

# Lafayette School District governing board appoints new member

By Jennifer Wake

The Lafayette School District announced the appointment of David Smith to the district's governing board following the sudden resignation on May 12 of Kenny Tuckerman, who had served on the board since 2018. Smith was one of five candidates who were interviewed at a June 23 special governing board meeting before the final selection was made in a 3-0 vote, with Jean Follmer abstaining.

According to a LafSD press release, Smith is a "collaborative problem solver

whose professional experience revolves around bringing together diverse stakeholders and finding ways to meet their needs while focusing on the broader mission of the organization." He has two children who attend Springhill Elementary School.

Smith was an integral part of the leadership team for the Measure L parcel tax, and has served on the board of Lafayette Partners in Education, the education foundation that supports Lafayette public schools, according to the district. "Dave spent the past year working for the

state of California to help lead the volunteer response to COVID-19 and the vaccination campaign. He has also worked professionally on decreasing mental health stigma and increasing mental health resources in communities and on school campuses."

When asked during his interview what he believed were the most critical issues the board will face, Smith said that aside from reopening in the fall, he believes the board needs to assess learning loss and support of students as well as mental health and social/emotional learn-

ing. "How can we equip them as they come back to the classroom?" he asked.

"Dave has an impressive track record as a creative thinker and industrious doer, and I enthusiastically look forward to Dave's onboarding

and active involvement in the hard work ahead," said current board president Rob Sturm. "Dave is a fantastic addition who's well-suited to hit the ground running - we're thrilled to have him aboard," Sturm added.

# Orinda Books summer reading challenge is underway



Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda Books, an independent bookstore in Orinda Village, is challenging readers from kids to young adults to read five books and claim a prize from Loard's Ice Cream or Orinda Theatre by Sept. 10. To qualify for the prize, a reader needs to read three books from the list suggested by the shop, and another two books of the reader's choice.

Selections range from first readers books like "Fox

the Tiger" by Corey R. Tabor, to non-fiction like "Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad" by M.T. Anderson. Included in the list are 28 books with something for everyone from young to not quite so young. All of the books on the list are available at the book shop, but no purchase is needed to participate.

Readers who complete the challenge will also be entered into a raffle for a \$50 Orinda Books gift certificate.

Readers can download a scorecard from the shop, that contains the full list of suggested books: [www.orindabooks.com/sites/orindabooks.com/files/Summer%20Reading%20for%20Kids%20Scorecard.pdf](http://www.orindabooks.com/sites/orindabooks.com/files/Summer%20Reading%20for%20Kids%20Scorecard.pdf)

# Letters to the editor

Be responsible residents

MOFD board members Baitx, Donner, and Danziger were criticized in a recent letter for failure to spend taxpayer funds for a chipper and its operation from the MOFD budget. I would suggest that the brush and tree removal that the writer seeks is a personal responsibility of property owners. When my own pine trees became old and a potential hazard, I paid to have them removed along with the debris. I also work to maintain brush and other material on my property in a safe condition.

There are numerous private tree and brush removal contractors who are capable, already equipped and make their

living with this work. I think it would be wasteful to buy a "community chipper" and pay professional fire personnel to operate it, probably on an overtime basis with the attendant wages, benefits, and pension liabilities.

We should take personal responsibility for our properties. We should look to our MOFD personnel for their professional guidance on fire prevention and skills at fire suppression, when necessary. When landscape and tree re-

moval is indicated we should hire commercial contractors for our individual properties at the owner's expense.

If board members are resisting on the basis outlined above, then I support them fully. I, for one, am a taxpayer who does not want to chip in for property maintenance that is the responsibility of the individual property owner.

Gary Fryer  
Orinda

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# City Council approves budget proposal, discusses ARPA funds

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Under terms set forth by law, Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery fund deposits into pension or rainy day funds are prohibited.

Next steps following the council's approval of the proposed budget include gathering public input through comments made at city council meetings, public community forums, meetings with business owners, and through emails and telephone inquiries collected throughout the public comment period. Myers' report included suggested ideas aimed at transparency such as public forums, an online survey, and possibly establishing a Q&A post on the city's website.

Recommendations to council highlighted policy decisions related to flexibility within the budget plan to address changes as unexpected conditions occur, the choice

between large or small scale first steps, and determining whether to apply the funds over the years to making ladder physical improvements within the city versus funding selected business with immediate potential to restore sizable, rapid economic

viability to the business community.

The council will consider the actions during meetings this fall, collect essentials reports and input from city staff and committees, and release the final budget in December.

# Memorial service planned for Larry Swindell on July 16

Submitted by Julie Swindell Bookman

The family of Larry Swindell has set a memorial service to honor his life at 2 p.m., Friday, July 16, at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. A courtyard reception will follow. The author and film historian died of heart failure on June 22, 2020, in Moraga. He was 91. Due to the pandemic, this service was delayed.



Drop in to the first in-person General Plan update event where you and your neighbors will learn about the Housing Element and get to say your piece.

Participate in activities to share your opinion on where new housing should be planned in the context of existing housing, wildfire risk, traffic congestion, school capacity, and more!

# Planning Together!

The General Plan is the guiding document behind Lafayette's built environment, open space, and infrastructure. After 20 years, the General Plan is getting an update - let's make it a plan for the people by the people!

Join the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) - a group of community volunteers advising the Planning Commission and City Council on the important decisions that will shape the community over the next twenty years at the first in-person event for the General Plan.

The GPAC wants your input to draft a plan that represents the community's vision. Visit [PlanLafayette.org](http://PlanLafayette.org) to get up to speed on everything that has happened to date and see what's coming next. Now is the perfect time to learn and speak up.

# In-Person Housing Workshop

Wednesday, June 30 4-8PM

Don Tatzin Community Hall

Lafayette Library and Learning Center

**Use your smart phone camera to scan this QR code to learn more!**

**Planning & Building Department**  
[www.PlanLafayette.org](http://www.PlanLafayette.org)  
[GeneralPlan@LoveLafayette.org](mailto:GeneralPlan@LoveLafayette.org)

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