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## Letters to the editor

### A note of thanks to Mr. Bill at Ace Hardware Moraga

My name is Rylan Gottschalk, and I am from Girl Scout Troop 33780 in Moraga. Our most recent project is our Bronze Award, in which we help our community with a specific service project, making a lasting effect. We are building cat shelters out of plastic barrels for a local animal shelter called Jelly's Place in San Pablo. We contacted Mr. Bill, the owner of Ace Hardware in Moraga, and asked for supply donations to paint the barrels. He was more than willing to give us the paint that we needed, and on top of that, he gave us a \$50 donation to support our project and Jelly's Place. This is an incredible act of kindness and generosity, and I hope this community recognizes how giving and humble Mr. Bill is. He gives back to this community every day, and he deserves to be acknowledged for what he does.  
Rylan Gottschalk  
Moraga

### Orinda must oppose housing mandates

Gross negligence and inattention have become — in the area of the Orinda's housing — the hallmarks of the Orinda City Council. "Orinda has been assigned 1,359 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) units. . .," according to the Lamorinda Weekly (March 2, 2022). In the same article, City Council Mem-

ber Amy Worth is quoted as saying: "It's really important that we show good faith to HCD [Department of Housing and Community Development of California] and agreed that the city should proceed with the rezoning by Jan. 31."

The extra housing comes from a demand by the State of California. The Orinda City Council has presumably refused to object to RHNA's plans. Instead, the city meekly goes along with whatever the State of California demands in terms of new housing. Currently, California is experiencing a severe drought. Extra housing will do nothing to conserve precious water. In addition, extra housing will make evacuation from a local wildfire more difficult.

On Jan. 20, 2022, I wrote Orinda's mayor, Dennis Fay, stating that extra housing in Orinda "is not in the interest of Orinda's residents." To date, I have not received a reply from the mayor. Is he afraid to respond to his constituents? If I had not paid my local property taxes, I am sure that I would have heard from the mayor or someone else in government.

Orinda, in conjunction with other local communities, must oppose housing mandates from the State of California. Decisions on housing and local zoning for housing should be made by local government, not the state government.  
Richard Colman  
Orinda

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](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

## Saint Mary's headed to Portland for First Round of NCAA

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Bennett was hard pressed to keep from smiling over the seeding and location of their first game. What was his first reaction to the news? "It was exciting, and it was fun, even having to wait until the last bracket to find out where we would be playing," Bennett said. "We were prepared for anything but everyone's excited about playing in the West at Portland."

Bennett could not help but appreciate how special this season has been considering how difficult things had been the prior two seasons. "It's fun to get rewarded," Bennett said. "Two years ago, our seniors missed out on the tournament because it was canceled due to the COVID virus. Then last year we had a half to two-thirds of a season, playing without any fans, and it was just funky. To hear our name called and to be playing in Portland just capped off a two-year process and I'm extremely excited, especially for our older guys because of what they've gone through."

Sixth-year graduate student, Tommy Kuhse, also saw this season as the capstone to a two-year season with a lot of bumps along the road. "Coming into this year, we really felt good about our chances. We just kept growing and getting better and better as a team. We're playing our best basketball at the

right time. It's super cool that we have the highest seed in Saint Mary's history, but we have bigger goals."

Kuhse has been called upon to fill many roles this season. He started the first 13 games of the season and then became the team's sixth man for the next 11 games and returned to the starting lineup for the team's final six games. His performance was not overlooked by the West Coast Conference as Kuhse was named first team all WCC and the sixth man of the year.

"I'm glad that Tommy wanted to come back," Bennett said. "He really improved and he's just a great story. His attitude was tremendous about becoming the sixth man and it really helped our team. After moving him back into the starting lineup, I let him create the narrative for how this season would conclude because I want him on the court against our opponents' two best guards. I wish I could say I knew that it was going to turn out as well as it did, but I didn't."

As this is Bennett's 15th time that he has taken Saint Mary's to the post season (seven NIT's), he knows what the key is for the team which will be playing for the first time in nine days. "The biggest thing is to be going in fresh," Bennett said. "If you go into the game fatigued, it makes it hard to win the game. We practiced twice last week,

and we'll start again this week."

The team's motto, 'Gritty Not Pretty,' which was originated by junior Kyle Bowen, was emblazoned on T-shirts given away to all by the school. "Kyle really put it into perspective as to what we wanted to be as a team," Kuhse said. "We battle on every possession so there are no easy buckets, and pride ourselves on that. We have some of the toughest guys I've ever met on this team and that became our identity and it's what made us so good."

Logan Johnson also credited the team's success to that attitude: "'Gritty Not Pretty' is what we stand on. It's the hard work that we put in all those days in the off-season, like starting at 6 a.m. and doing our run workouts. For us, that's everything that term stands for."

Bennett also was pleased when the University of San Francisco made it into the tournament as a 10th seed. It was recognition of the depth of the West Coast Conference, but for Bennett it was more about their coach, Todd Golden. "We fight and scratch all year long but there's mutual respect for our teams. For me personally, it's for Todd Golden as well. He was a Gael for four years and a captain of that team, so I'll be pulling for them."



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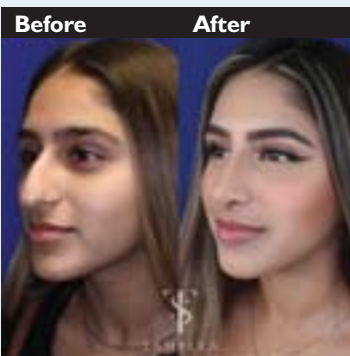
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