journey so meaningful.

“If I had to pick one highlight, it would be spending creative time with kids who literally have grown up sewing with us – some of our first students are now married and have their own families, and I hear that sewing is still an important part of their lives, whether as a hobby or a livelihood.”

Goldie plans to take some time to rest and recharge before moving forward with her textile and artwork endeavors. She plans to write about it in her blog (see below). Goldie says she is working on a resource list for classes, supplies, and machine repairs for people who are asking how they can continue to sew. Details will be available on her website, below.

Goldie’s blog can be found at www.goldielimitededitions.com
A resource list can be found on the Sewnow website at <http://sewnow.com/>

Food trucks pop up at the Roundup



Photo provided

Food trucks visit the Roundup Thursdays through Saturdays.

By Pippa Fisher

Lafayette’s long-established Roundup Saloon is turning to a variety of food trucks to bring customers in to help them weather the storm during the pandemic.

The food trucks will be there Thursdays through Saturdays, says Roundup owner Karen Johnson, “and any

other day I can find a truck.” She says that in this tough year being able to open even a little bit helps a lot.

The Roundup was shut down from mid-March until November, and then open for outdoor seating only until mid-December before having to shut down again. Johnson says the trucks don’t bring in a lot of money but it helps

cover some of the monthly expenses of the bar. And she says that it’s also nice to open the doors and see their customers’ support.

“Having your livelihood taken away has been extremely difficult, both financially and emotionally,” says Johnson. “Our employees have also been struggling trying to make ends meet. It’s hard because we are like a family and we feel responsible for them. We feel helpless not being able to do anything for them.”

Food trucks that will be coming include The Forge Fire Truck, Flavors of Cali, Charlie’s Food Trailer, Cousins Maine Lobster, and Cocina Danzon.

Johnson says the good news is that the Roundup is not in danger of going under. “We are plugging along,” she says.

And she remains optimistic, looking to the future. “We will be back, stronger than ever, as soon as possible.”

Saint Mary’s College names its 30th president



Photo provided

Incoming SMC president Richard G. Plumb, PhD

By Vera Kochan

Richard G. Plumb, PhD, will take the reigns as the 30th president of Saint Mary’s College beginning July 1. Plumb will replace President James Donahue who will retire at the end of the 2020-21 school year following eight years at the helm.

Plumb comes to SMC after a 30-year career holding senior leadership positions at Binghamton University in New York, University of Kansas, Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and University of St. Thomas in Minnesota where he has been since 2014.

After a nationwide search involving SMC trustees, Christian Brothers, faculty, staff and alumni, Plumb was unanimously appointed by

the college’s board of trustees. “Richard’s passion for Saint Mary’s and Catholic higher education, along with his considerable accomplishments, made him the standout candidate in a competitive national pool of applicants,” said Board of Trustees Chairperson Kevin Nagle. “We are excited to have him join the Saint Mary’s community.”

Plumb joins SMC with experience in capital planning, shared governance, curriculum development, financial management, and strategic planning. “Richard not only understands the issues facing higher education today, he demonstrated to us how a university can succeed in today’s environment,” explained SMC Trustee/Search Committee Co-Chair Kim Vogel. “Richard’s considerable experience in fundraising, program development, and diversity initiatives made it clear that his unifying vision can lead Saint Mary’s to the next level.”

“Saint Mary’s College holds a distinctive and highly admired place in the landscape of higher education, and I am deeply honored to be appointed as the College’s next president,” stated Plumb. “I look forward to working collaboratively with the talented leadership at Saint Mary’s to make the college an international leader in Catholic liberal arts education.”



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As Seen in Lamorinda



The entire staff at Stat Med Urgent Care in Lafayette are receiving their first doses of COVID-19 vaccines through the County, including Lafayette resident Dr. Armando Samaniego, Stat Med Chief Medical Officer, shown here.

Photo courtesy Stat Med Urgent Care

Service Clubs Announcements

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary

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

February 2021 Weekly Speakers

5: Patrick Thelen, Beirut Tragedy
12: No Meeting - President's Day Weekend
19: Club Assembly
26: Member Magazine on Wine, Mark Lewis

www.lamorindasunrise.com

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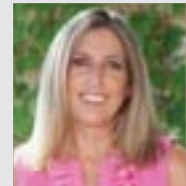
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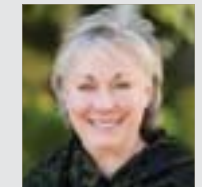
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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

'Deconstruction:' Empowering cancer survivors through art



Photos provided

Carson Kljavin, Joyce Mallonee, Alex Mallonee at a family barbecue in 2015.



Alex Mallonee

By Diane Claytor

A very small group of family and friends will safely gather Jan. 24 to celebrate the 70th birthday of longtime Lafayette resident Joyce Mallonee. Sadly, she will not be in attendance. Mallonee died in October 2020 after courageously and gracefully battling cancer for 25 years. The celebration of her life concludes a five-day multimedia art exhibit, "Deconstruction," open to the public at Lafayette's Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery.

"Deconstruction" was conceived by Joyce Mallonee several years ago as a mental exercise, explains her son, Alex Mallonee, believing it was her way of coping with all the things that had been happening to her. As she described it, Alex Mallonee recalls, "she would imagine herself lying on a table with doctors removing, replacing or modifying parts of her body." But she was determined not to allow these bodily changes to affect how she approached life. "She always said this disease did not change her sense of self and she would not allow it to control her life or identify who she was," Alex Mallonee lovingly says.

In fact, describing this ex-

hibit, Joyce Mallonee explained that the project was a creative way to show the journey she'd been through. "They can take stuff away from your physical form but they can't deconstruct your spirit," she wrote. "The point of this exercise is creating beauty and humor out of deconstruction. Creating a magical vision out of the road through adversity—the beauty of life, of loving, of laughing and creating."

An art major in college, Joyce Mallonee returned to the medium as a hobby in 2018, rediscovering her love of painting. Alex Mallonee believes this was a time of self-discovery for her. "She began approaching her life as an art project," he notes, "with cancer as the main viewing points." The concept of "Deconstruction" was born, although discussing the idea with some people resulted in less-than-positive reactions. No one is going to find this interesting, she was repeatedly told.

But when she mentioned it to her son, a filmmaker, director and producer living in New York at the time, his response was vastly different. "I think that's an amazing idea. Can I help?" Alex Mallonee remembers saying.

Together, mother and son conceptualized the exhibit and developed ideas about art pieces depicting the effects of cancer on Joyce Mallonee's body and mental state. They collaborated with a variety of artists to bring their ideas to life with humor and creativity. "Mom really wanted this show to be humorous," Alex Mallonee says, often referring to his mother in the present tense. "She didn't want it to be depressing. The reality of living with cancer is so heavy and humor was a huge coping mechanism for her."

Alex Mallonee believes

that putting this show together helped his mom work through some of the issues surrounding her disease. It certainly helped him. Admitting that he had a difficult time dealing with his mother's illness as a younger man, he now says that collaborating with her on this project made the whole process far less painful. "It suddenly became much easier to talk about," he comments. "Just the way we were able to discuss it was so matter-of-fact. Instead of worrying about the time we had remaining, we were working together to create something special. I think that's what she wanted and I immediately felt so much more in tune with what she was going through."

Although Joyce Mallonee did not live long enough to see her work come to fruition, Alex Mallonee, with the help of his sister, Carson, finished the show on her behalf. "I want to share my mom's story and believe there are many people that will connect with it," he says. "My mom and I both believed that art can empower cancer survivors."

Because of COVID, the exhibit is quite different than how it was originally conceived. Viewing appointments must be made in advance (<https://calendly.com/deconstructionartshow>), fewer people will be allowed in and masks are, of course, required. Alex Mallonee hopes to have a second show at another time, "after COVID," he declares. He will also be producing a virtual exhibit, which he expects to have completed later this year and is filming a documentary on the entire "Deconstruction" project.

"Deconstruction," a loving tribute and celebration of life through art, opens at the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery on Thursday, Jan. 21 and runs for five days. Seven artists, using a variety of mediums, have created eight pieces of work depicting Joyce Mallonee's personal journey, exploring themes of denial, vanity, humor and creativity as essential mechanisms for coping with cancer.

For more information, please visit <https://jenniferperlmuttergallery.com/2021/01/9233/> or www.facebook.com/deconstructionartshow

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Packed with flavor, this Mediterranean meal will bowl you over



Mediterranean Farro Bowl

Photo Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

Bowls are trendy and also a fun way to combine all sorts of your favorite ingredients into a dish that can be a complete and colorful meal! It's hard to find a menu these days that doesn't offer a "bowl" section. I probably would have called this dish a salad a few years ago, but with the major push toward bowls, it's a bowl for now! There's little difference between the two in

that they are still a bunch of healthy ingredients tossed together in a bowl.

Bowls can be made in the style of many different types of cuisine from Thai or Indian to Mexican, Chinese, Greek, French, Italian ... and Mediterranean. And, the great thing is that you can add whatever you like. Have it your way! Several years ago we featured our Forbidden Black Rice-Tabouli Chicken Bowl and that one is still one of our family's fa-

vorites.

For this recipe I used Trader Joe's 10-Minute Farro,

which literally cooks in 10 minutes, but use any farro you like and add whatever ingredients

you feel like adding or subtracting. These are really just ideas!

Mediterranean Farro Bowl

Ingredients

4-5 cups cooked farro
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 shallots, chopped
3/4 cup Kalamata olives, coarsely chopped
1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes, drained of oil (if packed in oil) and cut into julienne strips
2 tablespoons julienned basil (thin strips)
1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
15-20 cherry tomatoes, quartered
4 oz. feta cheese, cubed or crumbled
6 marinated artichoke hearts, drained and chopped (optional)
1/2 cup garbanzo beans (optional)
1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt

Dressing :

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 clove garlic, minced
Juice of one-half lemon

Garnishes :

Basil
Extra pine nuts
Grated Parmesan

DIRECTIONS

Cook farro according to the directions on your package. Cool completely and place into a large bowl. Cook shallots with olive oil in a saute pan over medium heat until translucent and just beginning to turn golden-brown. Cool and add to farro in bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and toss together with the dressing. Can be served warm or at room temperature.

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>



Lynn's Top Five

Prop 19 maneuvers – Is the juice worth the squeeze?

By Lynn Ballou CFP®

I've received many inquiries these past few weeks from those who are concerned about Prop 19's provision regarding the transfer of their property tax basis to children and grandchildren with respect to certain properties such as vacation homes and rental investment properties. I understand that no one willingly pays extra taxes, and with cut-off dates looming next month, there appears to be the sentiment that we need to rush to "do something!" But this is one "opportunity" that I believe most readers will take a pass on. Here's why.

In effect Feb. 16, Proposition 19 establishes new property tax rules with respect to transferring the property basis of homes for those who are at least 55 years old, severely disabled or who are victims of natural disasters or wildfires. However, for the purposes of this column, let's focus on the issue that seems to be garnering the most immediate concern. Local well-known estate planning attorney Cindy Sayegh explains that "beginning on and after Feb. 16, 2021, Prop. 19 limits the parent to child transfer, or grandparent to grandchild transfer if the parent is deceased, to a family home or farm that is the primary residence of both the transferor/parent to the transferee/child. More no-

tably, it eliminates the exclusions for any other type of property such as a rental property or vacation home/cabin. Essentially, Prop. 19 ended the ability to pass Prop. 13 property tax benefits to children upon death, meaning your children will not inherit your low property tax basis in these properties."

The gut reaction of many has been to simply start gifting these properties now before death. And although I understand the sense of concern and urgency you must feel, here's why I'm putting up some virtual "CAUTION" tape and asking you to slow down and think before you act.

1. If you do this, you are giving away the property now. Most often you have more than one heir. Do they want to co-own this/these properties with others? If not and you only want to gift to one heir and not others, how will you make that work from an equitable family estate planning standpoint that makes all family members happy? If they inherit jointly at your passing instead, wouldn't they most likely buy/sell to each other or to a third party? In my many years of practice, typically parents and grandparents bend over backwards to gift homes and other real estate to heirs when the reality is most of the time, the heirs don't want the gift and end up selling.

2. And if they do want to sell

and you've gifted the asset while you are alive, your heirs lose the step up in basis they'd benefit from if inheriting at your passing. So their taxable basis for capital gains and depreciation purposes (if they decide to keep the asset) is YOUR taxable basis, not a step up to the value at your date of death. This could have very large and very unwelcome capital gain consequences for your heirs.

3. Due to the size of such a gift, you will need to file a gift tax return and possibly pay gift taxes (or dip into your lifetime estate exclusion exemption).

4. Can your heirs afford to take on the property now regarding time and money involved? Is this actually a gift to them or a burden? Are you really ready to give up use, enjoyment and control of the property? Time for a family meeting! Don't just assume; ask and discuss in detail and you will need to be willing to share all the financial aspects relating to the ownership of the property you are contemplating giving to be sure your benefactors have an honest and complete picture of what they might be taking on.

5. If you and your family are still comfortable with the idea in general, then there's no time to waste and you should consult with your estate planning legal team as soon as possible. According to longtime Orinda resident es-

tate planning attorney Paula Leibovitz Goodwin and her colleague Jeff Tachiki with San Francisco law firm Perkins Coie, you can consider using sophisticated estate planning ideas such as setting up what are called "Incomplete Gift Trusts." They explain that such trusts potentially allow children to get the benefit of the parent-child exclusion and maintain the parents' property tax basis, while also keeping open the income tax basis step up otherwise lost when parents gift property to children. However, these incomplete gift trusts require careful and technical planning.

Leading up to the election, the selling points for Proposition 19 were well highlighted in the media. However, I think many voters did not fully understand all the changes that would be in place with the implementation of Proposition 19. Voters were in a very emotionally raw place from the many fires in California that resulted in widespread horrifying property losses. Also the notion that seniors were "stuck" in certain counties with respect to transferring their property tax basis struck a chord. Playing on those emotions allowed Proposition 19 supporters to rack up a win. Let's see if these provisions stay, or if the next election sees more tinkering with how Californians pay property taxes. In the

meantime my advice is don't let the tax tail wag the financial planning dog. If it's not the right time to transfer property to your heirs, don't do it just based on these new laws. Think about all the related tax and other planning issues before you make any moves. And as always, this is a perfect example of why you should reach out to your trusted team of pros including your CFP®, estate planning attorney and tax professional before you make any "next step" decisions.



Lynn Ballou CFP® is a Senior Vice President and Partner with EP Wealth Advisors. Information used in the writing of this column is believed to be factual and up-to-date, but we do not guarantee its accuracy and it should not be regarded as a complete analysis of the subject(s) discussed. All information is derived from sources deemed to be reliable. All expressions of opinion reflect the judgment of the author as of the date of publication and are subject to change.

Gold Coast Chamber Players announce virtual concerts for 2021



Cello/bass duo 2LOW

Photo provided

Submitted by Pamela Freund-Striplen

Gold Coast Chamber Players continue their virtual concerts in 2021 with an ambitious series of six new programs. The 2020 Fall Series, Bach Shorts, featured leading Bay Area cellists in an intimate exploration of Bach's Cello Suites. Main Stage Concerts, which begins in this month, celebrates love and diversity. Virtual links remain available for one week following the concert date.

Cello/bass duo 2LOW from the San Francisco Symphony begins the 2021 Main Stage Concerts at 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 24 with music by Handel, Bottesini and Rossini. Special guests, soprano Isabel Yang and pianist Keisuke Nakagoshi provide the "plus" for the title, 2LOW+.

Next is Russian Valentine at 4 p.m. Feb. 14 featuring Olga and Sergey Rakitchenkov illustrating their love story with music for viola and harp. Sphinx and Sitkovetsky on Feb. 28 is a collaboration between legendary Dmitry Sitkovetsky and two leading Sphinx artists celebrating diversity in the arts.

On March 20 at 7 p.m. the Delphi Trio

and violist Pamela Freund-Striplen team up for Love Story, a program celebrating a 19th century power couple: Clara and Robert Schumann.

The Bay Area Music Consortium, a group of chamber music organizations including Gold Coast Chamber Players, team up to present Music Around the Bay, a dazzling mix of local ensembles at 7 p.m. on April 10. Quinteto Latino, Friction Quartet, Alam Khan (tabla player), and Stars Aligned Siblings are featured.

Completing the Main Stage Concerts is, Dvorak's America, exploring the impact of spirituals and Native American music on Dvořák during his time in America. The Alexander String Quartet, soprano Michele Kennedy, Native American flutist Mary Youngblood, and violist Pamela Freund-Striplen are featured.

Main Stage Series tickets are \$120. Single tickets \$20-30. Concerts are live-streamed via YouTube LIVE. Purchase online at www.GCCPmusic.com or by calling (925) 283-3728. Please visit gccpmusic.com to find regular updates about concert offerings, to make donations, and to purchase tickets.

Legal professionals needed for Contra Costa County High School Mock Trial

Submitted by Jonathan Lance

Bay Area soon-to-be, practicing, and retired law professionals are invited to provide assistance to their future colleagues at the upcoming 40th Annual Contra Costa County High School Mock Trial Program, held live and virtually on seven weekday early evenings, during January and February. Last year, close to 80 Bay Area practicing and retired attorneys and sworn judges, as well as third-year law students, volunteered their time with the mock trial competitions.

Coordinated by the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCOE), the annual mock trial competition is a hands-on educational program created to help high school students acquire a working knowledge of our judicial system, develop analytical abilities and communication skills, and gain an understanding of their obligations and responsibilities as participating members of our society.

This year's case, *People v. Croddy*, is the trial of Lee Croddy, the host of a popular YouTube channel called *The Right Choice of News (RCN)*, who has been charged with two counts: (1) aiding and abetting in the commission of first-degree burglary by another, and (2) accessory after the fact. This case will also feature a pre-trial argument on the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination and as set forth in *Miranda v. Arizona*.

"It is always so impressive to see the students prosecute and defend so professionally in the courtroom," Contra Costa County Superintendent of

Schools Lynn Mackey said. "It is even more impressive that these students are still excited to compete in a virtual courtroom. No doubt, a lot of time has been spent preparing for their time in court. In addition, the attorneys and judges serving as volunteers are always in awe of what they have witnessed in the Mock Trial courtroom."

Teams of high school students work with teachers and volunteer coaches to prepare their version of the criminal case from both the prosecution and defense perspectives. Students assume the roles of pre-trial and trial attorneys, witnesses, clerks, bailiffs, artists, and court journalists. Judges and attorneys score their performance and provide immediate feedback. Winning teams advance through seven rounds of competition. The county's champion advances to the state finals. This year, there will be 18 Mock Trial teams competing, including teams from Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte high schools.

Via Zoom meetings, volunteers will view and score two competing schools that argue the case in their assigned court. Each night will begin with a 15-minute rules and regulations training, then the volunteers will go into their assigned Zoom "courtrooms" to serve as Mock Trial judge and scorers.

Interested volunteers can learn more by visiting the CCCOE's Mock Trial website (https://www.ccoecoe.k12.ca.us/programs/for_parents_students/academic_events/mock_trial/volunteers), or contacting Jonathan Lance at (925) 942-3429.

Schedule for 2021 Contra Costa County High School Mock Trials:
 Preliminaries: Jan. 26, 28; Feb. 2, 4 – 5 to 8 p.m. (Eight competitions each night)
 Quarterfinals: Feb. 9, 5 to 8 p.m. (Four competitions)
 Semifinals: Feb. 11, 5 to 8 p.m. (Two competitions)
 Final and Consolation: Feb. 16, 5 to 8 p.m. (Two competitions)

Lamorinda Idol winter finalists announced



L.A.M.E. 2020: Audrie Blank, Ellia Blank, Levi Kim and Mia Wooton

By Sora O'Doherty

Lamorinda Idol finalists in categories including kindergarten through second grade, third through fifth grade, sixth through eighth grade and high school have been named by the Lamorinda Arts Council. There are over 90 entries, some individuals, some groups, competing as soloists or groups. Videos of competition performances are now available on YouTube, but the videos of competition final performances are due to the Council on Feb. 28 and will be posted shortly thereafter. Public voting will then be open until March 10. An audience award will be given to that participant who is not a category winner with the highest number of public votes, adjusted for category size and number of total category votes. Winners will be selected by a panel of three judges, and will be announced in a live online event at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 14. Winners will receive cash prizes ranging from \$100 to \$400.

The Lamorinda Idol event is chaired by Steve Harwood. The competition, which is open to all

students in Contra Costa County, will be judged by "a total of eight judges," according to Harwood, "all with musical backgrounds; the judges have been assigned three to a category; and the combined votes of the three judges determined the finalists in each category."

Available videos include full performances, as well as short compilation videos with a 30-second clip of each singer in each category. Videos of the finalists can be viewed at <https://lamorindaarts.org/lamorinda-idol-winter-finalists/>



Clea Lee

Photos courtesy Lamorinda Arts Council

Local church offers help to community's food insecure



A sample of food offered at the new food pantry at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church.

Photo provided

Submitted by Renie Gannett

A new food pantry located at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church opened in November and is available to anyone in the community feeling the need to stretch their dollars a bit. At the culmination of such a trying year, Renie Gannett, one of the church staff, felt there might be a need for this type of service in Lamorinda and began to gather food. The generosity of church and community members has been

overwhelming. There is a large selection of staples each week to satisfy from dawn to dusk – cereals, power bars, canned goods, baking mixes, soups, pasta, and everything in between. The MVPC Food Pantry is a "U-Pick" format, allowing people to select what is best for them and their family. It is an essential service open from 5 to 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday evening in Rooms 201-202 at MVPC off the lower courtyard. Masks and social distancing protocols are in effect.

In Memory

Holly Fisher Baumgartner

Dec. 12, 1956 – Nov. 17, 2020



Holly F. Baumgartner passed away on Nov. 17, 2020 in The Villages, Florida. Born in Boston, Massachusetts on Dec. 21, 1956, she grew up in Moraga, California and graduated from Miramonte High School in 1975, where she was a member of the marching band. She later earned a master's degree in Speech Pathology & Audiology from California State University, Chico.

Holly married James Baumgartner in 1983. They moved to Breckenridge, Colorado in 1994 and then later to Kauai, Hawaii in 1999. They made their final home in The Villages, Florida in 2005. She explored many of the activities The Villages has to offer and became president of the decorating club. She also became a valued member of the musical community by playing the clarinet for the The Villages Band, the Wind Ensemble and the Orchestra.

She will remain in memory as a loving, kind, caring, affectionate, funny, generous, adventurous, patient, understanding, positive, supportive and beautiful friend. We are all better for knowing her.

She was predeceased by her brother, John Fisher in March 2020, her father, George Fisher, in June 2020. She is survived by her sister, Ann Wright (Tim Wright), of Gainesville, Florida, and her mother, Julie Fisher of The Villages, Florida.

Donations in her memory can be sent to Cornerstone Hospice, 601 Mariposa Way, The Villages, FL 32162.

In Memory

Aras Vytautas Grakauskas



Aras Vytautas Grakauskas, 59, passed away unexpectedly at home in Moraga, California, on the morning of Dec. 30, 2020 after a valiant battle with multiple health challenges. He was a wonderful, devoted husband, father, brother and uncle and leaves a major void in his family's life.

Preceded in death by his grandparents and parents. Survived by loving wife Eleanor, cherished son Cole, and bonus son Karl Lesterhuis; beloved sister and brother in law Asta and Mitch Gersovitz, and nephews Erik and Alex Gersovitz; treasured relatives Milda Lenkauskas, Viktor and Ilona Peteris; cousins Viktorija, Nijole (Kestutis), Siga (Jonas), and Gidas (Egle); and life long, loyal friends Arnas Kungys (godson Martin) and Arunas Sadonis.

Born in Los Angeles to Nijole and Vytautas Grakauskas, Aras grew up in Arcadia, California. In his younger years he played football, wrestled and skied. He was a proud Lithuanian American, who met lifelong friends at Camp Dainava, danced with the LA Spindulys dance troop, and bartended at dances.

Aras was a CPA, had a BA and MS in accounting, and worked for several major accounting firms, most recently as a Senior Manager at Ryan LLC. He was a native Californian who fished in Lake Arrowhead, skydived out of Perris, mountain-biked the Santa Monica mountains, skied Mt. Baldy, Mammoth, and Tahoe. He enjoyed frequent visits with his sister's family on Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota. Happy times were shared fishing with his brother in law and nephew, skiing in Park City, spending Christmas with family, experiencing the MOA and the MN State Fair. Just being with family gave him joy and pride.

Aras enjoyed small town shopping trips, overnight stays in the wine country of Napa and Sonoma, and vacation getaways in Lake Tahoe with his wife Eleanor. He treasured his son Cole beyond measure, and was an ardent, proud supporter at Cole's soccer games, swim meets and Cub Scout activities. Aras passed on his love for skiing to Cole. He was also a steady presence in Karl's life and encouraged the strong connection that Karl made with Cole.

Aras was a kind man of few words. He had a low voice, subtle smile, off beat sense of humor (think Far Side greeting cards), and the stature of Gulliver. On New Year's Day he traditionally wished his best friends "Happy Arbitrary Starting Point." And so it goes that he leaves us at a new, arbitrary starting point. Cheers to a memorable life well lived "Arai"!

Services in Glendale pending, in consideration of the Covid epidemic. Those wishing to make a charitable donation in Aras' memory are encouraged to do so to the Moraga Educational Foundation, German Shepherd Rescue of Northern California, or The Wounded Warrior Project or their favorite charity.

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.

Not to be missed

Not to be missed

Not to be missed

Not to be missed

ART

"Wintermission" - a show between shows, and features selected works by Gallery Artists designed to refresh and warm even the longest, darkest winter days - runs through March 4. Reflecting a wide range of styles, prices, motifs and media, the show continues the mission of presenting the best of the best of more than 100 East Bay artists. Also on hand is a wide-ranging juried selection of locally created fine crafts and jewelry. All 2-D works are available for sale or rent through an exclusive "No Regrets" rental program. Free, open to the public. Valley Art Gallery: 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek, www.valleyartgallery.org; (925) 935-4311 or email us at valleyartgallery@gmail.com.

Lamorinda Arts Alliance Announces the exhibit "Tiny But Mighty: Honoring RBG" which will feature abstract and representational 2D artwork that is bright, bold and powerful, just like Ruth Bader Ginsburg. This show will include mixed media, collage, monotype, oil and cold wax medium, and paintings in watercolor, oil and acrylic. LAA member Ruth Stanton curated the show. Pat Calabro, a Pacheco resident, was selected as the featured artist. Her digital acrylic collages are bright bold and full of intensity - so much intensity that she must tone down areas to make places for the eye to rest. Pat exhibits her work throughout the Bay Area and as far away as Ghent, Belgium. This free exhibit runs through Feb. 26.

Virtual Art Gallery at Wilder. The Lamorinda Arts Council is pleased to present Rashmi Rajesh's

12 watercolor and oil paintings to ring in the New Year. Rajesh, of San Ramon, is a self-taught artist who was drawing pencil sketches at a very young age in India. As an adult she relied on her drawing skills again as she pursued first acrylics, then oil paint and watercolors. You'll find florals, landscapes, abstracts, and still life works in her show. To keep her work fresh, she experiments with different techniques and subject matter. She hopes her work sparks some kind of connection for viewers because for her, connecting people together is one of the beautiful qualities of art. View the online gallery of artwork images and the artist's video at www.LamorindaARTS.org/Wilder; visit the artist's website at www.rashmisartcarte.com.

Virtual Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. To welcome in the 2021 New Year, join us for a peek at rare and protected animals of Africa. Maggie Boscoe, David Fleisig, Pam Hall, Jeffrey Halliday and Maureen Rosati-Wee present photographs taken on safari in national parks. The list includes Hwange, Zambia, Kafue, Botswana and Okavango Delta parks. Their exhibit includes images and a video of exotic animals, birds and landscapes encountered on their travels. Boscoe quotes Karen Blixen, author of "Out of Africa," as to what it's like to be on safari: "There is something about safari life that makes you forget all your sorrows and feel as if you have drunk half a bottle of champagne - bubbling over with heartfelt gratitude for being alive." Go to https://lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries for this unique look at another part of the world.

MUSIC

Looking for something to lift our spirits? Want to have some fun? The Diablo Women's Chorale has the answer: Come Sing With Us! Auditions are open to all female voice parts via Zoom on Monday, Jan. 25, and Monday, Feb. 1, by appointment only. For information on membership and auditions, contact Nancy Hickman, Membership Chair, at (925) 899-5050 or hickmandg@gmail.com. DiabloWomensChorale.org/join-us. Audition events are free and held via Zoom due to COVID.

Diablo Ballet presents the second program of its 27th Season, "Balanchine and Beyond," featuring four ballets, including the Act III Wedding Scene from the timeless fairytale, "Sleeping Beauty." Virtual tickets are being sold one per household for \$30 if purchased before Feb. 10 or \$35 if after, through the Leshner Center for the Arts by calling (925) 943-7469 or online at leshnerartscenter.org. For additional information, visit diabloballet.org or call (925) 943-1775.

Gold Coast Chamber Players continue their virtual concerts in 2021 with an ambitious series of six new programs. The 2020 Fall Series, Bach Shorts, featured leading Bay Area cellists in an intimate exploration of Bach's Cello Suites. Main Stage Concerts, which begins this month, celebrates love and diversity. Virtual links remain available for one week following the concert date. Cello/bass duo ZLOW from the San Francisco Symphony begins the 2021 Main Stage Concerts with music by Handel, Bottesini and Rossini. Special guests, soprano Isabel Yang

and pianist Keisuke Nakagoshi provide the "plus" for the title, ZLOW+ on Sunday, Jan. 24 at 4 p.m. Purchase online at www.GCCPmusic.com or by calling (925) 283-3728.

THEATER

Orinda Starlight Village Players presents "Pinocchio." The Orinda Starlight Village Players has released a video of the 2015 production of Pinocchio. We're sure you're missing our live performances in the park and we hope this presentation from our 2015 season will, in some way, compensate for this. The free video is available at www.orsvp.org throughout January. See story on page A6.

OTHER

British friends and Anglophiles! Join us at Genuine Goodness Cafe on Jan. 24 from noon to 4 p.m. for another Great British Pop Up! Reserve your items at the link: www.greatbritishpopshop.com/Genuine Goodness, 21 Orinda Way, Ste. G, Orinda, (925) 317-3348

KPFA Radio 94.1 FM presents Elizabeth Kolbert & Mark Hertsgaard: Under a White Sky on Thursday, Feb. 11, 5 to 6:30 p.m., at Online webinar, 1929 Martin Luther King Jr Way, Berkeley. Elizabeth Kolbert and Mark Hertsgaard will discuss Kolbert's new book, "Under a White Sky, The Nature of the Future," and answer audience questions. Cost: \$20 one admission, \$35 admission + book. For more info see www.eventbrite.com/e/elizabeth-kolbert-mark-hertsgaard-under-a-white-sky-nature-of-future-tickets-131627494379.

OUSD Kinder/TK Registration in February 2021. Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration for children entering an Orinda public school in August 2021 will be open Feb. 1-4. On those dates, parents may register their child online at www.orindaschools.org. Kindergarten students must be at least 5 years of age on or before Sept. 1, 2021. A child is eligible for Transitional Kindergarten if their fifth birthday is between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2, 2021. Additional information regarding registration is available at the district website: www.orindaschools.org.

GARDEN

The Montelindo Garden Club February meeting begins Friday, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. on Zoom. Everyone is welcome. Presentation: Edible Landscaping. Speaker: Patricia St. John, who loves to design with edibles! She has been designing residential gardens for the past 25 years, on both sides of the bay. Her work has received international design awards and been featured in Better Homes and Gardens, Sunset Magazine, S.F. Chronicle, and seven books on garden design. She has taught in the Landscape Horticulture department at Merritt College in Oakland for the past 14 years. To request a Zoom link to attend this meeting, email: montelindogarden@aol.com.

Please submit events: calendar@lamorinda weekly.com

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Frustration with state and governor prompts rallies for high school sports



Photo Melissa Murphy

Parents and students protest Jan. 15 at a "Let them Play" rally outside Acalanes High School.

By Jon Kingdon

Parents from all around the state of California held "Let Them Play" rallies Jan. 15 at their respective high schools, which included Acalanes and Campolindo. A Facebook account started by parents at Torrey Pines High School in San Diego, designed to restart the states interscholastic programs, grew to a membership of over 27,000 parents, which led to these public demonstrations.

Lauren Fritch, whose son Connor is a junior on the Campolindo football team, was out marching with several parents and athletes representing the various boys and girls sports team at Campolindo. Fritch spoke to the disappointment at the void left by the suspension of athletics. "It's frustration,

angst and depression," Fritch said. "The state has taken everything away from the student-athletes. When they sit in front of a computer with no social dynamics, sports may be the only outlet where they can be social and burn off some steam. Social media just doesn't cut it 24/7."

Jen Bielawski, whose son is a sophomore on the Acalanes football team also sees this as a learning experience for the students. "This is a good way for the kids to learn to advocate for themselves and get their voices heard," said Bielawski. "This is an important time in their lives, and they need to be with their peers. Why is it all or nothing? Why can't they have the opportunity to play sports when the data has shown that it can be done

safely?"

The goal for the parents and the coaches is to be able to make an in-person presentation with Gov. Gavin Newsom, proving to him that the data they have collected would show that the football programs along with other sports can be run with a minimal threat from the COVID-19 virus.

Serra High School head coach Patrick Walsh created the Golden State High School Football Coaches Community, which has a membership of over 600 coaches from all over California. The coaches began collecting workout data to determine the exposure of the virus to the athletes and coaches from around the state when they practiced proper protocols. "With over 230 schools reporting, the data included

15,000 different kids. These numbers have shown that the spread of COVID-19 or contracting COVID-19 at the workouts was next to zero," said Walsh. We have had over 700,000 contact points for the athletes and only had 408 reported cases of COVID-19 in that data set, with only five being traced to a workout along with 100,000 touch points for our coaches."

The Coaches Association was important to Campolindo head coach Kevin Macy because it allowed the coaches to speak as a unified voice and to determine that football could be played safely in the red tier. "For us, with all the testing, it's been zero for everyone and we've been doing this from the summer through the fall," Macy said. "I imagine that is what it's going to be for most of the other camps and that's with a lot of activity. There should be no sitting around waiting for an 'Orange green light.'"

For Walsh, the Coaches Association is only a first step for the group. "What's been great about it is the outcome is that we're sharing wonderful ideas and stories that bring us all together; public and private schools, big and small schools," Walsh said. "We're all fighting for one common goal which is that the kids need to get back out on the fields. This is not just a football movement, this is a youth sports movement."

The state of Texas recently held their football state championships and Walsh contacted their Coaches Association, which has over 400,000 members, to see how they were able to have such a successful season during the pandemic. They told him that communication was the key that led to his forming the Golden State

Coaches Association. The other crucial aspect for the success of their program was the attitude they brought to the game. "They did not start at no. They allowed summer workouts in coordination with the Governor's office and public health officials and they collected data which showed what our data has shown. They took that data and went to the next step. For us, the next step is to take the protocols of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) along with the data that we have amassed and present it to the health officials and show how like in other states, we can create a safe environment for our community, our kids, and our families. The data shows that these would not be super-spreader events."

The starting date for the fall sports season was originally set for Aug.10. Since then, the date has been moved four times – to Dec. 7, Jan. 4, and Jan. 25 and is currently, and one might assume, tentatively set for Feb. 1.

"They've kicked the can down the road so many times, the next kick may end everything for everybody," Macy said. "In the big picture, our kids have been ignored in this. There's never any language about there being assurances that we're going to make something happen. You have COVID-19 the virus and you have COVID-19 the political tool. Unfortunately, the kids are caught in the middle. The kids are the scapegoat in all of this. It's time to stop thinking of them as the super spreaders. It's time to let them have their dreams back."

... continued on Page C2

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Frustration with state and governor prompts rallies for high school sports



Campolindo students hold signs at Jan. 15 "Let them Play" rally.

Photo Jon Kingdon

... continued from Page C1

Patrick Cruickshank, the Commissioner of Athletics of the North Coast Section of the CIF, sent out a release updating the season of sports calendar for the remainder of the school year and how they plan to implement bringing high

school sports back to the member schools.

The key points in the release state the following: The leagues will set their seasons of sport based on the color tier that their county resides in and the sports allowed in that tier; No Athletic Competitions can begin until the local stay

at home order has been lifted; Feb. 1 is the earliest teams can begin practicing or competing; There will be no section, regional or state championships; Students can only participate in one sport at a time; The football season must conclude by April 17 for the 2021 fall season to commence as

scheduled on Aug. 9; and The final date for NCS competition will be June 12.

The full release can be seen on the North Coast Section website.

If the country remains in the Purple Tier, the only sports that will be permitted will be cross-country, golf,

tennis, track and field, and swimming and diving.

The athletic directors of the Diablo Athletic League met this past Friday to discuss what sports should start up and to determine how that plan would be implemented within the league. "We did not want to push back any sport that we would have the opportunity to start immediately," Campolindo's Athletic Director Raymond Meadows said. "The general consensus is that we want to get it going sooner than later. At this point in time, the Athletic Directors are getting feedback from our coaches because they are going to have more insight specific to their sports and how we can make the sports work given the guidelines and parameters around what we're allowed to do," he said. "The biggest message from our meeting, which was stressed by everyone, was that we really want to get our kids back out there playing sports as soon as we can."

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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 14 Issue 24 Wednesday, January 20, 2021



The Real Estate Year in Review

... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Renewal by nature



Arugula is easy to grow from seed.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever” – Mahatma Gandhi

I popped the crunchy pods of my just-picked sugar snap peas into my mouth as I uttered a prayer of gratitude for the food I grow to nourish my family and the gardens I cultivate to nourish my soul. The past few weeks have brought the fragility of life into focus amidst the mounting death toll from the pandemic and the anxiety aroused by the political rampages.

We need to return to our roots to savor the sweetness of life. For me, Mother Nature has always provided renewal and refreshment in her simplicity and order. When I'm feeling stressed, I go outside to walk, listen, see, smell, touch and taste ... to reconnect with my senses and revive my spirit.

I picked a few stems of jonquil which are now sitting in a vase on my desk as I write this column filling my nostrils with their elegant perfume. My step increases its bounce as I taste the tangy citrus of my newly ripe Navel oranges. Back in my vegetable garden, arugula, sorrel, Swiss Chard, assorted greens, and beets await my culinary menus. Orange and yellow calendula flowers season my salads and the unusual hued flowers of osteospermum el-

evate my chi as they decorate my hillside.

My journal indicates that this week in January the roses are to be pruned. My bushes are still filled with buds and blooms that enhance the landscape and my heart. I will complete this task when it is colder next month. Beauty is required as a tonic for joyfulness.

Winter is a time to regroup, to rest, to repair, to rethink. Deciduous trees are now bare, an indication that work in the garden is winding down, at least for a month or so.

We can use this period to dream and decide what projects and plantings we may want to engage in throughout the year. What's on your list of things that you've always desired in your backyard but never had the time, money, or inclination to accomplish? A sampling of suggestions to fill your vision boards could include:

- Planting a pollinator garden or a cutting garden;
- Making a meditation meadow;
- Rebuilding a patio or deck;
- Erecting a retaining wall;
- Growing vegetables, herbs, and fruits;
- Retrofitting regions for relaxation and reading;
- Adding a trellis, gate, arbor, or gazebo;
- Creating compost piles or buying compost bins;
- Improving a perennials plot;
- Hanging hammocks for summer enjoyment;
- Switching to succulents;
- Increasing native populations;
- Including a play structure;
- Paving a path with gravel or crushed granite;
- Installing a pond, fountain, waterfall, or other water feature;

... continued on Page D11



**A unique color for
Osteospermum
blooming in January.**

Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	10	\$1,100,000	\$2,410,000
MORAGA	6	\$1,215,000	\$2,110,000
ORINDA	5	\$965,000	\$2,382,500

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

- 1119 Garden Lane, \$1,470,000, 3 Bdrms, 1569 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 12-02-20
 1179 Glen Road, \$1,977,000, 4 Bdrms, 2072 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 11-30-20,
 Previous Sale: \$970,000, 07-09-10
 3258 Judith Lane, \$1,690,000, 3 Bdrms, 1688 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 12-02-20,
 Previous Sale: \$975,000, 04-16-10
 1055 Los Arabis Lane, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2679 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 12-03-20
 3885 Los Arabis Drive, \$2,410,000, 5 Bdrms, 3387 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-30-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 03-10-06
 3208 Lucas Circle, \$1,495,000, 3 Bdrms, 1612 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 12-03-20,
 Previous Sale: \$619,500, 10-14-11
 1171 Pleasant Hill Circle, \$1,805,000, 3 Bdrms, 2092 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 12-03-20,
 Previous Sale: \$160,000, 04-01-90
 517 Silverado Drive, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 1927 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 12-02-20
 1697 Springbrook Road, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1124 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 12-02-20,
 Previous Sale: \$325,000, 02-22-99
 8 Warwick Court, \$1,942,500, 5 Bdrms, 2664 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 12-04-20,
 Previous Sale: \$2,000,000, 06-04-19

MORAGA

- 126 Brookfield Drive, \$1,660,000, 4 Bdrms, 2013 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 12-02-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,070,000, 07-13-06
 93 Danefield Place, \$1,660,000, 3 Bdrms, 2354 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 11-30-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 07-03-14
 7 El Paraiso Court, \$1,925,000, 6 Bdrms, 2982 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 12-04-20,
 Previous Sale: \$649,500, 05-05-98
 31 Fieldbrook Place, \$1,810,000, 4 Bdrms, 2152 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 12-02-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,545,000, 10-23-18
 78 Jean Court, \$2,110,000, 4 Bdrms, 3022 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 12-03-20
 1 Kendall Circle, \$1,215,000, 4 Bdrms, 1965 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 12-04-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,227,500, 12-15-16

ORINDA

- 3 Briones Vwx, \$1,453,000, 2 Bdrms, 1477 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 12-02-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,230,000, 04-12-16
 16 Brookwood Road, \$965,000, 3 Bdrms, 1799 SqFt, 1925 YrBlt, 12-01-20,
 Previous Sale: \$519,000, 04-23-04
 53 Don Gabriel Way, \$1,625,000, 3 Bdrms, 2410 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 12-03-20
 18 Mira Loma Road, \$1,940,000, 3 Bdrms, 2637 SqFt, 1930 YrBlt, 11-30-20,
 Previous Sale: \$1,360,000, 03-25-14
 58 Windy Creek Way, \$2,382,500, 4 Bdrms, 4149 SqFt, 2019 YrBlt, 12-04-20,
 Previous Sale: \$23,750,000, 03-06-15



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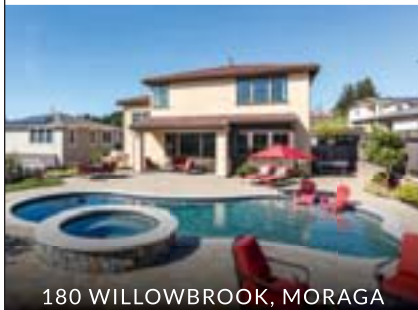
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The Real Estate Year in Review

By Conrad Bassett,
Licensed Real Estate
Broker and CRP, GMS-T

The year 2020 was once again extremely strong for sellers of residential real estate in Lamorinda. Sales volume was solid with a minimal increase in supply matched by continued strong demand and average prices going up in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Despite the pandemic that slowed sales in the second quarter of the year, the first three months and the last six months were extremely busy.

Protocols changed for how houses were shown and there were no Open Houses for either the public or for brokers after mid-March.

Homes stayed on the market for a similar limited time like in 2019 and the majority of homes sold at or above their asking price.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported for closings Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020, 344 single family homes closed in Lafayette versus 288 in 2019 and 300 in 2018. For the 344 reported closings, sales prices ranged from \$749,000 to \$5.85 million and the average time on market was 19 days, a decrease from the 27 days in 2019.

The average sale price was \$1,916,042—a significant increase from \$1,789,012 in 2019, \$1,736,519 in 2018 and \$1,625,636 in 2017. Prices have almost doubled in the last decade.

The average sales price was 101.7% of the final list price. There were four Lafayette foreclosures sold on the MLS.

In Moraga there were 175 single-family closings in 2020. There were 129 single-family closings in 2019 and 132 in 2018,

which was down from the 164 in 2017. Prices ranged from \$900,000 to \$3.365 million. Only three homes closed in the MLS at less than \$1 million. The average sale price was \$1,590,853, well above \$1,486,327 in 2019 and \$1,485,713 in 2018. In 2012, it was \$991,469 and in 2011 it was \$894,768.

The average number of days on market in 2020 was 20. The average home sold for 102.0% of its last list price. There were no REO properties that closed on the MLS and no short sales.

In Orinda the number of single-family closings was 302 – an increase from the 261 a year ago. There were 280 in 2018, 242 in 2017, and 229 in 2016. The reported sales ranged in price from \$785,000 to \$8.36 million with an average price of \$1,889,942. In 2019 it was \$1,629,030. In 2018 it was \$1,729,306. The average was \$1,021,751 in 2011. The average market time was 24 days, down from 36 days a year ago.

The average sales price was an average of 101.7% of the final list price for the reported sales, the same as Moraga. There were no REO (bank owned) sales in Orinda in 2020.

There were no reported sales in Canyon in the MLS in 2019 or 2020.

On an average price per square foot basis for reported sales in 2020, Lafayette homes sold for \$703.44, up from 2019 when it was \$671.90 and 2018's \$687.13.

In 2020, Moraga homes sold for \$644.18 per square foot, versus \$610.00 per square foot in 2019, continuing an increase from the \$589.93 in 2018. In Orinda last year it was \$672.53 and in 2019 it was \$624.28 per square foot for the average home.

... continued on Page D8

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Orinda

20 Hacienda Circle \$3,825,000

6 Bedrooms/6 Baths, 8063 sq. ft. State of the art, architecturally designed craftsmen estate.
 Melanie Snow /Laura Abrams 925-360-0344/510-697-3225
 20haciendacircle.com Lic#00878893/01272382



Orinda

200 Hall Drive \$2,645,000

Privacy and security in your own 5-acre county estate
 Yan Heim 510-499-709
 Yanheim.com Lic #01965925



Orinda

2 Camino Del Cielo \$2,288,000

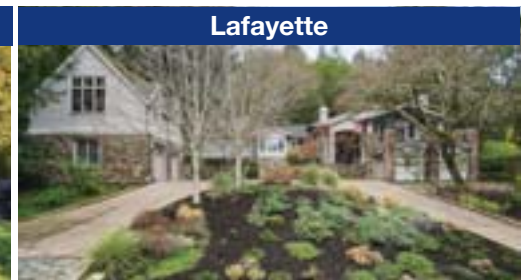
4 Beds/ 3.5 Baths. 4083 sq. ft Flat .87 ac panoramic view lot, pool and hot tub!
 Melanie Snow 925-360-0344
 www.1201cambridge.com Lic #0878893



Orinda

56 Camino Del Diablo Call Agent for Price

One of the original DeLaveaga homes on magical .73-acre mostly flat lot. Delightful!
 Laura Abrams 510-697-3225
 Lic#01272382



Lafayette

1201 Cambridge \$3,195,000

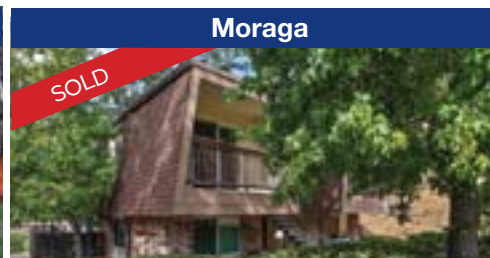
4 Beds/ 3 Baths. Happy Valley Elegance including an extra 600 sq ft Guest Cottage
 Melanie Snow 925-360-0344
 www.1201cambridge.com Lic #0878893



Lafayette

1076 Serrano Court \$1,485,000

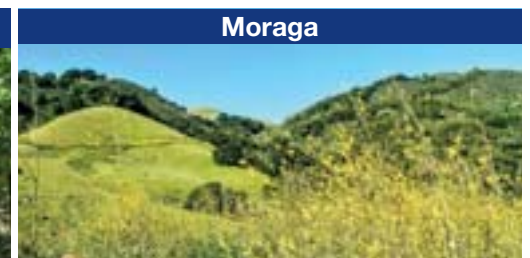
3 Beds/ 2 Baths. Quintessential Lafayette rancher with Farmhouse style charm.
 Laura Abrams 510-697-3225
 Lic#01272382



Moraga

142 Ascot Court, #3 \$499,000

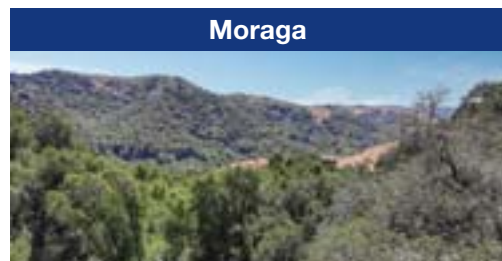
2 Beds/ 2 Baths. Fabulously updated cozy condo
 Mary Beth MacLennan/Tony Conte
 925-324-6246/925-708-1396
 142ascotct3.com Lic #01480008/00959101



Moraga

1255 Bollinger Canyon \$375,000

17+ Acres. In the distinctive American Viticultural Area for Lamorinda and minutes from downtown Moraga. Endless possibilities!
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Moraga

1233 Bollinger Canyon \$375,000

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Pleasant Hill

542 Tananger Heights Ln \$1,349,000


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 Kelly Crawford 925-998-54599
 Lic #0132705



San Francisco

818 Van Ness Ave #804 \$999,999

Penthouse w/City views. Building offers roof-top BBQ & entertaining area.
 Yan Heim 510-499-709
 Yanheim.com Lic #01965925



*Cheers to a happy, healthy,
and healthy new year.*

I'm fortunate to have helped these buyers and sellers in 2020. Many of these opportunities were "off market." It's more important than ever to work with an agent that is local - 2021 is already heating up and I can help!

Buyers 257 Overhill Road, Orinda • 100 Estates Drive, Orinda • 20 Ellen Ct, Orinda • 100 Sandhill Road, Orinda • 50 Don Gabriel Way, Orinda • 3613 Shukla Ct, Walnut Creek • 76 Scenic Drive, Orinda • 57 Van Ripper Lane, Orinda • 10 Wild Lilac Way, Orinda

Sellers 257 Overhill Road, Orinda • 100 Sandhill Road, Orinda • 106 Brookline Street, Moraga • 101 Hillcrest Drive, Orinda • 12 Kimberly Drive, Moraga • 18 Charles Hill Cir, Orinda • 213 Overhill Road, Orinda • 76 Scenic Drive, Orinda • 14 Silverwood Ct, Orinda • 1091 Pereira Road, Martinez • Rheem Blvd, Orinda

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231 Los Santos Court, Moraga
4 Bed | 3.5 Bath | ± 3,313 Sq Ft | ±.46 Acre | 231LosSantosCourt.com | \$2,395,000



Set on a serene cul-de-sac sits this exquisite custom Bella Vista home with highly upgraded finishes throughout including a state-of-the-art Net Zero power island and climate control system (grid independent), 240-volt electric vehicle hook up in garage, and a gracious chef's kitchen open to family room with Dual Wolf Fuel Range, 84" Sub Zero Refrigerator and separate freezer, 84" Sub Zero wine column, and Miele dishwasher.

Top this off with a beautifully landscaped backyard with the most glorious views & the ultimate privacy.



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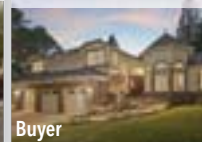




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HERE'S TO NEW BEGINNINGS

I was honored to help so many wonderful clients buy and sell in 2020 and grateful to donate more than \$14,000 to charity from closed transactions through my Local Giving Project: www.holcenberg.com/giving-back.

HOMES SOLD IN 2020

261 Claudia Court, Moraga  Seller	115 Devin Drive, Moraga  Seller	346 Birchwood Drive, Moraga  Seller	359 Donald Drive, Moraga  Buyer
2 Patrick Lane, Orinda  Buyer	236 Calle La Montana, Moraga  Seller	3 Corte Bombero, Orinda  Buyer	1069 Via Alta, Lafayette  Buyer
72 Corte Yolanda, Moraga  Seller	3303 Whitehaven Drive, Walnut Creek  Seller	338 Birchwood Drive, Moraga  Seller	149 Saddle Oaks Court, Walnut Creek  Buyer
390 Hermosa Court, Lafayette  Buyer	3736 Campolindo Drive, Moraga  Buyer	126 Brookfield Drive, Moraga  Seller	212 Sheila Court, Moraga  Seller

Wishing a wonderful 2021 for all and looking forward to surpassing donations this year.

Michelle Holcenberg

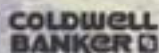
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925-324-0405

BRE #01373412



The Real Estate Year in Review

... continued from Page D4

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had 31 closings in 2020. This is up from 17 closings in 2019 in the MLS. This can be attributed to the higher number of new construction closings reported to the MLS. Sales prices ranged in 2020 from \$594,000 to \$2.36 million. Moraga had 71 closed units, up from 67 in 2019 and down from 85 in 2018. Sales ranged from \$329,000 to \$1.375 million. This includes “attached” homes in Moraga Country Club. Orinda had five closings while in 2019 there were six and 2018 there were nine and eight in 2017. They sold from \$635,000 to \$1.495 million.

It should always be noted that there are also a few direct sales that do not go through the MLS and they are not reported here. These may include some foreclosures that were sold at the courthouse as well as some sales between private individuals.

As of Jan. 11, there were 45 dwellings under contract per the MLS in the three communities combined, with asking prices of \$928,000 to \$5.495 million. It should be pointed out that there are no REOs and no short sales. Prices have continued to rise over the last few years and more owners now have equity in their homes and have not had to go the short-sale process or face foreclosure.

A comparison of year-end inventory in the three communities combined shows 49 homes on the market. Last January there were 53 homes on the market. Seasonally the biggest inventory is in the spring and early summer, however this cur-

rent number may point to another year with a combination of qualified buyers vying for a continued limited supply. The current asking prices range from \$989,000 to \$25 million in the three communities combined.

In Lamorinda in 2020, 55 homes sold for over \$3 million!

Interest rates have remained historically low and there is no pressure for them to rise in the short term for mortgages. Corporate relocations have slowed down due to their employees being able to work remotely and schools not being open. Many of these relocations will likely come to pass once offices and schools reopen. We have not seen many outbound relocations for people working for companies who have announced that their corporate headquarters will be moving out of the state.

The minimal amount of single-family new construction has helped keep supply and demand within a better balance than a lot of other neighboring communities.

The East Bay communities like Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, as well as Piedmont and several neighborhoods in Oakland and Berkeley, continue to benefit from their proximity to San Francisco where prices remain very high. Comparably speaking, the East Bay is still relatively more affordable.

The trend that began in 2011 continues today where in many situations in the three communities, the seller receives multiple offers and homes sell for above the list price. This, when coupled with a relatively low supply and a willingness by sellers to be realistic in their pricing should continue to fuel a strong market in 2021.

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Thinking About Selling?

Chris Swim and Tracy Keaton

are the premier real estate team serving the Lamorinda communities. Knowledgeable and experienced leaders, this award-winning team brings more than 70 combined years of exceptional concierge service. They approach each real estate transaction as if it was their own, utilizing a skillset of proven marketing strategies, a broad network of resources, and an acute attention to detail that gets the job done. Recognized by their clients and peers for their unparalleled integrity, dedication, and reliability, they put their client's best interests in the forefront.

If you are thinking about selling . . .

You need to call Chris Swim and Tracy Keaton

**The Client Is Always #1
With Chris Swim and Tracy Keaton**

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"Tom's personal interactions and continuous follow-up is why we continue to engage him." Tricia & Lou, NOV 2020

"I don't think I've ever worked with someone who works harder or cares more about his clients." Alan, DEC 2020

"Tom is more than a real estate agent, he's an advocate for his clients." Chloe & Gregory, NOV 2020

"Tom knows his stuff." Elizabeth & Jason, NOV 2020

"His drive and determination was probably stronger than ours." Lisa & Chris, NOV 2020

"Tom's enthusiasm and energy in this business are extraordinary." Suzanne & Hank, NOV 2020

"If you are buying or selling a home, do yourself a favor and hire Tom Stack!" Ray, OCT 2020

925.878.9964 | TomStack.com | Tom.Stack@camoves.com



Cynthia Brian's Mid-January Gardening Guide

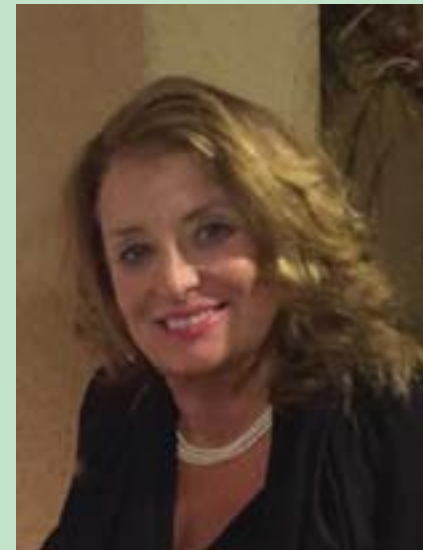
- **RECORD** your landscaping escapades by writing in a garden journal online or in print. Your journals will track trends and seasons for the forthcoming years.
- **CLEAN** your garden tools in a bucket of vinegar and water for 20 minutes. Remove your tools and dip a sponge in a bowl of baking soda. Scrub off the rust.
- **SPROUT** onions and chives in your kitchen by cutting the greens, then putting the roots in a glass of water. Within a week you'll have fresh greens for your salads and soups. (Change the water daily.)
- **START** yams or sweet potatoes by rooting in a glass jar with water. This is a simple, fun growing opportunity for kids! When lush leaves emerge, it's time to plant outside to produce more yams or potatoes.
- **REPLENISH** bird feeders with nutritious seeds keeping our avian visitors nearby while supplementing their dietary requirements during the cold season.
- **READ** seed and bulb catalogs or magazines that feature gardens.
- **HARVEST** sugar snap peas, arugula, Swiss Chard, greens, and Brussels sprouts.
- **REDUCE** watering on houseplants as they rest for a winter's nap.
- **RESOLVE** to spend a minimum of 30 minutes per day outside. Studies indicated that every person needs at least 15 minutes of outdoor sunlight daily for necessary Vitamin D replenishment.
- **REFRAIN** from heavy pruning of your rose bushes until buds and blooms are finished.
- **PLANT** a container of aloe to use on burns and bites.
- **RECONNECT** and be renewed by nature.



Close up of jonquil. One stem will perfume a room.



Yam growing in a glass jar can be planted in the garden.



Cynthia Brian

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. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Renewal by nature

... continued from Page D1

Increasing your library of garden guides;
Removing a junk pile;
Stacking wood for a fireplace or firepit;
Enlarging bird habitats;
Replacing irrigation systems;
Reseeding lawns in spring;
Building a rain garden;
Starting a small vineyard;
Buying patio furniture and chaise lounges;
Planning a rock wall;
Assembling an animal enclosure;
Painting the fence; and
Shooting photos of your plants and the wildlife that visit.

Ideas are endless as we daily take time to pause, brainstorm, and learn something new. Foster enthusiasm for the new year by paying attention to the enrichment of the natural world.

Reawaken your senses and restore your passion. Design your future farm. Breathe!
Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.

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**Move in for \$99 — No community fee
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Even in trying times, we don't forget our *Enjoy More* philosophy. Our team strives to find creative ways to bring joy into residents' lives every day. Because to us, home means community and feeling like your best self.

As the New Year starts, we look forward to sharing brighter days together.

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ORINDA



33 Dias Dorados

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

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ORINDA



56 Via Floreado

Exceptional 5 bed/ 4.5 bath 4248 sqft home on .54 acres w/ updated kitchen & panoramic views of Orinda. Minutes from Hwy 24.

\$2,595,000

ORINDA

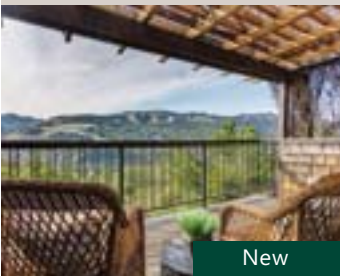


42 Oak Road

Spacious 4 bed + bonus room/ 3 bath 2860 sqft home on .28 acres. Close to town, BART & Hwy 24. Excellent schools!

\$1,595,000

ORINDA



New

217 Village Gate

Rare two level 3 bed/ 2.5 bath Orindawoods view property w/ 2 patio decks, 2 car garage, & large living areas.

\$1,435,000

ORINDA

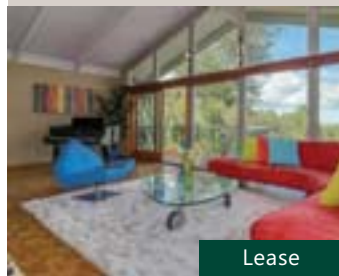


67 Brookwood Road # 3

Rarely available 2 bed/ 1 bath first floor condo in charming Orinda Oaks, close to BART, shops, theater & restaurants.

\$550,000

ORINDA



Lease

8 Via San Inigo

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

\$6,000/ Monthly

MORAGA



New

10 Gloria Court

One level 3 bed/ 2 bath rancher on cul-de-sac. Includes bonus family room, attic playroom & English style gardens.

\$1,295,000

LAFAYETTE



21 Hidden Valley Road

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

\$2,750,000

LAFAYETTE



New

892 Las Trampas Road

Newer two story Craftsman style home w/ 5 bed/ 4 bath. On lush .66 acres w/ views. Close to Hwy 24 & downtown.

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LAFAYETTE



New

1647 Taylor Blvd

Remarkable custom single story 4 bed/ 2.5 bath on level .63 acre lot. Minutes to downtown, Hwy 24 & BART.

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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

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Village

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