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A gorgeous day brought enthusiastic egg hunters on March 26 to Moraga Commons Park.

Photo Vera Kochan

A sunny Saturday greeted this year's Spring Festival and Egg Hunt

By Vera Kochan

After two years of hiding in his COVID-free hutch, the Easter Bunny was back at the Moraga Commons Park on March 26 spreading love and multi-colored, plastic eggs on the lawn in front of the band shell for kids to find.

The Moraga Junior Women's Club presented this year's 39th Annual Spring Festival, last held in 2019, to a larger than average crowd. Online, the \$15 tickets were sold to 280 participants, while an estimated additional 150 tickets were sold on site.

Besides the main event (the egg hunt) there were games, face painting, bounce houses, crafts, food/beverages, a photo op with the Easter Bunny, a Moraga Police Department car and a Moraga-Orinda Fire District engine.

The egg hunt was broken into three groups: ages 0-2; ages 3-4; and ages 5-8. Before each group's turn, hunters were instructed to keep a look out for an egg with markings on the outside, because a special prize of a large Easter basket filled with candy and other goodies would go to the finder.

The event was BYOB (Bring Your Own Basket),

and the "baskets" ran the gamut between the traditional purses and even paper bags - whatever did the job. Roe (2-1/2) from Lafayette, managed to gather 15 eggs into his basket, although Mom and Dad admitted to helping him until he understood the concept. Roe discovered that the eggs held various stickers, tattoos, hand stamps and tiny toys.

Friends Andrew and Cooper both (4-1/2) had varying game plans with regards to how many eggs they would find. A rather conservative figure of "50" was discussed before a loftier goal of "all of them" was decided upon. ... continued on Page A10

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Tri-City Council meeting focuses on transportation issues

By Sora O'Doherty

As the cities of Lafayette and Orinda and the town of Moraga grapple with trying to provide for hugely increased regional housing needs assessments, representatives heard from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) that lack of roadway capacity will no longer be a viable reason to disapprove residential growth projects foreseen in a housing element.

City council members from Lafayette and town council members from Moraga joined Orinda city council members for the annual tri-city meeting held on Zoom March 21. CCTA Director John Hoang gave a presentation about upcoming planning for countywide transportation, including the use of funds from the county's half-cent transportation sales tax passed in 2004. Measure J. David Early, of consultant Placeworks, joined in the presentation.

The Measure J growth management program

seeks to manage the impact of land use decisions on the transportation system; 18% of the income from the tax is returned to the cities, but requires compliance though a checklist. This is relevant because questions arose during the meeting about whether or not cities might be penalized for noncompliance if some roads in Lamorinda are classified as routes of regional significance.

The program seeks to focus new development away from green fields, preserving valuable agricultural lands and reducing the need for new infrastructure. The plan applies goals, objectives and performance measures to major arterials, transit lines and trails. New developments must mitigate negative impacts to Multimodal Transportation Service Objectives (MTSOs). Neighboring jurisdictions are required to work together when planning for growth and to protect communities downstream from development.

According to CCTA, the successes of the action plan for Lamorinda include the fourth bore of the

Caldecott tunnel, Moraga Way multimodal improvements, transportation for Livable Communities project grants, livable Moraga Way and Canyon Road Bridge improvements. CCTA is currently in the process of updated its action plans and is seeking big, bold ideas to enhance Contra Costa's transportation network. The agency is seeking public input through a series of public meetings.

The County Action Plan is intended to address transportation issues of today, to establish quantitative service objectives, identify regional routes, provide growth management program compliance metrics and to expand MTSOs to become Regional Transportation Objectives for roadways, transit, bike/pedestrian, technology, safety, climate change and equity. Transportation plans are closely tied to local growth and housing, as well as to local safety elements.

Lafayette Council Member Susan Candall asked about the public meetings CCTA is holding. ... continued on Page A6

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Council considers return to in-person meetings

By Lou Fancher

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Lafayette City Council has been meeting online according to Assembly Bill 361 guidelines, which temporarily allows local governing agencies to continue virtual meetings and to teleconference from remote locations when physical access and quorum requirements of in-person meetings would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

At its March 14 council meeting Lafayette Communications Analyst Suzanne Iarla updated council about current and upcoming Contra Costa County Health guidelines, the expiration of California Gov. Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 that waived provisions of the Brown Act to allow local and state legislative bodies to hold meetings via teleconference without the teleconferencing locations being open and accessible to the public during the meeting, and AB 361, which is poised to sunset on

Jan. 1, 2024.

When AB 361 expires, unless other laws still in proposal stage are enacted, local governing bodies will revert to the original guidelines. With the county continuing to recommend teleconferencing meetings online, the council after hearing the recommendations from staff, unanimously chose to follow county health guidelines and AB 361 protocols and to continue online meetings while beginning to prepare for the return to in-person and hybrid meetings when it is safe.

Iarla asked council to consider if some governing entities remain online, what the means by which the content of those meetings would be communicated to the public; whether face mask and social distancing mandates be continued in an in-person setting; if proof of vaccination would be required and if a voluntary contact list is a violation of privacy or a desired tool for contact tracing; and whether in-person meetings should include teleconferencing to the public as a courtesy

hybrid component.

According to Iarla, hybrid meetings allow real-time interactions and greater ease of access to participants including the council, consultants, experts speaking on a topic and the public, however the hybrid meetings require more staff hours for set up, operation and maintenance of the teleconferencing and livestream components. For meetings in the Don Tatzin Community Hall at the library – City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission, and Transportation and Circulation Commission – the added staff time pencils out. For smaller commission and committee meetings, the efficacy of the extra costs are questionable and worthy of evaluation.

With \$25,000 of funding for new hardware that was required for hybrid meetings in Tatzin Hall already secured (as of March) and staff undergoing training, additional cameras will improve the room's capabilities and no extra funds are sought for this phase of the project. Solutions

for hybrid meetings to be held at other spaces such as the Arts & Science Discovery Center and the Community Center outlined in the staff report continue to be explored by staff, and updates will be brought to the council.

During the discussion that included questions from the public about what factors will signal a return to rules governed by the Brown Act, and if the city will set its own safety protocols once the county guidelines expire, council favored continuing to follow AB 361. Acknowledging that operational issues due to possible power outages have potential to disrupt teleconferenced, livestream Zoom meetings, that remote downside was not enough to detract from the benefits of online meetings.

Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok said that since his election to the council, he'd only experienced remote meetings and asked, "What are we missing by being only online? Is there a key thing we're missing that would mean we'd want to be back in-

person in a hurry?" Kwok said meeting online is "good for democracy" in terms of people being able to interact more often, more effectively, and with greater ease due to increased accessibility.

Vice Mayor Carl Anduri agreed, emphasizing the gain in public health safety, but said, "The one tangible (loss) is the feeling of the community gathering to discuss issues and a major difference is the outburst of support – or boos – for speakers (that is) common at meetings in-person and doesn't happen online."

Ending the discussion, the council chose to continue with all-online meetings and follow county health guidelines until AB 361 expires. The staff was directed to keep careful watch of other communities and what they are learning when returning to in-person meetings. Meanwhile, staff will also plan and prepare as previously approved for hybrid options for certain meetings to continue after the pandemic becomes endemic.

Lafayette's American Rescue Plan Act fund distribution discussed



By Lou Fancher

An update and recommendations made by city staff and presented at the March 14 city council meeting by Economic Development Manager Thomas Myers focused on the distribution of the first tranche of Lafayette's American Rescue Plan Act funds. Having previously approved the use of \$2,590,555 of ARPA funds for Lafayette projects and programs, the report from

ARPA Subcommittee Members Meyers, Vice Mayor Carl Anduri, and Council Member Gina Dawson included explanation of five allocations involving expenditures through the end of the city's current fiscal year on June 30.

A ruling issued by Treasury that goes into effect April 1 will allow Lafayette and other cities reporting less than \$10 million in revenue loss to spend ARPA funds on economic recovery measures but also to apply the funds to gen-

eral government services. The subcommittee's first recommendation was to take advantage of the increased flexibility and discretionary use of ARPA's funds and on April 1 to immediately transfer \$500,000 from the unallocated ARPA funds to the General Fund. The action would "backfill" revenue expenditures made by the city for the Park Theater appropriation.

... continued on Page A9

Use of on-street parking, private parking lots, and sidewalks for outdoor dining and retail sales will be extended through March 31, 2023.

Photo J. Wake

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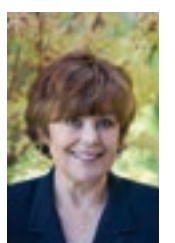
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Lafayette School District names new superintendent



Dr. Brent Stephens Photo provided

Submitted by Dawn Lynn Lanier

The Lafayette School District Governing Board has appointed Dr. Brent Stephens as its next superintendent, effective July 1. For the past three years, Stephens has been the superintendent of Berkeley Unified School District, successfully leading that district through the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on equity and access, and prior to that, serving as the chief academic officer for San Francisco Unified School District, where he oversaw curriculum, coaching, and professional development.

The process of selecting the next superintendent for Lafayette was a community effort, and the Governing Board is grateful to everyone who shared ideas, opinions, and priorities for the district and its leadership during the search process. "The appointment process underscored that Lafayette is unquestionably a destination district, as it produced many worthy applicants," Board President Rob Sturm said. "One candidate, however, clearly stood out in all respects - we have great confidence that Dr. Stephens will be a tremendous addition, continuing our district's long-standing tradition of inspiring superintendent leadership."

Stephens began his teaching career as a Spanish bilingual teacher in Oakland, and

later in Boston, supporting immigrant students and their families. While working as a teacher in Boston, Stephens achieved National Board certification, the country's highest professional distinction. Stephens' experience as a school principal in both elementary and middle school settings has helped build on his knowledge of standards-based teaching, scaffolding and differentiation, and the positive role that students' own backgrounds and cultures should play in classrooms. During his tenure as the Chief Academic Officer in San Francisco, Stephens led the creation and implementation of innovative curriculum in all subject areas, and worked closely on Special Education issues, including more equitable redistribution of Special Day Classes around the district and research-based approaches to reading instruction.

Most recently, as superintendent of the Berkeley Unified School District, Stephens spearheaded Investments in educational equity, including early literacy, special education, and mental health supports, as well as partnerships and programs to support the district's African American, LatinX, and AAPI students and families.

"I'm excited to join the Lafayette community," said Stephens, "and begin to get to know the students, families, and staff who make the Lafayette School District such a well-regarded district."

Stephens holds a doctorate from Harvard University and his work on school reform has been published by Harvard Education Press. When he is not working, he loves to spend time with family, hike the East Bay hills, and make art and music.

Superintendent Richard Whitmore looks forward to working with Stephens to ensure a smooth transition.

Public comment period on Draft EIR for Lafayette's proposed Housing Element extended to April 18

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the city of Lafayette's sixth cycle (2023-2031) Housing Element is available for public review on the city's website at www.lovelafayette.org/ceqa and on the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) website at <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021080038/2>. The public comment period for the Draft EIR has been extended and will run through April 18. Those interested in commenting on the Draft EIR may submit written comments to GeneralPlan@LoveLafayette.org through April 18 and/or attend the public hearing on the Draft EIR at the Planning Commission on Monday, April 4 to provide verbal comments. This meeting will be held online via Zoom teleconference. The link for the meeting will be available in advance on the city of Lafayette Calendar located on its website at lovelafayette.org.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the Draft EIR, which is intended to inform both decision-makers and the general public of potentially significant effects and ways to mitigate the environmental consequences that may result from implementation of the proposed updated Housing Element.

For more information on CEQA and the two scenarios studied for the EIR, visit <https://www.planlafayette.org/he-ceqa> Anyone who wishes to stay informed about the General Plan Update process can sign up for Lafayette's publications and e-notifications to receive meeting notices via email by visiting www.LoveLafayette.org/city-hall/e-notification and selecting "General Plan Update."



Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting
 Monday, April 11, 7 p.m.
 Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, April 4, 7 p.m.
 Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Design Review

Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m. Zoom
 Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

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The Lamorinda Movers will be having our GRAND REOPENING. After 2 long years, the Welcome Back Dinner celebration we've been talking about is finally a reality. It will be a fun-filled evening complete with a delicious BBQ dinner from the popular Back Forty Texas BBQ restaurant, upbeat music from fan-favorites Johnny Z and the Camaros, and the opportunity to dance the evening away and acquaint yourselves with old friends.

You definitely won't want to miss this! Mark your calendar. Invite a friend or two.

Plan on a wonderful, long-overdue celebration. The last day to sign up is *THIS* Friday, April 1st.

Location: Serbian Church
 1700 School Street, Moraga
Date: April 11th, 2022
Social Hour: 5:00PM
Dinner Time: 6:00PM
Entertainment: Johnny Z and the Camaros
Cost: \$30 per person collected at the door

To sign up go to our website; lamorindamovers.org and click on "Reservations". *Please be mindful that if you sign up and don't show up, we still have to pay for your dinner.*

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Town Council: Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, April 5, 7 p.m.,
Park and Recreation Commission:
Monday, April 18, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
Tuesday, April 12, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

Moraga Commons Park to receive updated irrigation system



Photo provided

Moraga Commons Park to undergo major irrigation project

By Vera Kochan

Another dry winter has created a lot of yellowing lawns within Moraga, and trying to keep Commons Park from suffering the same fate could be a challenge for the town.

In June 2021, council members approved the Commons Park Irrigation Project within the Capital Improvements Program Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22. According to a March 23 staff report by Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt, Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp, and Senior Civil Engineer Bret Swain the project's scope will include "re-designing and installing an improved irrigation system with modern controls to increase efficiency, conserve water,

and decrease maintenance and utility costs. The project was prioritized due to the increasing number of breaks in the existing system and the escalating utility costs associated with the breaks." The approved project was budgeted for \$215,000.

The town hired Gates + Associates, a Walnut Creek-based landscape architecture firm that specializes in urban design and master planning, to provide plans, construction documents, construction cost estimates, and construction landscape architectural support in preparation for the irrigation project. Gates' suggestions included the replacement and relocation of sprinkler heads to maximize irrigation distribution efficiency; the replacement of old and leaking irrigation lateral pipelines; the removal of a

cross-connection between the irrigation system and potable water system; and the extension of stub-out (greywater collection plumbing which dead ends at a cap) for future expansion. Additional suggestions included the possibility of installing a weather station, including cables and conduits, to improve evapotranspiration (a smart controller device that accounts for rainfall based irrigation control).

With a game plan from Gates, the town attracted four viable bids and awarded the contract to Bruno Landscape Management & Construction, Inc. (Atascadero, Calif.) whose base bid was \$172,238 with an additional \$3,795 for the weather station installation. Bruno has recently completed projects for the county of Santa Barbara, the city of Mountain View, and the San Luis Obispo Animal Shelter.

The total construction cost comes to \$176,032 with an added contingency of 10% (\$17,603) equaling approximately \$193,636. The Commons Park Irrigation Project will see funding of \$150,000 from the FY 2021-22 CIP Adopted Budget. The balance of \$43,636 will come from Fund 750 -- Asset Replacement (Municipal Painting savings \$27,800; Commons Park Swings savings \$8,000; and Recreation Donation \$7,836).

Construction on the project is expected to begin in April and completed by Memorial Day Weekend.

2022 Moraga Citizen(s) of the Year Nominations Requested

Do you have a person or couple in mind for the Town of Moraga to honor as 2022 Citizen(s) of the Year?

Selection criteria are as follows:

- Cannot be a current elected member or paid staff of the Town Council, the Town or any other local public agency (e.g., School District or Fire District);
- Must have a Moraga mailing address;
- Nominees should be persons who:
 - (1) have given their time, talent and treasure to help make Moraga a vibrant community, one where people want to live, work and shop; and
 - (2) bring the community together and make us proud to be residents of Moraga.

Please email your nomination to nominations@lamorindaweekly.com or mail it to Moraga Citizen of the Year Nominations, Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road Suite C # 202, Moraga CA 94556.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is Wednesday, April 6.

A celebration dinner will be held on Friday, May 6 in the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College to honor the winner. The 2022 Moraga Citizen of the Year Award is co-sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Saint Mary's College, the Lamorinda Weekly and the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley.



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Rheem Theatre hopes a COVID-free summer will boost attendance

By Vera Kochan

So many venues where large crowds are expected to sit within inches of each other have suffered through nearly two years of closures or limited seating in order to provide a safe, COVID-free environment to patrons. The Rheem Theatre (built in 1957)



Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga Council Member Teresa Onoda buys a movie ticket.

is one such local example.

The Rheem's Assistant Manager Tiffanie Cone proudly touted the fact that once the recently remodeled theatre was able to open its doors to audiences again, first-run blockbuster movies were and continue to be offered. "We were really busy during Christmas break, but then it dropped off," she said, noting that weekends are starting to see an improvement in attendance.

"I love going to the movies with my friends," said recent patron, Moraga Council Member Teresa Onoda. "It's wonderful to have a first class theatre just minutes away."

With spring break and summer on the horizon, the theatre will extend its schedule to seven days a week. During the off-season the Rheem

is only open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

"We always do a lot of business when a Marvel movie is playing, usually with a two-thirds capacity," stated Cone. "With 'Spiderman' we stayed busy the entire time we had it. During those kinds of movies the audience is mostly teenagers."

The Rheem also offers a Cinema West Rewards Club Card where patrons can earn points toward free concession stand items or a free movie ticket.

Cone expects that the coming summer months will help to bring patrons back to the movies, both as a place to get away for a few hours and to beat the heat. She hopes that people will remember how much fun it is to go to the movies.

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Town approves funding for its businesses still struggling from COVID setbacks



Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga Community Faire before the pandemic in 2019

By Vera Kochan

The federal government initiated a \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill in March 2021, called the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). From that amount, a \$130 billion recovery fund was created to provide local governments with help in surviving the economic hardships suffered during COVID mandates. Moraga's allocation of these funds is \$4,254,072. The first installment of \$2,127,036 was received in July 2021; the second \$2,127,036 installment will arrive in July 2022.

The town's Fiscal Year 2021-22 Adopted Budget includes the initial ARPA revenue and \$1.45 million in expenditures such as revenue loss, investment in storm drain system and broadband infrastructure, and costs toward an outdoor seating area to allow for public attendance during meetings held in the Council Chamber during the pandemic.

According to the March 23 staff report by Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg, the United States Department of Treasury issued a Final Rule in January 2022, addressing "many of the concerns communities raised with the Interim Final Rule, and increased the flexibility for local governments while simplifying the program. More specifically, the Final Rule offers a standard allowance for revenue loss of up to \$10 million, enabling the Town of Moraga to select to use the full award for government services (defined as services traditionally provided by the recipient government agency) with streamlined reporting requirements."

During the town council's Feb. 23 meeting a resolution was adopted designating the entire \$4.2 million ARPA allocation as Replacement for Lost Public Sector Revenue. At that time, the Moraga Chamber of Commerce requested that the town offer financial assistance and a relief program for still struggling small businesses. Council requested that the Chamber meet with the town staff to adopt a formula whereby any funds could be put to best use.

Executive Director Katie Bidstrup made a presentation on behalf of the Chamber during the March 23 council meeting, which concentrated on four elements that could help guide small businesses toward a revival. To start things off, an overall request was made for the council to set aside \$250,000 of the ARPA funds in support of Moraga's retail owners.

The first element was to provide \$30,000 for Business Rescue Funding. This would provide grants of up to \$5,000 each for businesses struggling to pay back due rent or utilities. The second element was a request for \$17,000 to fund two community events: the annual Community Faire, and a new event called Art Walk. The third element was the \$5,000 funding of a Moraga Chamber Gift Card Program; and the fourth element would be a \$10,000 funding to help the chamber get back on its feet.

Several business owners spoke during the public comment portion of the meeting, which was held in-person at the Council Chambers, to discuss the adverse effects that the pandemic had on them and requested that the town council be generous with the ARPA distributions.

Following staff's recommendation, the council voted to increase the \$30,000 Business Rescue Funding to \$150,000 with the opportunity to provide more should the need arise, if the Chamber can present the necessary reasons why during a future meeting. This increase in funding means that each small business, whether brick and mortar or home-based, is entitled to a maximum of \$5,000 each to pay for qualifying costs incurred on or after March 3, 2021.

The town agreed to fund \$17,000 toward the two events (\$15,000 for the Community Faire and \$2,000 for an Art Walk). The Community Faire was created in mid-2000 and co-sponsored by the Chamber and various other entities to help businesses showcase their offerings to faire-goers, besides bringing the community together for a day of fun (pony rides, food, classic cars, additional attractions for kids,

etc.). Without funding from the town the Chamber will not activate the faire this summer. The council requested that the Chamber seek sponsorship from larger corporations to help offset costs.

Even though the Art Walk is a new concept for the Chamber, the basic precept entails a walking tour of art located strategically throughout Moraga's shopping centers, thus helping to create more foot traffic. The town opted out of sponsorship by giving the \$2,000 directly to the Chamber for use toward the Art Walk.

... continued on Page A9

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See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
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 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
 www.orindaassociation.org

City Council

Regular Meeting:

Tuesday, April 5, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 5, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Traffic Safety Advisory

Committee Regular Meeting

Monday, April 18, 7 p.m.

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Orinda looks to other counties for emergency preparedness inspiration

By Sora O'Doherty

How is Orinda doing on clearing roadside vegetation? How should homeowners be encouraged to comply with the new fire code? Which is better, the carrot or the stick? Do other counties have the answers? These were some of the questions considered by the Orinda City Council and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District at a joint meeting on March 16. MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker reviewed the requirements of the new fire code. He stressed that MOFD seeks voluntary compliance, and that priority is given to evacuation routes.

City Manager David Biggs noted that the city has the ability to enforce rules for traffic purposes, but not for fire purposes. He added that he has spoken with Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and Sen. Steve Glazier to see if there could be a legislative fix that would allow the city to have a greater role in enforcing the fire code.

Council Member Darlene Gee asked if there are areas or places where clearance of vegetation is considered a problem, to which Winnacker re-

sponded that Orinda is very far from having taken care of the vegetation problem. "Very few neighborhoods have achieved clearance," he stated. Biggs did add that the city has addressed property it owns, and has institutionalized the deadline to assure compliance each year.

Council Member Amy Worth asked about the fire district's plan, what is the strategy for dealing with homes on high-priority evacuation routes? Winnacker replied that the district will send out early notifications to all residents, but those on evacuation routes will get targeted notifications.

The district will shift from its current chipping efforts to inspections and sending out violation notices, which will include language about maintenance of evacuation routes if the property is located on one. However, he added, "I have met with the owners of some parcels in their driveways, and their property is still not in compliance."

"We are willing to enforce," he said, "especially on evacuation routes." Postcards will go out in April, personalized letters will go out to those on evacuation routes in May,

and enforcement will begin on June 1.

In terms of enforcement, Vice Mayor Inga Miller noted that she had heard that there has been some non-voluntary work performed and paid for by MOFD, with liens being placed on properties. Winnacker agreed that there have been some cases, but very few.

Paula Reinman, a member of the Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission, joined the meeting to comment that she had just spoken with Rich Shortall, executive coordinator of Fire Safe Marin. He said that the most effective thing that they are doing is a home evaluation program run through the fire district, with home inspections being conducted by uniformed staff. She reported that Shortall said that this has driven compliance more than anything else they have done.

Winnacker said that MOFD has a very similar program with volunteers that is up and running. The volunteers wear vests, and it is a more effective program, he said, coming from a trusted source, a friend or a neighbor. The program will be expanded in the future. How-

ever, he emphasized that it is really important that homeowners receive consistent messages from the same person every time. "Any inconsistency," he noted, "becomes just one more item to be used to avoid doing the work."

MOFD Director Craig Jorgens added that MOFD also helps neighbors with Firewise councils. Biggs wondered how Orinda can get more Firewise communities, how the city and the fire district might help to encourage that. Worth suggested that if the goal is to increase compliance, the city and the fire district should pursue joint communication tools to maximize the message.

The meeting concluded with a determination to work more closely together, perhaps with the creation of a 2x2 committee of the Orinda City Council and MOFD, as Orinda has with the school board. Council Member Nick Kosla also favored more joint meetings, and MOFD President Michael Donner suggested that more than annual meetings are needed. Mayor Dennis Fay suggested that they create the 2x2 committee, let them work, then schedule another joint meeting.

Miramonte High School principal shares his support of the arts

By Sora O'Doherty

In the face of some social media speculation that Miramonte High School will be dropping musical theater classes next year, Principal Ben Campopiano spoke to the Lamorinda Weekly about his whole-hearted support for the arts as part of the high school curriculum. Every student who wants a choral music/musical theater class will be able to get one, he affirmed, but he noted that de-

clining enrollment coupled with fewer students who want to take these classes may mean that there are fewer total classes in the area.

"Every kid who wants musical theater will be in a class," Campopiano said. "We have got to have a strong arts program; it's critically important. Even with ebbs and flows of enrollment. In a comprehensive high school I am committed to that, and I will dedicate funds to that," he added. "I really support

the arts and it is critically important for every student to have what they need. If they want it, they are going to get it," was Campopiano's bottom line.

The principal did acknowledge that there is a lot of pressure on students to take the classes they believe will get them into the high-achieving colleges they seek. "Competition is so great to get into these colleges," he said, "I have to fill my schedule with top level classes."



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Tri-City Council meeting focuses on transportation issues

... continued from Page A1

Through the public meetings, of which there will be two more rounds, CCTA is seeking comments about most important initiatives that can be taken over the next 25 years. There is also an interactive exercise on its website.

Early explained that the concept of a route of regional significance is unique to Contra Costa County, not to be found in state or federal legislation. Of the five action plans in Contra Costa County, only Lamorinda has routes of inter-regional significance. Early advised that these should be changed to routes of regional significance, to avoid having multiple confusing designations.

He suggested that the designation might also give a little boost to grant applications. Orinda Vice Mayor Inga Miller, while noting that communities are no longer permitted to disallow a housing development on the basis of inadequate roadway capacity, wondered if there will be funding opportunities, and that an-

swer was that there will be funds available over the next 10 years.

Moraga Town Council Member Teresa Onoda brought up the issue of planning for wildfires. Matt Kelly, Contra Costa County Senior Transportation Planner, said that CCTA is hearing about that, especially from Lamorinda, so they are trying to incorporate fire into the transportation plan.

Early said that Placeworks is working on a project specific to the city of Orinda to quantify evacuation capacity and that it may become a model for other communities. He also answered a question from the Lamorinda Weekly, explaining that in an evacuation there will be a carefully controlled flow of cars and that making the roads one-way out will allow for increased capacity.

There was also some discussion about whether traffic patterns will change in the future, as a result of behaviors developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kelly said that CCTA is trying to figure that out in a travel behavior study,

and Orinda Mayor Dennis Fay wished them good luck in "getting people to tell you what they really think they are going to do."

Lafayette Mayor Teresa Geringer stressed that their city is committed to a traffic safety plan. Early agreed, saying that safety is of the utmost importance and will be reflected in the action plan. Worth added that all three communities are very concerned about bicycle and pedestrian safety.

The Action Plans and Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) will be updated over the next two years. While the CTP Update will be informed by the Action Plan Updates, there will be combined outreach events that provide stakeholders and the public with opportunities to provide input on both. The Action Plan Updates and CTP Update process is anticipated to be completed by fall 2023.

Residents can learn more about the Contra Costa County action plan, get involved, and share their thoughts at ccta.net/ctp

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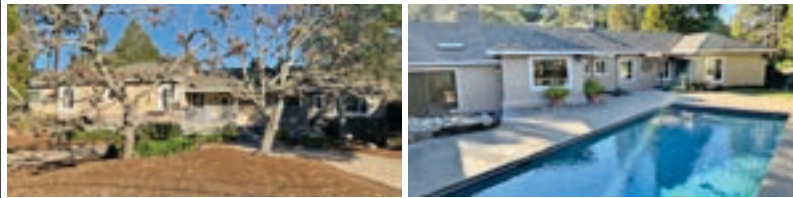
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Orinda reviews first year's progress with new sales tax

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda is beginning to see the power of youth. Reviewing progress on wildfire preparedness over the past year, one idea that came to the fore was involving schools in getting the messages out about evacuation, vegetation clearance, and home hardening. These are some of the major goals of the Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission, which was put in place by the increased sales tax measure approved by Orinda voters in November 2020, and presented its first annual review to a joint meeting with the Orinda City Council on March 23.

Commission Chair Judd Hammon presented the report, which also covered some of the work of the former Citizen Infrastructure Oversight Commission, which the SSTOC replaced, because the SSTOC only had its first meeting in March of 2021. Hammon was the chair of the CIOC at the time and transitioned to the SSTOC. Among the accomplishments of the SSTOC, the report praises Orinda staff, residents and non-resident property owners for

having made important progress in reducing wildfire risk in Orinda and preparing for emergencies in general.

The report included examples, including that quite a few Orinda property owners have significantly reduced hazardous fuels on their properties, many through help from the Orinda Firewise Council. The city itself procured a chipper and truck and started an Orinda Chipping Program; updated the pilot Red-Flag Day parking restriction program on El Toyonal; cleared city properties to meet new MOFD code requirements; supported two mock evacuation drills and posted multiple announcements through the Orinda Outlook, social media and local newspapers.

Nevertheless, significant concerns remain. According to the SSTOC, portions of critical evacuation routes are still lined with dangerous, fire-prone vegetation too close to the road and may have issues with cars parked along very narrow, winding roadways. Far too many properties do not provide adequate defensible space around structures and far too few homes meet even mini-

mum fire-hardening recommendations. The SSTOC concluded that many residents are not well prepared for emergencies in general.

Although Measure R is intended to deal with both fire safety and the city's roads and drains, it has been the city's priority to use most of the Measure R taxes in the beginning to focus on the critical issue of wildfire and emergency preparedness. The city's roads are now considered to be in very good shape, with the roads that still need repair scheduled to be completed by the end of 2023 without the need for Measure R funds. The average condition of Orinda roads in 2006 was poor, but work conducted with funds from the previous sales tax has successfully raised them to an average of very good.

Chair Hammon, in response to questions from the council, noted that "since we had made such good progress on roads, and our drains are not in such bad shape, we could take our foot off the gas and focus on fire for some years. This is what we've been doing, and

the city staff has stepped up in a fantastic fashion to deal with roads and drains."

Storm drains are a significant issue. The city is currently performing video inspections of storm drains. Large pipes are scheduled for replacement through the capital equipment project. The \$205,000 2020 storm drain improvement project included four large pipes, two on Miner Road, one on Camino Pablo, and one on Camino Sobrante. No measure R funds were required. Smaller pipes under Orinda roads are often replaced as part of the annual paving project. However, there are still many large storm drain pipes at risk of failure. It is estimated that Measure R funds will be required for storm drain work in fiscal year 2024-25.

Council Member Amy Worth noted that one of the challenges moving forward is having a housing element that enables us to have money for roads and drains. She added that the city does receive transportation funds from the county, and that Orinda is the only community that puts solid

waste fees into roads. Council Member Nick Kosla agreed that drains are crucial to emergency preparedness. "Look at Miner Road," he suggested, imagining how a disastrous sinkhole like the one that occurred in the beginning of 2017 would have negatively impacted evacuation in the event of an emergency.

For fiscal year 2020-21, Measure R sales tax has produced revenues of \$785,786. Expenditures of \$198,438 were used for the new chipper service, and by public works and parks on work to reduce hazards and trim or remove vegetation, with \$32,370 spent of staff and consultant support, and \$1,341 on legal services. However, the statistics come from very early in the time frame of the program. The unexpended balance of \$587,348 will be partially carried over to fiscal year 2021-22 activities, including the purchase of a truck and chipper. The city's annual audit resulted in a clean opinion. The report also contains extensive information about funding for roads and drains, which benefit from a large number of different sources.

The full report is available at <https://cityoforinda.box.com/s/aqrelwbwv0wc37m5hkju2o8a0sta7bup>

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Lafayette gets Firewise



Photo Violet Hsu

ConFire Fire Inspector Taylor King advises Lafayette City Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok to keep bushes and shrubs trimmed well below 3-4 feet when trees are above.

By Sharon K. Sobotta

At certain times Lafayette Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok and his wife Violet fear for their lives when they go to sleep in their home which is just a short uphill walk from the Lafayette BART station. It's not home invasions or crime that they fear. It's California wildfires.

Kwok, who is professionally and personally committed to the issues of environmental sustainability and climate change, has been living with the gravity of that since his (wife Violet's) cousins lost everything except the shoes on their feet and their wallets during the 2017 Tubbs Fire in Santa Rosa. This prompted Kwok to reach out to the people in his neighborhood about forming a Firewise community. Firewise is a national fire prevention and preparedness program. Firewise communities of at least eight residents from respective neighborhoods are dedicated to the common cause of reducing the risk and potential spread of wildfires.

"I reached out to my neighbors hoping to get eight families to sign up (to learn

about the program) and we ended up with 23," Kwok says. "It's a pretty low bar. You commit to spending an hour a year assessing and addressing fire risks around your home."

Kwok says there are more than 20 Firewise communities in the Orinda and Moraga area and he's hoping Lafayette can have at least 10 Firewise communities by the end of 2022. So far there are four.

In February, Kwok and his neighbors arranged to have Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Fire Inspector Taylor King walk through and assess risks. Kwok says it was an illuminating experience, not just for him, but for his neighbors as well.

"I spent an hour clearing out my rosemary bushes, which are very flammable, so technically I can be done with my hour for the year. But I'll keep going because I still have so many things to take care of," Kwok says, while pointing out various plants and vegetation the fire inspector recommended he mitigate. Still, this isn't as intimidating of a process as it may sound. "All

fire safety tips are offered as recommendations and then you can decide what is manageable or even collaborate with neighbors to problem solve."

Kwok says it's important that residents are not in denial about potential wildfires. "Over the past five years, we've seen wildfires in California getting closer and closer to us. Santa Rosa is a suburban community with few trees, and closer still, we had the Lafayette Tennis Club on fire a few years ago," Kwok recalls. "I think PG&E turned off 85% of the power in the city, but not in that area and there was a fire. Thankfully the fire and police were able to extinguish it, but we would be foolish to think that it can't happen to us."

Jack Baker moved to Lafayette last summer to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren. "When I first moved here, I saw that my daughter had a big sign near her home that said Firewise," Baker recalls. "I was aware of it and then started talking about it with Wei-Tai, who arranged the community meeting and a lot of people signed up."

Baker took advantage of the fire inspector's visit to his community and while he wasn't surprised by the findings and recommendations for his particular property, he did gain some insight. "I learned specifics. The irony is that I had a tree service scheduled for the next day. We were planning to clear out trees, but we expanded a little bit to address some of the additional concerns the fire inspector brought to our attention."

In addition to learning about practical things like the recommendation not to have greenery or flammable materials within five feet of his home, Baker learned about structural matters like how to fireproof a wooden staircase. Baker says he's sharing in the cost of removing a few large oak trees (which is something he committed to even before the Firewise community walk-through). "Nobody has to do anything, but we're educating ourselves about what we can do. That, to me, makes it a very valuable program."

Irene Jorgenson has lived in her Lafayette home for 22 years. After doing the neighborhood walk-through with the fire inspector, Jorgenson is thinking about some concrete ways to be a better neighbor. "The most important thing I learned is that we have plants that are highly flammable and we didn't know that," Jorgenson says. "The plants are right next to our neighbor's only exit from their house so it presents a

huge safety issue for our neighbors. Jorgenson says it's not a matter of if but how she'll address the issue. "The thought of a rapid fire is terrifying to anyone. It wouldn't be right for me to be made aware of how to address the issue and do nothing about it," she says. "We're going to meet with our neighbors (to find a creative solution) because it's not only a safety issue, but also a privacy issue."

Firewise pamphlets are sent out to the Lafayette community periodically. In terms of renters or residents of apartments who may not always get such items, they are available at the police department. Kwok says the 30% of Lafayette residents who are renters can also participate in the program. "Renters should talk to each other first and then their landlords to see what can be done. Fire safety is in everyone's best interest."

Some things everyone can do are mitigate or eliminate vegetation within five feet of homes and uplimb trees so that branches are at least six feet above the ground, and also think ahead. The city of Lafayette has 17 evacuation zones. "Along with doing what we can to make our community firewise," Kwok says, "everyone should sign up for the community warning system which sends out text notifications in the event of an emergency."

To learn more about the Firewise program, visit the National Fire Protection Agency's website at NFPA.org.

Fire District Public Meetings

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



ConFire
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 1 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org
(http://64.166.146.245/agenda_publish.cfm?id=&mt=ALL)



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Police Department Tip Line 94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues 94549Traffic@gmail.com
Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049
Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan 925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org
Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report
March 6 - March 19

Alarms	47
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	8
Traffic	102
Suspicious Circumstances	9
Suspicious Subject	17
Suspicious Vehicle	5
Service to Citizen	41
Patrol Req./Security Check	30
Public/School Assembly Check	12
Supplemental Report	45
Vacation House Check	20
Welfare Check	18
Ordinance Violation	3
Vehicle violations	
Auto Burglary	
100 Block Greenbank Dr.	
Dui Misd	
El Nido Ranch Rd./Lizann Dr.	
Eb Sr 24 At Oak Hill Rd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
Quandt Rd./Springhill Rd.	
Springhill Rd./Quandt Rd.	
Reckless Driving	
900 Block Diablo Dr.	
Deer Hill Rd./Brown Ave.	
1300 Block Martino Rd.	

Mt. Diablo Blvd./Acalanes Rd.
500 Block Glenside Dr.
Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Tc - Fire And Amb Enroute
Golden Gate Way/1st St.
Tc - Property Damage
700 Block Reliez Station Rd.
Deer Hill Rd./Brown Ave.
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.
Vehicle Theft
1200 Block Quandt Rd.
Wb Sr 24 Central Lafayette/
Moraga
Other criminal activity
Burglary
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.
Commercial Burglary
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.
Fraud False Pretenses
3500 Block Brook St. (2)
1400 Block Sunset Lp.
Grand Theft
1100 Block Vacation Dr. (2)
Grand Theft Bicycle
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Identity Theft
600 Block Doreen Way
Panhandling
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Petty Theft
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
500 Block Michael Ln.
Residential Burglary
3900 Block S Peardale Dr.
Shoplift
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
3400 Block Golden Gate Way
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Vandalism
3300 Block Carlyle Terrace
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
3300 Block Betty Ln.
Disturbing The Peace
1000 Block Almanor Ln.
3400 Block Moraga Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Loud Music
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
Loud Party
Brook St./Dewing Ave. (2)
Green Acres Ct./Mcbride Dr.
3900 Block Happy Valley Rd.
Leroy Way/S Peardale Dr.
Public Nuisance
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Deer Hill Rd./Happy Valley Rd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Los Palos Dr./Glenside Dr.

Other
Defraud Innkeeper
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
K9 Outside Assist Request
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd., Mor
Threats
2700 Block Oak Canyon Rd.
Unwanted Guest
1700 Block Toyon Rd.
Violation Custody Order
800 Block Acalanes Rd.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report
March 8 - March 20

Alarms	14
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	12
Traffic	32
Suspicious Circumstances	3
Suspicious Subject	9
Suspicious Vehicle	5
Service to Citizen	25
Patrol Req./Security Check	9
Supplemental Report	10
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	3
Public/School Assembly Check	9
Ordinance Violation	0
Vehicle violations	
Accident Property	
Rheem Bust Marys Rd.	
Auto Burglary	
Ivy Dr./Miramonte Dr.	
Dui Misd	
Moraga Way/Los Cerros, Ori	
Excessive Speed Moraga	
Rd./Moraga Way	
Moraga Rd./Skyline	
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
2000 Block Donald Dr.	
Reckless Driving	
Canyon Rd./Larch Ave.	
Starbucks	
Nations	
St. Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.	
Moraga Way/St Andrews Dr.	
Moraga Via/Glorietta Blvd., Ori	
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.	
Moraga Country Club	
Homegoods	
St. Marys College	
Revoked License	
Moraga Rd./Buckingham Dr.	
Ascot/Railroad	
Tc - Property Damage	
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.	
Safeway	

Camino Pablo/Tharp Dr.
Vehicle Theft
100 Block Corliss Dr.
Other criminal activity
Forgery
Police Department
Shoplift
Safeway
Warrant Arrest
Police Department
Nuisance to the Community
Loud Music
Canyon Club Brewery
300 Block Deerfield Dr.
Not Available
Loud Party
Not Available (2)
Public Nuisance
Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.
Calle La Montana/Paseo Grande
2100 Block Donald Dr.
Vandalism
Moraga Commons Park
Other
Mentally Ill Commit
St Marys College
Unwanted Guest
Safeway
Violation Dom Viol Order
600 Block Augusta Dr.
Violation Restraining Ord
600 Block Augusta Dr.

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report
March 6 - March 19

Alarms	29
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	8
Traffic	80
Suspicious Circumstances	4
Suspicious Subject	10
Suspicious Vehicle	6
Service to Citizen	46
Patrol Req./Security Check	21
Supplemental Report	18
Vacation House Check	1
Welfare Check	10
Public/School Assembly Check	2
Ordinance Violation	0
Vehicle violations	
Accident Injury	
200 Block Moraga Way	
Accident Property	
400 Block Moraga Way	
Auto Burglary	

10 Block Piedmont Ave.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
10 Block North Ln.
Reckless Driving
Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd.
Moraga Way/Oak Dr.
Via Floreado/St Stephens Dr.
Vehicle Theft
500 Block Tahos Rd.
Via Las Cruces/St Stephens Dr.
Other criminal activity
Failure To Obey
Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo
Fraud Credit Card
Camino Sobrante
Fraud False Pretenses
100 Block Canon Dr.
Grand Theft
Orinda Way
Grand Theft Veh Parts
200 Block Camino Pablo
Panhandling
Camino Sobrante
Orinda Way
Shoplift
Moraga Way
Warrant Arrest
Orinda Way
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
100 Block Ardith Dr.
Disturbing The Peace
Longview Terrace/Orchard Rd.
Loud Music
20 Block Orinda Way
Irwin Way
Loud Party
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New eCard program helps support Lafayette businesses

By M.D. Jones

Shopping locally can be the lifeblood for small businesses, especially during a pandemic. After allocating \$30,000 of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the federal government for the purpose of stimulating the local economy, the city of Lafayette recently launched the Shop Local Lafayette eCard program. The program, which is in partnership with Yiftee, matches, dollar for dollar, purchases made at participating businesses.

For a limited time, when an eCard is purchased, an equal value bonus eCard is given to the purchaser. The original eCard never expires (but starts to decrease in value by \$3 per month after a year) and the bonus "Twice as Nice" eCard has an expiration date of 90 days. The cards are sold in increments of \$10, \$25, \$50 or \$100, with a limit of two bonus cards per person. That means that if a person buys two gift cards for \$100 each, they could get up to two free bonus cards from the city of \$100 each – doubling their spending power

from \$200 to \$400.

Since becoming a participating business in the Shop Local Lafayette program, Lamorinda Music owner Colleen McCormick says, "We've had at least one person so far and it went great. My husband John is with the Chamber of Commerce and he worked a lot on it with Thomas Myers [Lafayette's Economic Development Manager spearheading the program] and we hope the word spreads because it's a great program. It essentially doubles your money and it drives people to small businesses in Lafayette." John McCormick, her husband and co-owner of Lamorinda Music, added, "It's a win-win between merchants and the citizens of Lafayette and it is an excellent use of the ARPA funding because the money goes directly to small businesses in Lafayette."

Lafayette's Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson noted that shopping local not only supports local business owners but helps

the overall community, since a portion of the sales tax collected on purchases is used to pay for local needs like police, safety and road repairs.

According to MarketWatch.com, a 2018 study showed that U.S. consumers spend an average of \$59 more than the value of their gift card and a U.K. study showed that gift cards cause 34% of people to visit stores they normally would not have visited.

Kimberly Pinto, manager at Lafayette Park Bistro & Bar, said, "We just started taking [eCards] this week and we're excited for the program."

The program is free to participating businesses and according to information about the program on the Yiftee website, "The card recipient and merchant receive the full value for the card, providing maximum benefit to local businesses."

Information, a list of participating business, and a link to purchase the cards can be found at www.lovelafayette.com/eCard

<https://app.yiftee.com/gift-card/lafayette--ca>

Council discusses Lafayette's American Rescue Plan Act fund distribution

... continued from Page A2

Myers then prioritized in his presentation two additional recommendations: immediately reallocating \$350,000 from preciously allocated ARPA funds to General Fund Revenue Recovery and on April 1 making payment in that amount to the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for actions to assist in the recovery efforts for Lafayette's small business sector.

Other items included in the report included allocating \$56,500 to Lafayette Partners In Education to make more mental health services available to Lafayette students who attend public high schools in the Acalanes Union High School District that are outside the Lafayette city limits. Another action, framed by Myers as a "transfer," would shift \$100,000 from ARPA funds allocated for Business District marketing back to the General Fund. The funds would be used to hire an outside consultant to develop a comprehensive business marketing website to spur economic growth and recovery of the local business community.

A fourth recommendation suggested suspending the city's Business Assistant Program (BAP) due to the low volume of calls now that most of the state and federal funds have been dispersed. Myers said the city would remain in contact with Townsend Public Affairs, the company en-

gaged to support local businesses, while it wraps up its work with local businesses and until such time as new funding becomes available. The subcommittee recommended that \$22,500 of ARPA money that had been designated for BAP (if Townsend's oversight was to continue beyond March) be transferred to the "undesignated" category.

A final item requiring no money transfers or reallocations, but one that must receive formal approvals from the council to be fully enacted, was to initiate a one-year pilot program that extends current pandemic-related arrangements offered to downtown businesses. Under the existing agreement, the city allows restaurants to use on-street parking, private parking lots, and sidewalks for outdoor dining and retail sales as long as there is adequate space for pedestrian traffic. Additionally, sign and parking ordinances would continue to allow A-frames, banners, and the use of private lots for outdoor activities. The subcommittee recommended these policies be extended until March 31, 2023.

Asked about moving ARPA funds to the General Fund and the bookkeeping responsibilities that would then be taken on by the city (instead of by ARPA), Myers said reporting on how the funds are used would have to be done regardless and the greater flexibility offered by

the shift of money to the General Fund was worthwhile. Dawson emphasized that having the allocations within the General Fund would also streamline the process for sub-recipients to which funds are given when they are reporting back to the city.

In public comments, Lafayette resident Grace Dixon describe the city's approach to the distribution of funds as "humble and out-of-the-box," but encouraged the council to "take a hard look at the past and present history with parks." She said downtown families had been without a play park for years and suggested ARPA funds might seed small, walkable parks and recapture public land access for Lafayette residents. Other comments supported funding accessible parks and public paths that would make the city more welcoming and suggestions for improved signage for restaurants and other businesses that do not have frontage on the city's primary downtown streets.

Ending his presentation on a positive note, Myers said the gift card program launched last week that supports local businesses has been well-received and to date has used just slightly more than \$9,000 of the total \$30,000 allocation (see related story, Page A9).

The council unanimously approved the subcommittee's five recommended allocations of the ARPA funds.

Town approves funding for its businesses still struggling from COVID setbacks

... continued from Page A5

The town council rejected the \$5,000 request for funding a Gift Card Program. The concept was that for every \$20 spent in town, customers would receive a \$20 voucher that could be spent at a participating Moraga business. If and when the \$5,000 fund became depleted, the chamber would ask for a replenishment from the town. While Bidstrup reported that the concept was a hit in Lafayette and Concord, council mem-

bers voted 3-2 against the Gift Card Program (Mayor Renata Sos, Council Member Teresa Onoda and Council Member Sona Makker in favor of putting that \$5,000 in the hands of struggling retailers).

With regards to the Chamber's request for \$10,000 in funding to help boost its operational needs due to lack of membership participation resulting from business interruptions during COVID mandates, the town agreed to provide the full monetary request with

an additional \$10,000 in funding during July for any future needs.

In total, the town council gave staff direction of preliminary approval for up to \$187,000 in ARPA funds to support Moraga's business community. Final approval is expected during the next town council meeting on April 13. The Chamber, in the meantime, will continue to assess small business needs in order to report back any results or suggestions to the town council at a future date.

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

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Orinda grants student's wish: adopts Sustainable Orinda challenge

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council happily agreed to a request from a Miramonte student on March 15 to join Sustainable Contra Costa with a Sustainable Orinda Challenge. The cost to the city will be \$1,500. The matter came before the council after an appearance at an earlier city council meeting by Kaitlyn Roach, president of the Miramonte Climate Action Club. Roach, as well as Laura Wehrley of Sustainable Contra Costa, were on hand to answer questions.

Former Mayor Victoria Smith, unable to attend the meeting owing to a conflicting engagement, wrote the city council a letter, supporting the proposal. "While our neighbors in Lamorinda have long had Sustainable Moraga and Sustainable Lafayette," she wrote, "we have not, until now, had a grassroots organi-

zation in Orinda to focus on sustainability. As a member of the Contra Costa County Sustainability Commission, I have received inquiries from many Orinda residents about ways in which they could be involved in sustainability issues; I think Orinda's participation in this program would be a good way for residents to get involved."

The council was clearly delighted to have students involved in this issue and participating in local government. Mayor Dennis Fay commented that it was "so admirable on the part of our high school students. I hope that this will continue. I completely understand," he said, "why this is so important to young people: this is their planet."

Orinda resident Nick Waranoff, however, opposed the proposed project, suggesting instead that Orinda should partner with Caltrans for "Adopt a Highway," and

enlist Miramonte students to actually pick up trash, and use the money for supplies.

According to the staff report, the \$1,500 fee will be put toward creating a Landing Page on the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge (after the city provides a picture of the city and a tagline like "Let's get sustainable together"). In addition, the fee will allow Sustainable Contra Costa to help with outreach to different groups to educate on the platform like schools, youth commissions, eco clubs, churches and Rotary clubs. Sustainable Contra Costa gives reporting back to the city regarding results of carbon/gas/water/money savings and gives messaging that the city can post to social media or e-newsletters regarding sustainability actions. In addition, Sustainable Contra Costa can post messaging that the city wants them to announce to their audience.

A sunny Saturday greeted this year's Spring Festival and Egg Hunt

... continued from Page A1

Orinda sisters Josie (7-½) and Dulany (5) had an every-girl-for-herself outlook. Their mom explained that Dulany wasn't too thrilled about participating in the egg hunt, because she felt that her older sister would get more eggs. However, once it was their group's turn to hunt, Dulany was grabbing eggs from left and right like a human vacuum.

On a beautiful, sunny Saturday where masks were a thing of the very recent past, everyone had an egg-ceptionally good time.

The city of Orinda will hold its free Spring Egg Hunt, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Orinda, for toddlers to second-graders at 11 a.m. April 16 at Orinda Community Center Park.



Photo Vera Kochan

Service Clubs Announcements

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary

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

April 2022 Weekly Speakers

- 1: Club Assembly
- 8: Dr Lisa Feldman Barrett, How Emotions Are Made
- 15: Good Friday – No Meeting
- 22: Tony Kaufman, 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak On Cruise Ship
- 29: Paul Fillingner, Member Magazine

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Reserve your time. Registration required:
RecycleSmart.org/ICAW

This event is open to: Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga, and RecycleSmart residents only.

Saturday, May 7th, 8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. (registration required)
Event hosted in Lafayette. Register for event information.

~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Two local authors address grief and loss through the written word



Photo Yvonne Lefort

Mike Bernhardt signs copies of "Voices of a Grieving Heart" to be sent to poetry contributors.

By Diane Claytor

It's a universal emotion. No matter who you are, where you live, or what you do, you will experience grief at different times and in different ways. It's the natural response to loss — the loss of a loved one or pet, a relationship or job, financial stability or health.

These past two years, when everyone was dealing with the pandemic and fears of COVID, grief permeated our lives. Our routines changed drastically, we were isolated and scared, lonely and sad; we longed to hug a friend, see a smiling face not on a computer screen or covered by a mask.

We dealt with these feelings in different ways. Two Lamorindans — a retired IT network engineer and a now-12-year-old middle schooler — each processed their feelings of loss by writing and self-publishing a book, expressing their grief through the written word.

Moraga's Mike Bernhardt originally published "Voices of the Grieving Heart" in 1993, two years after his young wife unexpectedly died. At the time, Bernhardt was completely overwhelmed with emotion and began searching for books that expressed the feelings he was experiencing. "I wasn't looking for answers," he explains, "I was looking for honest experience and validation." He found none that spoke to him.

To deal with his grief, Bernhardt began writing poetry, a medium he found healing and meaningful. "There are no rules when writing poems," he says. "You simply write what pops into your head."

Finding no poetry books that addressed his feelings, Bernhardt decided to create the book he'd been searching for. He placed ads in various publications asking for submissions of poems dealing with the personal loss of loved ones. "I wasn't interested in literary prowess," he says, "but wanted contributors that were speaking from the heart."

He received hundreds of submissions, choosing 65 poems that moved him the most. As Bernhardt writes in the introduction, "Voices of the Grieving Heart" is a collection of poetry that shares the pain, growth, changes, healing and gifts that can come when people we love die."

Bernhardt began healing. He remarried and had a son. As the 30th anniversary of his first wife's death approached amid the pervasive grief surrounding COVID, Bernhardt's second wife encouraged him to republish "Voices of the Grieving Heart." "There's so much need for it," he remembers her saying. He again requested submissions, this time seeking poetry related to deaths during COVID and the isolation and

grief surrounding the pandemic. Several hundred poems arrived; nearly 80 were added to the second edition, published last year. One reader wrote, "Thank you for giving voice to such heartbreak, especially across the world at this time."

Five miles down the road, then-10-year-old Stella Ciarlantini was enjoying her best life. She loved school, had great friends, a boy she liked and had just landed a lead in the school musical. Then COVID hit, school went online and she felt her friends slipping away. "Contact and communications were so different," the outgoing, precocious Ciarlantini says. They gathered over ZOOM but "friendships slowly deteriorate when that's the only way to see each other. It was really hard," she continues.

Her whole world turned upside down. Admitting that she was upset and having a really hard time processing her emotions, Ciarlantini reached out to her fourth-grade teacher, with whom she had a special bond. "My teacher suggested I start writing about my feelings and my experience through this. I think she meant it as journaling," Ciarlantini recalls, "but I thought perhaps I could turn my writing into something more."

"The Story of Stella," was born. Rather than write a journal, which she says is written for the author, Ciarlantini elected to write a memoir, which, she explains, is written for the readers. "I knew I was struggling a lot," she reports. "I figured others were also. So many times, children's voices are not heard. I really thought this could help show other kids that they have a voice, they can express their thoughts and feelings because they matter just as much as anyone."

"I know the pandemic deeply affected so many. We didn't see people for two years of our childhood — that's a big chunk of time in a young person's life," Ciarlantini says. She hopes that some day her book, which she said was extremely healing for her, may serve as a "story in history."

"The Story of Stella" has been used as a read-aloud book in several elementary school classes and Ciarlantini did a reading and book signing at Lafayette's Bel and Bunna's Books. She is now a happy, vivacious sixth-grader working on another book - this one realistic fiction. She acknowledges that as difficult as the pandemic was for her, "I would not be who I am today if it weren't for the quarantine. I grew so much as a person. I felt grief and pain but also hope."

Both "Voices of the Grieving Heart" and "The Story of Stella" may be purchased on the authors' websites: mike-bernhardt.net and stellaciarlantini.org as well as on Ama-

zon; "Voices" may also be found at Reasonable Books in Lafayette and Orinda Books.



Photo Diane Claytor

Stella Ciarlantini, author of "The Story of Stella"



When I say "good," you say "neighbor."

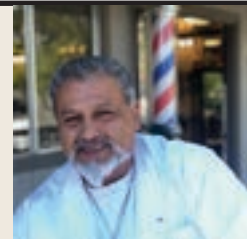
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Pickled onions and feta perfectly complement pulled lamb ragu



Pulled Lamb Ragu Flatbread

Photos Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

One Sunday last year, I was taking a stroll and came across a new restaurant near our house. After perusing the menu, I immediately ordered the pulled lamb sandwich that caught my eye. I'd never really had "pulled" lamb, although I've tried plenty of pulled pork and pulled chicken sandwiches – usually served barbecue style. Being a lamb lover, this was a hard one to resist. Rich and meaty, the flavor of this succulent and aromatic lamb was perfectly complemented by the pickled onions and feta cheese served with it! It was so good and I knew I'd have to figure out how to make it. The way I ended up slow-cooking the meat with jalapeños, shallots, garlic and seasoned with cumin, it turned out more like lamb ragu. In the end we just love it this way served over flat bread and topped with crumbled feta, toasted just until the cheese begins to brown and the sandwich is hot. Sometimes we spread the flat bread first with Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese before adding the meat. So delicious! The lamb slow cooks for out 5 hours, so you have plenty of time to enjoy the amazing aroma as it cooks until perfectly "fall off the bone" tender.

The nice thing about this dish is that you can prepare the

lamb and gravy ahead of time and freeze them either together or separately until you're ready to serve it. We like to make the sauce right when we shred the meat, but you can also save the braising liquid in the freezer and make the sauce at a later time. Any amount of work you can do ahead always makes it easier when you go to get dinner ready.

The lamb ragu is also delicious tossed with pappardelle for a hearty pasta dinner!



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

Pulled Lamb Ragu Flat Bread

(Serves 4)

INGREDIENTS

Lamb

- 3 lbs. lamb shoulder
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 large shallots, chopped
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 jalapeños, seeded and coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Sandwiches

- 4 pieces of naan or your favorite flat bread
- 1 round of Boursin Cheese (Garlic & Fine Herbs) - optional
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley or cilantro (for garnish)
- 1 bunch sunflower sprouts, optional (for garnish)

Ragu Gravy

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 2 tablespoons gravy flour (or sifted all-purpose flour)
- 2 cups cooking broth from lamb, skim fat off the top (or whatever you have left of the braising liquid)
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup red wine

DIRECTIONS

Lamb Ragu

Preheat oven to 285 F. Spray the bottom of a casserole dish that will hold three lamb shoulder chops laying flat with cooking spray. Evenly distribute shallots, garlic and jalapeños over the bottom of the dish.

Season lamb shoulder chops on both sides with salt, pepper, and cumin. Place them directly on top of the veggies in the casserole dish. Fill the dish with water just to cover the lamb. Wrap the dish tightly with foil.

Bake in preheated oven for 5 hours, or until the meat is done and falls off the bone. Remove from oven and cool completely. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight until the fat has congealed.

Once completely cold, remove the lamb from the refrigerator and skim off as much of the fat as possible. Transfer the lamb chops from casserole dish to a cutting board. Reserve the braising broth/liquid/gel.

Using two forks, shred the lamb and discard any bones and any extra congealed fat that is leftover. The meat can be prepared to this point and frozen or refrigerated for several days ahead of time.

Meanwhile, make the gravy.

Ragu Gravy

Heat oil in frying pan. Add shallots along with the herbs and spices and cook until the shallots are translucent and the herbs are fragrant, about 5-10 minutes over medium-low heat.

Slowly whisk in the flour and brown with the veggies for a few minutes, whisking all the while. Whisk in the reserved braising liquid along with any remaining veggies that are in the broth, and the red wine. Whisk well and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 5 minutes until slightly thickened. Add shredded lamb. Or, if you are making this ahead of time, cool completely and freeze or refrigerate until ready to use and then add the shredded lamb.

Assemble Sandwiches

Lay the flat bread out on a baking sheet. Spread the Boursin cheese over just the top side of the bread. Spoon the lamb ragu over the Boursin and top with the crumbled feta. Bake in a 400 F oven for about 8 minutes, or just until the cheese starts to brown and the lamb is heated through.

Serve with a garnish of minced parsley and/or sunflower sprouts.



Making the most of your college visits

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

As COVID protocols ease it is a great time to plan college tours. Campus tours are critical to the application process — this is the place where you will be spending a significant amount of your time for the next four years and there is no better way to get a 'feel' for the campus and surrounding area than an in-person visit. **Here are some tips:**

If you're a junior in high school and planning to apply this fall, make sure to schedule time to visit the admission's office. Email your regional admissions officer to let them know that you will be planning a visit and would like to introduce yourself. I would discourage a junior student from setting up an interview. If this is your first visit to campus I suggest you enjoy the tour free of the stress of an interview. How-

ever, if an on-campus interview is strongly encouraged, as it is at Washington University St. Louis, for example, then I would encourage a junior to prepare with their college advisor and take the opportunity. Otherwise, students should concentrate on digesting what they learn and processing how they feel about the college as the first priority. If the college makes it to your application list, and interviews are available, go for it then and prepare over summer or in the fall.

Think geographically when you plan — you can often visit multiple schools in one week or even a long weekend that are located close together. For example, in Colorado you can visit University of Colorado Boulder, University of Denver, Colorado College, Colorado School of Mines and Colorado State U Fort Collins.

Are there professors or

courses you are especially interested in? Reach out to see if you can sit in on a lecture. The same goes for extracurricular activities; perhaps there is a show or a game to watch or a concert to hear. And this has the added benefit of meeting other students who attend the school.

Explore the community around campus, have a coffee in town and people watch, especially if students tend to live off-campus at this college.

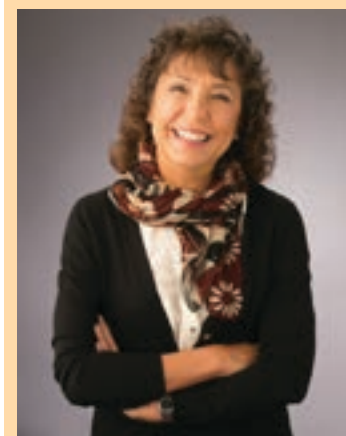
Even if you think you know what type of school you want, visit a school that is completely different. Looking at mainly large research universities? Visit a smaller liberal arts college. I have seen many students change their perspective when they do this.

Take notes on what you see, whom you meet and what you talk about while you're on campus—several months later, you are not going to remember the specifics, like the

name of that interesting professor that your tour guide mentioned, or the surprisingly good meal you enjoyed in the cafeteria.

Take photos and separate them into a college album to help you remember details of your visit.

School visits allow you to experience a campus firsthand rather than just remotely. And visits can help you distinguish yourself as an applicant by giving you the experience (and thus the content) necessary to help you write a truly unique "Why Our College?" essay. These are often the most important essays that will help you show why you and the college are a perfect fit. My college essay workshops each summer provide sample prompts and it is an eye opener to see how specific each college wants you to be about your reasons for applying.



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; Visit www.doingcollege.com; or Call: 925.385.0562.

Moraga resident wins Best Screenplay in film festival competition



Sandy Fox-Sohner

Photo provided

Moraga resident Sandy Fox-Sohner was named winner of the screenplay competition this month at the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival. Her script, "The Professor," tells the inspiring true story of Sofia Kovalevsky, a self-taught mathematician who dreamt of teaching mathematics at a university when universities did not allow women. In the late 1800s, she devised a daring escape from her homeland in Russia to make her mark in the West. She became the first female professor in Europe in this uplifting story of freedom and perseverance.

Fox-Sohner learned of this story while teaching high school mathemat-

ics. Some of the girls still had the impression that math is difficult for them because of their gender. In response, she lectured on famous women mathematicians, and the story of Kovalevsky inspired her and her students. The screenplay celebrates a brave woman who fought for equality and ultimately opened doors in education for other women to follow. It also celebrates those men, who, in the 19th century, made decisions based on merit, not gender or ethnicity, often risking their own careers to ensure justice and fairness prevailed.

A resident of Moraga for 37 years, Fox-Sohner is active in American Association of University Women -

Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette. She works on the organization's Tech Trek program, the science and math camp for middle school girls, and the annual AAUW-OML STEM Conference at Saint Mary's College. Dr. Kristen Beck, former mathematics professor at Saint Mary's, was involved in the organization of the STEM conference and provided accurate mathematical formulas for the screenplay.

Maria Sigrist, co-author, is a director in Switzerland. A co-producer in Germany is also attached to this project. A few additional producing partners are needed before filming can begin.

– J. Wake

Submit stories or story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Coffee, crisis & community collaboration at Papillon in Lafayette



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

Jim Straw, Lauren Michelle Stevens, Papillon owner Betty Chuluun and Emilee Shoebottom worked together to help a patron on March 23 at Papillon in Lafayette.

By Sharon K. Sobotta

Laughter, voices and stories lingered inside the bustling Papillon café in Lafayette on March 23 as clusters of friends, colleagues and community members had their morning coffee.

Lauren Michelle Stevens, a minister at the Lafayette United Methodist Church, chatted away with Jim Straw and a few other people from church when something abruptly changed. Julia, who has requested that we not use her full name, stopped responding. “She’s usually pretty talkative, so I knew something wasn’t right,” Stevens says. “We sent someone to get water for her and then she stopped moving.” Stevens called 911 and stayed on the phone for eight long minutes, while a number of Papillon patrons stepped in along with a few others from neighboring Tutu’s.

Stevens is just getting back to the pre-COVID weekly ritual of a drop-in morning coffee with congregants. She and the others were chatting when Julia mentioned being dizzy. “She put her head

down and we kept an eye on her and her husband went to get her a glass of water,” Stevens says. “We thought maybe she’d had too much coffee or that maybe she should consult with her doctor, but nothing seemed urgent until she stopped moving, stopped responding and seemed to stop breathing (for a few seconds).” Stevens answered questions for the 911 dispatcher, at various times searching for a pulse and saying Julia’s name.

Meanwhile, Lafayette City Manager Niroop Srivatsa, who was enjoying a beverage outside when this happened, rushed to neighboring Tutu’s in search of a doctor. Srivatsa didn’t find one, but her efforts weren’t lost. When Tutu’s patron Emilee Shoebottom, who previously worked at a hospital in England and has been trained in CPR, caught wind of what happened, she left her friends behind and rushed over to lend a hand. By then, about six minutes had passed and Julia became responsive again. Shoebottom crouched down in front of Julia and stayed there and talked to her

until EMS arrived.

Shoebottom says she was happy to delay her breakfast to help a community member. “I think if you’ve had any training or worked in a hospital and something goes wrong, you should do something,” Shoebottom says.

Straw paced back and forth between the table where the medical emergency was happening and the doorway of Papillon as he kept an eye out for the EMS team. “This is just a come as you are drop-in coffee hour,” Straw says. “I came today because I was really looking forward to a relaxing morning. Since the pandemic a lot of us are excited to get out and congregate again and find a sense of community.”

As Straw kept a watchful eye in each direction while waiting for the ambulance to arrive, Betty Chuluun, owner of Papillon, cleared the path between the door and the tables and also watched with concern. “I was so scared. Her face was turning gray. My heart felt like it stopped,” Chuluun recalls. “When she started breathing again, I got more relaxed. I’m glad that

she got help and I hope she gets better soon.”

On top of being relieved to see her customer get the medical support she needed, Chuluun was in awe of Papillon patrons. “I’m so glad that we have such great customers that care so much about each other.”

As Julia’s husband gathered his things and prepared to meet his wife at the hospital, he was also hopeful about her recovery and counting his blessings for the Good Samaritans who stepped in to help. “It’s much better that we were here when this happened than at home by ourselves,” Julia’s husband says. “We had lots of good people supporting us.”

Stevens reported that Julia received medical treatment and is doing much better. The incident did, however, teach Stevens some things about emergency preparedness that she’ll be following up on with business owners on Lafayette Circle. “The 911 dispatcher asked me to have a defibrillator close by just in case we needed it because although she was breathing and had a pulse, she was unresponsive. It

seemed unclear if any of the businesses in that center have one,” Stevens says. “Jim (Straw) would’ve grabbed one from the church if necessary. But, it’s on my list now to follow up (with businesses about that).”

Regarding the coffee hour that turned out to be way less relaxing than Stevens or the others imagined it to be, Stevens says she’s glad they were together. “I do think that if there’s an upside to this, it’s that she was around so many people who cared about her (even if they didn’t know her) who were willing to help.”

After the Papillon patron was taken to the hospital by ambulance, several others deliberated over whether to call 911 or the local fire department during an emergency in Lafayette. Srivatsa confirmed that when in Lafayette, the number to call for an emergency is always 911, regardless if the caller is using a cell phone or a landline. As for the way in which people came together to help the distressed Papillon patron, Srivatsa says she’s not surprised at all: “I’m impressed,” she says. “That’s Lafayette.”

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Scouts at work



Photo provided

Submitted by Rob Jacobus

Local Boy and Girl Scouts joined together on March 18, finishing up work on March 19 to make repairs to the old school bus stop in Orinda at the corner of Spring and Brookwood roads.

Community Service: We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda’s dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include “Celebrations and Remembrances” in the subject line.

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Moraga man embarks on sixth marathon to benefit Joslin Diabetes Center



Allie and Matt Curran

Photo provided

Submitted by Julia Demopoulos

In his early 20s, Matt Curran set a goal to one day complete six marathons. Now, in his late 40s, the Moraga resident is about to reach that goal and run his final marathon on April 18. Curran is running the Boston Marathon as a member of Team Joslin in support of Joslin Diabetes Center, a world-renowned diabetes research and treatment facility in Boston, Mass., which holds a special place in his family's hearts.

Curran's 12-year-old daughter Allie has type 1 diabetes (T1D) and was diagnosed when she was just 3 and a half years old after her preschool teachers noticed her symptoms. Curran and his wife, Sarah, were not familiar with diabetes at all. It wasn't until they looked deeper into their family history that they discovered Sarah's great uncle had passed away from T1D at a very young age.

The Curran family was familiar with Joslin's work and are friends with a runner who has run with Joslin in the past. Curran has also done work with other diabetes organizations. He sits on the board for Diabetes Youth Families, which provides educational and recreational programs for people in the Type 1 community.

Despite growing up in Vermont, with parents raised in Framingham, Mass., Curran has always had a connection to Boston and loved watching the Marathon. He wanted to run it himself one day and decided that there was no better time than now. His sister Kelly passed away last year and she would always encourage him to run it. "I thought, why wait?" Curran said.

Curran has been enjoying the fundraising aspect and thinks of it as a nice motivator to get up every day and continue his training. In running this marathon, there are a few

goals that Curran hopes to accomplish: He wants to better understand Joslin and the work they do in hopes of deepening his connection to them; he'd like to dive deeper into the research side of T1D and see what they're doing to work toward a cure; and he is also hoping the experience will bring his family closer together. Curran has extended family in Massachusetts and throughout the Northeast that will be cheering him on. "I'm really looking forward to getting together with them before the marathon so we can all share stories," Curran said.

Living with and managing Type 1 Diabetes is not easy, but the Curran family hopes to continue to educate people about it. "We are very grateful for Joslin's support and know their efforts have helped Allie have the freedom and independence that was not available to others decades ago," Curran said.

For more information or to support Curran and Team Joslin, visit the link below: <https://www.givengain.com/ap/matt-curran-raising-funds-for-joslin-diabetes-center/> For more information about Joslin Diabetes Center, visit www.joslin.org

In Memory

Harrold Jones Rust Jr.

Dec. 14, 1929 – Jan. 8, 2022



Following a week surrounded by hymns and prayers from his family, Harrold Jones Rust, Jr., passed away peacefully at home in Moraga and into the Lord's embrace on Jan. 8. Harrold, known as "Rusty" by all who knew him well, was born in Saginaw, Michigan to Harrold Jones Rust Sr. and Edna Needham Rust, Dec. 14, 1929.

By the time he was school age they had moved to Jackson, Michigan where he encountered many good friends and neighbors. His best friend was a neighbor named Bill McConkie. Bill and Rusty had many adventures together like building forts or motorizing a go-cart (when Bill's father wasn't using the motor to mow the lawn). Holidays were usually spent with the families of his mother's four sisters. Those wonderful memories would lay the groundwork for his devotion to his own family in later years. One of the highlights of his childhood was attending YMCA camp at Torch Lake in Northern Michigan. He liked it so much he returned as a counselor for several summers. Among other activities he taught sailing, which down the road he was to repeat with his own sons on Lake Tahoe.

After graduating from Jackson High School, Rusty faced a pretty significant decision. When he was settling in at the University of Michigan, he received news that he was offered an appointment to Annapolis. U-of-M won his heart. He pledged Psi Upsilon where he would develop lifelong friends. Besides the usual antics of frat boys ... and he was president twice so he often had to answer for those antics ... they developed an attractive "date bait": They were able to flood the backyard of their frat house in winter. It then froze and became a skating rink with which to entertain their girlfriends.

Graduating in 1952 with a mechanical engineering degree, he attended Officer candidate training school in Newport Rhode Island and two years in the Navy followed. That was during the Korean War and his assignment was to a manufacturing plant near Philadelphia where they designed and made elevators to lift aircraft on a carrier to the deck as well as nets to catch aircraft as they landed. Following the Navy, Rusty returned home, but not for long. He opened a new office for Acme Industries, selling air conditioning systems, and moved to San Francisco. That's where he met his wife Diane one evening, when with his good friend Bill and his new bride, he visited Diane's roommates. They married Feb. 20, 1960 and moved to Moraga in 1964. Their marriage lasted just short of 62 years until Rusty passed.

For Rusty, family was everything – each member deeply loved. Diane and he had two boys, Harrold III and Bill, 2½ years apart. As a dad, he devoted a great deal of time to raising those boys. When they were learning math, he made flash cards; when they were in Cub Scouts he helped them make the fastest cars for the Pinewood Derby; when he was a plant manager for The Rucker Company he took them to the plant and let them ride forklifts. It's no wonder both boys earned mechanical engineering degrees. For summer vacations he found some newly built lakeside condos on the north shore of Lake Tahoe near Kings Beach. His family – grown to 10 now including two precious daughters-in-law (Margaret and Kayo) and six treasured grandchildren (Megan, Spencer, Ashton, Hana, Noah and Elliot) – continue to return there each summer for fun (and sailing) in the sun. That's been over 55 years now. He will be sorely missed this summer. He and Diane were stalwart season ticket holders of Stanford Cardinal football. He was also a faithful sports fan for all his grandchildren, attending countless events over the years.

If you wish to attend his Celebration of Life it will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 9 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian, 10 Valley Lane, Moraga. If you desire to remember Rusty with a donation in his memory we suggest: Samaritan's Purse/Ukraine relief, PO box 3000, Boone, NC 28607-3000

In Memory

Barbara June (Rivers) Novogradac



Mother, wife, friend, real estate entrepreneur, financial executive, and longtime Orinda resident Barbara June (Rivers) Novogradac, 61, passed away on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, after a formidable battle with cancer.

Barbara had an inexhaustible zest for life, typified by a skydiving adventure with her son John just last summer in Truckee, California. She was game for any adventure, whether it was a spontaneous trip to New York City with her daughter, Ellie, to see a Broadway musical, or exploring London and Normandy with her son, C.J. Barbara's interests were full-spectrum—she was a knitter, pianist, scrapbooker, sewist, cyclist, chicken wrangler, car enthusiast, philanthropist, investor—and she loved to laugh. Barbara enjoyed walks with her husband and dogs, Patches and Pebbles, visiting friends, watching her children play sports, skiing, and traveling the world with her family. By 2013, she had visited all seven continents—including Antarctica.

Born in Portland, Oregon, Barbara attended high school in Dallas, Oregon, where she was Student Body President. Barbara graduated from UC Berkeley in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science in Business, with a focus on accounting, and began a public accounting career at Arthur Andersen & Co. In 1990, Barbara joined Robert Half International where she rose to the position of Senior Vice President and Controller. Barbara retired from Robert Half in 2001 to form a real estate investment firm, Novogradac Investment Company, and was elected to the Robert Half Board of Directors in 2009. At Robert Half, she mentored many staff and managers in their careers, coaching them to do their best work for both the company and for themselves.

Barbara was a diligent student in college and her determination to succeed led her to an economics tutor, Michael Joseph Novogradac who would, years later, become her lifelong partner and husband. Barbara and Michael married in 1994 and celebrated their 27th anniversary last September. The pride of Barbara's life were her three children, C.J., John, and Ellie.

Barbara never put herself first—she always took pleasure in caring for others, her family, friends, and those yet to become her friends. She enjoyed a lifelong relationship with a childhood friend and formed her cherished "Six Pack" with five other women with whom she shared many dinners, weekend vacations, and other adventures together—including group trips to visit their children in college.

An enthusiastic class-parent volunteer, Barbara was active in Boy Scouts (Orinda Troop 237), Girls Scouts, and the local chapter of the National Charity League, and many other charitable organizations. She inspired many co-workers and others to join her on the Waves to Wine bike ride, raising thousands of dollars to support the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. She cared greatly about her community and spent time making lunches and knitting blankets for homeless shelters.

Barbara's family and friends will continue to love her deeply and she will be missed enormously. Barbara is survived by her husband Michael, and their three children, Charles Jackson, John Ross Jure, and Elizabeth June, and by her stepson, Michael Joseph (Kat) Novogradac. She also leaves behind her mother Lois Roth, brother Tim (Nancy) Rivers, and uncle Bill (Doris) Reynolds. She was preceded in death by her father James Rivers, stepfather Gary Roth, and first husband Bruce Forsberg.

A celebration of Barbara's life and legacy is planned for late June in Northern California. Inquiries may be sent to novogradac@msn.com.

Condolences may be mailed to Michael Novogradac, 244 Glorietta Blvd., Orinda, CA 94563.

Remembrances may be sent in memory of Barbara to the MikeRoweWORKS Foundation, 1207 4th Street, PH1, Santa Monica, CA 90401 or at <https://www.mikeroweworks.org/donate/>.

◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆

ART

Lamorinda Arts Alliance is pleased to announce its member show "Wellness & Wellbeing" at the John Muir Health Auxiliary Gallery at John Muir Health, Aspen Center, Walnut Creek, April 11 – May 19. Soak in the power of healing through art at the Lamorinda Arts Alliance exhibit. Wellness and wellbeing are reflected in the artwork, creating an ambiance of healing which is important to the patients, their families and friends, staff, volunteers, and healthcare practitioners. The show features 22 artists and 36 original artworks in pastels, oils, acrylics, watercolors, etchings, photography, mixed media, and collage.

"Natural Abundance" Blooms at Moraga Art Gallery's new show April 13 through June 19 featuring floral and scenic oil paintings by member artist Jill Landau and a collection of works by Bay Area printmaker Donna Brown, who specializes in capturing joyous moments in time, as when colorful birds congregate on the tree outside her window. The public is invited to view the art, meet the artists, enjoy light refreshments, hear live music, and mingle with other art lovers at a free reception on Saturday, April 23 from 5 to 7 p.m. The gallery, open from noon until 5 p.m. from Wednesday to Sunday, is located at 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. For more informa-

tion, visit www.moragaartgallery.com or call 925-376-5407

New show at Valley Art Gallery: Talking Pictures March 19 - May 7. Talking Pictures, our latest edition, is sure to extend our over 70-plus-year tradition of presenting the best of the best East Bay artists — a record we're quite proud of. So please, drop by the gallery and have a listen. 1661 Botelho Dr, Ste 110, Walnut Creek, www.valleyartgallery.org.

The Lamorinda Arts alliance is pleased to invite members to submit their entry for the "Celebrating Summer" show at the Lindsay Dirckx Brown Gallery. The Exhibit Dates: Thursday, June 2 to Wednesday, June 29. The Entry Period: Friday, April 1 to Friday, April 15. Reception: Saturday, June 4 from 4 to 6 p.m. Registration Fee is \$20 for LAA members <http://LAA4Art.org>

MUSIC

The acclaimed Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble presents Sacred Baroque, featuring Pergolesi's masterwork Stabat Mater and other choral treasures on Sunday, April 3 at 4 p.m. at St. Perpetua Catholic Church, 3454 Hamlin Road in Lafayette and on Saturday, April 9 at 8 p.m. at St. Mary Magdalen Church 2005 Berryman Street, in Berkeley. Voci will be joined by Jubilate Baroque Orchestra and

soloists Elysha Massatt and Lisa Sanders. The program also includes treasures from Archedelt, Hasse, Legrenzi, Palestrina and Porpora. Tickets: \$15-\$30 at VociSings.org

LITERATURE

It's back! The giant spring book sale sponsored by the Friends of Moraga Library will be held on Saturday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Moraga Library (1500 St. Mary's Road). Books, CDs and DVDs in every category will be sold at prices ranging from 25 cents to \$3. Beginning at 1 p.m., a bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with all the books it can hold. Proceeds from the sale are used to fund library materials and programs. See you there!

THEATER

Town Hall Theatre Lafayette announces the second in their "new voices" series- "amé monos // let us love each other" by Linda Maria Girón April 1, 2 & 8, 9 at 8 p.m. TICKETS: \$25. April 9 is a Pay-What-You'd-Like performance.

Happy Valley Elementary is proud to welcome back its annual musical! This year, fourth- and fifth-graders will perform "Cats the Musical." Performances are Wednesday, March 30 at 7 p.m.; Thursday, March 31 at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. All shows are at the Acalanes High

School Performing Arts Center. Cost is \$15 for adults; \$10 for students/children - general admission seating. Link to purchase tickets: <https://hvpc.membershiptoolkit.com/form/m/178536>

The Orinda Starlight Village Players will be holding auditions, by appointment only (email info@orsvp.org), for OrSVP's season April 3 and 5. Actors will be asked to read from scripts. Prepared monologues will not be required. As of now, masks and proof of vaccination will be required. OrSVP, willing to train, is also actively searching for volunteers interested in stage managing, running lights and sound for performances. The first production of the season will be Agatha Christie's "Towards Zero," directed by Beth Hooper. Performances are set for June 3 through July 2, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:30 p.m.; Thursday, June 30 at 8 p.m.; and a Sunday matinee June 26 at 4 p.m. Rehearsals start in April. For information, visit www.orsvp.org, email info@orsvp.org or call (925) 528-9225.

The Performing Arts Department of Saint Mary's College presents the Saint Mary's College Dance Company annual spring dance concert "In the Slipstream." Being in the slipstream refers to the "turbulence behind a moving object that pulls us along." The concert features Modern/Contemporary Dance, Tap, West African, Dance

Theatre, Asian Dance and Ballet Folklorico. The evening culminates with a tribute to our graduating seniors called "Reposar la Juventud en la Victoria (Standing in Your Victory)." Thursday, May 5, 8 p.m.; Friday, May 6, 8 p.m.; Saturday, May 7, 2 p.m. (also live-streamed) Saturday, May 7, 8 p.m. LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. For more information, contact Tara Sundy, Performing Arts Department Coordinator & Events Manager at (925) 631-4670 or tms8@stmarys-ca.edu.

OTHER

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

Appreciating Diversity Film Series presents "Coded Bias" a diversity film series documentary on Thursday, March 24, from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., on Zoom from your own home. As programmed by primarily white, male computer scientists, artificial intelligence technology has been embedded with the bias of its programmers. Cost: FREE; rsvp and get free link to Q & A post film discussion at website <http://diversityfilmseries.org> For more info see <http://diversityfilmseries.org> or call 510-599-9227 or email jlchang1951@gmail.com.

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Bigger & Better for 2022! Full day outdoor multi-sport camp + giant inflatable slide and obstacle course! New batting cage & pitching machine too. Great coaches that bring the FUN! Lunch included. Full week & single day options.

www.bayareaballplayers.com
bayareaballplayers@gmail.com

Berkeley Rep (Berkeley)

Berkeley Rep is back in-person with our most popular summer programs! Create your own play, musical, or film, learn from award-winning professionals, and become fully immersed in the world of theatre regardless of experience level. The only requirement is a mind open to imagination, collaboration, and lots of fun!
www.berkeleyrep.org/school

Camp Commons (Moraga)

see ad

Camp Commons is a new afternoon program designed to engage the minds, bodies, and spirits of campers ages 5-10 around a central weekly theme. Mon. - Thurs. 12pm-5pm. Location: Moraga Commons Park
Dates: Jun 13-17, Jun 20-24, Jun 27 - Jul 1, Jul 11-15, Jul 18-22, Jul 25-29
(925) 888-7045, www.moragarec.com

Code Wizards (online)

see ad

Live, online coding classes for Scratch, Python, and Java. Code websites, games, and apps in every class. Or choose our 1-week Minecraft camp for ages 11-18. Small group classes with parent progress reports and course certification. The most fun and effective coding classes for kids, learn to code this summer!

www.codewizardshq.com/summer
1-800-213-2417

Community Center Spring Classes & Summer Camps (Lafayette)

Art, soccer, cooking, dance, science, engineering, LEGOs, tennis, robotics, basketball, carpentry, singing, chess and more! Registration open. Dates: various dates and times available.

Phone: (925) 284-2232
www.LafayetteRec.org

Cougar Youth Football Camp (Moraga)

see ad

The Cougar Youth Football Camp directed by Head Coach Kevin Macy for grades 4-8 is held at Campolindo High School July 11-15 & July 18-22. Cost is \$500 with all equipment including T-shirt supplied. Registration forms online.

Register at www.cougarcamps.com

DONS Youth Football Academy (Lafayette)

see ad

The Dons Summer Football Academy, run by current Acalanes coaches, will teach fundamentals, develop skills, and help kids with the transition to tackle football in a fun, fast-paced, non-padded and non-contact environment. Both skilled position players and linemen from 4th to 8th grade should attend. Cost is \$200. July 18th-21st 3p.m. - 5 p.m.
www.acalanesdonsfootball.com, email: acalanesblue@gmail.com

Eclipse Soccer

Summer Soccer Camps - Eclipse Soccer Club will be hosting half-day soccer camps this summer in the Lamorinda area. The camps will mix a variety of individual technical skill building activities with lots of fun games to test the newly improved skills of the players.
For more information, visit www.eastbayeclipse.com.

Firecracker Math (Lafayette)

Summer MATH Camp in Lafayette for kids ages 6-16. We offer both half-day and full-day options (with fun activities in the afternoon). Monthly online open houses.
For more information and to sign up visit www.firecrackermath.org, info@firecrackermath.org or call (510) 488-4556.

Lady Mats Girls Basketball Camp (Orinda)

The Lady Mats camp will focus on teaching basketball skills and fundamentals. The camp will have sessions in August for 3rd to 5th grades and 6-8th grades. All camps will be run at Miramonte HS by the Miramonte coaching staff and current and former players.
Dates: 7/25 - 7/29 and 8/1 - 8/5.
vwirthman@hotmail.com Phone: (510) 504-5683

Lamorinda Lacrosse (Orinda)

see ad

Summer Day Camp Co-Ed 8U-14U held at the Wilder fields in Orinda. Full gear is required, and the cost is \$425. Register online.
Dates: July 11-July 15
Time: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

<https://lamorindalacrosse.leagueapps.com/>

LMYA Swim

see ad on page C1

LMYA swim team is a competitive, recreational summer swim team that offers dedicated coaching and technique instructions to swimmers of all ages and skill levels.

Registration is open at www.lmyaswim.com

CAMPS 2022

Half Day CAMPS

Lorne Smith's Super Summer Evening LAX Camp (Lafayette) see ad

A unique lacrosse experience learning new skills and playing fun no contact games. Each session will be made up of practicing stick skills, learning some new team concepts, fun competitions, and organized free play for grades 1st to 6th at Acalanes high school stadium field. June 6 -15. MW 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

www.lornesmithlacrosse.com

MVPC Vacation Bible School (Moraga)

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church is offering a week- long camp June 6-10 from 9 a.m. to noon. Dust off your boots, saddle up your steed, and gallop on over to Saddle Ridge Ranch where we'll be roundin' up some of the tough questions kids have about faith and drivin' home the answers straight from God's Word. Dates: June 6-10, 2022, Time: 9am to Noon
Register by May 15 www.mvpc.today.org

Nature Camp (Orinda)

Ages 6-12. Have fun exploring creeks and ponds, meadows and woods and discovering the oldest ranch in Orinda, the Wagner Ranch Nature Area. Also enjoy hikes, climbs, games, and crafts. This is a fully outdoor, unplugged and in-nature experience! Half-day and full-day options. Counselors-In-Training for grades 8-9.
www.fwrna.org contact Brad: FWRNATreasurer@gmail.com, (925) 348-6707

Randy Bennett Day Camps (Moraga)

The Randy Bennett Day Camps held at Saint Mary's College in University Credit Union Pavilion are a great way for boys and girls grades K-8th to receive top-class instruction on every aspect of the game, led by Coach Bennett and his staff. Morning, afternoon and full day options available. Day Camps in June 13-17, 20-24, 27-July 1 / July 11-15 (K-6)

www.smcmensbasketballcamps.com/

Sherman Swim School (Lafayette)

Sherman Swim School is a family business which has taught swimming to over 40,000 students and has produced numerous diving champions since 1961. Our springboard diving program runs year-round offering lessons and team. Diving information is available online at shermanswim.com where you may download a diving lesson request form.

SMC Soccer Camp (Moraga)

A variety of soccer camps tailored for all ages and abilities! We offer half-day and full-day Youth Camps and Elite ID Camps. Head Coach Theresa Romagnolo hand selects and trains her staff, composed of top-level coaches and collegiate players. All instructors have been chosen for their extensive knowledge of the game and their enthusiasm to work with young athletes.

Register at www.smcwomenssoccercamps.com

Spanish Immersion Summer Camps (Lafayette) see ad

Learn or improve Spanish language skills at Viva el Español through games, music, arts and crafts, science projects and cooking. During each weeklong camp students learn vocabulary related to a specific kid-friendly theme such as Adventures at the Reservoir or Rainforest Expedition. Full day, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.
Before/after-care available. Half-day options also available.
(925) 962-9177 www.vivaelespanol.org

Town Hall Theatre (Lafayette) see ad

Town Hall Education is holding Summer Camps running May-August! With six different sessions for PreK- 1st graders, 2nd-5th graders, and Middle School-High School. Join us for single or multi-week camps, get up to 20% off with our summer sibling discount or multi-class discount! Tuition assistance is available. Come have fun and shine this summer at Town Hall Theatre!
www.townhalltheatre.com/summer-2022

Did we miss your favorite camp? On May 11 we will include a final summer camp list. Reach 60,000+ in Lamorinda and advertise with us. Call (925) 377-0977 or email wendy@lamorindaweekly.com.



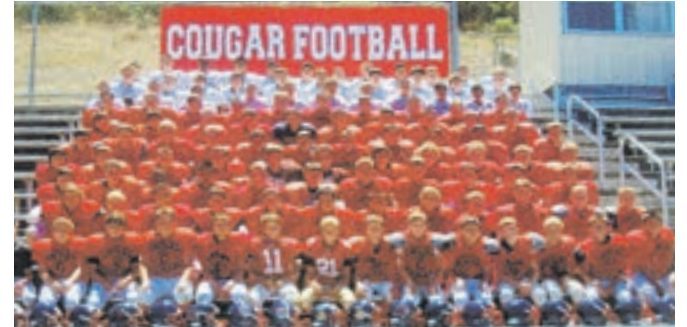
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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Sophia Kosturos – An athlete whose goal is to treat athletes



Photos UCLA athletics

By Jon Kingdon

Going back to the 1960 Olympics when a 13-year-old from Lafayette, Donna de Varona, swam in Rome, there have been numerous women from Lamorinda who have found great success in the pool in swimming, diving, water polo and synchronized swim.

Continuing that tradition at UCLA is junior Sophia Kosturos – a graduate of Miramonte High School. At the Pacific XII conference swimming tournament, Kosturos swam in three individual (50 free, 100 free, 100 back) and four relay races (back stroke in the 200 and 400 medleys and 200 and 400 free style) amassing a personal best 48 points for the Bruins. “That was the most points I ever scored, and it was the first time I had made

it into the final eight in a race,” Kosturos said.

Kosturos, whose goal has been to advance to the NCAA championship, missed by one spot as a freshman and this year came agonizingly close to moving on in her best event, the 100 backstroke. “It was a bummer that my event had so many top competitors in it,” Kosturos said. “I missed it by 3/100’s of a second which was so small, it was very frustrating. The cutoff to make it to the NCAA was at 40 and I finished in 41st.”

Like so many growing up in Lamorinda, Kosturos began swimming at the age of 6 with rec swimming, in her case at the Orinda Country Club which she participated in through the eighth grade. “It was a lot of fun training with people that would become my best friends, spending the whole summers with them,” Kosturos said. “It sparked my love for the sport and allowed me to make friends who remain my friends to this day. I first became friends with Katrina Drake and Giorgio Alessandria when we were young and now we’re attending UCLA where I am swimming, and Katrina plays for the women’s water polo team and Giorgio plays for the men’s water polo team.”

After her time at the Orinda Country Club, Kosturos went on to swim with Orinda Aquatics and then with the Crow Canyon Country Club along with swimming at Miramonte. Despite no longer

swimming for OCC, Kosturos served as a swim coach there every year through high school: “I attribute much of my success in the pool to my OCC Coach Steve Haufler. He taught me how to be the swimmer I am today.”

Kosturos still holds the California high school record in the 100-yard backstroke set in 2019 and now has two school records at UCLA in the 200 and 400 medley relays.

Kosturos, who describes herself as a sprinter, specializing in the events up to 100 yards, has shown a lot of improvement, dropping half of a second in the 50 free event. “That may not seem a lot but in the 50 free it’s a lot,” Kosturos said. “I’m hoping for the NCAA to make the 100 individual medley an event which was particularly big at the OMPA and is why I’m so good at it and why I love it so much. It’s just a full-on sprint.”

She attributed her overall improvement at UCLA to the weightlifting program that the team does multiple times a week, something that is not recommended for high school swimmers as their bodies are still developing. “It has helped me a lot as I have gotten so much stronger, mostly in my arms along with improving my technique,” Kosturos said.

A psycho-biology major, Kosturos was a CSCAA Scholar All-American First team in 2020-21 and is planning on a career in sports medicine. Whether she decides on going



to medical school or physician’s assistant school, Kosturos plans on working with athletes. “I’m really interested in treating injuries having suffered injuries that I have had to deal with and going to rehab every week for preventive and rehab treatment,” Kosturos said.

Her appreciation for the proper treatment of athletes goes back to her time at Miramonte when she was treated by the Matadors’ trainer, John Grigsby. “I had a bad ankle during my club season, and he helped me a lot. He is a great athletic trainer and a great guy.”

Kosturos and her family have been something of an institution in Lamorinda and Miramonte. Her parents were both Miramonte graduates with her father, Tommy, going on to play football and rugby at Cal and her mother, Katie, running track at Chico State. According to Kosturos’s uncle,

Kendall Langan, there are 20 members of the extended family that graduated from Miramonte. The family was also very much involved with the OMPA meets as Kosturos’ grandfather and uncle were both OMPA directors at some point.

Contrary to Thomas Wolfe’s novel, “You Can’t Go Home Again,” Kosturos is still a Lamorindan at heart. “I loved my childhood and growing up in Lamorinda because my parents grew up here as well. With my parents being athletes and having graduated from Miramonte, I loved that I was able to follow their path, going on to UCLA. I love being able to say I’m from the area and will always cherish my childhood years there. With so many of my family in the area, I’m sure that they’ll never get rid of all of us throughout Lamorinda.”

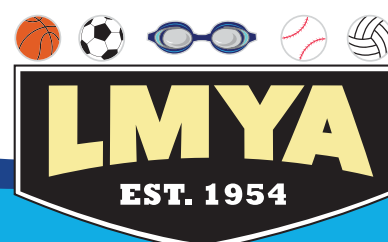
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www.lmyaswim.com

Lamorinda volleyball teams are works in progress



15 Tyler Vineyard, spiking, 26 Patrick Volk, 50 Gabe Goeller, 11 Andrew Pak



Campolindo's Brian Thomas serving



15 Eric Moen Photos Jon Kingdon

which will allow us to open up our game.”

The Cougars have a lot of size that they can call upon. “We have the size but if your size is not fast or disciplined at the net, that can hurt you,” Chan said. “If your ball control is shaky against a team that has good defense and serving, they will pick you apart, so it gave us an understanding as to what we need to do. Our captains Brian Thomas and Patrick Volk have done an excellent job in leading the team.”

Andrew Pak has been solid as the team's setter. Graham Volk, who can also be an effective setter, has been called upon to fill the role as the team's libero. “Graham can run our offense, but we need him on defense in our back row,” Chan said. “For us to be successful, it's going to come down to our service defense and our defense with our first touch. For most of these kids, they have lost half of their career. We want them to have an experience, an opportunity for them to recoup something they've lost.”

Acalanes

The Dons have had an excellent turnout with 50 players. “We been able to have a varsity, JV and freshman team,” Passalacqua said. “My philosophy is to combine John Wooden and Phil Jackson together. It's a mental game with a lot of fundamentals.”

This is an inexperienced team with half of the starters being first year players. Despite this, the Dons have not been shut out in any of their losses.

... continued on Page C3

By Jon Kingdon

If there is one thing that the volleyball teams in Lamorinda have in common, it's how they are all pointed to the future. Campolindo head coach David Chan is cautiously optimistic about his team's performance: “We are ranked highly in the state but there is so much more that we need to do to solidify that.”

Acalanes head coach Mark Passalacqua is taking a long-term perspective: “We're creating a new culture and it's going to take a while before it all comes together.”

It's youth and inexperience that Miramonte head coach Michael Sami is confronting: “We have a very young team and most of the players have just began playing the game and because of COVID-19, we missed a lot of practice time.”

Campolindo

“Skill-wise, we're getting there as a group,” Chan said. “The culture of the group has been really good and that starts with the team's leadership. We have a big team physically – one of the tallest teams we've ever had, and we have a large number of players. That culture has really

defined our group, due to the virus.”

An early season tournament in San Diego against a number of top teams proved to be an eye-opening experience for Chan and the team. “We knew what our strengths could be, and our weaknesses were exposed. It showed us what we really needed to work on.” The players have shown themselves to be quick learners with a current record of 16-4.

The roster has brought on a basketball player (Tyler Vineyard) and a football player (Tyrone Tuavale) who are both first year players.

“Even though they have not played a lot of volleyball, their value and contributions have helped us,” Chan said. “They have a work ethic and drive that is something valuable that we have been able to use.”

Josh Ewert has been leading the team on the court. “Josh is the heavy lifter on the team as the players learn our game and figure out our system,” Chan said. “At some point, we are going to have our other players contribute. It's just a matter of time when we will be holding everyone accountable, and they will be able to carry their own weight

Karate & Fitness USA members return with medals from SoCal Karate Championships



Submitted by Karate & Fitness USA

Eight team members returned with a total of 13 Medals: four Gold, five Silver and four Bronze. Super Star of the Day Chloe Paras Double Gold Medal in Kata and Kumite. Chloe (Gold Kata, Gold Kumite); Miles (Silver Kata, Silver Kumite); Wayne (Silver Kata, Gold Kumite); Adeeb (Bronze Kata, Gold Kumite); Paroma (Bronze Kata, Bronze Kumite); Sophia (Silver Kumite); Ethan (Silver Kata); and Parsa (Bronze Kumite).



Photos provided

Stanley 8th-Grade A Team goes undefeated, wins tournament

Submitted by Tim Jones

Under the tutelage of coach Adam Perry, Stanley Middle School basketball A Team finished their undefeated sea-

son with a Championship Win Wednesday evening, March 9, in the 8A Boys Tournament held at the Martinez Middle School gymnasium.



Photo provided

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Lamorinda volleyball teams are works in progress

... continued from Page C2

“The team has been improving and coming together, but it’s going to be a little while before we really gel; but every week, we’re getting better and better,” Passalacqua said. “We’re playing with a lot of heart. The newer guys are doing well, but they’re still building up their instincts and I’m very happy in the way that have improved the last several months.”

Leading the offense on the front line have been Eric Moen, Liam Bodner and Tommy Biekert. “Moen has been equally good on the front and back row,” Passalacqua said. “Bodner is also a great passer and Biekert has been solid and will be playing for

Concordia in Irvine next year. Aaron Alvira and Joe Castelli have shown great vertical as well.” The setters have been freshman Avyn Morales and senior Cole Regan, who are still getting up to speed.

The defense is still improving, according to Passalacqua: “Our blocking is getting there. We have good diggers and we’re working on a back row attack. Liam Hill has been everywhere on our defense along with Liam Stancik.”

Passalacqua attributed the large numbers that turned out for the team this year to “lots of open gyms and our players telling their friends about the team. We’re trying to bring players from other sports to come out for the team. Right

now, we have four freshmen basketball players playing for us. This has been a real opportunity for the players to play as soon as possible and learn that it’s a fun sport.”

The captains on the team are Bieker, Moen and Bodner. “They, along with seniors like Grant Silveri have done a good job in picking things up and helping to keep the players in line,” Passalacqua said. “My assistant coaches Alan Go, who is a great technical coach, and Lexi Hammer have done a great job with the players.”

Miramonte

For the Matadors and Coach Sami, it’s been a work in progress. Despite the lack of success on the court, Sami remains optimistic and looks

forward to improvement in the future. “We have a lot of potential and should be much improved the next couple of years,” Sami said. “The season has been going by quickly.”

With the coronavirus wreaking such havoc, it has really limited the development of the players, Sami said: “Some of the players are still learning the concepts of volleyball.”

There are not a lot of players with real game experience on the team. Senior, Kian Sami, a co-captain and the coach’s son is one of the returners to the team, playing both as an outside hitter and setter and has been a solid player along with middle blocker Colin Morris-McDermott who has also been

a force on the front line along with Emiliano Boyd.

Sami is looking forward to the development of junior Jon Marc Mosher as he continues to get more playing time. “Jon-Marc is new to the game,” Sami said. “He has good height and should be very effective next season.”

Seniors Ethan Lee and Yuji Watanabe have consistent players on the Matador’s defense.

With four freshmen and four sophomores on the JV team, there is cause for future optimism. It’s going to take a large commitment after the season for the team to take the next step. “Most of the players will need to play a lot more in the off-season to improve,” Sami said.

Vibe Volleyball competes at Northern California Volleyball Association



Submitted by Jenifer Lamken Paul

The Vibe Volleyball 17 Black team placed in the Gold Division at the Northern California Volleyball Association (NCVA) Power League Championships held in Reno, Nev., March 5-6. Vibe 17 Black was the only 17s team to have started playing this year in Bronze, moving through Silver, and ending their impressive season as No. 7 in the Gold Division. This cohesive team, led by their excellent coach, Kevin Ishizu, is full of camaraderie on and off the court and has players from high schools in the greater Lamorinda area: Acalanes, Campolindo, Las Lomas, Miramonte, and Northgate.

Photo provided

From left, back row: Kaylin Ishizu, Bella Yun, Mara Korzeniowska, Brittany Soun, Hanna Hageboeck, Madison Preciado, Ryann Jones, Coach Kevin Ishizu; front row: Maya Paul, Kylie Choi, Lauren Philips, Kalena King; not pictured: Sofie Foster, Chloe Stemmerich

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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 16 Issue 3 Wednesday, March 30, 2022



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Plant for Peace



Marsh rosemary (Limonium), also called sea lavender makes an excellent dried flower.



Buttery, yellow freesia are also fragrant.



A walk around the Emeryville harbor yielded these spectacular cobalt spires of Pride of Madeira.

By Cynthia Brian

*“Lose yourself in nature and find peace.”~
Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Between the pandemic, the Russian-Ukrainian war, and, for me, a frightening family medical emergency, 2022 has been tumultuous and tough. Everyone is feeling the pain regardless of any city, county, or country residence. Anxiety and stress mount daily as news of the world become ever desperate, depressing and diabolical.

Increased research indicates that nature-based activities are an excellent therapeutic intervention to ease our mental and physical stress. Whether it is a walk in the park, forest-bathing, hugging a tree, smelling the jasmine, or weeding your garden, taking a break with the beauty of the natural environment is an essential element in keeping us well. Listening to bird songs, the croaking of frogs, the lapping of waves, or the trickling of a fountain all have positive effects on our health. We'll lower our blood pressure and decrease levels of the stress hormone cortisol

as we awaken our senses outdoors.

Standing in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, I continue to embrace the colors of blue and yellow. Perhaps because I'm looking for those colors, they seem to be everywhere, and I am shooting photos. This week I'm enjoying the tiny, starred cerulean of Blue-Eyed grass as well as the ubiquitous buttery blooms on freesia. Marsh rosemary (Limonium, sea lavender), nasturtiums, and sedum carpet hillsides and paths reminding me of the courage of the Ukrainians.

... continued on Page D8

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	8	\$490,000	\$3,950,000
MORAGA	10	\$438,000	\$2,880,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,800,000	\$2,700,000

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

- 4041 Happy Valley Road, \$3,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 2358 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 02-10-22
3340 Johnson Road, \$3,950,000, 4 Bdrms, 5132 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 02-11-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 07-29-15
1048 Leland Drive, \$1,706,500, 3 Bdrms, 1831 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 02-15-22,
Previous Sale: \$383,000, 06-01-91
300 Lowell Lane, \$3,950,000, 3 Bdrms, 2322 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 02-07-22
546 Morecroft Road, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2861 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 02-18-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,180,000, 08-01-13
1 Mountain View Lane, \$3,535,500, 3 Bdrms, 4132 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 02-18-22,
Previous Sale: \$959,000, 04-13-99
3182 Old Tunnel Road #D, \$490,000, 896 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 02-16-22,
Previous Sale: \$407,500, 05-14-15
1968 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2727 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 02-10-22,
Previous Sale: \$675,000, 02-04-09

MORAGA

- 2067 Ascot Drive #245, \$438,000, 1 Bdrms, 790 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 02-17-22,
Previous Sale: \$202,500, 05-24-01
3 Benedita Place, \$1,366,000, 3 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 02-14-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,070,000, 09-03-21
108 Brookline Street, \$1,375,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 02-07-22,
Previous Sale: \$775,000, 08-12-08
777 Camino Ricardo, \$2,652,000, 5 Bdrms, 2831 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 02-14-22
61 Hardie Drive, \$2,475,000, 4 Bdrms, 2449 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 02-10-22
2 Moraga Valley Lane, \$2,880,000, 3 Bdrms, 2793 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 02-08-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,423,500, 04-28-08
1127 Rimer Drive, \$2,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2308 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 02-08-22,
Previous Sale: \$270,000, 12-01-87
264 Sandringham Drive, \$1,775,000, 3 Bdrms, 1901 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 02-18-22
34 Sea Pines Street, \$1,495,000, 3 Bdrms, 2828 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 02-08-22
1744 Spyglass Lane, \$1,360,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 02-15-22,
Previous Sale: \$265,000, 07-01-86

ORINDA

- 69 Hillcrest Drive, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 2887 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 02-10-22
139 La Cuesta Road, \$1,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 2358 SqFt, 1944 YrBlt, 02-11-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,342,000, 11-22-16
87 Muth Drive, \$2,065,000, 4 Bdrms, 1825 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 02-18-22,
Previous Sale: \$784,000, 08-25-04
65 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 1784 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 02-07-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 06-19-18
22 Valencia Road, \$1,870,000, 3 Bdrms, 2777 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 02-16-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,037,500, 05-13-13

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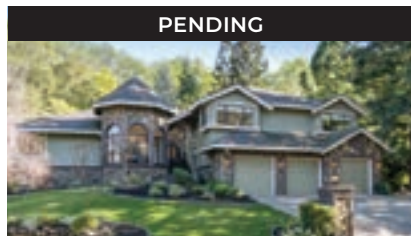


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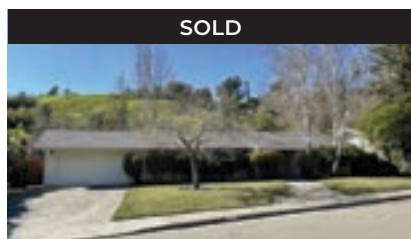
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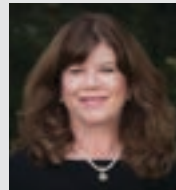
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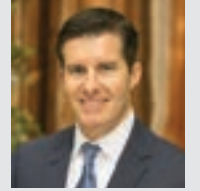
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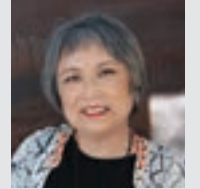
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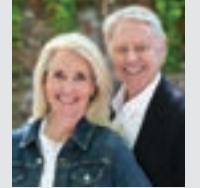
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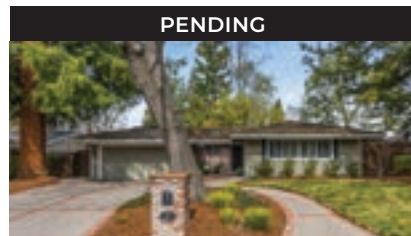


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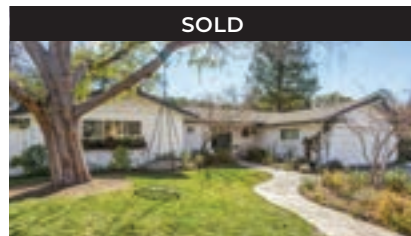
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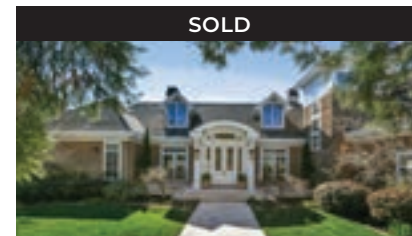
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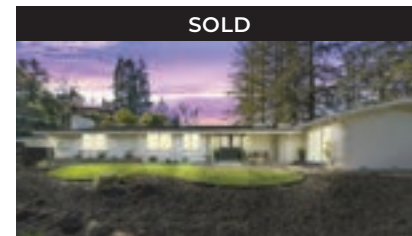
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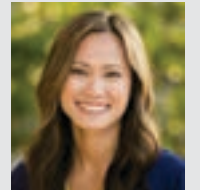
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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Plant for Peace



A salute to the bravery of Ukraine with a hillside of sedum and cherry blossoms.

... continued from Page D1

I hiked a trail around an Emeryville harbor to soak in the water views and inhale the fresh sea air, while marveling at the spectacular cobalt plumes of Pride of Madeira (echium fastuosum) and the sky blues of California lilac (ceanothus). My mood instantly improved.

Being in nature fosters resilience as well as encourages awe and wonder. Nature is restorative to body, mind, and spirit. Spring is here and the ground is bursting with new life. Trees unfurl luxuriant leaves, bulbs bloom in a kaleidoscope of colors, and fruit trees, including apple, pear, crabapple, and cherry are bursting with buds. This is the perfect season to plant peace.

I've planted three avocado trees that have been nurtured from a pit. A dwarf navel orange has been added to my citrus grove which is buzzing with bees sucking on the sweet nectar. Since I added new nutrient soil last season to my garden, there are numerous weeds. Pulling those weeds is time-consuming, yet it allows me to let my mind wander, relaxing enough to assist in solving challenges. Once my hillside is free of unwanted plants, I will begin to sow seeds of "pretties," flowering annuals that will bring me joy and tranquility.

If you are looking for seeds that will grow in our region, visit the Moraga Library where the Moraga Garden Club has installed a free seed library. The public is invited to take up to five packs of seeds and if you want to donate seeds to this marvelous outreach project, you are invited to do so.

It's not too late to plant roses and since peace is what everyone wants and deserves, consider planting the beautiful Peace Rose. It will brighten your garden and your heart.



The gorgeous blue clematis is an excellent climber on a trellis or arbor.

As I lose myself in nature to find peace, I recall the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower: "One day the people of the world will want peace so much that the governments will have to get out of their way and give it to them."

I think that time is now!

Peace be with you.



Blue-Eyed Star Grass is a blue and yellow beacon of hope.

Photos Cynthia Brian

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

- **EMPTY** vessels of standing water as mosquitoes are already breeding. For fountains and birdbaths, clean the water regularly or add drops of bleach or mosquito dunks.
- **REMOVE** deep-rooted weeds such as dandelions from your garden by hand.
- **DECREASE** the spread of crabgrass by applying a pre-emergent that keeps seeds from germinating.
- **HARVEST** the tender leaves of wild mustard, arugula, purslane, and dandelion. Add to salads and sandwiches for a surprising snap.
- **AERATE** your lawn to improve the absorption of moisture and fertilizer before reseeding.
- **PICK UP** dropped camellia blooms to deter petal blight.
- **REFRAIN** from cutting back daffodils until they are as crisp as a cracker. They need to replenish the nutrients to the bulb for next year's floral explosion.
- **CUT** small branches of crabapple or redbud to bloom in a vase on your nightstand. Research indicates that individuals with the brightest outlook and happiest attitudes keep blooms bedside.
- **FERTILIZE** lawns and shrubs.
- **SCATTER** snail bait to protect new shoots from the crawlers.
- **VISIT** your local nursery to buy intriguing plants that will increase the attractiveness of your landscape and improve your temperament.
- **LOSE** yourself in nature and find peace.
- **SUPPORT** Ukraine.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Spring!



Clip a few small branches of Western Redbud for a floral display.



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Honoring Ukraine, Cynthia Brian continues to wear yellow and blue.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her 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. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD and special savings. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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