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Lamorinda school buses to roll again, and, for the first time ever, will service Wilder as well



bigstock images

By Sora O'Doherty

After the difficult school year caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, area schools are reopening with full schedules of academics, sports and other activities, and the Lamorinda School Bus Program will also return to full service. The full schedule of bus service for Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, including service from Wilder, is available on the Lamorinda Bus Program

website, and parents can register for bus passes. It should be noted that Route Number 17 to Orinda Intermediate School is already almost full, but the program will record a waitlist if the route does fill up.

Annual bus passes cost \$955 for round trips and \$635 for one way passes. A single trip costs \$6, and a bundle of single trip passes is \$30. For those who prefer to pay monthly, the round trip annual pass can be split up into

10 monthly payments of \$97 each, and the one-way annual pass can be paid at \$65 month for 10 months.

The Lamorinda school bus program serves the elementary and middle schools, while high school students can avail of service on the County Connection public buses provided by Contra Costa County.

To encourage students to learn more about public transportation, County Connection has free "class pass programs." Kids and teens who learn to use transit now are more likely to use it as a commute alternative when they become adults.

Teachers may take their students on free trips twice per year or once per summer session using the fixed-route bus system, Monday through Friday, during off-peak hours of 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

County Connection provides a personalized trip plan with appropriate system maps and schedules, and a specially designed group "Class Pass" to use when boarding. Dispatch will be alerted when a class pass is being used in order to assure a smooth and enjoyable trip.

Sustained effort by Miramonte students results in polystyrene ban in Orinda



bigstock images

By Sora O'Doherty

An idea first brought to the Orinda City Council in January of 2020 has resulted in the adoption of an ordinance regulating the use of polystyrene food containers in the city, effective Aug. 20 of this year. The students, including Devon Bradley, Sheng Shu, Leo Cardoza, Joseph Manio, and Alexis DeBusschere, are members of the Miramonte Environmental Club that has been running a community-funded project launched in July of 2019 to promote environmental sustainability and help restaurants.

Mayor Amy Worth thanked senior planner Adam Foster for working closely with the students to bring the

ordinance to fruition, and proclaimed that the students are now ready to go to Congress and advocate for important environmental issues.

City manager David Biggs and Foster presented the ordinance to the council and explained how it has been crafted to address Orinda-specific issues and to incorporate feedback from the council at earlier stages in the process. The law is based on similar laws adopted by Contra Costa County and some 13 out of 20 county jurisdictions. However, Orinda does not, for example, have a prison or hospitals within its limits.

Foster explained that the new law will substantially reduce the use of polystyrene food packaging in Orinda, but does contain exemptions nec-

essary for pre-packaged food, ice chests, and raw meat trays. Although the law does apply to city facilities, it does not apply to clubs, including swim clubs, or congregations. The city's parks and recreation department will amend facility lease agreements to incorporate the new law. Although restaurants will have until Feb. 1, 2022 to comply with the new law, it will become effective on Aug. 20, 2021, at which time city facilities will require compliance. Parks and Recreation Director Todd Trimble assured the council that the city will be ready to comply by the August date.

The ordinance contains regulations governing polystyrene food service use. Polystyrene is often sold as the brand name Styrofoam. The regulations apply to restaurants, food trucks, and farmers' markets, but exempts clubs, schools, and residential care facilities. The regulation also requires that polystyrene utensils only be provided upon the request of a person receiving food and would therefore not be the default procedure.

The first reading of the ordinance was on July 6, with discussion by the council. The second reading and final adoption of the ordinance was on the council's July 20 consent calendar.

Citywide Sidewalk Sale planned

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The Welcome Back committee is aimed at supporting local commerce and includes six Chamber board members, City Manager Niroop Srivatsa, Lifson, and Chamber staff members Sara Regan and Holly Sonne. Lifson says the variety of well-established and new businesses in the city's relatively small footprint is unique and the sidewalk sale offers wonderful reasons to attend.

Perusal of a list of participating businesses posted on the Chamber website backs up Lifson's claim. The Assistance League Thrift Shop at Way Side Inn offers a 50% off sale and a free give-away; Bel & Bunna's Books celebrates Harry Potter's Birthday with giveaways, \$10 hardbacks and discounted items; and Cambiati Wellness Programs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. highlights free B vitamin shots and a 15% discount on

products.

Fitness buffs and cycle hobbyists can find 10% off maintenance services and bike products at First Mile Cycle Works and at Formula 3 Fitness, join a free class or become a member for \$25 for the first month. Discounts and specials will be offered at Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery, Sanctuaire Spa, Lamorinda Music, Reasonable Books, Your CBD Store, Friends Corner Bookshop, Emerson Grace Design and more.

Lifson says that the main core of Mt. Diablo Boulevard is heavily traveled and highly visible and therefore encourages shoppers not to forget the downtown's East End. "The hidden new gems are Romp Collection on Blackwood, Lemonade Piercing, CG Designs and Fringe & Fern in the Forge," he says.

Asked to provide shout outs for two of the area's newest businesses, Lifson

says shoppers will enjoy Hollie's Homegrown on Moraga Road. The gourmet specialty food store provides culinary and medicinal home, garden, bath, and body products, along with fine wine tasting. Another debut, 2 Girls One Plant, celebrates their new home behind the unmissable pink door in the shop located at 3416 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Houseplants in every size, shape, color and variety fill the intimate store and inclusive, healing events already on the calendar underscore the owners' mission to someday create a therapeutic greenhouse that serves as a rescue and therapy center for at-risk youth.

Finally, Amphora Lafayette, Roundup Saloon, the new Headlands Brewing Company and other restaurants or food and beverage purveyors ensure no one will be forced to shop while suffering a dry throat or empty stomach.



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