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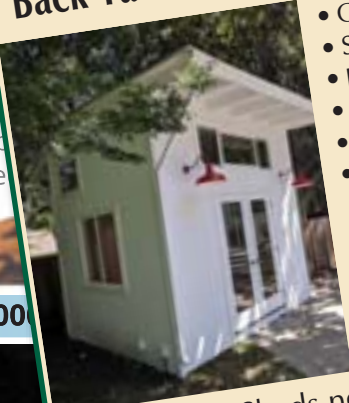
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An arch of jack-o'-lanterns light up this Lamorinda home's entryway.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

# Parents hope for fun Halloween from the past

By Jennifer Wake

With many COVID restrictions still in place on Halloween last year, door-to-door trick-or-treating became almost non-existent. This year, however, is shaping up to be a bit more like those of Halloweens past.

Moraga mom Jennifer Pierce said her family stayed in their neighborhood and trick-or-treated with their neighbors last year and then had dinner outside and watched an outdoor movie. This year they are planning on going to a cul-de-sac gathering

the night before Halloween and possibly stopping by another costume house party.

"On Halloween night we will trick-or-treat with some friends in their neighborhood," Pierce said. "So, more back to normal somewhat."

Judy Sin also expects this year to be a bit more like normal versus last year when some Los Perales classes did a check point candy hunt (with map and a list of addresses around Corliss Drive) for Halloween.

Lafayette resident Eric Rubin and his wife last year put together a scavenger hunt throughout Burton Valley. "We made the boys (13 and 10 years old)

along with three friends each, split up into teams and we uploaded all the clues to an app that they downloaded. They got points for finding specific items (witch on a broom, three small black cats, the word boo etc.) and the first team to get to our friend's house was the winner and they got the choice of a huge candy bar or a huge bag of gummy worms. It was super fun and the boys loved it."

This year they're also going back to the previous way of doing things, with minor adjustments. "Door to door, masked," said Rubin, who is working on costumes that have built-in masks.

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# The clock is ticking to appoint a new Moraga council member

By Vera Kochan

When former town council member David Stromberg resigned from office on Sept 9 the remaining four council members agreed that it was prudent and fiscally responsible to fill his vacancy through an application, interview, and appointment process, with a Nov. 8 deadline, rather than hold a costly special election. Four applications were received by Town Clerk Marty McInturf by Sept. 30: Moraga residents Seth Freeman, Kerry Hillis, Kendall Langan and Sona Makker. The town council held a Special Meeting on Oct. 12 to interview the applicants and hopefully select a new member, who would serve through November 2022.

During the meeting, Freeman informed the council that he reluctantly needed to drop

out of contention due to a possible conflict of interest with the firm that employs him. Makker, a technology policy lawyer who has lived in Moraga for two years, looks to preserve open space as well as address the town's long-term infrastructure, fiscal, housing and retail needs. Hillis, a principal government and community relations representative for the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and a four year resident, currently serves as the vice chair of the Moraga Planning Commission and vice president of the Moraga Community Foundation. The final applicant, Langan, a 68-year resident, is currently a commercial property owner within town who has been president and CEO of several companies throughout his career.

Vice Mayor Steve Woehleke opened the meeting,

saying, "We're trying to find the right candidate ... to serve the citizens of the town, and that's the way I look at it."

Woehleke went on to say that while he was impressed with Makker's enthusiasm and great promise, he was concerned about her newness to the town. With regards to Hillis, Woehleke appreciated his contributions to Moraga, but wished he had more experience in finance and fiscal responsibility, adding, "He tends to not be willing to change his position" after listening to all viewpoints. Referring to Langan, "I value his input," but he didn't provide a complete application for evaluation.

Council Member Teresa Onoda felt that Makker "has tremendous potential" and she liked her focus on transparency, call to action, and fact-based decisions. Onoda wanted Makker to get involved

with the understanding of land use and the planning commission. She appreciated Hillis' background and "how he's been active in the four years that he's been here. He's held lots of positions and given, I think, good guidance" while on the planning commission. When referring to Langan, Onoda commented, "A council is about showing up and doing the work, and if you can't put together an application, then in my book, that doesn't cut it."

"He knows the world of government and has been doing it virtually his entire professional career," said Council Member Renata Sos when speaking of Hillis. "He understands the decision making process; the public boards and councils." Sos said that Makker "has shown a commitment and willingness to learn quickly by how she's prepared for this in-

terview," and that being new to the town could be a strength. Sos felt that Langan's many appearances during public comment portions of council meetings where "he quite honestly berated our staff and disparaged individual council members" wasn't a good fit.

Mayor Mike McCluer said, "We need someone with a broad grasp of the town's issues and a deep knowledge of Moraga." While he was impressed with Makker's background and thought process, he felt she hadn't been a resident long enough, and although he appreciated Hillis for his "deep public policy experience in government," McCluer believed that he too, was a relatively new resident of the town at four years. McCluer agreed with the others when it came to Langan.

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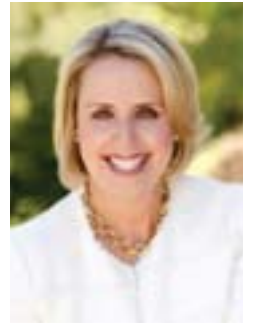


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## Council responds to ABAG denial of Regional Housing Needs Allocation adjustment

By Lou Fancher

The Lafayette City Council on Oct. 12 made amendments to the draft of a letter addressed to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The letter was written in protest to increased housing element allocations tied to ABAG's Draft Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan. The action came after ABAG's executive board denied Lafayette's appeal – and that of six other jurisdictions in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties – and declined requests to reduce the allocations. The use of an erratum to correct an admitted error

made by ABAG that had public lands in high fire hazard severity zones included in the baseline for the RHNA allocations was at the centerpiece of the city's objections.

Council Member Gina Dawson started the conversation with a question about whether the letter should return to the initial ask, or request a simple reduction in the allocation. The city's housing element allocation assigned by ABAG is 2,114.

Housing Consultant Diana Elrod informed the council there was no vehicle or legal argument on which to base a second appeal at this time.

That said, the council turned their attention to the

errata explanation and ABAG's executive board having made what council perceived as a misguided change in policy (requiring that Lafayette BART station be "upzoned" and disregarding exclusion of high fire zones on public land) without a public hearing process.

Mayor Susan Candell initially suggested that the letter included the phrase, "...no city should ever be subject to such an arbitrary and capricious policy changes issued by staff through an errata memo in the future." Candell in comments during the item discussion said important policy changes should be reviewed by ABAG executive

staff and be subject to public hearings.

Planning and Building Director Greg Wolff advised amendments to the letter make points firmly without becoming "inflammatory" to ABAG staff. He reminded council that work with ABAG is ongoing and in the interest of future dialogues, clarity and emphasis on reducing the allocation and preventing sudden policy changes were best.

After further discussion and following Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok's suggestion to offset and therefore highlight two action steps suggested to ABAG, the city council approved the follow-

ing amendments:

"Next Steps: 1) We understand that the Administrative Committee took a preliminary action to deny Lafayette's appeal, however we respectfully request that the error be corrected by reducing our allocation. 2) The issuance of an errata (see attached) should not be used to change policy moving forward and should be limited to factual and technical corrections. Policy changes should be made by the Executive Board through a public hearing process."

Receiving no public comments, the council unanimously approved the letter as amended.

## Mayor and city manager answer questions at Lafayette Homeowners Council meeting

By Lou Fancher

Lafayette Mayor Susan Candell and City Manager Niroop Srivatsa gave substantive reports Oct. 14 during an online meeting by the Lafayette Homeowners Council – a non-profit organization representing the interests of homeowners throughout Lafayette. Moderated by LHC President Bill Bucher, Candell and Srivatsa answered residents' questions about safe routes to school, wildfire safety measures and how to harden homes by trimming dead trees and brush, housing development issues, and other topics of interest.

"The LHC tries to hold resident meetings twice a year depending on topics and current events affecting homeowners," said Bucher. "Access

to people making decisions that affect the homeowners helps everyone understand the process and challenges we as a city face. Transparency and accountability is most important in a small town."

At the beginning of the question and answer period, following Srivatsa's and Candell's presentations, resident Lauren McCaib Herpich said she thinks the town of Lafayette is changing dramatically, especially in the downtown area. "When the General Plan Advisory Committee was first talking about a mission statement, there was a resounding outcry that we are not semi-rural anymore."

Srivatsa, who has worked for the city of Lafayette since 1992, said that she has never seen such a significant shift in community expectations about growth as there is today.

She predicted that as they proceed with the General Plan update, they will have some difficult conversations – especially on land use. The staff is currently working on meeting requirements for increased housing density on BART-owned parking lots to meet next year's AB 2923 compliance deadlines, making updates to the Housing Element plan due at the end of 2022 (CEQA review included), and updating General Plan 2040.

During the meeting Candell addressed the impact that recently passed bills, SB 9 and SB 10, will have on the community. While SB 10 is an opt-in bill, meaning there is no impact on communities unless their councils vote to create an ordinance to upzone parcels under the law, these bills change single family zoning rules and allow up to six units

(SB 9) or 10 units plus 2 ADUs and 2 Junior ADUs (SB 10) to be developed on a single land parcel. The bills also place housing element allocations under state, not local control.

Bucher asked Candell if, with the passage of the bills, the city will automatically meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers, which require an additional 2,114 units be added to the city's Housing Element. Candell said that the Housing Element numbers are including ADUs and the city can include increased capacity from SB 9 and 10 in RHNA numbers, but noted neither bill has an affordability clause.

Candell said people can lobby state legislators for returning local zoning control to cities and for more support for nonprofit housing development companies to build pro-

jects with below-market-rate units. "The city has a requirement that all multi-family projects have 15% set aside for BMR, so we're slowly building our affordable housing stock." Candell said she wished they could raise the percentage to 25, but by law the state won't allow it. "I think we could do better. We as a city, without the state telling us what to do, could actually build stronger affordable housing requirements."

When Candell was asked by Patty Battersby what residents can do right now "to get our regional control back," Candell suggested she visit stopsacramento.org and to sign up for their newsletters. Bucher also asked about safe pathways to school, saying, "We all want safe routes, but plans can get diluted."

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# Running in the rain



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

The rain didn't deter runners, young and old, from having a great time at the Oct. 24 Lafayette Reservoir Run.

By Sharon K. Sobotta

Pouring rain didn't stop hundreds of runners and walkers from showing up for the Lafayette Res Run. Athletes skipped and stretched, paying no mind to the puddles and downpour as they waited for the sounding horn for their 5 and 10K races to begin, at the same time as clusters of families stayed closer to buildings, in ponchos and under umbrellas.

More than 2,300 people registered to participate in the 5K, the 10K and the 2-mile races this year. Those who showed up said they waited too long to be back together doing this race as a community to be scared of a little – or a lot of rain.

Pete Lowenberg said he showed up with his wife's encouragement after taking a long sabbatical from running. "I'm here this morning to support all the runners and I'm going to run myself in the 5K. My goal is to finish it and hopefully to do that in less than 1:05," Lowenberg said ahead of the race. "The way the weather is, if we can't run it, we'll swim it."

Hien Clayton and her

daughter Lexi, who attends Lafayette Elementary school, ran and walked in the 2-mile race along with Daisy Troop 30245 in Lafayette. Clayton said, rain or shine, she's always happy to have a chance to get out and be with the community. "The rain makes it really memorable. The girls are working on earning their medal for being courageous and strong and they definitely earned it," Hien said. "It's raining so hard and I see so many smiling faces everywhere and everyone's excited to be together again and do something that can help and give some hope."

Along with the happy puddle jumpers, there were plenty of children in the 2-mile race that were a little 'weighed' down by the soggy day. Brooke Peterson, the leader of Daisy Troop 30245, said she was happy that all of her first-grade Daisies stuck out the challenge of the wet race, for the most part with smiles on their faces. "My daughter said it was the best day ever. They're all little first-graders that are (an extra) 10 pounds soaking wet," Brook said. "It's been so long and it feels so good to be back together again."

# Mayor and city manager answer questions at Lafayette Homeowners Council meeting

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Candell said she sees this as a two-step process: Try to get something in as quickly and expeditiously as possible, such as enacting parking restrictions or adding speed humps, with the second step a longer-term process, like adding protective pathways or changing two-way streets to one-way streets.

After outlining current housing projects in and near the downtown core, Srivatsa highlighted some of the city's other activities, including new initiatives to potentially resolve PG&E lawsuits regarding tree removal, and the formation of a gas safety alliance comprising community residents who are monitoring PG&E and working with the California Public Utilities Commission and will provide the council with updates. She also mentioned how the city hired a trapper to deal with wild pigs that are devastating front lawns.

Financial support for the business community is headlined by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds granted to the city: \$6.37 million in total, with half available immediately, the second half deliverable in 2022. Candell said a completed business survey asking businesses and nonprofits for ideas had only 78 respondents from Lafayette but was useful. Business owners suggested a shop local campaign or gift card program, general assistance relief support, rent assistance, more downtown events, more arts

and culture venues, better lighting, more free parking and more.

A community survey that closed Oct. 25 had received 734 responses, with comments clustered on topics such as improving public infrastructure, increased wildfire prevention, greater police presence, expanding outdoor dining, opening the Lafayette Theater, and holding more public outdoor events.

After all the feedback is received and studied by city council, Candell said the directions taken and priorities set will be selected and voted upon at meetings in November and December.

In an interview after the meeting, Bucher said he would like to see future presentations and discussions about "how the \$6.37 million in COVID-19 funds will be spent, how we handle housing development in our downtown and the related traffic and circulation issues."

Bucher said he and most of the LHC have been following these topics at city meetings and through other presentations. "We feel the topics are important for all homeowners to understand and how these will affect the city's character and upcoming changes," he said.

The LHC plans to conduct a meeting in the spring as well as a Candidates Night next fall for the upcoming November 2022 election. For information about the LHC, visit [lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org](http://lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org)



**Lafayette Public Meetings**

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**Planning Commission Meeting**

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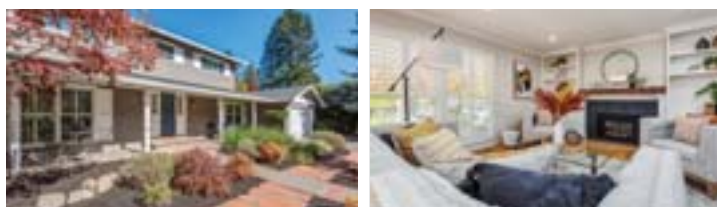




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**Nearly 300 households participate in the Sustainable Moraga Challenge**

By Vera Kochan

In October 2020, the town council authorized Moraga to partner with Sustainable Contra Costa to inspire its citizens to make environmentally friendly choices in their daily activities with regards to home, work and community life. The partnership helped to further the goals set by the town's Climate Action Plan di-

rected at energy efficiency, transportation and water usage.

The Sustainable Moraga Challenge began in December, with participating households creating online profiles in order to track their progress. Team challenges were also encouraged to promote additional friendly yet competitive goal setting.

Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt's Oct.

13 staff report noted several categories where changes could have been made: Big Actions (purchase or lease an electric vehicle; install solar panels), Energy Efficiency (adjust thermostat; weatherize or insulate home), Transportation (telecommute; carpool; take the bus), Water (take shorter showers; install efficient irrigation systems), Renter Friendly (wash clothes wisely; catch the rain), and Easy (up-

grade dishwasher; install low-flow toilets; turn off the faucet).

Within less than one year, 296 households have registered in the Moraga Challenge, and between Dec. 14, 2020, to Oct. 4, 2021, a combined total of 173 tons of CO2 (equivalent) emissions have been reduced.

Not stopping there, reports show 4,017 therms (natural gas) saved, along with 61,398 kWh of electricity saved. Nearly 375,000 gallons of water have been saved, as well as 4,244 gallons of gasoline. Perhaps the most significant and inspiring figure is the cash savings of \$71,240.

**To join the Sustainable Moraga Challenge visit:  
<https://cleanercontracosta.org/moraga>.**

**The clock is ticking to appoint a new Moraga council member**

... continued from Page A1

With the topic of land use high on the list of town council discussions for the upcoming

year, the importance of someone with planning commission experience pre-empted the first motion to appoint Hillis as a council member by Onoda

and seconded by Sos. The motion failed with a 2-2 vote. Sos then made a motion to appoint Makker, to which there was no second.

"Can I just ask what we're doing here?" questioned Sos. "We have two qualified candidates, and we just had a vote on each of them, and you said 'no' to both of them, so I don't understand what we're doing here."

McCluer reiterated that he felt both candidates hadn't been residents long enough. However, Sos pointed out that they all started out green to the job. "To measure people up, people who are assuming office for the first time, to a seasoned council member, I don't believe is the appropriate way to be looking at this."

Woehleke felt that the town council has not been supportive of staff, and that there has been a lack of cooperation with regards to decision making, especially when he raises an issue. He mentioned that McCluer tried to organize a meeting to discuss the issues, but that it was re-

jected. He was also concerned about the possibility of three council members out-weighting the other two on a regular basis.

Onoda pointed out the urgency of making a decision that evening in order to avoid a potential special election (in May or June), after which Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg stated the cost to Moraga could be anywhere between \$93,104 and \$162,932.

"I'm very concerned that whoever we choose has to be a good team member," replied Woehleke. "We have to work together as a group of five."

McCluer agreed, saying that if the application process is opened up again, possibly more applicants will come forward. "Ideally a broad-based business person with a government background that's been in Moraga for a while."

Making another attempt at appointment, Onoda motioned for Makker with Sos seconding. Once again, McCluer and Woehleke voted against.

A clearly upset Onoda suggested that McCluer and Woehleke get together to discuss the issue in order to avoid more work for staff. "If you guys are this tender about it, it needs to be taken care of, and I don't think it has anything to do with the people who are trying to be on the council. If you two would swallow whatever rancid thing that you have in your mouth from the past, and we make this decision tonight and get this done, then we have meetings - the four of us - and get this taken care of!"

The decision was made to continue the process to the next day's regular town council meeting in the hopes that "sleeping on it" might change some minds.

On Oct. 13, Onoda immediately cut to the chase and moved to appoint Hillis to the council with Sos seconding the motion. Yet again, the vote ended in 2-2.

Sos addressed the concern about a "new to the town" member, suggesting that a mentorship from the others could be helpful, to which Woehleke replied that canvassing for a new set of applicants "may provide better clarity. I personally think we owe it to the residents since there are questions to open it back up again, and we'll be no worse off."

"This isn't going to sound very nice, so I'm warning you guys ahead of time," stated Onoda. "If we have to go to a Special Election, it is on the vice

mayor and the mayor, because Council Member Sos and I have both said okay to two candidates that are very qualified, so I just want it to be very clear that that's what I'm thinking, and it is completely 100% on you two, and that will cost \$100,000, perhaps, and I don't think this town wants to spend money doing that when they have elected us to make decisions. That is our job. As ugly as my statements just were, I stand by them." With that being said, she once again motioned to appoint Makker to town council and was seconded by Sos. The vote again was 2-2.

"When you say it's on us, it sounds like you're saying it's our fault," challenged McCluer. "It sounds like you're saying your opinion is right and our opinion is wrong. When you have a 2-2 vote, you have a difference of opinion." He once again suggested reopening the application process as a benefit to the residents.

Sos felt that opening another round of applications was disrespectful to the candidates who initially responded in a timely manner for the Sept. 30 deadline. Posing the idea that McCluer and Woehleke needed more time to reconsider Hillis and Makker she motioned that the entire matter be continued to the Oct. 27 Regular Town Council Meeting. Seconded by Onoda, the vote failed 2-2.

McCluer motioned to open the application process up to another round with Woehleke seconding. This time Onoda and Sos voted against.

Battenberg stated that the issue would be agendized again for the Oct. 27 Town Council Meeting, as it is the last regular meeting before the 60 day period of appointment expires on Nov. 8.

The town received 32 public letters of concern about this topic as of Oct. 22. An Oct. 17 letter addressed to the mayor and council members pointed out that "the refusal of half the Council to make a selection risks forcing the Town into an eight-month period with only a four-member Council - and the inability to break tie votes." The letter was signed by 13 former Moraga mayors and council members whose term in office ranged from 1974-2020. It went on to urge them to "set aside internal disputes, swiftly appoint one of the applicants before you, and return your attention to executing the urgent business of the Town."

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**Town Council**  
 Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m.  
**Planning Commission:**  
 Tuesday, Nov. 2, 6:30 p.m.  
**Park and Recreation Commission:**  
 Monday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.  
**Moraga School District Board Meetings:**  
 Tuesday, Nov. 9, 6 p.m.  
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Moraga mom launches Veggie Explorers Club subscription for kids



Kit focuses on four senses

Photos provided

By Jenn Freedman

Local mom and “The Family Kitchen Coach,” Amy Jizmagian, has created an engaging and educational subscription box for kids. Veggie Explorers Club creatively introduces vegetables to children through simple sensory activities focused on sight, smell, touch and taste.

Veggie Explorers Club is part craft kit, part cooking kit. Each month’s kit focuses on one in-season vegetable. The eco-conscious box arrives at the child’s doorstep and includes everything needed except the food.

“I created Veggie Explorers Club because it was the thing I wished I had as I was introducing new foods to my kids,” Jizmagian shares. Before having kids, Jizmagian assumed raising healthy, adventurous eaters would be easy: introduce vegetables first, make healthy food taste good, and minimize junk food. “And while these do help, I underestimated how much kids are their own little people. They have their own natural preferences, tastes, and development patterns.”

Jizmagian utilizes scientific research showing that kids who have no-pressure, and even non-eating interactions with food are more likely to eat it. “As a result, all of the activities in the kits are invitations to play and explore – not pressure to eat – knowing that even if they don’t try it now, it will likely help them be more open to eating it in the future.”

Jizmagian’s idea for this kit for kids came to her in the fall of 2020, smack in the middle of the pandemic, when she had very little time to herself. And yet, amazingly, Veggie Explorers Club was born just a few months later in March 2021.

Her biggest challenge has been developing the physical product in a thoughtful way. We all hate getting more “stuff” in the house, so Jizmagian is mindful of striking the right balance between “fun for kids” and “good for the earth.” For example, each box contains at least one useful tool that kids can use over and over again. And the art activities are generally paper-based with minimal components that can be easily recycled.

Each box incorporates a recipe for the “taste” activity. Recipes include modifications for gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan, and dairy-free.

Veggie Explorers Club customers can choose from several subscription options: a one-time box for \$29.99, an ongoing monthly club membership for \$24.99 per month (with free cancellation at any time with no minimum commitment), or a 3 month gift for \$75. And you can add a sibling for \$9.99 per box as well.

Conscious that busy parents may feel pressed to find enough time to supervise their children through the activities each month, Jizmagian offers an optional online “playtime” class as well. At no additional cost, parents can sign up their kiddos for a 1-hour Zoom ses-

sion with her. During play-time, Jizmagian leads up to 10 children through the activities from the box.

This reporter can vouch from experience ... my kids have thoroughly enjoyed the activities and have even tasted asparagus and artichokes for the first time ever.

If you’ve been wondering how to get your kids or grand-kids involved in the kitchen, give them exposure to healthy food, and maybe even try a new vegetable, Veggie Explorers Club may be a fun option for the little one(s) in your life.



Amy Jizmagian

For more information or to order a subscription, go to [www.veggieexplorersclub.com](http://www.veggieexplorersclub.com).



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Repairable bikes find new homes during Cycle Recycle

Submitted by Bobbie Preston

Don't toss that repairable bike on the garbage heap; it's time once again for the Cycle Recycle! Over the last 24 years Bobbie and Tom Preston have collected over 3,700 repairable bikes Nov. 1-31 on their driveway at 1307 Larch in Moraga. No helmets are accepted and

no razors or scooters are accepted either, unless in “primo condition,” but bike racks are accepted. And the Prestons will accept biking clothing in primo condition as well. No need to call. This year’s recipients of Cycle Recycle include Waterside workshops, Trips for Kids, Keeping our Promise, Charity Bike Institute, White Pony Express, and Oakland International High School.

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**The Orinda Association:**  
 www.orindaassociation.org

# City council agrees that Charles Hill Circle home worthy of historic landmark

By Sora O'Doherty

The denial by the planning commission to grant historic landmark status to a residence at 12 Charles Hill Circle was reversed by the city council on appeal on Oct. 19. The council members noted that it was a tough decision for a number of reasons, including the fact that the landmark status had originally been recommended by the Historic Landmarks Committee but was denied by the planning commission with only five members present at the time.

Homeowner and appellant Nathan Ogle, an architect, has owned the home since 2009. The single family residence on over three-quarters of an acre was designed by architect Paul Hamilton, who lived in the home and used it as his office for about a decade. The original landscaping was designed by renown landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, but little of the original landscaping survives.

The application has been vigorously opposed by the applicant's neighbors on Charles Hill Circle, who have argued that the applicant seeks the designation in order to interfere with their properties. In fact, the applicant did oppose plans by his neighbor to remove a tree and widen a driveway, but Planning Director Drummond Buckley, who presented the staff report to the council, emphasized that that argument had been denied and that the historic landmark status would apply solely to the one house, 12 Charles Hill Circle.

There was also considerable doubt about the status of Paul Hamilton. The architect designed about five homes in Orinda and many others elsewhere. It was agreed that none of his homes have been granted historic landmark status thus far. The applicant claims that their home is a well-preserved example of the Second Bay Tradition in modern architecture.

In order to be granted historic landmark status, a property must be found to meet three of eight criteria. The planning commission found that 12 Charles Hill Circle met only one condition, criterion E, that the building contains elements of architectural design, detail and materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. However the city council members agreed that the residence met three criteria, criterion E, as well as criteria A and D. A specifies that the character, interest or value is part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of Orinda, the state of California, the United States of America or Native Americans; D is that the building represents a distinctive example of an architectural period, style or movement or its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose work has influenced the development of the city.

The council could not agree on C, that the proposed landmark is associated with a person who significantly contributed to the culture, history and development of the city. But meeting criteria A, D, and E

was sufficient to warrant the landmark status.

All of the city council members had questions and concerns regarding the property. Vice Mayor Dennis Fay asked about any burden the status would place on the property owner and also on his neighbors. Buckley responded that only the exterior house structure and entry courtyard would be protected. Any proposed changes to the protected structure would require a landmark improvement plan to be approved by the Planning Commission. He emphasized that the landmark status placed no restrictions on any surrounding properties. Fay was also glad to find out that there are provisions that allow the city council to revoke a landmark designation if they deem it necessary.

Council Member Darlene Gee asked the applicant why he wanted the historic landmark status for his home. He replied that, although it was a lot of hard work, as an architect he viewed preserving the home as "my legacy for the city, and my children's legacy for the city." He stressed that he wishes to give back his knowledge to the next generation. He added that, having been the architect's residence, "this house has memories in it."

In public comments, preservation architect Mark Hulbert said that the subject house lacks strength of character, and that the architect is obscure. In his opinion, "neither the architect nor the house is historically important to the city of Orinda." Leslie Lundin who owns 14 Charles Hill Circle

said she would love to see the home restored, but contended that the applicant "is trying to bully his neighbors and the city council." She pointed out that the architect has never had a house designated as historically significant and that his work was derivative. She also noted that the home has been extensively altered and the original landscaping is gone.

Todd Williams, a land use attorney representing Lundin posited that Criterion A would apply to almost half the houses in Orinda. He also averred that Hamilton was not a significant architect and that his work was not innovative. Bobbi Landers, former Orinda mayor and chair of the Historic Landmarks Committee also addressed the council. She said that the committee is very diligent and has only landmarked four to five houses thus far.

Local attorney David Trotter, who represents the appellant, urged the council to seize the day and designate the Paul Hamilton house as a unique example of the Second Bay Tradition. "This is an opportunity you don't get every day," he urged. He also mentioned with a book publisher about the house.

Mayor Amy Worth talked about the history of architecture in Orinda, and concluded that Paul Hamilton, while not comparable to famous architects Frank Lloyd Wright or Richard Neutra who designed two homes with historic landmark status in Orinda, did contribute to the identity of Orinda. The measure passed unanimously.

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# Schools focus on COVID and other safety issues

By Sora O'Doherty

Lamorinda schools are working with Walnut Creek schools to make sure that rapid testing is available to every student and parent every day in the greater Walamorinda area. Since the return to school for the 2021-22 academic year, there have been protocols in effect that require students to be tested if they exhibit any symptoms or are notified of an exposure incident. The test, which is required for the student to return to school, has not been easy to obtain in the recent past.

Each school appears to present the testing information in a different format on the school's website. However, as of Oct. 12, Orinda Union District School superintendent Aida Glimme says that the system has been upgraded in an effort to make rapid tests more available. Results of the rapid antigen tests are generally available within 20 minutes. The goal is to make sure that students miss as little school as possible, while making sure that everyone is protected to the greatest extent. Scheduling is being provided by the Global Virus Pass, a system being used by most school districts, according to Glimme. Nevertheless, parents are reporting on social media and in person that they are experiencing difficulties trying to get their children tested.

From the OUSD website, parents can see where rapid antigen tests or PCR tests are being offered every school day in Lamorinda and Walnut Creek. The current schedule for tests is: Monday, Stanley Middle School, and Lafayette and Moraga Community Library; Tuesday, Acalanes Union

High School District; Wednesday, Tice Creek Elementary, Walnut Creek and Orinda Union School District Office; Thursday, Burton Valley Elementary, Lafayette; and Friday, Orinda Union School District Office.

All sites except Acalanes currently offer both types of tests. Acalanes does not offer rapid antigen testing, but is in the process of getting them, according to Nick Carpenter, AUHSD Director of School Services who had been assigned to COVID testing and contact tracing. Like other schools, AUHSD has a nurse who administers rapid antigen tests to students who have been exposed and are on modified quarantine. Carpenter noted that the test clinic at AUHSD is being used almost exclusively by younger children, not high school students.

There are a number of circumstances that require a student be tested before being allowed to return to school, ranging from having a stomachache to being exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID. In the latter case, the student will be tested by the school nurse and placed on a modified quarantine, which allows the student to continue attending school.

Testing is only one of the weapons being employed in the fight against the virus. According to John Nickerson, AUHSD superintendent, there have only been three cases in the past six weeks, which he says shows that mitigation efforts are working. The schools report that there have been no incidents of COVID being transmitted at school thus far. However, he pointed out the schools rely upon their HVAC systems and air filters to protect students and staff. He

noted that in the event of a public safety power shutoff the schools would be forced to shut down because they would lack power to operate these systems.

Miramonte principal Ben Campopiano reported that while there have been no COVID cases at Miramonte in over six weeks, wellness center visits have ticked higher this year. OUSD's Glimme agreed that academics are going really well, but she said that the challenge is mental health. "Students are struggling to interact in person," she explained. "Some who have never been to school in person; social interaction is crucial," she continued. Glimme said that OUSD's main focus right now is the increased need for mental health support.

COVID is only one of the safety issues of concern to the schools. Another issue that has been getting a lot of attention recently is the safety of students on their way to and from schools, following several traffic incidents, including the death of a school crossing guard and injury of a child outside Stanley Middle School in Lafayette and the serious injury of a child skateboarding to Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek. This has been the subject of a number of meetings recently between mayors, city managers, and the school boards.

Orinda Mayor Amy Worth says that what is required is that the whole community slow down. "The tragedy in Lafayette reminds us that we have congestion," she said in a recent interview. "We are looking at structural things that we can do to make the roads safer, but," she says, "it has to be a community awareness campaign."

# Friends of Orinda Library purchase phone charging cabinet

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda Library will soon feature a locking phone charging cabinet, donated by the Friends of the Orinda Library. The cabinet contains eight bays into which users

can place their phone for charging. Each bay will securely lock with a personal pin code. The cabinet will provide rapid charging for both Android and Apple phones. Because it can be hooked up to a generator, it

can also be used during Public Safety Power Shutdowns (PSPSS). The Friends announced at the Orinda Mayor's Liaison Meeting on Oct. 12 that the cabinet will be made available to Orinda during any upcoming PSPSS.

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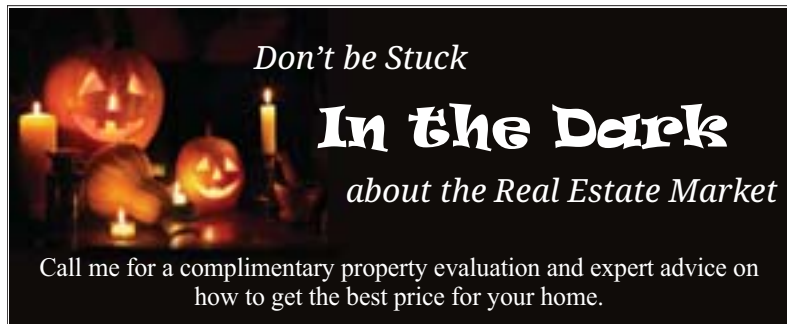
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## With patience, Czech student finally makes it to Orinda



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Visiting Czech student at Miramonte High School.

By Sora O'Doherty

Denisa Dvořáková was thrilled to win the competition and be chosen by the Orinda-Tabor Sister City Foundation to come and study at Miramonte High School in Orinda. But then, the COVID-19 pandemic intervened. The Czech student was unable to come and study in Orinda during the pandemic. But the Foundation, in fairness, offered her the next opportunity to come.

Dvořáková finally arrived in Orinda on Aug. 1. She was vaccinated against COVID in the Czech Republic, which was a bit tricky because she did not meet the age requirement there.

But it was managed, and the young Czech woman set off on her first solo international trip.

Dvořáková says that it was her dream to come, but the postponement is also a little bit tricky, because now she is a senior at her high school in Tabor, the Secondary School of Civil and Mechanical Engineering, and must take her final year exams, known as Maturita, in April. This means that she must keep up with her Czech course work as well as her Orinda school work. But the lively 18-year-old still finds a little time for fun.

When she started school on Aug. 12, she signed up to be a cheerleader, which she really enjoyed. She performed at home and away games. However, dancing, she admits, is not her strong suit. She started to practice her tennis, and was soon invited to join the tennis team, which she did. Unfortunately, she couldn't manage both, so she had to drop cheerleading, but she is happy to still have friends on the squad. She plays tennis at Acalanes High School every day, using a racket borrowed from her host brother, who, like her brother back home, also plays tennis.

Dvořáková is being hosted by the Mosher family in Orinda. It reminds her of her own family in the Czech Republic, because she also has a younger brother who plays tennis, and a sister. Her host father is a construction engi-

neer, like her own father. She also has a host sister, but she is away at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. She enjoyed spending time with her when she was home visiting. Her host mother actually works in the College & Career Center at Miramonte. During her long wait, Dvořáková says that her host mom kept her up to date on developments on this side of the pond via video chats.

Since arriving, Dvořáková has been brought to visit the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco, which she loved. She's been to Los Angeles, visiting Hollywood, Santa Monica, Malibu and Venice Beach. During Winter break, her host family is taking her to Maui. After that, she won't return to Miramonte, but will head back to the Czech Republic on Jan. 10, 2022, where she'll return to her classes immediately, then take her exams and start applying for university. Although it is late, she may apply to some American schools, as well as to the university in Prague.

Dvořáková is fluent in English, as well as speaking Czech and has studied German, although she doesn't speak German. She enjoys international travel, and has visited both Malta and

Boston for English language courses. In the future she would like to travel to Northern Europe, including Denmark, Norway, Finland and Germany.

"I don't have time to be homesick!" Dvořáková says. She keeps up with her friends at home via social media. She writes a blog in Czech on Instagram so that the next visiting student will have an idea of what the experience is like. The next student will be selected in February, and Dvořáková hopes to be included in the interview panel.

What has impressed Dvořáková about Miramonte? "I really like the school spirit," she says. She is amazed that the students wear the school colors, and come out to cheer for their teams. Her favorite class at Miramonte is Principles of Engineering, which reminds her of her Czech physics class. Like her father, Dvořáková wants to be a civil engineer.

"I'm so grateful for all of this," she said, wondering how she could express her thanks to her host family. When she returns to Tabor, she will be in a select group of those who visited Orinda as students and who maintain close ties to Tabor's sister-city.



**City Council Regular Meeting:**  
Tuesday, Nov. 2, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only  
**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, Nov. 9, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only

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Wednesday, Nov. 10, 6:30 p.m. By Teleconference Only

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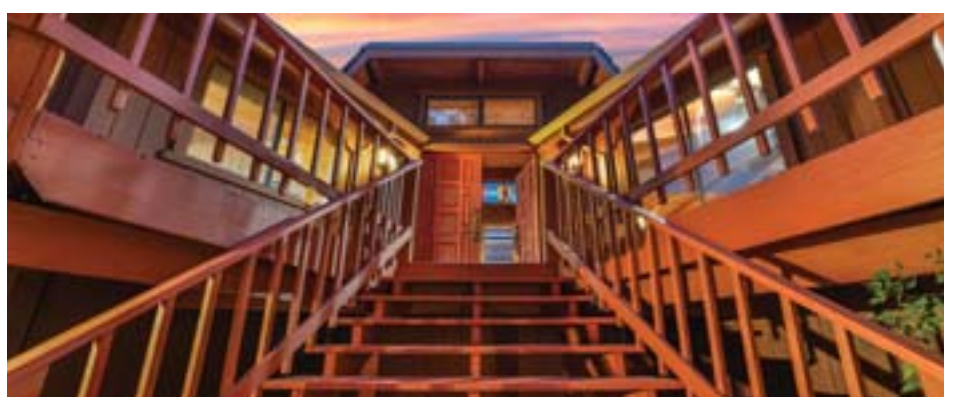
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# Great Lamorinda ShakeOut gives radio users a refresher course



Photo Sora O'Doherty

During the "hotwash" the incident team reviewed what worked well, and what didn't.

By Sora O'Doherty

As befits any emergency related event, there were donuts, there was a dog, and if you were listening on a GMRS radio at 10:21 a.m. on Oct. 21, you would have heard, "Good morning. This is an exercise. This is net control for Orinda, Moraga, and Lafayette GMRS Repeater portion of the Great Lamorinda ShakeOut Net."

Members of Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and

Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group (LARIG) were called upon to radio in to Incident Control and report their names and locations. This exercise was part of the greater event on the same day. Over 31 million participants were registered for 2021 Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills worldwide.

Incident Commander Bruce Macler had a number of goals for the exercise. Chiefly he wanted to find out how many radio users were willing to participate and

where they were located, with an eye toward answering the question, "Can this system be used in a real emergency?" Radio skills are considered perishable, and the exercise was also designed to allow CERT and LARIG members to refresh their skills, as well as to develop a citizen-level communication plan for Lamorinda.

After the announcement went out, a group of volunteers gathered at Incident Command on Donald Drive in Orinda, an area known for good radio reception. Several volunteers known as scribes answered radio calls, collected information from the callers, and forwarded it along to Wesley Ayers, HAM Team Net Control, who collected the data on a computer and sent it to Moraga-Orinda Fire District Fire Station 45. There the calls were being mapped, to create a visual guide to the response.

As often happens, there were some surprises. The plan had included check-ins from all the local schools. Moraga schools did check in; Orinda schools did not. It

turned out that the reason was simple: Moraga schools have GMRS radios; Orinda schools have only one. CERT Safety Officer Julie Sparks noted, "We did not have contact with Lafayette schools; they are on a different radio system." She added, "It will be noted in our after-action report as an action item to follow up on."

In every emergency, communication is always a problem. Macler hopes that one result of this exercise will be developing a protocol for radio use, a training module for CERT training, and then routinely using the protocol at events. The volunteers answering the radio calls at the incident command center reported difficulties in clearly hearing and recording the names of callers and especially of their locations, many of which sound similar, such as La Cuesta and La Cresta in Orinda. The problem was compounded by two factors: static and callers speaking too fast.

Another objective of the exercise was to test equipment, including radios owned

by individuals and the three local repeaters, installed by LARIG. The installation was completed in 2016. The repeaters boost the signal from the radios, giving them greater reach. All three were found to work in the exercise. Another goal was to identify where there is GMRS radio coverage. For this exercise, all three repeaters were linked, so that when a radio user connected with any one repeater, the message was conveyed by all three.

At the close of the exercise, a "hotwash" was conducted via the Zoom video conferencing platform. A hotwash is when participants review what went right, and what didn't, during the exercise. Those receiving calls reported some frustration with poor reception and lots of "doubles" which occur when two radio users attempt to call in at the same time. But overall it was concluded that the exercise went pretty smoothly and Keith Rylie, Net Control on the HAM Team at Station 45 concluded, "Julie's group is just amazing!"

The map of radio responses can be viewed at [www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1rxwL7iNxoKWC28\\_fWaUH08Z6VY4FJaNL&usp=sharing](http://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1rxwL7iNxoKWC28_fWaUH08Z6VY4FJaNL&usp=sharing)

# Diving deep into the mechanics of recycle bins



Lamorinda's recycling blue bin

Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

Who can remember the days when we didn't have multi-colored plastic garbage cans, but rather the round, metal cans with lids that never closed properly? It's okay to admit that you were a little kid in those days, if it makes

you feel any younger. Even the trucks picking up the trash weren't as "high tech." No lobster claws reached out to grab your trash can and flip it upside down, giving the receptacle an additional shake to make sure the contents have been emptied. Instead, actual human beings

jumped off the trucks and mightily hoisted the galvanized steel cylinders brimming with all of a household's refuse, while deftly emptying the contents into the hungry mouth of the trash truck.

During an Oct. 7 Zoom presentation by Republic Services representative John Taylor, the event, sponsored by Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, delved into the mechanics of recycling, beginning with a brief history. Up until the 1970s, recycling trash wasn't even a concept until the landfills began to overflow. With environmentalists already exploring ways to help the planet, the population slowly began to reduce waste material by 52%. The most common blue bin recyclable items are: metal, glass, paper, cardboard and plastic.

Metal in the form of aluminum cans, cookie sheets, beverage cans, food and pet food cans, tin cans and surprisingly enough clean pots and pans are acceptable. All colors of glass are allowed as long as it's clean. Paper can come in the form of paper-back books, boxes, catalogs, construction paper, computer paper, detergent boxes, paper egg cartons, magazines, newspapers and cardboard just to name a few. Plastics include bleach bottles, CRV beverage containers, clean food containers, empty household cleaning containers, prescription bottles (empty and label removed), water bottles, small solid plastic toys and more. If in doubt, check the object for an imprinted triangle with a number inside.

Plastic items with a No. 1-7 marking references from what kind of plastic a container is made. "Each plastic is composed of a different molecule or set of molecules," explains the Rlmrecycling website. "Different molecules do not mix when plastics are recycled, it is like trying to recycle paper and glass together." And, for those who have always assumed that the triangle containing the number 1 with PETE underneath it, meant that someone named Pete was the bottle inspector, PETE is the designation for Poly(ethylene terephthalate) which soda bottles, water bottles, cooking oil bottles and medicine containers are made of.

Once the blue bins have been serviced the contents are delivered to Mount Diablo Recycling in Pittsburg, Calif. The facility operates 24/7 to sort all of the recycled material delivered. If anything that doesn't belong in the blue bin arrives at this location either a machine or a human catches the erroneous item, Taylor said. Public tours of the facility are expected to resume in 6-8 weeks.

Republic Services also recycles organic waste, which

the green bins are for. The waste is first taken to a landfill in Martinez. From there it is delivered to Manteca where it is sold to Scott Turf Builder. Organics include yard trimmings, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meats, seafood, bones and food soiled paper such as pizza boxes. Republic Services provides a free 3-gallon food scrap container for customers to store kitchen organics. Plastics, glass, metal, rocks, concrete, sod or dirt items are among several that should never be placed in the green bin.

According to Taylor, blue bin recycling is currently sent to Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, South Korea and Malaysia where it is expected to be turned back into useful household items. Phoenix, Arizona turns its plastic waste into fuel.

The book "Zero Waste Home: The Ultimate Guide to Simplifying Your Life By Reducing Your Waste" by Bea Johnson, has helpful pointers for waste-free living. Additional recycling tips and information can be found at: [republicservices.com](http://republicservices.com) or [recyclingsimplified.com](http://recyclingsimplified.com).

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### Fire District Public Meetings

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Nov. 17, 6 p.m.  
For meeting times and agendas, visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)

**ConFire**  
Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 9, 1 p.m.  
For meeting times and agendas, visit [www.cccfpd.org](http://www.cccfpd.org)

Public Safety	Service to Citizen	Warrant Service	Alarms	100 Brookline
<b>Emergency response:</b>	Patrol Req./Security Check 24	2000 Block Leland Way, Con	911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 4	Warrant Arrest
Emergency: 24 Hours 911	Public/School Assembly Check 17	<b>Nuisance to the Community</b>	Traffic 85	Canyon Rd./De La Cruz Way
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	Supplemental Report 14	Disturbance-domestic	Suspicious Circumstances 4	<b>Nuisance to the Community</b>
925-284-5010	Vacation House Check 1	600 Block St Marys Rd.	Suspicious Subject 5	Disturbing The Peace
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777	Welfare Check 10	3300 Block N Lucille Ln.	Suspicious Vehicle 2	700 Block Moraga Way
or go to <a href="http://www.nixle.com">www.nixle.com</a>	Ordinance Violation 1	Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Service to Citizen 37	Loud Music
<b>Lafayette Police Department:</b>	<b>Vehicle violations</b>	3500 Block S Silver Springs Rd.	Patrol Req./Security Check 21	Hacienda
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680	Auto Burglary	Loud Music	Supplemental Report 2	Loud Noise
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt	4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	3400 Block Black Hawk Rd.	Vacation House Check 1	10 Block El Camino Flores
925-299-3221	Hit And Run Misdemeanor	Loud Noise	Welfare Check 5	Donald Dr./Moraga Rd.
Police Department Tip Line	Police Department	1000 Block Dewing Ave.	Public/School Assembly Check 2	300 Block Rheem Blvd.
94549Tip@gmail.com	Reckless Driving	Public Nuisance	Ordinance Violation 0	Loud Party
Police Department Traffic Issues	Pleasant Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Lucas Dr./Lucas Ct.	<b>Vehicle violations</b>	1400 Block Camino Peral
94549Traffic@gmail.com	St Marys Rd./S Lucille Ln.	Michael Ln./Lucas Dr.	Accident Property	600 Block Augusta Dr.
<b>Moraga Police Department:</b>	Pleasant Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Bollinger Canyon Rd./St Marys Rd.	<b>Other</b>
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.	Vandalism	500 Block Center St.	Barking Dog
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049	Wb Sr 24 At Pleasant Hill Rd.	Oak St./Oconner Dr.	Dui Misd	Rancho Laguna Park
<b>Orinda Police Department:</b>	Tc - Property Damage	1000 Block Sierra Vista Wy	Ivy Dr./Arroyo Dr., Ori	Failure To Obey
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820	800 Block Las Trampas Rd.	<b>Other</b>	Excessive Speed	Valle Vista Staging Area Ebrp
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan	900 Block Moraga Rd.	Fire/Ems Response Info	Fernwood Dr./Rheem Blvd.	Fireworks
925-254-6820	Moraga Rd./Moraga Blvd.	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.	St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.	500 Block Moraga Rd.
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Harassment	(2)	Harassment
<b>Lafayette Police Department</b>	Moraga Blvd./Moraga Rd.	1000 Block Carol Ln.	Rheem Blvd./Fayhill (2)	Dollar Tree
<b>Incident Summary Report</b>	Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.	900 Block Hough Ave.	St Marys Rd./Rheem Blvd.	300 Block Rheem Blvd.
<b>Oct. 3 - Oct. 9</b>	Vehicle Theft	K9 Outside Assist Request	Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.	Mentally Ill Commit
Alarms 25	800 Block Acalanes Rd.	Eb 4/Port	Rheem Way/Ivy Dr.	St Marys College
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 4	<b>Other criminal activity</b>	Trespass	Rheem Blvd./Redwood Ln.	Unwanted Guest
Traffic 64	Grand Theft	3400 Block School St.	Hit And Run Misdemeanor	900 Block Country Club Dr.
Suspicious Circumstances 5	3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Violation Restraining Ord	Campolindo High School	
Suspicious Subject 8	Identity Theft	3600 Block Brook St.	Reckless Driving	
Suspicious Vehicle 1	Police Department		Del Rey School, Ori	
	3100 Block Stanley Blvd.		St Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.	
	Petty Theft		St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.	
	3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.		<b>Other criminal activity</b>	
	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.		Fraud False Pretenses	
	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.		500 Block Woodminster Dr.	
	Shoplift		Petty Theft	
	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)		200 Block Scofield Dr.	
	Strongarm Robbery		Petty Theft From Veh	
	3500 Block Moraga Blvd.		100 Block Hazelwood Pl.	

**Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 5 - Oct. 18**

**ORINDA POLICE**

**Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back soon**



# Letters to the editor

## Appoint a new council member

As residents of Moraga since 1980, we are very concerned about the refusal of the Town Council's two members McCluer and Woehleke to agree to appoint one of two qualified candidates to take the place of resigned council member Mr. Stromberg.

The Council had already agreed to appoint someone to fill Mr. Stromberg's seat until the November 2022 regular election, a year from now. This procedure has worked well in the past, avoiding the high and unnecessary cost of holding a special election in June. Town residents Kerry Hillis and Sona Makker have applied to be considered for the open council seat and are considered qualified candidates.

Regretfully, Council members McCluer and Woehleke refusals to govern responsibly by agreeing to appoint one of the two candidates as a council member means a special and unnecessary election must be held in June which would cost our town around \$100,000 – a needless waste of our town's limited resources!

We urge Town Council members McCluer and Woehleke to actively participate in a discussion at their next meeting on October 27 regarding candidates Hillis and Makker and vote on their choice to fill the vacant council seat so Moraga Town Council can get back to work on the highly important matters awaiting their attention.  
Cayo and Fred Marschner  
Moraga

## Agenda item for Town Council

Last week the Moraga Town Council became deadlocked over the appointment of a candidate to fill the vacancy created recently by the resignation of Councilmember Stromberg. I was deeply troubled as I watched the inability of Mayor McCluer and Vice Mayor Woehleke to see the value, talents, and significant experience of both candidates before them. Due to the impasse in getting at least 3 votes for one of the candidates threatens the scheduling of a Special Election for next

May or June at the cost of around \$100,000 for a mere 5 month term. An appointment at this time would have a 12 month term.

Either candidate would bring the perspective and expertise of a relatively young, well-qualified, and energetic person to the Council. Bringing this person onto the Council now would have the benefit of a full 5-member Council as it processes the complex matters and makes major decisions in the coming year. In addition, an appointment at the next Council meeting on Oct. 27 would prevent the Town from wasting \$100,000 on a needless special election.

I urge the Mayor and Vice-Mayor to fulfill their basic responsibility to set interpersonal matters aside and govern responsibly for the people of Moraga.  
Victoria Courtney, Ed.D.  
Moraga

## Appoint a Moraga Town Council member and save us all a lot of money

The Moraga Town's government isn't making a lot of sense. Rather than appoint one of the qualified candidates to the open vacancy on the Town Council, two of the council's members prefer to spend \$93k-163k of money the Town does not have on a special election.

Do us all a favor and do your job. Appoint one of the qualified candidates and save us all the money of a special election.  
David Lorié  
Moraga

## Moraga Council seat

I strongly object to the lack of action at filling the open council seat. We need a full council and we need those currently on it to act in the best interests of the town.

We have many worthy projects for the Town to spend its limited resources on. Running a special election is low on that list and any Council member who forces such an action is surely not going to get my vote and probably many others.

Furthermore, having arbitrary criteria that do not depend on candidates actual qual-

ifications is bigotry. If that criteria is skin color is it racism,; if it has to do with age, it is ageism. That is not the kind of Town we should want to live in.

I urge the Council to fill this vacancy quickly with one of the vetted candidates. The town can then get on to priority issues and the voters can express their views at the next regularly scheduled election.  
Sincerely,  
Max Sherman  
Rheem Valley

## Critical Race Theory

Local parents should be aware that Critical Race Theory (CRT) is being promoted at local high schools and courses are being taught. Miramonte has "English 4 Deconstructing Race" per the Course Catalog for 2021-2022; see "Diversity and Inclusion" at miramonteparents.com. For Campolindo information see "Diversity, Equity & Inclusion" under "About Campo" at the main Campo website. The Acalanes School District has a computerized "AUHSD Bias Incident Reporting System," where one can report offenders, anonymously if desired.

At dnicampo.com is the following: "This year, the Campo Parent DNI Group will push on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging based on gender, race, and sexual orientation and their intersectionality in the classroom, on the sports field, on campus, and in the community."

CRT is a Marxist-derived philosophy in which the world's people divide into oppressors and oppressed. See Wikipedia, a review of "Critical Theory" from the Frankfurt Group, and "Critical Race Theory: An Introduction" by Delgado and Stefancic. You can gain an understanding of this worldview from Campo's definitions at dnicampo.com/resources, where you will find the following terms defined: cisgender, diversity, equity, gender identity, gender expression, white culture, marginalized group, BIPOC, diversity, implicit bias, power, privilege, race, whiteness, microaggression, structural racism, white privilege, and others.  
David Berti  
Moraga

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570



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# Preschool waitlists continue to grow as directors struggle to find and keep staff



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

## Soledad Lascon reads with children at St. John's Preschool in Orinda.

### By Sharon K. Sobotta

After working in her family's restaurant in Martinez for as long as she can remember, Soledad Lascon pivoted to a job as a cook at St. John's preschool in Orinda when her youngest child was born just before the pandemic. The site director Maria Rios noticed a sparkle in Lascon's eye as she served the preschoolers meals and snacks. This prompted Rios to encourage Lascon to take child care units while cooking, and ultimately helped her forgo a teacher shortage.

"Once I got there and started cooking, I realized I

really loved working with kids. I followed Maria's advice and went to DVC," Lascon said. "Since I finished work by 12, I had plenty of time in a day to begin completing my units."

In August when St. John's Preschool lost a teacher to a new opportunity, Lascon moved out of the kitchen and into the classroom.

"I love it," Lascon said. "When my own child looks at my phone and sees preschool pictures, he's jealous."

Lascon's youngest child is among the dozens of children on the waitlist for the school, which is licensed to serve 48 children and is at full capacity. If not for Lascon's willingness to make a professional pivot, Rios might've found herself in the increasingly familiar struggle so many preschool directors are facing.

"Thank goodness Soledad was ready to jump into the classroom when another teacher gave notice," Rios said. "I feel super lucky to have dodged the bullet that so many other schools are experiencing (with staff turnover and staff retention)."

Rios has worked at the preschool for two decades and has been in the director role for a few years. Like all of the six staff members at the preschool, Rios commutes in from a few towns away every day.

"I love caring for children in this community and I would love to live in this community, because the school district is just phenomenal," Rios said. "But I can't afford it."

Rios says she counts her blessings to have a job she loves, working with a community of children she adores. Of course, she says she's also aware of class disparities. "Sometimes we think we've evolved from these issues, but people of color are (in many cases) having to struggle so much more," Rios said.

Rios' 4-year-old is a student at St. John's preschool. When the enrollment numbers allow for it, teachers have the option of enrolling their own children in the preschool. However, since the pandemic, the demand far outweighs the availability of classroom space. "We have an incredible wait list," Rios said. "It seems like lots of families made their way over to Lamorinda from San Francisco and Oakland and are now desperate to find care."

Down the road, at The Child Day School in Moraga, Director Emile Delgado-Olsen has around 100 children on the waitlist. The preschool has around 70 students but is licensed for 84 children. Why aren't there more children in the classroom and fewer on the waitlist? "We need more staff," Delgado-Olsen said.

There are 16 staff in total at The Child Day School, but Delgado-Olsen would love to have 18. The pandemic changed operations and protocols for places like TCDS, making the need for staff higher in order to accommodate the growing list of students. For example, in pre-pandemic times, all children played in a common area while they waited for the official preschool day to begin. "Now we don't mix kids from different classrooms. That way if there is a positive case in one classroom, we can quarantine that classroom without closing down the entire school."

Delgado-Olsen can happily work around these logistical adjustments if he can keep qualified teachers, who've completed 12 child care units, in the classroom. While Delgado-Olsen knows of many other preschools with long waitlists of children and a shortage of teachers, he says the off-the-beaten path location of Moraga, makes it extra challenging.

"This field is losing a lot of really good qualified teachers because they are getting priced out. If you're not already familiar with this area, you're not likely to drive an extra 30 minutes to get to Moraga."

Delgado-Olsen says his staff earns between \$20-\$24 per hour depending on units and experience. While the wage is higher than service jobs, he acknowledges it's difficult to make ends meet on that wage in the Lamorinda area.

"I wish there was a program that offered affordable housing to educators and caregivers or even (accessory) taxes that somehow went directly to teachers who wanted to live in the communities they're teaching in," Delgado-Olsen said, while reflecting on the difficult place educators are in. The salaries of preschool teachers who are primary breadwinners qualifies many of them for housing. Yet in Lafayette, the below market units on the city's website, the Towne Center, has a waiting list for those earning less than \$47,000. The site manager indicated a long waitlist for affordable units, while units available at the regular rate of \$4,400 were readily available.

Of all of the uncertainties in the preschool business, Delgado-Olsen knows one thing for sure: There's an influx of families with children eager to get into preschool in the Lamorinda area. And, until there's more staff, it'll be difficult to accommodate more children.

"Most preschools are hanging on by a thread these days. I feel very lucky to have the team and community we have at The Child Day School," Delgado-Olsen said. "And we're definitely desperate to hire."





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### Parents hope for fun Halloween from the past

... continued from Page A1

Local health officials suggest that those who are planning on traditional outdoor trick-or-treating should wear a face mask or keep their distance from others to help reduce risk of getting COVID-19. They also recommend using hand sanitizer frequently and washing hands before eating any treats as well as keeping gatherings, both indoors and outdoors, small.

One Halloween tradition in Lafayette involved closing streets on Moraga Boulevard and Merriewood Drive, which would see hundreds of costumed kids running from house to house on Halloween. This year, however, those streets will be open to street traffic with potential parking restrictions erected for that evening. According to Engineering and Public Works Director Mike Moran, both neighborhoods had initially asked for the streets to be closed, but later withdrew their requests.

At the Oct. 12 Lafayette City Council meeting, several parents expressed their con-

cerns during the public comment portion of the neighborhood road closures discussion, noting that people who have come to expect certain roads to be closed on Halloween may be unpleasantly surprised.

Lafayette resident Meghan Mitman, who was one of several residents who championed the street closure in the past, said neighbors withdrew the request for street closure due to "concerns about the need to take personal liability to provide for a safe facility on the city's right-of-way." She realizes it will be "less of a block party feel if we just close the shoulders to parking."

Burton Valley parent Abigail Fateman described previous Halloweens on Merriewood when there was no street closure as a very scary experience. "It's a great place to be, but there can be hundreds of thousands of people that descend on the Merriewood/Silverado loop in front of the elementary school. It's the place the neighborhood goes. It's fun, it's a great place to be ... but if we're not going to close the

street, it would be in our interest to create a safe space where people can move."

Jessica Lordan was planning on taking her kids to Moraga Boulevard for Halloween, but was surprised to hear that closing streets needed to be brought to the city by residents. "This year, Fauci did say, 'Go out; go trick-or-treating!'" she said. "And parents are taking it to heart."

Grace Dixon who lives near Moraga Boulevard said she'd like to see the city close one side of the street to parking, since there are no sidewalks on that street. She said she gives away about four bags of Costco candy to trick-or-treaters each year, and she loves seeing all the kids. "It's one of the best things all year!" she exclaimed.

The Lafayette City Council planned to bring the topic of street parking closures on Halloween back for discussion at its Oct. 25 meeting, after Lamorinda Weekly went to press.

Diane Claytor contributed to this article.

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<p><b>CAROLYN WAY</b></p>  <p>925.890.4115 DRE# 00947460</p>	<p><b>JUST LISTED</b></p>  <p><b>19 EL PULGAR, ORINDA</b> OFFERED AT \$1,475,000 RUTH EDDY   925.788.5449</p>	<p><b>JUST LISTED</b></p>  <p><b>1030 BROWN AVENUE, LAFAYETTE</b> OFFERED AT \$1,049,000 MATT MCLEOD   925.464.6500</p>	<p><b>PENDING</b></p>  <p><b>2049 STRAND ROAD, WALNUT CREEK</b> OFFERED AT \$1,795,000 KAAREN BRICKMAN   925.351.5049</p>	<p><b>CHERYL HATA</b></p>  <p>510.912.5882 DRE# 013859346</p>				
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# ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

## A ghostly presence or two at Lafayette's Town Hall Theatre?



Photo Vera Kochan

An orb hovers over the stage as something bright white spills over the back of a seat at THT.

By Vera Kochan

Most playhouse theatres can be spooky enough during the day, but at night with all manner of bizarre props and human-like mannequins as part of the normal backstage décor, anyone with an active imagination could easily become startled. Add to the mix, the month of October with Halloween on the horizon, and the hackles are bound to go up on the necks of even the most stalwart of ghost skeptics.

Most, if not all, theatres follow the custom of a ghost light. "A ghost light is a single bulb left burning whenever a theatre is dark," according to an article in Playbill. "Some argue that its function is to chase away mischievous spirits; others insist it lights the way for the ghosts that are said to inhabit virtually every theatre, keeping them happy and contented. Either way, that light ensures that no one takes an accidental tumble off the stage."

Lafayette's Town Hall Theatre building was built in 1914 and initially used for dinner/dance parties. Between 1941-1945 it was used as World War II troop barracks. It wasn't until 1947 when its first incarnation as a theatre began. That's over 100 years of active history and enough people passing through to make one or two want to linger for an eternity.

THT Managing Director Dennis Markam believes there are two spirits haunting the building. One is a male and the other a female. "Down in the lobby, in front of the bar, there's often a cold spot. It feels like it's female. Other staff members have felt things, but nothing specific. We also have lights and fuse boxes that seem to have a mind of their own."

Markam recalled one incident several years ago when a teacher brought her young students over to the theatre to rehearse for a show. They were alone in the building. During the process of posi-

tioning the youngsters on the stage, one of the children pointed toward the technical booth at the back of the theatre and asked, "Whose the man in there?" Knowing that they were alone, the teacher didn't want to take a look. Staff decided it was the ghost of Carl Rasmussen, the theatre's art director in the 1950s. His picture now hangs above the booth. For years an old technical director would always talk to the departed Rasmussen and include him in the daily workings of the playhouse.

With Town Hall Theatre's decades of success, and survival through COVID mandates, it would seem that the ghosts are keeping a benevolent eye on things. "Even if after-hours lighting weren't required for safety purposes, superstitious thespians would probably still insist on keeping the ghost light burning," stated Playbill. "After all, the business of theatre is risky enough without an irate spirit or two in the wings."

## Marquee talent for Park Theater fundraiser



Photo provided

"You and Me" by Ames Palms

By Jeff Gomez

To celebrate the 80th anniversary of Lafayette's Park Theater, The Park Theater Trust – an all-volunteer group dedicated to reopening the classic theater – has partnered with the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery to hold an exhibition of neon art. The show features work from three Bay Area artists: Shawna Peterson, Bill Concanon, and Ames Palms. All three have a deep history and expertise in the form, having worked with neon for decades.

The show came together through a serendipitous set of circumstances. When plans for a huge birthday celebration for the Park Theater – which opened on August 11, 1941 – had to be scaled back due to lingering concerns around COVID, the board of directors of The Park Theater Trust thought a show of neon art would be a good way to celebrate the theater, and the town's, history.

Tracey Karsten Farrell, a member of the TPTT board, got in touch with the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery, which sits half a block away from the

theater on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Way. "Jennifer has been very supportive of our efforts since the beginning," Farrell says. "Her gallery is so innovative, and such a presence in downtown Lafayette, we were thrilled when she agreed to do this for us."

Perlmutter, a longtime resident of the area and patron and supporter of local artists, thought it was an excellent idea; she'd wanted to curate a show of neon art for some time. For Perlmutter, the show's an opportunity to have people look at objects in a whole new way, elevating neon above mere decoration or advertising purposes. "The artist has a point of view and perspective they're expressing, and so when you show pieces like these it sparks a conversation," says Perlmutter. "It becomes about ideas rather than signage."

A show of neon art is more challenging than just hanging paintings. All the pieces require electricity and, because they're made out of glass, are quite fragile. It's a situation the artists have to deal with every day. Creating with neon, says artist Ames Palms, "You have the risk of being shocked, cut, and burned." But the love for their chosen medium shows in their pieces, which combine art and science to create something technically intricate and wholly beautiful.

All of the pieces on display will be available for sale, with 50% of the proceeds being donated to The Park Theater Trust. The neon artists are also willing to donate a portion of any additional commissions to the Park Theater restoration effort.

"I hope this will encourage guests to make a purchase,"

says Perlmutter, "knowing that not only are they supporting the artists, but also the Park Theater. This show gives our community, and the gallery, a chance to have a real stake in the future of Lafayette."

The Park Theater Trust is currently engaged on a mission to raise \$8 million, with \$3 million going toward the purchase of the building, and the rest paying for renovations and additions such as adding a mezzanine theater and rooftop terrace. Restoring the theater's vintage neon marquee will cost around \$80,000.

... continued on Page B2

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Dr. Matthew Tamplen, who grew up in Lafayette and is a well-known Facial Plastic Surgeon with Kaiser Permanente, just opened a private practice in Downtown Orinda to better serve Lamorinda patients.

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# Sage brown butter sauce accents fall flavors in this gnocchi dish



Photo Susie Iventosch

## Gnocchi with Roasted Pumpkin and Cranberries in Sage Brown Butter Sauce

By Susie Iventosch

This is a fun dish to make, especially at this time of year when cranberries and pumpkins are in season and the fall flavors are all the rage. We love brown butter in almost anything, but this sage brown butter complements the pumpkin and cranberries so well, I couldn't resist using it for this recipe. Browning butter takes a little extra time, but it's so worth it, and you can brown a whole pound of butter at one time, and refrigerate it for other uses like cakes or cupcakes, sauces, and for dipping French bread.

All you need to brown the butter is a saucepan, low heat on the stove and about 10-15 minutes. You want to brown it slowly, because otherwise you could run the risk of burning

it. We make vanilla cake with buttercream frosting using brown butter and it makes vanilla cakes so much more interesting and tasty.

When I first set out to create this gnocchi recipe, I attempted to make my own pumpkin gnocchi, but after mine turned out rubbery and not all that tasty, I decided to start over with pre-packaged gnocchi. They really know what they are doing and it was perfect for this dish. There are a lot of companies that package gnocchi, but I was at Trader Joe's, so that is the one I used. Even though it seemed a bit dry when I first opened the package, it cooked up beautifully fluffy and soft and it only took about 3 minutes to cook in boiling water. This makes the recipe guaranteed to turn out and is so much easier than making your own gnocchi!

## Gnocchi with Roasted Pumpkin and Cranberries in Sage Brown Butter Sauce

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

#### Gnocchi:

1 lb. packaged gnocchi (Trader Joe's make a really good one that is slightly bigger than 1 lb., but you can also find packaged gnocchi at your local grocer.)

#### Sage Brown Butter:

4 tablespoons butter, cut into pieces  
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves  
2 sage leaves, finely minced  
1/2 cup dried cranberries

#### Roasted Pumpkin:

1 sugar pumpkin, stem and seeds removed and cut into 3/4-inch wedges  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
Several grinds of sea salt  
Several grinds of pepper

#### Garnishes:

1/2 cup dried cranberries  
2 oz. goat cheese, crumbled  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan  
Minced sage leaves and fresh thyme leaves

### DIRECTIONS

To make the brown butter, place butter in a saucepan with a light colored bottom if possible, and if not just use a regular saucepan. Add minced sage and thyme and cook over medium-low heat until the butter begins to sizzle and bubble and eventually you will see little brown solids around the edges and at the bottom of the pan. This should take anywhere from 10-15 minutes, depending upon the water content in your butter and the temperature of your burners. I've seen it take 5 minutes and I've seen it take 25 minutes, but do keep your eye on it, because the butter can go from beautifully brown to burned in a heartbeat! Once it's brown, add 1/2 cup of dried cranberries to the herbed butter and cook over low heat for about 5 minutes longer. Remove butter from the heat and set aside.

To roast the pumpkin, preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, or spray with cooking spray. Lay the pumpkin wedges out on the baking sheet and brush both sides of each wedge with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until the edges start to brown and a knife can be easily inserted into the flesh of the pumpkin.

Remove from oven. When cool enough to handle, remove skins (or if you like them you can keep them on ... they are edible and add extra color), and cut all but four of the wedges into bite-sized pieces. If you have enough, save the wedges to use one for a garnish on each plate.

Cook gnocchi according to instructions on the package. Meanwhile reheat the sage brown butter on low heat. When the gnocchi are cooked (probably about 3 minutes in boiling water) strain them through a colander and then add them to the saucepan with the sage brown butter and cranberries. Add the cubed pumpkin pieces and toss all together well.

Serve on plates and garnish with extra dried cranberries, goat cheese crumbles, grated Parmesan, snipped sage leaves and thyme leaves. If you have extra roasted pumpkin wedges, place one on each plate when you serve it.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://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>



# COVID, colleges, and your student

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

Most colleges planned on fall 2021 being a time to return to in-person education. Yet the sudden explosion of COVID's Delta variant threw these plans into question. Schools adopted a range of approaches to re-open while trying to keep their students, faculty, and staff safe. What will "normal with Delta" (or another variant) look like for your student when they are ready to go off to college? Get ready for lots of variety and seemingly endless divisiveness.

Vaccination is a hot topic for colleges. For around 600 colleges across the U.S., vaccination is mandatory with more coming on board. While these requirements have been met with both support and resistance by students and staff, private schools are within their rights to make these mandates.

Other colleges, both private and public, are not re-

quiring vaccines. In some cases, statewide mandates or local policies have influenced or restricted the introduction of vaccine mandates. In Texas, for example, public universities can't require vaccination, although private ones can.

An overwhelming majority of the colleges that do not require vaccines still think they are a good idea. These schools encourage students to get vaccinated through incentives or disincentives. Incentives that schools have used include discounted tuition, housing, and meal plans, with some colleges giving away free computers, gift cards or campus apparel to those who get the jab. Disincentives are often related to fees or testing frequency. Rice University – which does not have a vaccine mandate but does have a testing mandate – offers vaccinated students the convenience of being tested less frequently. Rhodes College in Tennessee also requires

testing. Testing is free to vaccinated students, but unvaccinated students must pay for their own.

Colleges are planning for many elements of the standard college experience to be in place when your student attends, whenever that may be. The school schedule, which was interrupted during 2020, has returned to the usual semester or quarter system with regularly scheduled breaks around Thanksgiving, winter and spring. For many colleges, dining halls and libraries are open, as well as on-campus housing.

However, even for schools mandating vaccines, spaces like dorms and dining halls have changed. Many campuses have allotted more room for dining, so students can maintain safe distances from one another. On-campus housing options have also decreased capacity, upping the numbers of single-occupancy rooms to

allow for social distancing in personal spaces. Masking and social distancing rules for classrooms, on campus and in the community have been written into school policies and student codes of conduct.

These extra measures may have been viewed as unnecessary in the past, but with Delta the breakthrough infections are alarmingly common. While these cases generally are not as severe, and often even asymptomatic, many colleges see it as their duty to protect the unvaccinated members of the college community as well as the broader community in which the college operates.

The only thing that can be said for certain for students considering college in the U.S. in future years is that everything could change tomorrow. It's important that we help our students navigate these challenges and grow their resilience as they boldly venture into an uncertain global future.



Elizabeth LaScala, PhD personally guides each student through each step of selecting and applying to well-matched schools for undergraduate and graduate school study. Over the past two decades, Elizabeth has placed hundreds of students in some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the U.S. The number of clients taken is limited to ensure each applicant has personalized attention. Contact Elizabeth early in the process to make a difference in your outcomes. Write [elizabeth@doingcollege.com](mailto:elizabeth@doingcollege.com); Visit [www.doingcollege.com](http://www.doingcollege.com); or Call: 925.385.0562.

# 'Plant It Forward' program shares fresh produce with friendship school



Photo provided

Submitted by Cathy Chang

"Plant It Forward" is a new hands-on service project that matches those with the space and desire to grow food with families who need it. How it

works: Camino Pablo Elementary School families were given free, edible plant seedlings to grow nutritious plants for their own use during summer break. In return, the families agreed to give back surplus from those crops to communities in need.

The pilot program was organized by the Camino Pablo Elementary PTA Community Services Committee. Some seedlings were donated by the local volunteer-run farm, and the rest were from community members' private greenhouses in Moraga.

All told, students and families adopted about 60 edible plants before the 2020-21 school year, and grew food at home during the summer break. Each family was then called on to give back a pint-sized container (or more, if

they wished) of fresh produce from their gardens in September when school started again. The produce was dropped off and collected on campus, and was then shared with community friendship school, Meadow Homes Elementary School in Concord.

Over 650 students at Meadow Homes Elementary receive free or reduced-price lunch daily, and the Camino Pablo Elementary PTA has been donating washed gently used clothes and shoes since 2018.

"I don't eat a lot of tomatoes, but I want to grow tomatoes for the families at Meadow Homes," said seventh-grade student, Brian Harrison. "We adopted eggplants, but as it turned out our eggplants didn't grow very well. But we had a lot of herbs

and kale in our garden to give back, and we were so excited to share! We love 'Plant It Forward,'" said Leslie Nuccio, whose daughter Abby Nuccio is in fifth grade. "It's a really fun way to engage the kids in volunteer work, and it's also a great way to encourage people who haven't taken the leap yet to grow food at home - but do have the space and sunshine - to go ahead and give it a try."

Beyond the fresh produce from "Plant It Forward," the local farm also donated over-ripen tomatoes after their summer harvest to be processed into jarred tomato sauce for Meadow Homes families. This, too, was a fun community affair: three fifth-grade students from Camino Pablo Elementary volunteered to help jar the sauce and make labels for all the jars and pro-

duce for the delivery. "We're delivering what's good from our gardens to their families because we care, so every label has to look nice!" said the fifth-graders.

In the end, the pilot year of "Plant It Forward" was a great success. Beyond the vegetables, the program sent friendship and warmth from one community to another. Coordinators would love to see this program expand to other Lamorinda schools. So dear readers, what would you plant this next season to share?

For questions about "Plant It Forward" or to run the program at your own school, please contact [hwchang3@gmail.com](mailto:hwchang3@gmail.com) at the Camino Pablo Elementary School PTA Community Services Committee.

# Marquee talent for Park Theater fundraiser

... continued from Page B1

The Trust's model of a non-profit ownership with a for-profit operator means that the current capital campaign is a one-time ask of the community. Any subsequent fundrais-

ing will be minimal and only necessary to maintain TPTT's nonprofit status.

The vision of the Park Theater Trust is to make the spot be more than just a place to watch movies. "We see a lot of alignment with the schools, other nonprofit organizations,

and location institutions such as the library and Town Hall Theatre," says Farrell. "There are so many things we hope to do to bring the Park Theater back to life for everyone in our community."

Once the building is purchased, the renovations and

restorations will take about a year. The plan is to have the theater open in 2023.

The neon show currently at the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery focuses attention on the art of neon, the historical significance of the Park Theater, and the value of saving

and bringing it back to life for everyone in the community. The show runs through Nov. 6 and is open Wednesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Masks are required for entry, and private showings are available by appointment.



◆ **Not to be missed**

**MUSIC**

**New Century Chamber Orchestra** presents Adamo Premiere with Jeffrey Zeigler on Thursday, Nov. 4, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., at First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. New Century Chamber presents an evening of illuminating American contemporary works featuring guest leader and acclaimed cellist Jeffrey Zeigler. Cost: \$30 to \$67.50. For more info see <http://ncco.org> or call (415) 357-1111 or email [info@ncco.org](mailto:info@ncco.org).

**THEATER**

**Broken-hearted Blockbuster**, the podcast, LIVE Townhall Theatre, Lafayette Nov. 1, 7 and 9 p.m. Created and Hosted by Jill Collister. With Special Guests Kelly James Tighe (7 p.m.) and Katrina McGraw (9 p.m.) Hear stories from various broken-hearted warriors and talk about the movie that got them through. One Ticket for one show: \$15, both shows \$25. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St, Lafayette.

**Saint Mary's College** fall production of "Everybody," by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins. "Everybody," a finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize, is a wise and joyful riff on the 15th-century morality play "Everyman." The action follows Everybody (the lead actor chosen by lottery at each performance) on a journey towards life's greatest mystery—mortality itself. The Saint Mary's production will be staged outdoors in the Redwood Grove, timed to unfold from sunset through twilight into darkness. In-person Show dates:

Nov. 3, 4, 5, 6, 5 p.m. and Nov. 7, 4 p.m. Pre-recorded streaming option: Nov. 14 - 12:15 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. For tickets or more info, please visit [stmaries-ca.edu/everybody](http://stmaries-ca.edu/everybody) or call (925) 631-4670. \$8 Students; \$12 SMC Faculty/Staff/Non-SMC Students; \$15 General. Please dress warmly and bring blankets. Masks will be required for the audience, and Covid regulations will be followed.

**Diablo Ballet's 28th Season** opens with a new full-length production of Julia Adam's smash holiday hit, "The Nutcracker Suite," which performs Nov. 12 - 13 at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. For in theatre or virtual tickets, call 925-943-SHOW (7469) or visit [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org) or [www.diabloballet.org](http://www.diabloballet.org).

**LITERATURE**

**November events at Orinda Books** 276 Village Square, Orinda. Tues. Nov. 2, 11 a.m. Pat's Book Group will read and discuss "Machines like Me" by Ian McEwan. All are welcome. Just call Orinda Books at (925) 254-7606 or email [info@orindabooks.com](mailto:info@orindabooks.com) to let us know that you are coming.

**OTHER**

**Fifth Sunday's Car Show** this Halloween Oct. 31, 8 to 10 a.m. at Si Si Caffe, 910 Country Club Drive, Moraga.

**Long traditioned Halloween "Hocus Pocus"** skit in Moraga moved to a new location. The about 5-minute skit will be presented on Halloween outside at 1911 Ascot Drive in Moraga.

**Acalanes High School Class** of 1971 - 50 year reunion. April 9, 2022, at the Coop in LaFiesta Square. For more information please contact: Katrina Neblett Silvani: [71Acalanes@gmail.com](mailto:71Acalanes@gmail.com)

**It's time for the Cycle Recycle** again! Don't toss that repairable bike on the garbage heap! Over the last 24 years Bobbie and Tom Preston have collected over 3,700 repairable bikes Nov. 1-31 on their driveway, 1307 Larch, Moraga. No razors or scooters unless in primo condition. Bike racks accepted. No helmets, please. Biking clothing in primo condition okay. No need to call. This year's recipients include Waterside workshops, Trips for Kids, Keeping our Promise, Charity Bike Institute, White Pony Express, and Oakland international High School.

**Canyon Club in Moraga** is the venue for Sydney Paige Foundation's "Raising the Bar" fundraiser on Nov. 2, 5 to 7 p.m. Enjoy drinks, appetizers, and bid on fabulous items at a silent and live auction hosted by the Warriors "Hype Man" Franco Finn. There will also be a special tribute to three incredible Lamorinda teachers. Proceeds from the event will help fund Sydney Paige's initiatives to empower low-income K-12 students by providing them with equal access to the tools they need to succeed in school. To date, Sydney Paige has supplied over 100,000 students with new, high-quality backpacks, school supplies and books. To purchase your ticket and help make a positive impact in underserved local communities, please visit [www.raisethebar.givesmart.com](http://www.raisethebar.givesmart.com).

**Saint Mary's College Guild** Christmas Party. Come and celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season at our joyous Christmas Party, Dec. 2, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Saint Mary's College Soda Center in Moraga. They are raffling a valuable money tree and selling delicious baked goods - great for holiday desserts and or gifts. We are featuring the award-winning Saint Mary's College Chorale, directed by Dr. Judy Ford and accompanied by SMC pianist Sharon Lee Kim. Tickets are \$50. Make checks payable to: St. Mary's College Guild and send to Cynthia Jane Kelly, 628 Augusta Drive, Moraga, CA 94556. All proceeds benefit students seeking Financial Aid Scholarships. Deadline Nov. 17.

**The Peace Center webinar** co-organized with Veterans for Peace - set to take place Tuesday, Oct. 26 7 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom - as a part of Walnut Creek Sustainability Week. Link to register: <https://forms.gle/cppvwgD> Pztrmw3uH8. A Zoom link will be

sent as a confirmation email. The webinar will be focused specifically on the Veterans for Peace campaign around Climate Change and Militarism: 1) The carbon footprint of the U.S. military, larger than that of many countries; 2) The wars for oil and other resources - how they support the fossil fuel-based status quo; 3) The unequal burden of both climate crisis and militarism on people of color, the poor, and future generations; and 4) The resources spent on militarism and war - redirect to respond to the existential threat of climate crisis. [www.sustainablewalnutcreek.org/sustainability-week/](http://www.sustainablewalnutcreek.org/sustainability-week/)

**Mountains and Valleys:** Preparing for Family Holiday Celebrations. Speaker - Brian Kay, MFT, Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church. Thursday, Nov. 18, 6:45 p.m. on Zoom. Please Register Through MVPC Website or call the church office (925) 376-4800.

**Service Clubs Announcements**



**Every Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.**  
**Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building**  
**OR Zoom Link at <https://lamorindasunrise.org/speakers>**

**November 2021 Weekly Speakers**

- 5: Thomas Myers & Jay Lifson, Lafayette—Past, Present, Future**
- 12: Ashleigh Curry, Film Director of "Toni. Mamie. Connie."**
- 19: Member Magazine**
- 26: No Meeting**

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Please submit events to: [calendar@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:calendar@lamorindaweekly.com)

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Acalanes girls tennis finishes year with tough loss



Ella Morris



Kayli Harley



Emily Burkowitz Photos Gint Federas

**By John T. Miller**

For Acalanes High School girls tennis coach Drew Diefenbach, finishing off this year with a 5-4 loss to Miramonte was tough.

In that loss there were four third-set tie-breakers, including No. 4 singles Ella Morris, who barely lost her match, and a hard-fought win by the No. 2 doubles team of Kayli Harley and Emily Burkowitz, who won in a third tie-breaker.

According to coach Drew Diefenbach, the Dons' season was a matter of "having fun and coming together as a team."

They accomplished that and more with an excellent season, finishing 6-4 in the competitive Foothill Division of the Diablo Athletic League and 9-10 overall.

Diefenbach, in his fourth year at Acalanes, is a Miramonte High School and Saint Mary's College graduate, having played tennis as an undergraduate at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. He also earned

a master's in sports psychology from JFK University and runs a program called Paragon Tennis in Orinda.

The team boasted a good amount of returning players, and, with only three seniors graduating and a good JV crew, their prospects look good for next year.

Analese Ruczynski and Martha Burns, both juniors, played the No. 1 and No. 2 singles positions. They are both lefties, presenting some additional problems for opponents.

Kit Scheirer, a sophomore, No. 2 or

No. 3 singles, pulled out a lot of great wins for the team, according to Diefenbach. Senior co-captains Ella Morris played No. 3 or No. 4 singles, with Kayli Harley occupying the No. 1 doubles position.

Diefenbach gives additional credit to Cate Condy, a junior, at the No. 5 singles: "Cate brought special enthusiasm to games and practice, really helping to push the team spirits." He also mentioned Avery Bahl, who rounded out the team as No. 2 doubles. "Avery stepped up as a senior in her first year on varsity and really helped contribute to the team."

In addition to beating DAL rival Miramonte earlier this year, 8-1, Diefenbach points to a nonleague win against a tough Burlingame High opponent, 6-0, as a highlight of the year

Helping out with the team was volunteer Mike Toni, who is in his fourth year as assistant to Diefenbach, and another special "coach," a stuffed animal sloth named Gilbert, Jr. who attends all the practices and games.

At the JV level, Diefenbach credits coaches Gary Fiammengo and Lee Ann Gove for doing an excellent job. "We're pretty well set up for next year," he says.

Diefenbach is also an aficionado in pickleball, hoping to promote it as a sport for high school athletics.

## Lafayette's Donovan Bantique and Tucker Jones on winning team

Submitted by Tim Jones

Lafayette eighth-graders Donovan Bantique and Tucker Jones won the 2021 Adrenaline Santa Barbara Lacrosse Showdown with their West Coast Wolverines team going 5-0 in tournament play.



Photo provided

## Lamorinda Karate Athletes return with medals



Karate & Fitness USA team members with Thomas Westernoff on right, not all athletes in photo

Photo provided

Submitted by Thomas Westernoff

Karate & Fitness USA Team members of Lafayette participated in the Yuba City State Karate Championships on Sunday, Oct. 3. A total of 13 athletes from the Lamorinda area returned with 22 medals: 11 Gold, 4 Silver and 7 Bronze. The Karate team competed in Kata (Forms) and Kumite (sparring).

Fall Classic Competition results: 13 Total Athletes, 22 Medals, 11 Gold, 4 Silver and 7 Bronze.

Name	Kata	Kumite
Sophia Hong	Silver	Silver
Jacob Beugelmans	Bronze	Bronze
Collin Beugelmans	Gold	
Miles Paras	Bronze	Gold
Chloe Paras	Gold	
Parsa Shayesteh	Bronze	Gold
Kian Shayesteh		Bronze
Zac Kemp	Gold	Silver
Agnes Swaney	Silver	Bronze
Andrew Cai	Gold	Gold
Polly Ryzhanklva	Gold	Bronze
Alex Paras	Gold	Gold
Ryoma Durkee	Gold	

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## Saint Mary's men's basketball – more of the same only better



Logan Johnson

Photos SMC Athletics/Tod Fierner

**By Jon Kingdon**

It was Mark Twain that said, "Familiarity breeds contempt." It's certain that he was not referring to this year's Saint Mary's men's basketball team. Head coach Randy Bennett's Gaels are only one of two college teams returning every player that played every single minute last season.

Bennett appreciates how more efficient his practices are with all of the veterans on the team (and three freshmen): "It's refreshing. You know what they can do and what they bring to the team and that's where it's an advantage. You can teach things so much quicker in that the players already know the drills so you can move faster. Now in practice, we can put in three plays rather than one play and they'll pick it up like that."

Last year's team (14-10) dealt with many issues – the coronavirus (6 canceled games), youth (6 new players on the roster) and injuries with only three players appearing in every game. "I know our team better this year because of what everyone went through last season," Bennett said. "Our young players were thrown into the fire, and I feel they know it now. I feel their maturity, growth and toughness and it often gets down to that. I feel good here."

With five sophomores and two recruited freshmen, Bennett appreciates the leadership that the upperclassmen are providing. "We have a group of seven older players that have been through the good and bad for us," Bennett said. "It's not one individual. (Tommy) Kuhse, (Logan) Johnson, (Matthias) Tass, (Dan) Fotu, (Quinn) Clinton, (Kyle) Bowen and (Alex) Ducas have all been very good leaders as a core group. I feel that as much with this team as with any other team I've coached that this group of older guys has ownership of this program right now, in a good way."

Bennett is excited at the improvement he has seen from last year's freshman class. "It was a big adjustment for last year's freshmen, but they have all made a big jump into their sophomore year," Bennett said. "Last year with only 10 players that were healthy at times, they had to practice every day and play in the games. We had to overcome much and we were forced to play a lot of young guys, yet through all that they got tougher and better. They grew up a lot and I can see it now in practice."

There is great depth and size at the guard position for the Gaels. Returning starters, leading scorer Tommy Kuhse and 2nd team All-WCC Logan Johnson are backed up by junior Quinn Clinton, sophomores Jabe Mullins (6'6"), Leemet Bockler (6'7"), Luke Barrett (6'6") and freshmen Augustas Marciulionis (6'4") and Chris Howell (6'6"). This will allow Kuhse who led the team with 36 per game and Johnson with 32 minutes per game to play less and not be as worn down later in the season.

Bennett is particularly excited about his two freshmen recruits: "Marciulionis and Howell are both really good. It will take a little while for them to get comfortable and learn our offense and defense, but they are on track to be able to help us this year."

Marciulionis' father, Sarunis, played six years for the Warriors and is in the NBA Hall of Fame. "Sarunis is very familiar with the area and people really love him around here," Bennett said. "Augustas has got a lot to learn but having played against older and bigger players, he knows what to do offensively and it helps that we play a lot like the European teams."

The front court does not have the depth the team has at guard. Returning at the forward positions are senior Dan Fotu and juniors Alex Ducas and Kyle Bowen. Sophomore Judah Brown should also see time in the front court along with being able to play guard. "Those are the guys we have, and we want them to stay healthy," Bennett said.

Senior center Matthias Tass, a three-year starter who averaged 10.9 points and 5.3 rebounds a game, is backed up by sophomore Mitchell Saxen who appeared in all 24 games last season and was named to the All-WCC Freshmen team. "Last year, it was a new role for Tass to be one of the go-to guys in our offense but he needs to make another jump this year if we're going to be really good," Bennett said. "We have good depth with Saxen who played well for us and has shown a lot of improvement." Matt Van Komen is coming off a foot injury and may redshirt this season.

After averaging 75.3 points per game in 2019-20, the Gaels scoring average dropped to 64.3 this past season and it's an area that Bennett has been focusing on. "Last year was an aberration. When we lost our two best shooters (Bockler and Mullens), we didn't have much shooting to replace them. "Because of that, we focused on our defense and tried to score enough to win," Bennett said. "If we're going to be good, we're going to have to score points so we're working on our team chemistry. We must be better offensively, scoring in the low post, throwing it out of the low post, kicking it out on penetration and making better shot selection. I feel we've gotten better in just our first three weeks of practice. We have the personnel where we can get eight or nine guys scoring in double figures so it's not just a matter of someone putting up 20 points."

Still, it's not as easy as it sounds. "Our guards have to be willing to find the guys that are open," Bennett said. "We did not shoot with a high percentage and that's why we struggled in the league. Knock on wood, we have our injured players back and the team has been shooting the ball very well. The team has improved as much as any team that I can remember thus far."

Saint Mary's does have a favorable schedule with eight non-league games at home, two on the road and four on neutral sites. The Gaels will open with four home games before heading to Las Vegas to play Notre Dame and either Oregon or Chaminade.

Though things have improved with the virus, Saint Mary's is requiring proof of vaccination or a recent negative COVID test for anyone to be allowed into the arena.

"I'm looking forward to having fans again," Bennett said. "It wasn't the same last season without them. It'll be fun playing in front of crowds again."

## Saint Mary's women's basketball – a picture of size and strength



Photos SMC Athletics/Tod Fierner

**By Jon Kingdon**

After eight consecutive 20-win seasons, the Saint Mary's women's basketball team had two consecutive losing seasons for the first time in 13 years. Head coach Paul Thomas learned that size and injury avoidance matters. "We're a lot bigger and stronger than we've been the last couple of years," Thomas said. "We're healthier today than we've been over that period as well. When you have injuries, you quickly discover that your best players are the ones that are available."

Balance is the key for Thomas, starting with the front court. "I believe that the game starts from the inside out," Thomas said. "If you're strong inside, it will make your perimeter better. We were a top 10 rebounding team in the country for years and that has been my challenge to get this team back up there. That takes work and commitment and toughness and the intangibles that we love our kids to have. With our length, we can put a lineup on the floor with everyone over six feet. Our team has a much better mix and flow to them. Our balance and rhythm between the perimeter and the paint has also improved. We can throw the ball inside and create a lot of things. We don't have to pound inside for every basket, but it will initiate what we can do."

With Ali Bamberger, Amy West, Mia Griszelj, Aspen Garrison, and Ellie Croco, it's a solid base of youth and experience in the front court. Bamberger, a sophomore, who transferred from the University of Washington, redshirted last season, recovering from a knee injury. She has made a complete recovery and is being counted on to be a key force for Thomas: "Ali should be a double figure scorer for us. She is one of those bigs that feels very comfortable stepping out and shooting the ball and we feel very comfortable with her out there. She will make a big difference in our ability to finish."

West, a junior, only played nine games last year due to an injury but the Gaels are expecting big things from her this season. "Amy is healthy right now and at 6'4" can really run the floor. We're looking forward to seeing her fulfill her potential," Thomas said. "She gives us a whole different dynamic and should be a big part of our success."

The back court starters are seniors Tayce Wedin (12.5 PPG) and Maddie Holland (11.3 PPG). Wedin is second on the team in career 3-point field goals and was Honorable Mention All WCC last season. "Maddie is definitely the quarterback on the court though she won't always be the point guard," Thomas said. "Tayce is currently out with an injury but should be fine in a couple of weeks." Freshman Addison Wedin, currently rehabbing a knee injury, is a strong shooter like her sister and should be available to play soon.

So far, the team has been shooting much better in the team scrimmages. The staff has been working very hard with the players in understanding and improving shot selection.

Thomas does not want the guards to be strictly shooters, encouraging them to be aggressive to the hoop. "Jade (Kirisome) is more comfortable in driving to the basket as are Leia (Hanifan) and Tayla (Dalton). We've challenged Briana (Simonich) to be more aggressive and she has also looked good in practice. I expect her to be able to average in dou-

ble figures. Our offense will play with 4 out and 1 in, spreading the court while still having two bigs in there because rebounding is going to be so vital to our success. If we're efficient with our shot selection and can get on the offensive glass, we can really have something."

Ironically, the pandemic has contributed to the depth of the team. "The pandemic affected all of us, but it allowed our seniors to come back for another year," Thomas said. "Maddie and Briana, who both have shown how much they love Saint Mary's, were able to get another year and they want to go out with some good juice, and they have been our hardest workers."

Thomas is also counting on a strong freshman class to contribute through the season. Aspen Garrison will provide size and depth in the front court and Makena Mastora and Addison Wedin, Tayce's sister should all find playing time. "Addison should be back for our league games. Makena is a left hander who brings a lot of smoothness to the game. She has different gears, can shoot the ball, loves to drive, and has a great pull up jumper. Our new people are going to be able to help right away and several of them should be able to get some high quality minutes."

With the additional size, the Saint Mary's defense will also have a different look from the last two seasons. "This year we're going to play more zone defense because of our length," Thomas said. "We gave up a lot of points these past two seasons. Those numbers are part of our legacy. We just didn't have the bodies because we suffered too many injuries. In the past, we set all kinds of records for 3-point shots attempted and made. We're not that team anymore and we've adjusted to our personnel."

Once again, Thomas is looking to address the turnover issues by the offense. Last year, the opponents scored 21.3 points off Saint Mary's turnovers. If the offense can reduce their "live" turnovers (bad passes, bad catches), the defensive numbers should improve. "With live ball turnovers, we're losing. This allows the other team to get down the court before we can set up our defense. We're constantly working on our ball handling skills. When we can defend a team in the half court, we're very good."

The team is going to be traveling back East to play North Carolina State who came to Saint Mary's three years ago and Coastal Carolina whose coach, Jaida Williams, played for Thomas when they were both at Cal Poly Pomona. Coming to Moraga are TCU, Fresno State, Western Michigan, San Jose State and UC Santa Barbara and the team is also playing at UC Berkeley.

"It's always good to take the team on the road, seeing a different part of the country and being able to play against two really good teams," Thomas said. "We don't shy away from competition. We can tell our recruits that we are playing against top ranked teams, knowing competitors want to play in those games."

The key to being successful this year, according to Thomas: "Staying healthy is always at the top of the list," Thomas said. "If our rebounding numbers are high and steady, you are going to see our win totals high and steady because the rebounding will solve a lot of things. This team has a good understanding of shot selection so add that to rebounding and we're good."



# Campo tennis coach lauds captains who brought team together



Claire Ross



Francesca Restrepo



Emma Bornadi

Photos Gint Federas

By John T. Miller

Campolindo girls tennis coach Sunun Faulkner had to be a quick study for the Cougars, taking over the position 16 years ago when her senior daughter, Ellie, had no coach.

Sunun had no experience in coaching and had played lacrosse for Connecticut College before graduating from Yale with a dual major in Art and East Asian Studies.

Originally from Korea, she was familiar with the sport from being Campolindo's team manager while her daughters were on the team and playing recreationally at Moraga Country Club. Ellie went on to play

Division I tennis at University of San Diego, while her sister Claire, who also played tennis at Campolindo, played club lacrosse at USD.

The Cougars boast a solid team, with their four returning senior team captains leading the way, finishing the regular season 9-1 in league and 14-2 overall.

Claire Ross is their No. 1 singles player, with Francesca Restrepo in the No. 1 doubles position. Emma Bornadi joins Francesca on the doubles while Marissa Karver is the No. 5 singles player.

About her four captains, Faulkner says, "These team leaders are some of the best set of captains I've ever had. They

are excellent in motivating the other players, setting a good example, and mentoring the other girls. They're a great help to the coaching staff."

Ross, who has been the Cougars' No. 1 player for the last two years, first started following the team in fourth grade when her sister was a freshman and drew pictures of herself as a Campo player.

Junior Alex Goette is the No. 2 singles and Faulkner calls her the most improved player on the team, with Sophia Raldugina-Zhu, a tall, lanky freshman at No. 3 singles who has been "a nice surprise with her abilities," says Faulkner.

Rounding out the competitors are No. 4 singles Paige

Davis, a junior who will be playing lacrosse at UC Davis after she graduates, and the No. 2 doubles team of Dilara Basegmez and Liesel Hilkemeyer, both juniors.

In all, the Cougars will lose six seniors this year from their roster of 15.


After helping as a full-time volunteer coach for 15 years, Steve Robinson recently moved to Reno. He still comes around when he can, but Jimmy Scott

has taken over as full-time assistant coach. Scott, a Miramonte graduate, has previously coached boy's varsity and girls JV. "We work well together," says Faulkner, "and I'm so glad to have him help."

About the team, Faulkner says, "The whole team always shows up to practice and works together as equals, which is rare these days." She also adds that the parent help has been amazing.

DAL-Foothill league singles and doubles championships were scheduled to be held this week. All three Lamorinda girls high school teams look forward to the NCS championships, with Campolindo and Miramonte, who finished first and second in the DAL-Foothill division, competing in Division I, while third place Acalanes is hopeful of a spot in Division II. NCS team playoffs begin Nov. 9, while singles and doubles competition start on Nov. 15.


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# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 15 Issue 18 Wednesday, October 27, 2021



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian* **Gremlins of the garden**



Photos Cynthia Brian

**Decorate your front porch with pumpkins and chrysanthemums.**

**By Cynthia Brian**

*"Gnome and elf and fairy, Witch and ghost make merry On this last of dear October's days." ~ Lettie. C. Van Derveer, Halloween Happenings, 1921*

The howling, nipping, and barking of the coyote send shivers down my back. Although they hunt throughout the day, as dusk settles over the hills and the moon rises, these wily carnivores set out to regulate the ecosystem. As apex crepuscular predators in an urban landscape, their prey is often our beloved pet. Creepy and blood-curdling!

For kids, the hot topic of conversation this week revolves around Halloween. As we decorate pumpkins and light jack-o'-lanterns, spooky specimens and wild phantoms are also prowling around our hallowed grounds.

We work hard to maintain our landscapes and it's frustrating to

have our sanctuaries invaded by unwanted organisms. One of the most noxious weeds to assault our gardens is the bindweed. Mimicking the fair face of a morning glory flower, like a poltergeist, it twists and tangles until it strangles plants and shrubs. Each plant produces more than 50 seeds that can survive for 50 years or more, making this deep-rooted gremlin a wicked weed to eradicate.

The cast list of freaky wild ones includes the misunderstood good, the beastly bad, and the pesky players that we often wish to hocus pocus somewhere else.

### **The Misunderstood Good**

#### **Owls**

Owls are the silent, stealthy hunters of our gardens providing free rodent control. When you hear their haunting hoots, be grateful that they've designated your trees as their habitat. Install a tall owl nesting box if you don't have old trees attractive to owls.

#### **Frogs and Toads**

In folkloric traditions, magic potions are concocted in rituals using frogs and toads to cast evil spells. These helpful hoppers have been much maligned. As a natural pest controller, they will munch over 10,000 insects in a few months. Their summer song and mating calls are melodious, indicating that you have a healthy environment. Turn a broken clay pot on its side, bury it halfway in the soil, and welcome these amphibians to their toad abode.

#### **Bats**

Dracula and the coronavirus have something in common ... they both disparaged the docile bat. Bats are not winged rodents or bloodsuckers. Instead, they are the only flying mammals with wings. Bats are productive pest patrollers feeding on insects, progressive pollinators of hundreds of plant species, and sensational seed dispersers.



**Plant garlic to keep vampires away.**

... continued on Page D12



## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	24	\$1,025,000	\$3,000,000
MORAGA	19	\$390,000	\$2,900,000
ORINDA	22	\$540,000	\$5,250,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

### LAFAYETTE

- 3190 Acalanes Avenue, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 1512 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-10-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,825,000, 05-10-18
- 596 Antonio Court, \$1,450,000, 3 Bdrms, 1368 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-13-21,  
Previous Sale: \$950,000, 08-10-06
- 18 Benthill Court, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3013 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-08-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 04-05-13
- 3643 Boyer Circle, \$2,751,500, 3 Bdrms, 2597 SqFt, 1945 YrBlt, 09-07-21
- 1000 Dewing Avenue #307, \$1,185,000, 3 Bdrms, 1568 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 09-15-21
- 3298 Gloria Terrace, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1956 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 09-08-21
- 3122 Indian Way, \$1,985,000, 4 Bdrms, 2810 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-13-21
- 3368 Johnson Road, \$1,495,000, 3 Bdrms, 2047 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-14-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 05-04-18
- 1283 Juanita Drive, \$1,560,000, 5 Bdrms, 2460 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 09-01-21,  
Previous Sale: \$675,500, 03-31-14
- 1129 Martino Road, \$3,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 3326 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 09-10-21,  
Previous Sale: \$2,050,000, 06-16-18
- 1064 Miller Drive, \$2,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 3023 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-15-21,  
Previous Sale: \$460,500, 11-05-98
- 3416 Moraga Boulevard, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1690 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-03-21,  
Previous Sale: \$835,000, 10-14-14
- 945 Oak View Circle, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1617 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-07-21,  
Previous Sale: \$640,000, 07-29-10
- 965 Oak Vista Court, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 3615 SqFt, 1994 YrBlt, 09-03-21,  
Previous Sale: \$810,000, 06-29-09
- 5 Pleasant Place, \$2,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3547 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 09-17-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,898,000, 03-12-15
- 1618 Silver Dell Road, \$1,777,000, 4 Bdrms, 2099 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 09-16-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 04-24-19
- 46 Silverwood Drive, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 2155 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-07-21
- 3485 South Silver Springs Road, \$2,210,500, 5 Bdrms, 2449 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 09-17-21
- 3575 Springhill Road, \$1,320,000, 3 Bdrms, 1629 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-15-21,  
Previous Sale: \$900,000, 05-13-14
- 3149 Stanley Boulevard, \$1,430,000, 4 Bdrms, 1657 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-09-21,  
Previous Sale: \$640,000, 01-03-13
- 3220 Surmont Drive, \$1,950,000, 5 Bdrms, 2773 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 09-15-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 09-24-20
- 1191 Vacation Drive, \$1,025,000, 3 Bdrms, 1442 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-16-21
- 1048 Via Media, \$2,025,000, 4 Bdrms, 3120 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-16-21,  
Previous Sale: \$357,500, 10-01-86
- 1039 Windsor Drive, \$1,810,000, 4 Bdrms, 2010 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 09-10-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,525,000, 06-15-18
- ### MORAGA
- 1039 Alta Mesa Drive, \$975,000, 2 Bdrms, 1700 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 09-10-21,  
Previous Sale: \$244,000, 12-01-90
- 1174 Alta Mesa Drive, \$1,480,000, 3 Bdrms, 2486 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 09-15-21,  
Previous Sale: \$1,195,000, 07-24-17
- 2059 Ascot Drive #108, \$390,000, 1 Bdrms, 713 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-16-21,  
Previous Sale: \$235,000, 12-03-13
- 2083 Ascot Drive #134, \$650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-03-21,  
Previous Sale: \$380,000, 10-04-13

... continued on Page D10



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## Stop the drips



bigstock images

By **Jim Hurley**

We've all seen a comedic scene in shows where the protagonist can't sleep because the noise of a dripping faucet is driving them to distraction. In reality, especially during a prolonged drought, that drip is a waste of precious water.

Here's how drips happen. Faucets are simply valves which control the flow of water into the sink. Your household water supply is under very high pressure, so just the slightest damage or wear on the seals inside the faucet valve will allow water to squeeze through and cause that drip.

In the old days, a good handyman would carry a little box of black rubber washers in various sizes and shapes to a house call. The repair was simple: just shut off the water supply, unscrew the tap, and replace the washer. Then came cartridges. A modern faucet has a cylinder inside called a "cartridge" to control the flow of water. Cartridges come in all shapes and sizes. Unless you have a very old faucet with washers, a DIY repair for drips goes something like this:

1. Shut off the water supply valve under the sink.
2. Remove the cartridge from the faucet. Make a note of the faucet manufacturer if possible.
3. Take the cartridge to the hardware store. (Find the old guy who knows what to look for

and where to find it and hope they have a cartridge that is an exact match in size.)

4. Return home and install the new cartridge.

5. Turn on the water and see if that fixed the problem.

This is not always easy.

When shutting off the supply valve under the sink, turning the valve handle may cause a drip to start from the valve stem. Before you start, remove any items under the sink to keep them dry and to make it easier to observe the floor for drips. Turning off the valve may also not completely shut off the flow of water to the faucet. In some cases, the shutoff valve also has a washer that may also be faulty. If this happens, you will need to shut off the house main water supply and replace both the shutoff valve and the faucet cartridge.

These shutoff valves deserve an entire article of their own. In brief, there are two types of shutoff valves; one that screws shut, (turn the handle several times to close the valve), and one that stops at a quarter turn. The quarter turn type (a ball valve) is the best. If the screw-down type needs replacement, buy a quarter turn valve of the same size.

Faucets are so varied in design that it would be impossible to explain how to remove the cartridge for each one. You will need to be creative and gentle as you discover how to remove the handle, which may be stuck on very tight, and disassemble the valve to remove the cartridge.

And not all hardware stores are equal. Find a good one with a variety of replacement parts and a knowledgeable salesperson. An alternative is to go to a plumbing supply house but, unfortunately, they are typically not open on weekends.

Once all the pieces are off – without you losing or breaking them – be sure to stack them carefully on the counter in the order that they came off, so that you can reassemble them in order.

Provided you do all those steps successfully, the problem may still not be resolved

because sometimes the valve base is damaged, and the drip is from the valve housing rather than the O ring on the cartridge.

Before you spend this much time and energy on repairing the old faucet, you might consider replacing the whole thing. This may not require buying a new one because most faucets come with a limited warranty and some even have a lifetime warranty. If you have the documents that came with the faucet, (anything with the name and model number on it), call the manufacturer's customer service line and they will send you a replacement. Even if you only know the manufacturer, call their service line and they can use a photograph of the faucet to look up the make and model for you.

If replacement parts are not available, you will need to buy a new faucet. Replacing the whole faucet has only one major challenge: You will need to remove the nut under the counter that holds the old one in place. It is typically a tight space, and the fastening nut may be rusted or just won't budge. The hardware store sells an "Offset Sink Wrench" ostensibly to reach up under the counter and loosen the nut. I have never seen one of those actually work. What I use is my Multi-Tool with a metal cutting saw blade to cut through the nut and then pry it off with a screwdriver.

If you reach a point where it just won't come out, it's time to call your favorite handyman or plumber.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25 years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.







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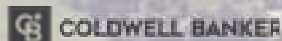
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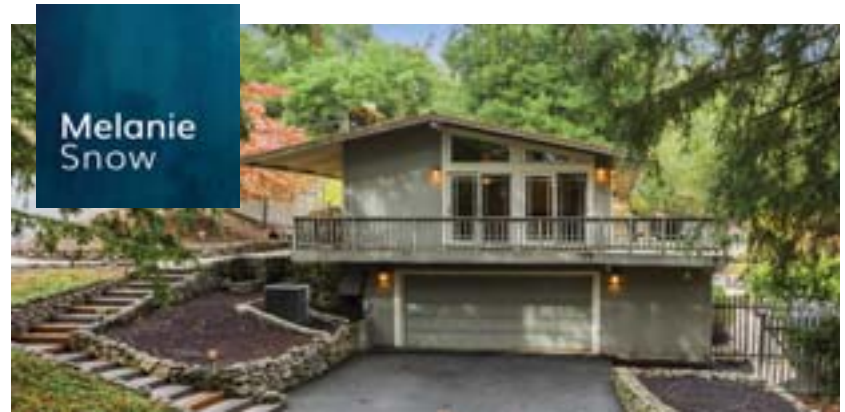
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## Lamorinda home sales recorded ... continued from Page D2

### MORAGA... continued

- 2129 Ascot Drive #2, \$600,000, 2 Bdrms, 1314 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-16-21, Previous Sale: \$525,000, 11-14-18
- 589 Augusta Drive, \$2,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 2687 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 09-03-21
- 831 Augusta Drive, \$1,200,000, 2 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 09-07-21, Previous Sale: \$850,000, 07-28-15
- 7 Berkshire Street, \$1,050,000, 2 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 09-03-21, Previous Sale: \$680,000, 11-12-04
- 1388 Camino Peral, \$849,000, 2 Bdrms, 1126 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-02-21
- 3883 Campolindo Drive, \$1,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 1937 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-03-21
- 2 Corte Azul, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 2340 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-17-21, Previous Sale: \$1,249,000, 06-25-07
- 770 Country Club Drive, \$1,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 09-08-21, Previous Sale: \$565,000, 01-11-13
- 111 Cypress Point Way, \$1,155,000, 2 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 09-17-21, Previous Sale: \$580,000, 08-27-03
- 2145 Donald Drive #8, \$505,000, 2 Bdrms, 1190 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-13-21
- 129 Draeger Drive, \$1,725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 09-09-21
- 20 Hardie Drive, \$2,370,000, 4 Bdrms, 2922 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-08-21, Previous Sale: \$470,000, 08-01-92
- 17 Mayfield Place, \$2,175,000, 4 Bdrms, 2112 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 09-01-21, Previous Sale: \$1,445,000, 11-13-16
- 240 Sandringham Drive, \$2,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3108 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-08-21, Previous Sale: \$475,000, 08-01-91
- 7 Silvia Court, \$2,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 2446 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-10-21, Previous Sale: \$950,000, 06-04-04

### ORINDA

- 40 Adobe Lane, \$3,469,500, 4 Bdrms, 4045 SqFt, 2020 YrBlt, 09-01-21
- 67 Brookwood Road #19, \$540,000, 2 Bdrms, 897 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 09-16-21, Previous Sale: \$405,000, 12-26-06
- 14 Camino Del Diablo, \$1,580,000, 2 Bdrms, 2222 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 09-01-21
- 114 Camino Don Miguel, \$2,275,000, 5 Bdrms, 3411 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 09-15-21, Previous Sale: \$2,275,000, 08-07-19
- 35 Candle Terrace, \$4,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 4326 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 09-08-21, Previous Sale: \$3,400,000, 11-15-16
- 155 Canon Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 2767 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-17-21, Previous Sale: \$1,322,000, 10-23-19
- 29 Crescent Drive, \$1,540,000, 6 Bdrms, 3264 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-13-21, Previous Sale: \$200,000, 04-22-03
- 409 Dalewood Drive, \$5,250,000, 6 Bdrms, 5964 SqFt, 2001 YrBlt, 09-10-21
- 12 Dos Posos, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2863 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 09-07-21
- 84 El Gavilan Road, \$3,325,000, 3 Bdrms, 3152 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-02-21, Previous Sale: \$2,050,000, 12-06-18
- 8 La Campana Road, \$1,374,500, 3 Bdrms, 1547 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-08-21, Previous Sale: \$840,000, 05-21-14
- 150 La Espiral, \$3,180,000, 4 Bdrms, 3378 SqFt, 1942 YrBlt, 09-10-21, Previous Sale: \$2,100,000, 04-05-18
- 11 Las Palomas, \$1,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 2338 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-13-21, Previous Sale: \$1,365,000, 06-08-17
- 5 Lavina Court, \$1,505,000, 3 Bdrms, 1225 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-09-21, Previous Sale: \$865,000, 05-31-16
- 2 Los Amigos, \$1,030,000, 3 Bdrms, 1667 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 09-02-21
- 57 Orchard Road, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2249 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-10-21
- 79 Orchard Road, \$1,335,000, 4 Bdrms, 2011 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 09-17-21
- 5 Owl Hill Court, \$4,895,000, 3 Bdrms, 3929 SqFt, 2007 YrBlt, 09-17-21, Previous Sale: \$2,675,000, 05-19-17
- 624 Tahos Road, \$3,060,000, 4 Bdrms, 2669 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-13-21, Previous Sale: \$2,000,000, 07-06-05
- 11 Totterdell Court, \$1,375,000, 3 Bdrms, 1603 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-03-21
- 121 Van Ripper Lane, \$2,850,000, 5 Bdrms, 3653 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-09-21
- 24 Whitehall Drive, \$1,876,000, 4 Bdrms, 2359 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-15-21



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## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

### **Gremlins of the garden**



**Cattails are great for fall arrangements.**



**Bindweed is a wicked weed resembling morning glory that must be eliminated.**



**A glittering pumpkin.**

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

These flying friends don't plague people, but they will devour a thousand mosquitoes in an hour. Provide habitat for these winged heroes to roost by erecting a bat house 12 to 15 feet off the ground. As a bonus to your garden, they'll offer nutrient-rich fertilizer with their excrement, guano. If you fear vampires, plant garlic.

#### **Snakes**

Snakes are slimy, slithering, and scary. But most snakes are harmless and helpful garden assistants. The common garter snake preys on insects, slugs, and rodents and prefers to live in cool, dark places. Keep your doors closed as it would be frightening to find that a female gave birth to up to 50 live young under your bed! The elegant kingsnake is welcome in any landscape as it eats venomous snakes like the rattlesnake or copperhead as well as rodents and other plant destroyers.

#### **Skunks**

Skunks are the garbage collectors of the garden. These docile black and white creatures will eat anything including insects, rodents, and yellow jacket larvae. When fruit falls from a tree, they'll be the clean-up crew. Pet food and birdseed are attractors. Because of their odorous spray, these mostly nocturnal, solitary, and non-confrontational creatures get a bad rap. When threatened, they'll stomp, hiss, and puff up

before raising their tail and unleashing their potent defense system.

#### **Spiders**

Little Miss Muffet had no reason to run away. Only unwanted insects such as grasshoppers, aphids, cockroaches, and mosquitoes need to fear these valuable web weavers. Research is underway by scientists on the benefits of spider venom to prevent arthritis while the strength of spider silk is inspiring mechanical engineers.

#### **The Beastly Bad**

##### **Gophers, Moles, Voles**

Although we witness the horror gophers, moles, and voles create in our lawns and yard, we rarely see these creeping critters. Stomping on the mounds, trails, and holes may distract them for a while, but like the Terminator, they'll be back. Setting multiple traps and checking them daily is the best method. If all else fails, call in the pros.

##### **Rats and Mice**

Rats and mice gnaw through wiring, wood, pipes, bags of birdseed, and make nests in our stored patio furniture pads. Reproducing rapidly and prolifically, rats spread disease, contaminate food sources, and infest our homes and gardens. In just three years, a single rat can produce half a billion descendants! Trapping is the humane manner to eradicate these pests unless the wicked witch of the West unleashes her feral black cats to hunt and exterminate. ... continued on Page D13



## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Gremlins of the garden



**A Kingsnake is a friend, not foe.**

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D12

#### Raccoons

If you are hearing scratching noises in your attic, it's not the walking dead. You could have rodents or raccoons. Raccoons will walk on a tree branch to access your roof and set up a den in the spaces above your ceiling. They also are attracted to garbage, pet food, bird feeders, bird nests, and they kill poultry. Raccoons are major hosts of rabies in the United States. Make sure to cut your tree branches back at least six to eight feet from your roof to protect yourself from these masked marauders as well as from fire laddering. Deter raccoons from setting up house with cayenne pepper sprinkled wherever needed and spray your shrubs and bushes with a solution of a bottle of hot sauce mixed with water.

#### Wild Boars

Wild boars destroy yards, damage fences, and are a danger to humans. The destruction of property by feral hogs costs agriculture over \$1.5 billion annually. They compete with wildlife for food and negatively impact our natural ecosystem, increasing soil erosion and decreasing water quality. Their trampling, rooting, and digging have devastated numerous lawns and gardens locally. Wild hogs are a horror show.

#### Pesky Players

Squirrels, deer, and turkeys are a nuisance to homeowners.

#### Squirrels

Bushy-tailed squirrels strip fruit and vegetables from trees and vines before it is harvest time and often take up residence in homes. I've witnessed squirrels scampering on my fence with an apple from my tree that was bigger than his head. They have denuded my pis-



**The left-over cat food enticed this skunk to the patio.**

tache trees of their unripe berries and stolen all the chestnuts from the trees. Nevertheless, I enjoy their aerial antics and circus acrobatics as well as their lively chatter.

... continued on Page D14



**A chatty squirrel eats the berries at the top of a pistache tree.**



## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

### **Gremlins of the garden**



**Proven Winners two new releases, jet-black leafed crapemyrtle, and a sun tolerant gardenia**

... continued from Page D12

#### **Deer**

Deer demolish gardens with their dining desires. The only sure way to keep them away from your sacred spaces is to build a tall fence enclosing your property. Since my garden is fenced and protected, I welcome the doe and her twin fawns on their daily 6:30 p.m. visit to graze on my grassy slope. Sometimes the stags sharpen their antlers on my oaks and often leave me a gift of them.

#### **Turkeys**

Turkeys fly over those fences to forage for berries, bugs, and buds. Living in my pines, I sometimes have as many as two dozen gobbling and scratching. I've watched how they share the bounty of their discoveries with some of the birds shaking branches to release fruit to their young waiting below.

Elves, fairies, and gnomes are invited to roam my haunted garden



**The devilish looking gulf fritillary caterpillar on the 'Witchcraft' passion vine.**

to protect and serve. If you get an infestation of any of the "beastly bad" or when the "pesky players" are bewitching and injurious to your property, it may behoove you to call in the ghostbusters, also known as licensed predators for nuisance wildlife control. R.I.P.

#### **Spooky Shrubs**

Ending this article on a lighter note, if you are looking for an all-black bush to showcase for Halloween, Proven Winners developed a crapemyrtle called Center Stage Red that boasts jet black leaves with stunning summer red blooms. I'm partnering this black beauty with a heat-tolerant gardenia, Steady as She Goes. Shrubs with names that evoke goosebumps include Ghost Weigela, Abracadabra Hydrangeas, and Handsome Devil Viburnum.

As October comes to an end, I wish you zombie thrills, frights, and chills. May the grim reapers stay away from your garden. Charge up your broomsticks and have a very happy, safe Halloween.

Happy gardening. Happy growing. Trick or Treat!





Cynthia Brian and a ghoul.

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](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com).

Buy copies of her books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store). Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD and special savings.

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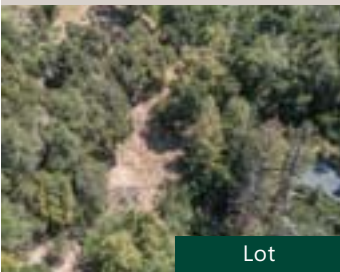


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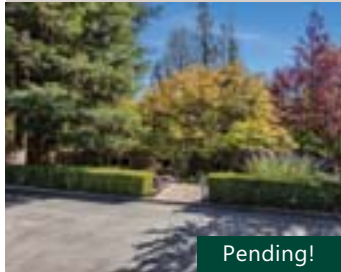


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## LAFAYETTE

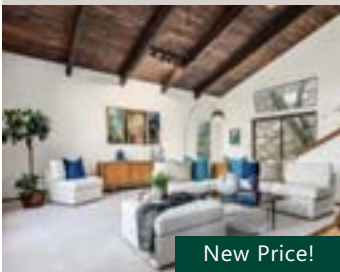


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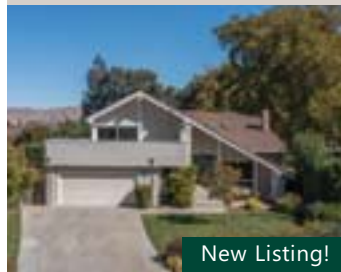


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