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Saint Mary's guard Augustas Marciulionis (3) Photo SMC Athletics Dept./Tod Fierner

SMC men's basketball relies heavily on younger players

By Jon Kingdon

Coming off a successful 2021-22 season highlighted by Coach Randy Bennett's 15th year with at least 20 wins in his 21 years at Saint Mary's, (and a career winning percentage of 70.6), an undefeated record at home (16-0) for the first time, a victory over a number ranked team in the nation (Gonzaga) and a win in the NCAA tournament, Bennett still remains cautiously optimistic about the upcoming season.

lineup, this is an uncharacteristically young team with eight freshman and sophomores in the team's top 11 players. "We're taking it a step at a time," Bennett said.

This past August, the Gaels went to Australia and played and won five games which provided the team with some much needed experience though there was a tradeoff in Bennett's mind. "It's a tricky deal because we skipped some steps in our preparation to go and be able to compete," Bennett said. "So, we had to go back to square one on some areas. We're ahead offensively but we did skip some steps

along the way defensively. In scrimmages against Arizona and Hawaii, we were exposed in areas where we did not play well but from square one, we were able to accelerate the process a lot faster."

Losing and replacing two all-conference players in center Matthias Tass and guard Tommy Kuhse is Bennett's biggest concern. "We're trying to figure that out right now," Bennett said. "With (junior) Mitchell Saxen stepping in at center, we now have to fill the backup role which Mitch played so well last season along with losing Kuhse's scoring, leadership and toughness." ... continued on Page A8

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CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

Opening Night hosted by Matias Bombal Nov. 10	Special Screenings hosted by Jan Wahl Nov. 12 & Nov. 14	Q&A with Christopher Knight Nov. 13	Award Ceremonies Barrie Chase Nov. 12	 Randal Kleiser Nov. 13
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Slipping through the cracks: Lafayette renters struggle to stay afloat

By Sharon K. Sobotta

Hamza Houcher has held jobs delivering pizzas for Round Table, assisting at the Chevron station and working at the Lafayette Post Office. Now, Houcher has put down temporary roots in a one-bedroom rental unit that he shares with his wife and baby for \$1,600. If Houcher had it his way, he'd stay in Lafayette forever – if only he could afford it.

ernment issued EBT card to cover the cost of essential groceries and she is able to get a discount on PG&E and internet in her home.

How would she make ends meet and pay rent without these things? "I wouldn't," Shastri said.

Shastri and her family are in the queue for affordable rentals in Lafayette. Before finding her current place for \$1900/month, she was preparing for the possibility of being homeless.

Anna Connolly is a single mother of four, who is a licensed realtor and works as a server in a downtown restaurant to help cover her \$3,800 of monthly rent. Even though she works hard, Connolly said she still comes up a little short sometimes and has to lean on family. "I feel embarrassed and ashamed to be at this point in my life and still need to ask for help."

Prior to her divorce, Connolly was a homeowner and a stay-at-home mom. "A lot of people that I've known from in town have questioned if I still live in Lafayette now that they see me working as a server," Connolly says. "The truth is that if this can happen to me (as a person who's been here since I was 9), it can happen to anyone."



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta Rental for \$6K on Brook Street

... continued on Page A3

Election results: Since the midterm elections occurred after press time, Lamorinda Weekly will post local certified election results at www.lamorindaweekly.com once finalized. To view results directly, visit electionresults.sos.ca.gov.

<p>Civic News A1-A10</p> <p>Orinda city council decides on path forward for city's Housing Element - Page A6</p> <p>Public Safety</p> <p>Wildfire prevention work continues - Page A8</p>	<p>Life in Lamorinda B1-B5</p> <p>Saint Mary's College catacombs explored - Page B1</p>	<p>Sports C1-C3</p> <p>SMC women's basketball gearing up for strong season - Page C1</p>	<p>Our Homes D1-D16</p> <p>Prep for winter with these autumn chores for the garden - Page D4</p>
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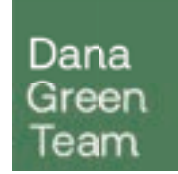
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Council discusses HCD response following first review of draft Housing Element

By Lou Fancher

Planning Director Greg Wolff, during a presentation to the Lafayette City Council at its Oct. 24 meeting, highlighted comments from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's 13-page letter dated Sept. 29 in response to the 6th Cycle Draft Housing Element submitted in June. He said although several items did not need immediate action or needed clarification before being brought back to the council for consideration, the response from HCD included extensive comments.

Housing consultant Diana Elrod said the letter was "average size" relative to others she has seen for nearby cities in the county. Several items of inquiry were similar to other jurisdictions, she said, "so Lafayette is not alone in being asked for more information by the HCD."

The items, organized in categories according to needing consideration, requiring more information, or HCD's long list of updates that do not require immediate action by council were rated by staff as to the level of difficulty in meeting the request or responding. Several items, Elrod indicated, had "significant difficulty" involved in executing

them.

Regarding the programs submitted by the city in the housing element draft, the comments asked for solid commitments on when a program would be discussed by the council and timelines for the decisions involved and anticipated completion dates. Staffing levels and resources may need to be adjusted earlier in the cycle than previously planned, suggested Elrod.

The staff have already asked HCD for clarification in several areas as to what is sought. Elrod noted that the Bay Area is being held to higher standards than jurisdictions in Southern California and staff plans to request specific examples of acceptable responses that are not drawn from Southern California before making any recommendations for updates to the council.

HCD's questions about inventory made in the comment letter addressed the BART site housing development plans in particular. Elrod said the comments indicated "a limited understanding of the site and the city's intentions." Also, the lengthy list of issues do not address the city's standing in the BART TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) plan, so staff hopes to better understand

what HCD is seeking, instead of interpreting the responses. She said the BART plan is "one of the heaviest lifts" the city will have and council will need to discuss what is realistic and the options if they are unable to meet HCD's requirements.

Vice Mayor Carl Anduri asked about the timeline of the two 90-day review periods, since HCD took the full 90-days for the first review and the final report is due Jan. 31, 2023. "Unless I'm missing something, how do we get a response to them and get (another 90-day) review?"

Elrod said there are many moving parts, including certification of the EIR before it can be adopted, and the timing is such that it is likely the city will receive a second review, but one that is less extensive. HCD's guidelines, or "moving goalposts," she said have made the process complex for all jurisdictions. The takeaway she is hearing from other cities is the more they move towards resolution and keep HCD informed of the progress, the better. According to Elrod, HCD is looking for real commitments with a real path for a development of the BART site that is planned to occur within the next eight years. She said nothing in the HCD response indicates that

they are likely to deny or disallow any of the sites. Elrod believes more documentation and details are required for HCD approval.

Asked about the two sites other than BART included in the inventory, Elrod and Wolff said they are located in the parking lot behind the Methodist Church and a consolidation of parcels at Golden Gate Way and First Street.

Council Member Susan Candell asked about staffing needed to complete the necessary document and planning. The work requires staff expertise, meaning adding new staff is not an immediate solution. With 56 bills passed recently that deal with housing requirements, Wolff said new hires are scarce, searches have not "born fruit," and relying more on in-house resources is something they will need to implement. Already, various departments within the staff are working in tandem and sharing information and resources for greatest efficiency. Council members suggested the staff rely on council members, experts and consultants in the community and anyone else available to assist in the public process of executing the final report that must be completed by Jan. 31, 2023.

Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok asked if work on a Plan

B should begin in the event that Lafayette's Plan A is rejected by HCD. Wolff said the calculus to satisfy the regional housing element requirements have been discussed, the universe of sites possible is complete, and if it happened that Plan A failed to be accepted due to HCD's concerns about the BART site, any Plan B would not have to start at ground zero.

Public comments supported developing a Plan B, but said arguments and any possible legal action related to comments from members of the council – who expressed that the housing element numbers were unfair and overly burdensome – would waste time and not be successful.

Council Member Gina Dawson noted that timelines and schedules need to work in parallel and asked if the EIR should be prioritized. Wolff said it needs to be both prongs and "acted on as quickly as possible." Wolff said the goal is to bring more detailed information back to the council at the next regular meeting. Mayor Teresa Geringer thanked the staff for the update and the public for their comments and said the council would look forward to the next steps in the process.

City seeks input on road safety

In an effort to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on Lafayette streets, the city of Lafayette is seeking community input on transportation safety to develop a Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP) and is welcoming ideas for

making Lafayette streets safer as well as identifying where residents have felt unsafe when walking, driving, biking or rolling.

A mapping activity has been created where residents can follow online prompts to

pinpoint the locations across Lafayette where they have felt safe or unsafe, provide ideas for making streets safer for everyone, and share stories about traffic safety. The mapping activity will be available through Nov. 20 at

<https://bit.ly/LRSPmap>

To view more information about the Local Roadway Safety Plan, visit www.lovelafayette.org/roadsafetyplan.

If you need assistance or want to provide more detailed information, contact

Lafayette's Transportation and Circulation Program Manager, Patrick Golier at PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us. -- J. Wake

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It's Village. Of Course.

Correction: In the Oct. 26 article "AUHSD forums address candidate funding, academic excellence," the story stated that "All of the candidates live in the district and all candidates except [Rene] Nowac have children who are either attending local schools, will attend local schools, or have graduated from local schools." Ms. Nowac has two children who attend Moraga public schools. We apologize for this error.

Slipping through the cracks: Lafayette renters struggle to stay afloat

... continued from Page A1

As a longtime resident of Lafayette who's been residing here for just under four decades, Janet Thomas says she's deeply invested in there being more affordable housing in town.

Thomas says she's been concerned about housing in the community for as long as she's lived here. Thomas recalls purchasing a modest two-bedroom house when she moved here 38 years ago and remodeling it with her husband during the summers to make room for her growing family, but she was aware that this wasn't necessarily an option for everyone she worked with.

"As (former) teachers in the Acalanes District, we were aware that most of our colleagues couldn't afford to live in this community and had to commute long distances to teach," Thomas said.

Now Thomas lives in an ADU home on a lot that she shares with her son and his wife, who would not otherwise have been able to live in Lafayette. "In replacing a free standing garage with an ADU, we've transitioned to an (intergenerational) situation that works well for us. We babysit, share a garden and patio and feel connected to our grandkids' schools. The cost was about one-fifth of a new home on a separate lot which is energy efficient and comfortable."

Thomas acknowledges that while ADUs may be a solution for those with intergenerational roots in Lafayette, they don't do much to accommodate service workers trying to live in the community and parents who may be struggling to keep their kids in the district. "Unless there's a

strong incentive for community members to build ADUs and offer them to those outside of the family at affordable prices or unless there's a big shift in our general culture, I doubt this could be used as a solution for affordable housing in Lamorinda."

So what is the solution? Thomas says it's multifaceted. "There's not one solution. Rent control that limits but doesn't freeze rent is one action the city should consider," she said.

City Council Member Susan Candell agrees that rent control might be a matter worth revisiting at the city level. "The council discussed this in 2015 and 2017 with no action. It takes strong political will to pass good rent control measures and our current council may have the will to do this," Candell said. "It will be this balance of pros versus cons that will drive our decision."

Watching her sister navigate Lafayette as a renter gave Candell an appreciation for the kinds of struggles renters face. There was an instance when her sister's rent went up by 25% causing her sister and a third of the renters in the complex to need to move to smaller, less expensive places.

"We looked at many different places in town and some that refused to rent to her because of her three boys. This is illegal but hard to enforce," Candell says. "I imagine this is a familiar story for many, and it's important for the city to better understand what is actually happening in order to figure out if there are good solutions we can implement to improve renter's experiences."

A discussion about renters' issues will be held at 7 p.m. Nov. 17 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.



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Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting
Monday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's
You Tube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 21, 7 p.m.
Teleconference Meeting via Love
Lafayette YouTube
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Design Review

Wednesday, Nov. 23, 7 p.m. Zoom
Teleconference Meeting via Love
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Moraga takes steps toward recruiting new town manager

By Vera Kochan

After Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg gave written notice on Oct. 4 of her impending late December resignation, the town council wasted no time creating an Ad Hoc Committee during its Oct. 12 meeting in order to find her successor.

Mayor Steve Woehleke and Vice Mayor Renata Sos, the two committee members, followed up on the meeting's decision to use an executive recruitment firm to help in the process. All council members agreed that it would be in the town's best interests to employ an executive search firm for multiple reasons: access to a wider net of talent thanks to experience and contacts in the industry; recruitment firms are better equipped to cast a wider net when advertising positions; these firms can save the town time by performing back-

ground and reference checks; and recruiting firms can interview stakeholders in order to identify a candidate's characteristics with respect to the town's needs.

The Ad Hoc Committee received written proposals from three top recruiting firms and, after interviews, decided to recommend to the council, during its Oct. 26 meeting, Gary Phillips from Bob Murray & Associates, who among other things has had experience in recruiting personnel for communities much like Moraga. The recruiter's fees of \$28,000 are in line with other agencies.

Also discussed during the town council meeting was a timeline of next steps to be taken with the assistance of a recruiter in order to fill the town manager's position. First is to develop recruiting materials by interviewing council members, senior town staff

and key stakeholders with regards to the prospective candidate's attributes which will help to develop a profile; next is to advertise the position through various means; once applications have been received preliminary interviews with the recruiter begin; and, finally, the top candidates meet with council members for in-person interviews.

The town council approved an agreement with Bob Murray & Associates and stipulated that the recruitment process will include a community survey to allow for public input. The council also agreed to continue with the Ad Hoc Committee during the development of recruiting materials and in bringing forth potential Interim/Acting Town Manager candidates after Battenberg's resignation date becomes effective, until a permanent town manager is seated.

Housing Element adoption deadline causing some confusion

By Vera Kochan

Housing and Community Development for the State of California had issued a Jan 31, 2023 deadline for Housing Element adoption, but allowed for a second deadline of a 120-day "grace period", whereby municipalities must have received their HCD certification acknowledging that their Housing Element meets the

state's standards. Herein lies the confusion.

After the publishing of a San Francisco Business Times article, "S.F. got the state's housing deadline wrong -- so did Berkeley, Oakland and San Jose," a flurry of conversation was ignited between the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Contra Costa County Directors in order to clarify matters.

HCD stated that it stands "firm" with the initial January deadline, and the Oct. 26 town council meeting's staff report by Planning Director Afshan Hamid notes, "After that date, the Town is out of compliance if it does not have an adopted legally adequate housing element."

The report also states, "The 'grace period' is not in-

tended to provide communities with more time to complete and adopt their Housing Elements. Communities that fail to be found in compliance by May 31, 2023, may face adverse consequences."

Some of the outcomes could lead to loss of local control; implementation of the "builder's remedy" (a legal mechanism that states can use to expedite the construction of low or middle income housing when a city fails to comply with housing development laws); and the loss of affordable housing and transportation grant funding.

After conferring with Barry Miller Consultants, the Planning Department assured the town council that Moraga is on track to comply with the HCD Jan. 31, 2023 deadline.

Accolades for retiring Town Clerk Marty McInturf

By Vera Kochan

In American culture 13 is considered to be an unlucky number. That tradition continues in Moraga, because after 13 years on the job, Town Clerk Marty McInturf has decided to retire.

No stranger to Lamorinda, McInturf is a graduate of Miramonte High School. Prior to joining the town staff she worked as the city clerk for Pleasant Hill. Her numerous tasks as town clerk and her fountain of knowledge have made her well known to residents who have come to rely on her help and direction over the years.

Although Moraga's status as a "town" may sound less daunting when it comes to daily responsibilities, as anyone on the staff knows there's a lot to do. McInturf's job is no exception. Some of her duties

include: certifying and distributing ordinances and resolutions; conducting follow-up activities related to the agenda by processing agreements and recording official documents; indexing and filing town council actions; maintaining and updating the Municipal Code; maintaining permanent town records; managing and conducting town council member elections; preparing and posting agendas and council packet production/distribution; processing legal notices for council meetings and public hearings; recording proceedings of town council meetings; responding to requests for public record information; serving as filing officer for Fair Political Practices regulations; submitting measures to the electorate; and publishing the About Town Newsletter.

... continued on Page A5

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Special Town Council Meeting:

Wednesday, Nov. 16, 6 p.m.

Planning Commission: Tuesday, Nov. 14, 6:30 p.m.,

Park and Recreation Commission:

Monday, Nov. 21, 7:00 p.m.,

Moraga School District Board Meetings:

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us.





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Accolades for retiring Town Clerk Marty McInturf



Photo Lamo archives

Marty McInturf when she joined the town in 2009.

... continued from Page A4

“Marty, as Town Clerk, is Moraga’s own Mary Pop-pins,” said Mayor Steve Woehleke. “She is the central point resource who keeps all reminded of deadlines, arrangements and all other key information critical to town operations. All are be-moaning her departure, while also wishing Marty a very enjoyable, well-deserved retirement.”

Vice Mayor Renata Sos said, “Marty is the consum-mate public servant: dedi-cated, hard working, colle-gial, and community-focused. Her warmth and kindness have no bounds. It was a joy and a privilege to work with her.”

Council Member Teresa Onoda described McInturf as “the wizard behind the cur-tain no matter who the elected leaders are,” and Council Member Mike McCluer described her as “a fountain of information and is one of the most helpful people I ever met,” noting that when he conducted his Community Engagement vis-its and asked for recommen-dations on how the town can improve, the best idea Mc-Cluer received was “Clone Marty!”

Council Member Sona Makker said, “She’s always looking around corners to see how to advance staff’s, coun-cil’s, and the town’s needs at large. She also brings a poignant, much needed sense of calmness to the room (and even managed to do this over Zoom!). I am grateful I had the opportunity to work with Marty and see her shine as a true public servant.”

“Marty provides excep-tional customer service to everyone – elected offices, residents, business owners and fellow Town employees,” Town Manager Cynthia Bat-tenberg stated. “She is collab-orative and always willing to help. Marty is a friend to all and will be sorely missed.”

Moraga-Orinda Fire Dis-trict Chief Dave Winnacker said there is no substitute for the years of support Marty gave to the community. “Her pleasant attitude, patience, thoroughness, and high pro-fessional standards were al-ways appreciated. I wish her the very best in her retire-ment.” Moraga Police Chief Jon King described McInturf as “a mainstay of this Town, dedicated to ensuring that in-formation gets out to people and that everyone has an op-portunity to participate. She is such a good person and I

feel honored to work with her and call her my friend.”

“It has been a pleasure working with Marty,” agreed Administrative Services Di-rector Annie To. “She has the institutional knowledge and is dedicated to her town clerk role. I have enjoyed working with Marty as she is calm, cool, and collected! I am re-ally going to miss working with her.”

Director of Public Works/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp has known Marty since their days together working for the city of Pleas-ant Hill. “I joke with Marty that she is the only town clerk that I know. She has an in-credible professional proof-reading ability. She tries to read all staff reports, resolu-tions, ordinances, proclama-tions and so on. It’s a lot, to the point that she spends countless hours at home reading (after work and late into the night). She has high standards for quality of work.”

“Marty’s intellect takes on any beast of a topic,” stated Planning Director Af-shan Hamid. “When I intro-duced the upcoming Housing Element and the new laws to Moraga Town Council, Marty shared how she watched Pleasant Hill’s meetings on the same topic, and how their community responded. Marty not only took on Moraga’s Housing Element, but she went further and learned Pleasant Hill’s. Marty cared and was invested in Moraga to learn how Moragans would be impacted.”

Public Works/Parks Maintenance Manager Kyle Salvin described Marty as “very kind and intelligent; al-ways willing to take on new challenges no matter how busy; never allowed fellow employees to fail – always looking out for others; and a true friend to the town. In my 27 years with Moraga she is hands-down the most stead-fast and diligent worker I have ever had the pleasure of working with. She will be greatly missed.”

Administrative Assistant Mary Jane Muller had pow-erful bullet points when de-scribing McInturf: “the epit-ome of dedicated; thought-ful and understanding; help-ful to all who request anything of her; calm and unflappable; always positive and respect-ful when interacting with anyone and everyone; her knowledge and recall is un-matched. Being that I have worked the most closely with her for eight years, it will be a challenging adjustment for

me to go on without the rock that is Marty.”

Retirement for McInturf means more time to spend with her husband, Steve, her two sons and their families (which includes grandkids), and whatever else she has in mind. She has earned it.

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After marathon session, Orinda council decides on a path forward on housing element

By Sora O'Doherty

By the end of a four-hour meeting where the housing element was the only substantive matter on the agenda, the Orinda City Council on Nov. 1 instructed staff to pull back to a less cautious buffer and reduce some potential housing height and density in the revised housing element to be sent to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Every eight years every town, city, and county in California must prepare a "housing element," a plan for providing for increased housing. The plan must be approved by the HCD on a strict timeline, with significant penalties if the plan is not certified by HCD in time. All over California communities are currently working on the sixth housing element, which will be in force from 2023 through 2031. Communities, including those in Lamorinda, received vastly

higher numbers of housing units they must provide for than the previous five housing elements.

Several public comments suggested that the city of Orinda simply refuse to comply with the state requirements, but to do so would impose difficult consequences, and litigation would be arduous and expensive, according to Orinda Director of Planning Drummond Buckley, City Attorney Osa Wolff, and City Manager David Biggs. A compliant housing element is also required for the city to qualify for grants and loans.

After the city submitted its draft housing element to the HCD, the agency responded by rejecting a number of sites that the city had included as suitable for potential new housing. The HCD was particularly dubious about non-vacant sites that the city had included. As a result, where the downtown precise plan (DPP) had initially included 43 sites, 23 of those sites have now been removed and one site, 4 Orinda Way, has been added, resulting in a total of 21 DPP sites in the updated inventory. Council Member Nick Kosla, co-chair of the Downtown Development Subcommittee, said that in his opinion, all of the sites in the original draft would work, despite HCD's doubts.

An additional factor bearing on the housing element is the stream of new legislation from the state of California. Two pieces of recent legislation, Assembly Bill 2097, which limited the ability of local areas to require parking in developments within a half-mile of a BART station, and Senate Bill 6 which allows housing to be built in areas zoned for commercial use, were of particular concern to the council. Vice Mayor Inga Miller pointed out that BART won't get your children to school or you to the supermarket. "The idea that because you live near BART means that you don't need a car just doesn't work," she said. "Maybe it works in San Francisco, but not in

Orinda."

Attorney Wolff pointed out that the law contains an opportunity for the city to make a finding for the proposed project that a requirement of no parking would impose a substantial hardship on residents. Such a finding must be supported by a preponderance of evidence and must be submitted within a relatively short time period. For that reason, the council urged staff to begin a parking survey that would provide evidence regarding the various proposed housing sites that could be relied upon in the event of a proposed development coming forward.

Much of the discussion was devoted to two potential housing sites, a piece of land owned by Caltrans off Highway 24 and the BART parking lots. Members of Orinda Watch and Nick Warranoff, who was unable to attend the meeting, suggested that the city rely heavily upon these two sites to meet its quota of potential housing sites, which would allow for lower height buildings and less density in other areas of the city. However, BART has communicated to the city that, although it recognizes the potential for housing on its sites, it cannot be ready to proceed until the next housing element cycle, eight years from now.

The Caltrans site consists of 10 acres, but the issue is that the property must be decertified. Council Member Darlene Gee declared, "I cannot imagine why Orinda would have to be involved in the decertifying. I hope that staff will push Caltrans to declare this land as surplus property." Biggs agreed, noting that he thought that Gee was right, and he hopes to overcome the obstacle.

Several members of the public suggested that the Caltrans site could accommodate more than the 200 units proposed. Staff explained that if the number were increased, it might cause HCD to start asking a lot of questions and want to see project examples.

Since reliance of the

BART site is probably not a possibility for this cycle, and the Caltrans site has issues to be resolved, the city looked to another way to reduce proposed heights and densities for certain sites. It was suggested that one way to do that would be to reduce the buffers that were included in the draft. Buffers are numbers of housing units added to the required amount to protect against failure to meet the HCD requirements in the event of unexpected occurrences. The use of buffers protects the city from negative consequences of not meeting its required quotas.

However, after discussion with staff and with the city's consultants, Placeworks, who attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the revised draft, the city council agreed that the buffers could be reduced, which would allow for the highest heights allowed in some areas, up to 65-70 feet, to be reduced to 45 feet, and the highest density of 65 dwelling units per acre to also be reduced.

Another issue that the city council wanted staff to explain to HCD is the role of Measure J, the original half-cent sales tax that passed in 2004. Measure J incorporated a growth management program for Contra Costa County. Orinda gets half a million dollars back from the tax each year, which is applied to the city's street-paving program. In order to qualify for the money, however, the city must fill out a growth management checklist, which includes elements such as the city's work towards affordable housing, cooperative planning, traffic mitigation fees for things such as bike paths and local transportation. As explained by longtime city council member Amy Worth, this plan is reviewed every two years. "If the city is not making progress," she said, "the city can't get the money." She further explained, "We need to have our housing element to show that we are making progress, and we've always been successful."

Miramonte gardens razed, raising concern for some



Photo provided

One of the gardens at Miramonte High School, pre-pandemic

By Ashley Dong

Longtime Orinda resident and garden volunteer Linda Mizes

was in a state of shock after her first visit to Miramonte High School post-pandemic. The three gardens, scattered throughout the school, in which she, along with many other volunteers, dedicated nearly two decades of strenuous volunteer work, had disappeared, along with several Eagle Scout projects and thousands of dollars in grants.

"Times are changing now, and there are different priorities. But a number of years ago, school gardens were a wonderfully big thing," Mizes said.

In 2020, Miramonte boasted three thriving gardens. The first one stood next to the tennis courts.

... continued on Page A7

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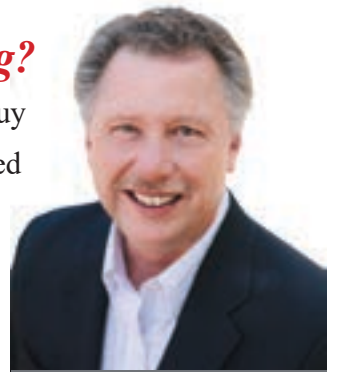
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'Looking Out, Looking In' – paintings by Nicole Reader at Orinda Library gallery



"White Window" by Nicole Reader



"Canyon Dawn" by Nicole Reader Images provided

Orinda artist Nicole Reader has kept her eyes on her easel for the past 13 years. Now, in her show at the Orinda Library Art Gallery, she exhibits her paintings of contemplative people turning their eyes elsewhere.

The figures in these paintings are focused on their own environment, whether internal or external, rather than acknowledging the gaze of the viewer. Some are perched on literal overlooks, dramatic landscapes opening up before them; others barely

look off the edge of the canvas, their vision turned inward.

Reader works in acrylic paints on canvas. Her realistic figurative paintings are based on photographs, but have an intensity and vibrancy that go beyond their source material. The artist says, "In my paintings I strike a balance: I pin down precise and specific realistic details, but I also incorporate the magic of mood and atmosphere." Many of the paintings in this show depict people in landscapes with ex-

pressive light, with settings ranging from the Yosemite Valley to Oxford, England.

Reader has lived in Orinda for over 20 years. "Looking Out, Looking In" will be on display at the Orinda Library Art Gallery throughout the month of November. The gallery is located at 26 Orinda Way. The show is curated by the Lamorinda Arts Council. See more at www.nicolereader.com and lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits. -- J. Wake

Miramonte gardens razed, raising concern for some



Photo provided

One Miramonte garden site as of Oct. 20.

... continued from Page A6

Mizes originally started it as a vegetable garden in 2004, but through years of hard work, volunteers converted it into a thriving permaculture food forest—a mostly self-sustaining garden. Students, parents, and teachers filled the garden with benches, raised beds, a garden shed and a compost bin built as Eagle Scout projects, fruit trees donated by the Moraga Garden Center, and even a greenhouse donated by the Lafayette Garden Club. However, today, all of this is gone, leaving only a pile of the stones, which used to line a path through the garden, and the fruit trees, which are desperately in need of tending.

"I had no idea that this happened. I talked to some other people, and they also had no idea this happened," Mizes said.

The second garden was called the Contemplative, or Meditation Garden, and the volunteers designed it to be a safe, calming space for students to hang out with friends

or decompress alone. To construct this space, in 2018, the Lafayette Garden Club granted Christina Orangio, the former horticultural program instructor, \$2,000 to carry out her vision. This space consisted of planter boxes, various seating areas, and plants donated by parents and other volunteers. Only the planter boxes, which were painted beautifully by students, stand today, barren and scattered around the dirt area.

The third garden was a vegetable garden consisting of nine raised beds, four or five wheelbarrows, a path made of stepping stones, a sturdy fence, a garden shed, and a newly donated Eagle Scout-built compost bin. Today, all this material is gone, with the exception of the garden shed sitting in the corner.

"It's not as if the school is tearing down its own equipment. This was provided and paid and assembled by other people, not by the school itself. It was a gift, and these other people were not going to be too happy having their donations destroyed," Mizes said.

The reasons why the school and district decided to remove the gardens are unclear. "Although they may have been in good shape many years ago, over the years the weeds and plants became overgrown, the benches, fencing, greenhouse, and beds were falling apart and unsafe, the vegetables were growing in chemically treated beds, and the terrain was not ADA compliant nor safe for anyone," Miramonte Principal Ben Campopiano said.

However, Mizes insists that, due to the lack of care and water, it is unlikely the plants became overgrown and that much of the garden's equipment was recently installed and was still in good shape in 2020. Additionally, she says that they never used chemically treated wood because they kept their gardens organic, and, under the supervision of a previous principal, they ensured the gardens were ADA-compliant.

Nevertheless, both Mizes and Campopiano agree that the plan is to rebuild back, better than ever. "I will be working with interested parents, students, staff, and community members to help bring these gardens back to life," Campopiano said.

Having access to school gardens in high school is important because, along with their positive aesthetic and environmental effects, experts say gardens are also beneficial for overall student health. "Working in a garden can lead to reduced stress, more positive mental state, and physical health and well-being," a study by the Journal of American College Health states. During a time when teenagers are under heavy social and academic pressure, finding ways to relieve stress is more important than ever.

"For 20 years, I've taught nature and gardening to students. It's important to eat healthily, and it's important to work in a garden and know how things grow," Mizes said. "My hope is that we can make these sites more conducive and more useful to the students."

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Planning Commission
Tuesday, Nov. 22, 7 p.m.
By Teleconference Only

Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
Wednesday, Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m.
By Teleconference Only

Work continues as recent rains give hope to end of fire season



Work areas within the Tunnel-East Bay Hills Fuel Break Project Image provided

By Jennifer Wake

While recent rains have been a welcome sight in Lamorinda, Moraga-Orinda Fire District Fire Marshal Jeff Isaacs warns residents not to let their guard down. “This time of year, we get questions from the public on fire sea-

son: Are we out of fire season?” Isaacs noted at the Oct. 19 MOFD board of directors meeting. “It really depends on the rain. If we see that early onset of rain of three to four inches, we can safely expect that we’re not going to see any large, rapidly spreading fires. But if that rain is pushed back and we get those wind events that usually oc-

cur this time of year, we could be right back into significant fire weather.”

Isaacs said MOFD is preparing to start chipping season and fire reduction work as fire season begins to wind down. “The chipper should be ready to go by mid-November,” he said, also noting that the Home Hardening Grant Program is going strong. This program is open to all residents within MOFD’s jurisdiction for the 2022-23 fiscal year ending on June 30, 2023, with grants available to reimburse the purchase of ember-resistant vents not to exceed \$1,000 per parcel. “We ordered about 1,800 feet of BushFire [1/16” mesh in 7.5” width] fence material and have 800 feet remaining.” He said there have been over 30 requests for the material and homeowners say it’s easy without having to hire a contractor. More information can be found at the MOFD website:

www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention/home-hardening-grant-program

Wildfire prevention work is also continuing at the Tunnel-East Bay Hills Fuel Break Project through Cal Fire in Work Area 2 and into Work Area 1 of

the six work areas. Crews have cut brush, limbed up trees and created piles that will be burned or chipped and they’ll do additional cutting and fuels mitigation once the weather becomes more favorable this fall or winter, Isaacs said. They have been allowed to do work in those areas “because it’s on East Bay Municipal Utility District land and EBMUD has the environmental and CEQA documents done so we follow their habitat conservation plan,” he said.

MOFD is working with environmental consultant, Sequoia, who worked with the district on the North Orinda Shaded Fuel Break and they’re doing the CEQA for the portions of the grant that will take place on private property in areas 4, 3 and portions of area 5. “We should have that environmental work done by spring and once we have that accomplished, we have workers in place who will be able to get our crews out there and get working on this,” Isaacs said.

To view the entire presentation on YouTube, visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsDPeRujFA&t=2727s

Letters to the editor

Water usage

There was a good piece on the subject of water usage in the San Francisco Chronicle recently but I do believe the statistics should include the acreage – for example, our house in Orinda is on a small lot (0.31 acres) but we do have a pool that needs topping up every month or so – our latest statement from EBMUD indicates that in the last two months (very hot and dry so probably

as high a number as we’ll have this year) we used 294 gallons per day. The EBMUD allowance is 1646 per day and some of the Happy Valley people cited by the Chronicle are using far more than that.

I would also suggest that water usage by City and State entities be included. I recall that one study a while ago (during the last major drought) showed that the largest consumers of water were government entities, espe-

cially in Sacramento. How much water do the Cities of Lafayette, Moraga, or Orinda consume, for example? It seems that little people like us are doing our best and being incredibly conscientious while the CEOs and super-rich plus the Cities are quite without conscience as they consume “our” water...

John Windle
Orinda

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer’s name and city/town of residence – we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

SMC men’s basketball relies heavily on younger players

... continued from Page A1

As a two-time all WCC honors player, fifth-year senior Logan Johnson’s return was a mutual decision between Bennett and Johnson. “Logan felt it was the right move to come back for another year and we were glad to have him back,” Bennett said. “He will be a key player again and his role will remain the same as it was last season. He’s got a good chance to play after college and depending on how good we are, he could play himself into something nice next year.”

The other guards that will be seeing substantial playing time are sophomore Augustus Marciulionis, redshirt freshman Chris Howell and freshman Aidan Mahaney. “Aidan and Chris are not there yet but I believe we can get there this year with them,” Bennett said. “We’re going to be throwing them in the fire and they’re going to have to learn right away. Augustus and Aidan are talented at the point and they’re just lacking experience but they’re going to learn as we go this year. It’s just a matter of finding out how much they can handle and that’s where I’m at

right now.”

As difficult as it is for a freshman to adjust to the Saint Mary’s system, Mahaney is as well prepared as one can be as a local Campolindo graduate. “Aidan knows our program, environment and the guys on the team,” Bennett said “He knows how he fits and how we think and how we want our guys to be unselfish and play off our guards a lot. He’s got the skill set, the size and confidence to do it. We just have to keep making him better within what we do which really fits his skills and talents. It’s not going to happen on day one but Aidan will fight through it just like Augustus did last year until they both get as confident and comfortable as Khuse and Logan were last season.”

The 6’6” Howell is being counted on to fill many roles for the Gaels. “Chris is a jack of all trades that can play the 1-2-3 or 4, but he’s essentially a big guard,” Bennett said. “He has a really good feel and he’s a good defender that can fill that role when Logan is out of the game.”

Seniors Kyle Bowen and Alex Ducas are the other two returning starters, lining up at the forward position. “Their

roles are not going to change but we need them to get better because they’re carrying more of the load this year, at least for a little while,” Bennett said.

Redshirt sophomore Luke Barrett (Piedmont) has made good strides and should see a fair amount of time at the three position along with Howell. The pleasant surprise so far this year has been 6’8 235-pound freshman Joshua Jefferson, a physical player who averaged 17 points per game last year at Liberty High School in Las Vegas. “Joshua has a good body and a really good basketball IQ,” Bennett said. “He’s a good passer and just needs to learn how to play harder and improve his defense. He’s going to learn that as he goes, but we need him, and he’s going to help us.”

As with all of the other positions, at center there is a veteran starter with Saxen who missed the first four games last season with back spasms, but returned and had a good season. “Mitch kept getting better and he has shown that he is ready to be the starter.”

Backing up Saxen is another freshman, 7’0” 275-pound Harry Wessels, another import from Australia. “Harry

is a big, strong player and like all freshmen, he has to adjust to the game and figure out how the officials call the game over here,” Bennett said. “He can score and rebound and gets a lot done when he plays – sometimes too much – but he is going to be able to help us this year.”

With so many freshmen expected to play this season, it brought Bennett back to the 2009 team that had a 28-6 record and had a memorable upset of Villanova in the NCAA tournament. “That year we had three freshmen, Matthew Dellavedova, Mitch Young and Jordan Page, who played a lot,” Bennett said. “I’m excited about the young players on our team but we still have to win the games.”

Bennett, who is in charge of setting up the team’s schedule, has the Gaels playing their first five games at home against teams from Oklahoma (Oral Roberts), U. of Vermont, Texas (No. Texas), Louisiana (Southern) and New York (Hofstra), all teams that will provide good early season challenges. “Vermont’s the eighth winningest program in college basketball in the last seven years, North Texas is very

good, Oral Roberts is a sweet 16 team along with Southern and Hofstra. Our other non-league home games are also tough with Missouri State, New Mexico State, New Mexico and Colorado State.”

The Gaels will also be playing in the John Wooden Legacy Tournament in Anaheim and the Jerry Colangelo Classic in Phoenix. “Those tournaments are hard to get in but we’ve played in both of those tournaments previously,” Bennett said.

The support that the team gets at the University Credit Union Pavilion is one that most schools envy. “It’s a tough environment for other teams to play in,” Bennett said. “Our fans are a community and we’re like the local team. Our students are great, and they take it to a whole other level, but even when they’re not here, we still have a great atmosphere which a lot of schools don’t have. Our alumni, fans and students like our guys because they’re good guys, which is what makes it really special.”

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Lafayette Police

Department

Incident

Summary

Report

Oct. 16 - Oct. 29

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Vacation House Check 34

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Ordinance Violation 1

Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary

800 Block Paradise Ct.

Acalanes Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.

50 Block Lafayette Cir.

Hit And Run Misdemeanor

Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.

Mt. Diablo Blvd./Village Center

3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

50 Block Lafayette Cir. (2)

Mt. Diablo Blvd./Village Center

20 Block Lafayette Cir.

Reckless Driving

3300 Block Mildred Ln.

Happy Valley School

Sweet Dr./Walnut Ln.

Taylor Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.

Tamper With Vehicle

1000 Block Leland Dr.

Tc - Property Damage

3800 Block Los Arabis Dr.

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd., Ori

3400 Block School St.

Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd.

Other criminal activity

Fraud Credit Card

3600 Block Mosswood Dr.

Grand Theft

3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Grand Theft Veh Parts

1100 Block Garden Ln.

Identity Theft

Police Department (2)

Misc Burglary

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

Panhandling

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Petty Theft

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

3700 Block Mosswood Dr.

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Petty Theft Veh Parts

3300 Block La Caminita

Shoplift

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)

3600 Block Deerhill Rd.

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-domestic

900 Block Foye Dr.

1000 Block Miller Dr.

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

900 Block Foye Dr.

Disturbing The Peace

Mt. Diablo Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.

1000 Block Carol Ln.

Loud Noise

Florence Dr./Betty Ln.

Moraga Blvd./2Nd St

Public Nuisance

Stanley Blvd./Barott Rd.

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Golden Gate Way/Mt. Diablo Blvd.

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)

Saranap Ave./El Curtola Blvd.

El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24

Deer Hill Rd./Oak Hill Rd.

3500 Block Terrace Way

Vandalism

3400 Block Monroe Ave.

Other

Attempted Petty Theft

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Fireworks

1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.

K9 Outside Assist Request

10 Block Bear Ridge Rd., Ori

Loitering

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Trespass

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Pleasant Hill Rd./Old Tunnel Rd.

3600 Block Boyer Cir.

3400 Block School St.

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

Unwanted Guest

900 Block Mountain View Dr.

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

1000 Block Stuart St.

Violation Custody Order

1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.



Orinda Police Department

Incident Summary Report

Oct. 16 - Oct. 29

Alarms 44

911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 9

Traffic 102

Suspicious Circumstances 6

Suspicious Subject 12

Suspicious Vehicle 6

Public/School Assembly Check 2

Service to Citizen 41

Patrol Req./Security Check 21

Supplemental Report 18

Welfare Check 8

Vehicle violations

Accident Property

40 Block Oakwood Rd.

Auto Burglary

Camino Sobrante

Dui Misd

70 Block Muth Dr.

St Stephens Cir./El Nido Ranch Rd.

Hit And Run Misdemeanor

Orinda Way

10 Block Meadow Park Ct.

Reckless Driving

Camino Pablo/Monte Vista Rd.

Moraga Way/Coral Dr.

Rheem Blvd./Glorietta Blvd.

Vehicle Theft

60 Block Moraga Way

Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo

Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Way

Other criminal activity

Child Abuse

Dalewood Dr.

Identity Theft

Police Department

20 Block Las Vegas Rd. (2)

Petty Theft

Orinda Way

Moraga Way

30 Block Moraga Via

10 Block Edgewood Rd.

Shoplift

Moraga Way

Camino Sobrante

Warrant Arrest

Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante

Wb Sr 24 At Wilder Rd.

Theatre Square

Nuisance to the Community

Loud Music

Camino Sobrante

100 Block Brookwood Rd.

Loud Noise



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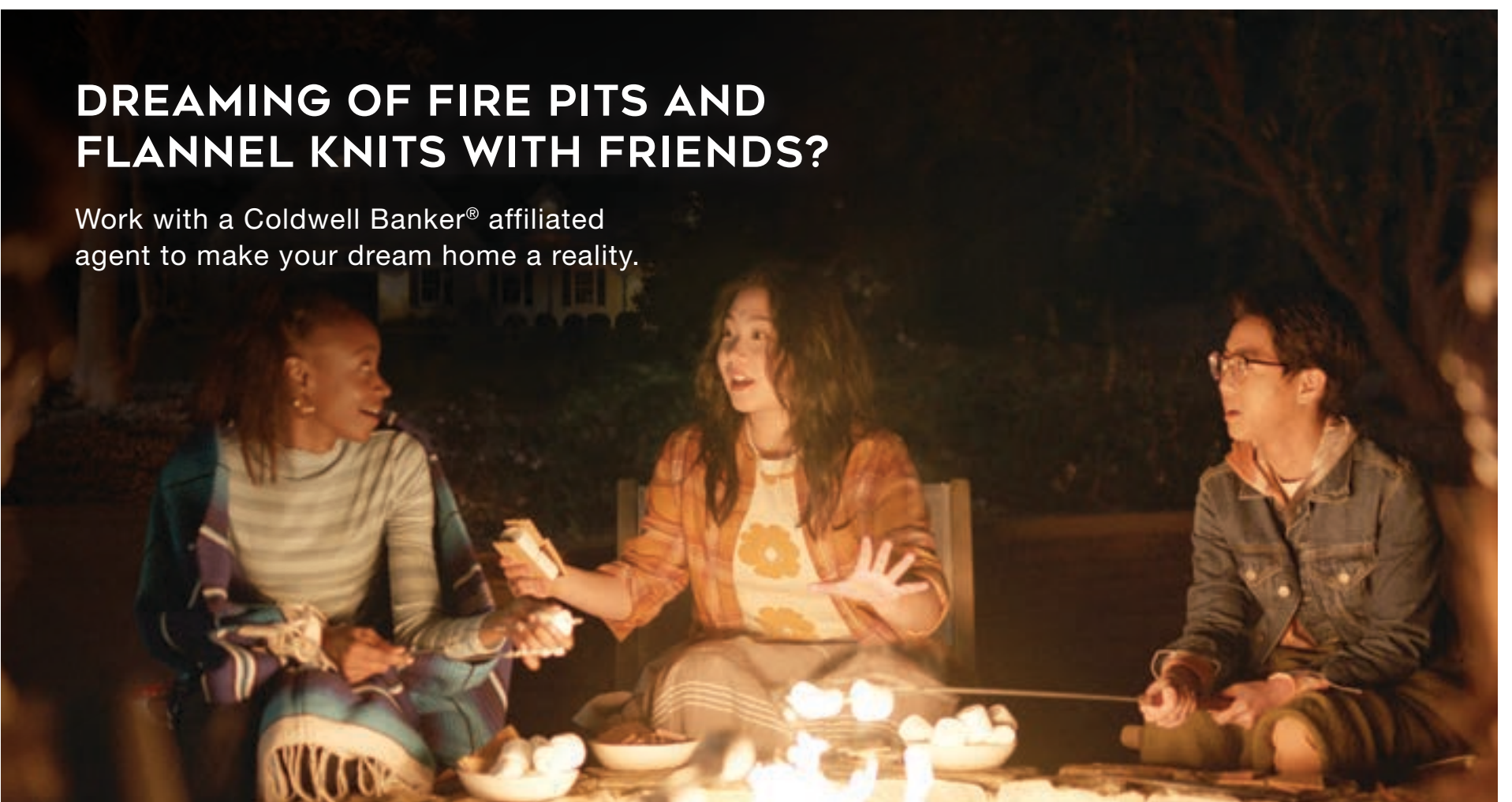
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SMC campus-wide walkout draws attention to sexual assault



“SMC Survivors” holds campus walkout Oct. 28 Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Last May, the anonymous group called “SMC Survivors” posted flyers throughout the Saint Mary’s College campus in order to bring awareness to the school’s sexual assault issues and lack of satisfaction for victims. On Oct. 28 the group staged a campus-wide walkout with approximately 200-300 students participating.

Still feeling that their grievances are not satisfactorily dealt with by the Title IX office and school officials, a rally was held on the Chapel Lawn where both event organizers and assault victims spoke to the assembled crowd.

Students were asked to sign a large purple banner that read: “One Message for the Campus Community” (to be posted at the Title IX office). Small purple flags were available for participants to place on the lawn in a show of solidarity. Purple is the color for domestic violence awareness. Pamphlets detailing support with regards to mental health for survivors were also offered.

Days before the walkout, SMC’s President Richard Plumb issued an Oct. 25 Title IX update and progress report listing the school’s “recent developments and ongoing efforts.” Pointing out that last spring several commitments were made in response to the group’s demands, Plumb noted, “In the coming weeks, a daily crime log will be published on the Public Safety website in accordance with the Clery Act; we’ve enhanced communications with those involved in incidents by following up on a regular and consistent basis to answer questions and provide support; we continue to care-

fully review our current workflows for all incident-related processes and procedures, and will publish those updated workflows soon; we’ve hired an interim Title IX deputy coordinator and will share more in the coming weeks regarding ongoing efforts to ensure appropriate staffing and bolster support for this critical area; and we developed and implemented mandatory sexual violence and sexual harassment prevention training for all students, faculty, and staff – on an ongoing basis.”

While wearing T-shirts with slogans such as “Feel My Rage,” organizers gave impassioned speeches expressing their frustration with SMC’s lack of duty and follow-through for the victims of on-campus sexual assault. One of the organizers, who doesn’t want her name printed, reported an assault to campus authorities in the fall of 2021. The case was closed a year after the incident happened. Her assailant was found “unresponsible” through the SMC Title IX process. She is appealing the judgment. “There are a lot of loopholes in the system,” she said. In the meantime, the man involved in the incident remains on campus.

Plumb arrived at the event, thanking everyone for showing up and, according to student advocate Lauren Kearney, let the crowd know that their voices were being heard. He was asked if he understood how big of an impact sexual assault has on an individual and if he’d ever personally experienced it. He replied in the negative. However, Plumb shared that a family member has had an experience. He left the group after answering a few more questions.

Kearney, who is a member of SCAAR (Student Coalition Against Abuse and Rape), was also assaulted on campus by someone who was never found culpable of the crime. He eventually moved to Toronto, Canada where he was arrested for assaulting another woman.

Another student who identifies as they/them was assaulted twice, explaining how difficult it has been emotionally. “We can only take so much! It keeps getting referred to the Title IX office, but they don’t do anything. It’s scary to tell someone what happened.”

Sexual assault on campus, while usually occurring to women has had its small share of male victims. Encouraged to come up before the crowd and speak, there were moments of painful silence as victims summoned up the courage to tell a large group of strangers their most painful and private secret. One by one, through tears and anger, several students said this was the first time they’d ever spoken openly about their experience. They all expressed anger that not enough was being done on campus to protect them, let alone finding satisfaction and follow-through.

After the walkout, SMC issued the following statement: “Care for one another is a foundational component of the Lasallian core principals that guide the Saint Mary’s experience. By proactively taking the initiative to raise awareness around important issues such as the prevention of sexual assault, our students are practicing these values. At the same time, this national issue continues to be one that we must work on collaboratively, and we all have a responsibility as a campus to help create a culture of care and safety. We have taken specific steps forward on this issue [outlined in Plumb’s Oct. 25 communication], and we are also mindful of the fact that these issues will take continued collaboration, so we look forward to continuing that work together as we seek to take additional steps forward in partnership with our entire campus community.”

For additional information about “SMC Survivors” contact: SMCSURVIVORS@gmail.com.

The Peter Pan Foundation celebrates grand re-opening; Mighty Pilates and Kimberley Harrison Interiors open in Lafayette



The Peter Pan Foundation celebrated its ribbon cutting on Oct. 6. Photo Jeff Heyman

Submitted by Gina Campo and Holly Sonne

The Peter Pan Foundation recently moved to a new location affectionately called the Treehouse at Creekside Commons, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. The official grand re-opening and ribbon cutting for the longtime Lafayette organization occurred Oct. 6, and was attended by the mayor of Lafayette, Teresa Gerringer, Lafayette Chamber president and members, PPF board members and participants with the local nonprofit. The event highlight was a flash mob and two stunning vocal performances by PPF members.

PPF founder Leslie Noel Hansen could not be happier with the new location. “Between the vivid rainbows that dance on the wall around 5 p.m., daily visits from majestic wildlife and inspiring humans, endless trees that surround us and the waterfall outside our window – the PPF is truly home.”

Mighty Pilates also recently opened their Lafayette location in the Mercantile at 3589 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Lafayette Chamber board of directors, ambassadors, members and staff welcomed them along with Mayor Teresa Gerringer. And the Lafayette Chamber welcomed Kimberley Harrison Interiors (71 Lafayette Circle) to Lafayette on Oct. 13.

Learn more about PPF at <https://peterpanfoundation.org>. For info about Mighty Pilates, visit www.mightypilates.com/ and Kimberley Harrison Interiors at www.kimberleyharrison.com/



Ribbon cutting at Kimberley Harrison Interiors on Oct. 13. Photo provided



City officials welcome Mighty Pilates to Lafayette at recent ribbon cutting. Photo provided

~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

What lurks beneath Saint Mary's College?



Photo Vera Kochan

SMC's Brother David Caretti with orb hovering near his chest

By Vera Kochan

On a rather balmy, late October evening, Moraga's Saint Mary's College offered a free event sponsored by the SMC Alumni Office, calling it "Brews & Boos." The title is rather self-explanatory for an experience that begins in the campus' The 1928 Pub and features a tour of the mysterious underground catacombs, a few nights before Halloween.

A complimentary and hearty nacho bar with a no-host beverage bar was available, possibly to fortify the participants who just might have naively signed up to take a one-way tour into the bowels of SMC, never to be heard from again.

Alumni Engagement Services and Events Assistant Director Philip Goodwin and Program Manager Bailey Minardi coordinated the evening's festivities while Brother David Caretti took groups of 10 people at a time down into the catacombs. What better way to instill trust in unsuspecting souls, than to follow a man of the cloth into the unknown?

The last time anyone had gone "down below" was in 2019, before it was suspended due to COVID restrictions – at least that's what we were told (wink-wink). Nearly 100 years old, the catacombs are part of

the original 1928 construction of the campus.

As Caretti led the first group of explorers from the pub, past The Chapel, to the inevitable entrance of what by now is assumed to be Hell's Gate, the jovial chatter of the party morphed into an almost nervous, giggly hush. For years, rumors have abounded with tales of students sneaking their way down into the haunted depths, only to become lost for days, and finally emerging as babbling fools thanks to their macabre experiences. Adding to that, is the undocumented theory that the catacombs once acted as a subterranean cemetery for SMC's deceased clergy members before their remains were transplanted (so to speak) to their final resting place in Napa.

Once all of the "tourists" had descended to the netherworld, it was obvious even to a layman, that the vast network of tunnels house nothing more than interconnecting pipes and cables that service the college's electrical and plumbing needs. One might think this all a bit anticlimactic, but the sight was impressive nonetheless. The main tunnel travels back toward the direction of the Chapel and beyond, appearing to go on for an eternity and giving one the impression of a subway sys-

tem minus the train. There was evidence of unintelligible graffiti running rampant on the walls (which may give credence to the tales of students

left down there too long and emerging as blathering morons).

Spooky? Yes. It is not a place anyone would want to spend alone for a long period of time, left to the mercy of an over-active imagination. If

taken at face value, the catacombs are merely an infrastructural necessity meant to keep SMC functioning comfortably. However, how does one explain a photo of a white orb hovering in front of Caretti?

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with



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Christopher Knight

Nov. 13

Award Honorees



Actress, Dancer
Barrie Chase

Nov. 12



Director
Randal Kleiser

Nov. 13

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November 14 • 7:00pm



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Lamorinda Veteran's Day vigils planned

A Veterans Memorial is scheduled from 9 to 10 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 11 at Moraga Commons Park (1425 St. Mary's Road) at the Memorial Rock to honor those who served and will include a cadre of Scouts, town and county officials, veterans and community members who will listen to speakers and enjoy refreshments. Additionally, a Veteran's Day Vigil will take place at 4:30 p.m. that same day at the Lafayette Hillside Memorial, across from BART in Lafayette. Thoughts at the vigil will be focused on U.S. soldiers who have served on behalf of our country and the sacrifices

they've made. It will include short speeches, music and reflection.

Lafayette Hillside Memorial continues to be a place of reflection and remembrance; a protest against forgetting. It is a place to recognize, honor, and commemorate individual national service contributions. The memorial is also a place that encourages individual and public reflection on those contributions, and the otherwise unintended, unseen, and unexamined costs of war.

For more information, or to donate to maintenance, visit www.lafayettehillsidememorial.org. – J. Wake

Great taste, less time with this banana bread redux



Banana Nut Bread Coffee Cake

Photos Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

Do you ever have overripe bananas? It always happens to us, because it seems that whenever I buy bananas, we never eat all of them before they start to get mushy and brown. What do you do with mushy bananas? That's when I freeze them for banana bread, which does get gobbled up!

But what I have never really liked about my banana bread, is that it takes forever to cook and it never gets completely baked in the very center of the loaf without the top getting too dark and overdone. The center can still be gooey even after 50 minutes of baking. Not ideal.

We had houseguests last weekend, so I bought a beautiful bunch of bananas, which

are great for a quick snack. Besides, somehow it looks like you run a professional operation if there are bananas in the fruit basket. At the end of the weekend there were two aging bananas left on the counter, and reluctantly I started thinking about banana bread. After all of these years, I decided to make the banana bread in a square baking pan instead of the longer and deeper loaf pan. Voilà! Banana Bread Coffee Cake. That was

just the ticket and the bread came out perfectly baked on top and cooked, but moist, in the middle and still tasted exactly like banana bread.

Another benefit is that it only takes 20-25 minutes to bake the bread in an 8x8 square pan, so you can make your bread that morning and serve it hot, right out of the oven. If you've ever had banana bread travails like I have, this is your answer. By the way, you don't have to use

mushy bananas for your banana bread, but it is a great way to use them up. (I hate wasting food!) If you're not quite ready to make the bread, just freeze the bananas right in the peel and thaw them and peel them just as you're ready to bake with them. Once baked, the banana bread coffee cake also freezes very well. Just wrap it in plastic wrap or foil and freeze in an airtight container.

Banana Nut Bread Coffee Cake

(Makes one 8x8 inch-square coffee cake)

INGREDIENTS

4 oz. butter, softened to room temp (1 stick or 1/2 cup)
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup light brown sugar
2 eggs
2 cups all-purpose flour (can use half whole wheat flour if you prefer)
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
2-3 large ripe bananas, mashed or chopped
3/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts
1 tsp. vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease or spray an 8x8 inch baking dish with cooking spray.

Cream together butter and both sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Add vanilla and bananas and mix until integrated. Sift flour, baking soda and salt right into the batter and mix well. Fold in chopped nuts.

Turn batter out into prepared pan and bake for approximately 20-25 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean and the cake is golden brown on top. Serve warm or at room temperature.



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>



SMC Dance Company's collective dance concert, 'Unveiling,' Nov. 17



Image provided

The Saint Mary's College Dance Company's collective dance concert, "Unveiling," which will be offered both in-person and live-streamed beginning Nov. 17, shares investigations of time, women's rights, familial warfare, religious oppression, marginalization, and many more innovative concepts.

This showcase is produced, performed and choreographed by the Dance Program's Senior Class of 2023: Faith Alexis, Sofia Amador, Trinity R Boykin, Rochelle Demelo, Sev Fisher, Andrio Jordan Fong, Olivia Rose Grimes, Alexa Janezell, Elena Prisco, and features a new work by guest artist and alumna Micah Sallid. According to the Saint Mary's website, "Unveiling" is a collective dance show that is motivated by the idea of finding grounding and balance within the dance community amidst readjusting from the Covid-19 pandemic. "Returning to campus this fall and reflecting on the shared experiences of the last few years, these emerging choreographers are exploring concepts of familial warfare,

changing love, women's rights, time, self divinity, power within marginalization, religious oppression, homesickness, and the instability of dance spaces."

Andrew Merrell, Dance Faculty and Senior Project Advisor, says he is honored and excited to be on this journey of choreographic exploration with this current group of SMC seniors. "All of them are attacking their work with vigor and deep inquiry. They are on a fearless endeavor of making their voices heard in a world that needs very much to listen and take notice!"

"Unveiling" will be performed Nov. 17-19 at 8 p.m. in LeFevre Theatre, and at 2 p.m. Nov. 19 (Live in LeFevre and livestreamed). Tickets: \$15 General Admission, \$8 for SMC students, \$12 Staff/Faculty/ Non-SMC students. Online sales. A limited number of cash/check-only tickets will be available at the Box Office half an hour before each performance. For information, visit www.stmaries-ca.edu/Unveiling. – J. Wake

Can being in the moment help you?



Photo provided

Linda with her daughter during Camino walk in Spain

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson

Camino de Santiago, a walk that brings life messages. I had the experience of walking over 100 miles on the Camino in Spain this past month. The path is the pilgrimage of the apostle St. James the Great, his bones are housed in the Cather-

dral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain. Unlike most walkers who do 10 miles a day – I did 6 plus miles most days. There were some very tough uphill grades as well as steep down hills and rocky passes.

If anyone had told me I would do this at my age, I would say they were crazy. I

usually walk about two miles a day, five days a week. However, I trusted my daughter to plan the trip, making sure we had private baths in our rooms and a couple of days of rest. In all, it took us 16 days to do our trek. We had only one rest day and we took a 2-mile hike on that day.

This walk is called a "pilgrimage" and you are called a Pilgrim by the Spanish people you meet along the path, who treat you very nicely along the way. You also meet people from all over this world, all doing the walk for a variety of reasons. The advice is to do the "Camino" your way – there are people who feel they need to carry their pack and some think unless you do the entire 500 miles you just are not doing it. We had our suitcases transported daily between stops and just carried a day-pack. We never felt like we were less than the other pilgrims and kept our own pace. We walked in all types of weather, warm and sunny, fog and rain. Like life, we experienced all the challenges of a long journey on foot through the wilderness, farmlands and cities.

A big challenge was the long uphill climbs; I had to find a way to manage the burden of physical endurance. As a result, I learned that worries in life can be a hidden barrier to accomplishing goals and surviving tough days. What I said looking down at the path (and not at the hill in front of me) is "the path is flat" and "the world is round". As long as I

just looked at what was right in front of my eyes and stayed in the moment I was able to climb most hills with little stopping.

I did not ignore the reality of the challenge in front of me – I called that "the world." At the same time, saying the path is flat allowed me to be truly present in the moment. That simple statement became a metaphor that I will use for the rest of my life.

Most of us lead busy lives and some of us are caregivers for those who cannot manage their own life. Thus, we are always thinking ahead and rarely do we enjoy the moment without the burden of worries. The trip taught me the importance of being present in the moment, overcoming obstacles, and a valuable lesson in how to feel calm and beautiful when we simply live in our surroundings – smelling, tasting, touching, hearing and seeing without thinking or processing.

I shared this lesson with my dementia support group and they heard the message. It will be interesting to see if they are able to find 10 minutes a day to be in the moment and how it changes their burden of caring. The world is round and we do have to climb at times but if we do it with the intention to be "present in the moment," it can recharge our energy and give us a calm that other activities do not. Peace to you.

The Zoom dementia class for November is about managing "behavioral challenges." I

will add some new interventions for challenges based on my experience. The class will be held on at 11 a.m. Nov. 11 – for a Zoom link, go to the website (www.LindaFodriniJohnson.com) or send me an email.

Affirmation: I spend time daily in the "Moment." Time without thinking, just being.
Zoom Classes:
Dementia:
Managing Behavioral Challenges, Nov. 11
Dementia:
Self-Care/Preventing Burnout, Dec. 9



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989. Eldercare Services is now a division of Home Care Assistance and continues to provide Bay Area families with care management, advocacy, counseling, support groups and education.



“Kincsem - Bet on Revenge” - an epic Hungarian film at the 23rd CAIFF

By Sophie Braccini

The 23rd California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF) opens at the Orinda Theatre Nov. 10 with India's selection for the 2023 Oscars, “Last Film Show.” Information about all the films and festival events can be found at <https://www.caiff.org/film-submissions>. “Kincsem - Bet on Revenge” is the Hungarian film that will close the festival on Nov. 17. The highly entertaining full feature will continue to play for a week at the Orinda Theatre after the lights of the festival have gone dark.

“Kincsem,” with its valiant cavalcades, ironclad characters, evil traitors and brave heroes, is a hymn to the indomitable character of a country, Hungary, to its men, women, and of course its horses. This movie is a must see if you have an interest in heroic stories and Conan style revenge.

There was once a real mare called Kincsem. She lived in Hungary from March 1874 to March 1887. During her four-season racing career she ran 54 races and

won them all. Kincsem holds the longest undefeated record of any racehorse. The movie that bears her name is otherwise purely fictional.

The story takes place in the late 19th century when Hungary was a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, led by two different governments under the leadership of Austrian emperor Franz Joseph I. A few years prior, a Hungarian revolution had been crushed by Franz Joseph with the help of the Russian army. The resentment of the Hungarian people against the victors, and against the Hungarians that sided with the Emperor, is the backdrop of the story. There are two sides: the good ones who own Kincsem and are true Hungarians, and the traitors who would do anything to crush the brave horse that symbolizes the spirit and the revenge of an untamable country.

The beautifully filmed melodramatic period movie would not be complete without the harrowing love story that may develop between the hero and the daughter of the traitor. In the spirit of a

true cloak-and-dagger film, “Kincsem” includes many well choreographed action scenes. Spectators will be treated to duels as well as balls and love scenes.

Horse race enthusiasts will also appreciate the suspense created by the races. Several of these are filmed with mastery, and even if one thinks they know the ending, surprises are nicely introduced.

The feature film aimed at the general public is striking and directed with great efficiency by Gábor Herendi. Ernő Blaskovich is played by Ervin Nagy, while Andrea Petric portrays the bold and beautiful Klara von Oettingen.

The movie, released in Hungary in 2017, was the most successful Hungarian film of the last decade in that country. It has won several international awards including the Best International Film, the Best Cinematography and the Best Screenplay at the California Wine Country Film Festival.

Photo provided

Sweet Thursday Author Series features Author Barbara Quick

Submitted by Laurie Miles

Friends of the Lafayette Library presents author Barbara Quick at 7 p.m. Nov. 17 in the Don Tatzin Community Hall to discuss her book “What Disappears.” Winner of the Discover: Great New Writers Prize for “Northern Edge,” author of the 13-times translated international favorite “Vivaldi’s Virgins” (currently in development as a mini-series), and an

award-winning poet with a national platform, Quick has brought all her considerable artistry and skill together in her sumptuous fourth novel, a multi-generational saga peopled by the greatest dancers, artists, writers, designers, and trend-setters of the Belle Époque.

“What Disappears” begins in Tsarist Russia in the late 19th century and ends in Paris with the start of the First World War. One of two identical twins born to a Jewish

family in dire political and financial straits, Zaneta is spirited out of an orphanage by a Catholic family from France. The other twin, Sonya – raised to believe her sister died at birth – has her life and livelihood shattered by the horrific 1903 pogrom in Kishinev. The twins come face to face as 29-year-old identical strangers in the doorway of Anna Pavlova’s dressing-room when both find jobs in Paris with Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes, one as a seamstress and the other as

a minor ballerina in the corps. The resulting complicated relationship brings to light the secrets they’ve kept even from themselves, affecting not only their lives but also the lives and fates of Sonya’s three daughters. A meticulously researched page-turner of displacement, family dynamics, and cultural loss, “What Disappears” resonates for contemporary readers with its fast-moving plot and deep dive into the ways in which girls and women define their iden-

tity and search for meaning.

This free event is sponsored by the Friends of the Lafayette Library although registration is required and seating is limited. Register at tinyurl.com/Sweet-Nov22 for either in-person or Zoom attendance. The DTCH doors will be open at 6:45 p.m. for coffee and sweets before the talk. Orinda Books will be on site selling copies of the book. Please wear a facial mask, if you are not fully vaccinated.

Surprising discovery unearthed amongst the dried weeds at Los Perales



Photos Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Doing its part to participate in wildfire mitigation measures, the folks at Los Perales Ele-

mentary School in Moraga made an unusual and historic discovery.

During the process of performing fire abatement work

in the lower field of the campus, the crew discovered a bronze plaque affixed to a medium-sized boulder at the foot of a huge eucalyptus tree. Turning green around the edges thanks to its exposure to the elements, the plaque reads: “Bicentennial Heritage Tree, Eucalyptus Globulus, The Tree Was Planted Circa 1895, Dedicated April 11, 1976.”

Administrative Assistant Krystal White, who often takes a walk around the entire campus, took this reporter to the site of the tree and plaque. Neither could find any other clues or markings that might add details as to what organization or individual made the commemoration or how they knew when the tree was planted.

According to “Images of America: Moraga” by Susan K. Skilton, tall trees such as the eucalyptus were planted by farmers and ranchers to help break up occasional wind gusts. “The land where the tree still grows once belonged to rancher James Marion Daley, onetime superintendent of the Moraga School.”

As to who placed the commemorative plaque at the base of the tree, Skilton’s book explains, “The Moraga Town Council designated this eucalyptus, which dates from at least 1910, the Bicentennial

Heritage Tree. At the time of the dedication, the girth of the eucalyptus tree was estimated to be 28 feet and the height 65 feet.”

This reporter’s search through Moraga Historical Society’s Los Perales files did not uncover any additional particulars, and no one at the school has any further information about the 127-year-old tree whose, pardon the pun, roots come from Australia.

Giving a tree the designation of a “Heritage Tree” is not just a whim, according to the Phytosphere Research website. “Individual trees may be considered important community resources because of unique or noteworthy characteristics or values. Such trees have been described in ordinances as heritage, historic, landmark, legacy, special interest, significant, or specimen



trees. In some ordinances, trees are simply labeled protected trees.” There are several possible criteria used when giving a tree “Heritage” status: size, species, age, historic significance, ecological value, aesthetics, location, required plantings and retained trees, just to name a few.

An odd footnote to the saga is that the tree was planted on land now called Los Perales; English translation: “The Pear Trees”.

Special thanks to the Moraga Historical Society.

Lamorinda Weekly

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Moraga Garden Club spreads blooms, butterflies and a bounty of good cheer



Photo provided

From left: MGC members Carolyn Westhoff and Janice Lieu, behind the sign, Marilyn Smith (middle) Jessica Fleming to extreme right, Susan Sperry to left, and Rena Munson, in front of sign.

Submitted by Linda U. Foley

The Refresh of the Moraga Commons entrance at the intersection of Moraga and Saint Mary's Roads saw its eagerly-awaited final mulching touches two weeks ago. A cadre of community volunteers – including husbands, Kiwanis, town officials – were spurred on by appreciative honking and comments from pedestrians and motorists. The Garden Club's own Julie Stagg's thoughtful design was diligently implemented by Jessica Fleming and Janice Lieu.

There are five other beautification projects the MGC has designed, planted and continues to maintain: The Coun-

try Club urns with solar lighting, the Library urn, the large Triangle at the intersection of Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard (now referred to as the Gateway Entrance), the Perennial Garden at the Hacienda (near the Casita) with picnic table, and the fabulous Monarch Demonstration and Teaching Garden, a haven for returning butterflies and respite for all ages.

The Moraga Garden Club welcomes new volunteers in the upkeep of these projects.

You can follow the Moraga Garden Club on Facebook, Instagram, and Nextdoor, or visit its website for more information at moragagardenclub.com. You can also reach the club at moragagardenclub@gmail.com.

Lamorinda Village hosts successful booster clinic



Photo Kathryn Ishizu

Lamorinda Village volunteers Becky Jenkins and Helen Gough wait to greet booster clinic attendees.

Submitted by Laura-Kate Rurka

Over 150 community seniors received their Covid-19 boosters Oct. 5 at a clinic hosted by Lamorinda Village in conjunction with Contra Costa County Health. County health workers administered either Moderna or Pfizer Covid Bivalent boosters over a four-hour period at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Vaccine recipients were grateful for the opportunity to receive their recommended shots quickly and eas-

ily. Many wrote afterward to thank the Village for hosting the event, remarking on the ease of making an appointment, friendly volunteers, and excellent nurses.

Several volunteers were on hand to assist, including Becky Jenkins, Helen Gough, Andrea Appleton, and Tori Sovocool from Lamorinda Village and Cheryl Miller, Leslie Finertie, and Catherine Coleman from the Lafayette Orinda-Presbyterian Church Congregational Chair Team. Lamorinda Village is thankful to those who helped make it a successful event.

NCL hosts 'Civics for Teen Girls' event



Photo Shirley DeFrancisci

NCL Acalanes and Lamorinda Chapters hosted a panel of local elected officials, from left: Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, District Attorney Diana Becton, Lafayette School Board Trustee Suzy Pak, Orinda Council Member Amy Worth, Moraga Town Council Vice Mayor Renata Sos, and Orinda School Board Vice President Hillary Weiner.

Submitted by Ella Hack

Over 200 teen girls from Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda filled the stands of the Miramonte High School gymnasium Oct. 23. They were not there to cheer for a sporting event; rather, these girls came together to attend Lamorinda's first-ever "Non-Partisan Civics for Teen Girls" event, to hear from inspiring local female elected officials in Contra Costa County about the importance of being engaged and informed citizens.

The Acalanes and Lamorinda Chapters of National Charity League (NCL) organized this informative panel discussion, and hope the success of this event can serve as a blueprint for other NCL chapters across the nation to encourage more girls to share their voice and become engaged in our political process. Abigail Weiner, a student from Miramonte High School and member of NCL, shared why her chapter helped organize the event: "It is important for young women to participate in voting in order to share a new and younger generation's perspective and to express their opinions and have a say in the political world."

The panel included District Attorney Diana Becton, the first woman and person of color to serve as Contra Costa District Attorney since the office was established in 1850; Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, the current 16th California Assembly District representative; Suzy Pak, a trustee on the Lafayette School Board; Renata Sos, a member of the Moraga Town Council and vice mayor; Hillary Weiner, current Vice President of the Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees; and Amy Worth, Orinda City Council member and former mayor who has served for 24 years.

Kay Lankford and Kirstin Parker, both seniors at Miramonte High School and members of NCL, served as the afternoon's emcees. They encouraged panelists to share their experiences as women in the political world and fielded questions from the audience. Questions included, "Why is it important for women to hold elected office?" and "What is the hardest and most rewarding part of your job?" The panelists shared their inspiring stories of how and why they entered politics, and described the unique skills and perspectives that women bring to the political process. They also appealed to the teen girls in the audience to get involved in local issues by attending city council and school board meetings, joining committees, interning, and letting their elected representatives know – via calls and emails, presentations, and other means – what issues matter to them. Girls 16 years and older were invited to pre-register to vote at registertovote.ca.gov.

In addition to attending the panel discussion of local elected leaders, the teen attendees worked together by class to make several hundred patriotic zipper pulls for soldiers, as requested by NCL philanthropy partner Blue Star Moms. Blue Star Moms is a national, non-political, Congressionally chartered veteran service organization that has been supporting troops since 1960.

National Charity League is a national philanthropic organization of mothers and daughters committed to philanthropy, culture, and leadership. NCL donates close to three million hours annually to over 6,000 charities in the United States. The Acalanes and Lamorinda chapters are composed of approximately 250 girls in 7th-12th grades, and their mothers. For more information, visit nationalcharityleague.org.

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 story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

In Memory

Cedric Terry Brady (Ric)

Sept. 8, 1942- Oct. 20, 2022



It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Cedric Terry Brady (Ric), a 46-year resident of Orinda. Eight weeks ago, he was diagnosed with Glioblastoma, an aggressive brain cancer. We feel blessed that before he passed he was able to celebrate his 80th birthday and reconnect with many friends and relatives.

Ric was born in Palo Alto, Calif., to Mamie DuBose Brady and Clemer Cedric Brady. He attended Palo Alto High School, Yale University, and UC Berkeley School of Public Health. He served five years in the USAF as a KC135 Navigator.

After the Air Force, Ric spent many years as a medical group practice administrator, first in Seattle, Wash., and then in Oakland, Calif. He

eventually formed his own niche business in the East Bay, Brady and Associates, which specialized in brokering oral surgery practices. After his retirement, Ric found more time to enjoy skiing, walking at the local high school track, taking Cal extension courses, reading extensively, and spending time with his children and grandchildren. An avid sports fan, Ric also devoted hours to following Olympics events, the Tour de France, assorted track and field meets, local professional sports teams, and the Cal Bears.

At the end of his life Ric spoke often and with pride about his experience on the Palo Alto HS relay team that broke a national record in the four-mile relay. Ric ran his four laps in 4:30.4. The new record for the relay was 17:51.8. The friendships Ric developed through track lasted a lifetime.

Ric is survived by his wife of 56 years, Susan; his son Steven Brady (Katie); his daughter Janice Metzger (Keith); and his four grandchildren, Ashley and Casey Metzger; Declan and Ellison Brady. He is also survived by his sister, Jean Brady (Norm Young).

A celebration of Ric's life will take place at the Piedmont Community Church, 400 Highland Avenue, Piedmont, Calif., at 1 p.m. Nov. 11, with a reception following. Many thanks to the staff at Dysico Care Home and Hospice East Bay for helping Ric in the last several weeks.

Should you wish to donate in Ric's memory, the family suggests Hospice East Bay 3470 Buskirk Avenue Pleasant Hill CA 94523 or Brain Chemistry Labs PO Box 3464, Jackson, WY 83001 (brainchemistrylabs.org)

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 story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

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Art

The Moraga Art Gallery's lush holiday exhibit, "Variations on the Theme of Beauty," debuts on Nov. 9 with a display of works by more than two dozen area artists: ceramists, sculptors, oil painters, etchers, and many more whose talents will be front-and-center until Jan. 15 at 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. Ordinarily open Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m., the gallery will be open daily between Dec. 1 and 24. Save the date: Saturday, Nov. 19, 5 to 7 p.m., free holiday reception to view the art, meet the artists and enjoy snacks and live music. www.moragaartgallery.com, (925) 376-5407.

Art show at Orinda Books. November features the paintings of Lisa Gunn. Lisa has long had a prominent artistic presence in Orinda. Her style is a "California Impressionism" involving plein air, landscapes, and abstracts. She notes "I am hoping that people will connect with my painting and find some attachment that speaks to them whether it be through color, composition or some thread of energy transmitting from one human to another." Visit the Artist of the Month at www.orindabooks.com/events.

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library: Paintings, Photography, Woodburning, & Hats. Lamorinda Arts Council presents paintings by Nicole Reader, photography by Farzeen Taban, woodturning by David Fleisig and hats by Denise Goodman in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library during November. Show runs Nov. 1 through 30. Close dates at all Contra Costa Libraries are Nov. 11, Nov. 23 at 6 p.m. and all day Nov. 24. Visit www.lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits/ to view November artwork online.

Art Gallery at Wilder: Juleen Lapporte "Celebrating 40 over 40." Lamorinda Arts Council presents portrait photography of featured artist Juleen Lapporte at her virtual Art Gallery at Wilder from Nov. 1 through Dec. 5. You can see more of Lapporte's photographs at www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries. Lapporte is an award-winning portrait photographer based in Lafayette who is showing 13 women over 40 and their stories.

Music

The Saint Mary's College Dance Company proudly presents "Unveiling," the fall dance concert created by nine senior choreographers from the Class of 2023, along with guest artist and alumna Micah Sallid. Nov. 17, 18, 8 p.m.; Nov. 19, 2 p.m. (also live-streamed); Nov. 19, 8 p.m., LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga.

Discovering Opera: Alma Deutscher's Cinderella presented by Bradford Wade, opera lover for 40 years. Based on the classic fairytale, this family-friendly work is reset at an opera company run by a scheming stepmother, in which the title character is a brilliant composer, laboring as a copyist. In this production, Cinderella is united with the prince not due to the fit of a glass slipper, but with the beginning of a melody only she knows how to continue. Wednesday, Nov. 9 1-2:30 p.m. Arts & Science Room, Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Free.

Pacific Chamber Orchestra (PCO) ushers in the holiday season with the sublime melodies, uplifting messages and sheer beauty of George Frideric Handel's beloved Messiah. This year's program Glorious will be performed in three locations on Friday Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m at St Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Pleasanton, Saturday, Nov. 26, 7:30 p.m at St. Stephens Episcopal

Church in Orinda and Sunday, Nov. 27, 3 p.m at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore. To purchase tickets for the performance at Livermore's Bankhead Theater, go to <https://livermorearts.org/events/pco-glorious/>, boxoffice@bankheadtheater.org, (925) 373-6800

Theatre

Town Hall Theatre Company presents: "Cinderella: A Fairytale" directed by Sequoia Schirmer, written by Sally Cookson and Adam Peck. Dec. 3-18. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$25-\$40. Dec. 17 is Pay-What-You-Can.

Literature

The Sweet Thursday Author Series is featuring author, Barbara Quick, on Nov. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Don Tatzin Community Hall at the Lafayette Library to discuss her book "What Disappears." This free event sponsored by the Friends of the Lafayette Library requires registration at tinyurl.com/Sweet-Nov22 for either in-person or Zoom attendance. The DTCH doors will be open at 6:45 for coffee and sweets.

Other

The Cycle Recycle: Don't toss that repairable bike on the garbage heap! For the month of November, Bobbie and Tom Preston are accepting repairable bikes that will be refurbished by volunteers and various biking organizations and distributed to kids, refugees, and those in need by White Pony Express, The Bike Charity Institute of Alamo, Keeping our Promise, and Waterside Workshops. New and/or used adult or children's bikes—in working order or repairable—or useable bike parts may be delivered to the side driveway of the Preston's home at 1307 Larch Avenue in Moraga through the month of November only. No skateboards or plastic bikes please; no need to call beforehand, but for more information contact Bobbie or Tom Preston at (925) 376-8474.

An AAUW Fund Fellowship/Grant recipient will speak at the AAUW-Orinda, Moraga, Lafayette Branch general meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 15, 9:30 to 11 a.m. at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. AAUW provides fellowships and grants for post-graduate academic work and community projects. Visit our website <https://oml-ca.aauw.net> for more information.

ca.aauw.net for more information.

Hospice East Bay is proud to be celebrating our 36th annual Tree of Lights. Our Tree of Lights ceremonies will begin Nov. 6 and run through Dec. 11. Lafayette, Tuesday, Nov. 15, 5:30 p.m.; Orinda, Saturday, Dec. 3, 4:30 p.m.; Moraga, Sunday, Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m.

Veteran's Day Vigil on Monday, Nov. 11, at 4:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Hillside Memorial. The memorial is across from BART in Lafayette. Thoughts will be focused on U.S. soldiers who have served on behalf of our country and the sacrifices they've made. It will include short speeches, music and reflection. www.lafayettehillside.com

Lafayette's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee presents: See Us: Hear Us, The Renters' Narrative of Life in Lafayette, facilitated by Sharon K. Sobotta. Thursday, Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Don Tatzin Community Hall.

Garden

The Montelindo Garden Club meeting on Friday, Nov. 18 will feature speaker Michael

Uhler of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Tilden Park, on their recently-completed Alpine Crevice Garden, in their Sierra section. This garden is a haven for California endangered plants. Montelindo Garden Club membership is open to all, and interested people are welcome to visit montelindogarden.com/meetings.html for meeting and club details. Location is the Lafayette Library Community Hall at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. The hall opens at 9:30 am, club meeting 10 a.m., Speaker 10:45 a.m. Free.

Moraga Garden Club—Nov. 17. Speaker Katie Creighton, Garden Designer, will present "Solving Garden Design Problems and Ideas for Awkward Spaces." This is a perfect topic for Newbies to the area or those who are struggling with problem spaces or are considering redesigning their gardens. We are free and welcome new members. www.moragagardenclub.com. We begin with Social Time at 9:30 a.m. at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Saint Mary's women's basketball brimming with potential



Ali Bamberger

Photo provided

By Jon Kingdon

In what looked to be a .500 season last year, Saint Mary's ended the season with a victorious run as the Gaels won their last three games to win the Women's Basketball Invitational ending the season with an 18 and 15 won-lost record. Building off that success, head coach Paul Thomas and his staff spent the off-season fine-tuning their system for the players.

"We made a lot of tweaks to the offense and defense," Thomas said. "We're looking to do a little more and a little better. We installed things that will showcase and accentuate the people that will be playing

more while playing to our team's strengths."

There is no shortage of veteran leadership on the team with two graduate students (Clair Steele and Taycee Wedin), and two redshirt seniors (Jade Kirisome and Amy West) on the roster. With the season just getting underway, Thomas is satisfied with the way that the team is coming together. "Our chemistry is very good, and we build on it every day," Thomas said. "In our scrimmages against Long Beach State and Sacramento State, we found out where our strengths are and most importantly what we need to work on."

What had been an Achilles heel for the Gaels, turnovers,

has been addressed with the arrival of Steele, a Lehigh graduate, who led the country last year in assists to turnover ratio. In the team's first scrimmage, without Steele they had 28 turnovers. In the second scrimmage with Steele, the number was cut down to 14. "Clair has so much to bring for us this year, especially in the turnover aspect," guard Taycee Wedin said. "She can really take care of the ball and lead us to success."

There is still the matter of determining who will be the team's starting five. Steele and Wedin (14.4 ppg) will be the starting guards and Ali Bamberger, the team's leading scorer (15.3) and rebounder (9.3) at forward are the only sure starters at this point. With nine guards and five forwards listed on the roster, Thomas does not feel locked in as to who he wants to play. "I want the five best players on the court," Thomas said. "It will also depend on who we are playing in determining who will be the other two starters."

Upon arrival, Steele's first goal was to grasp the team's system. "It was learning the offense and at the same time, finding what my role would be, finding where I can thrive and find my teammates and do my best to be a great point guard for the team," Steele said. "My teammates have helped me, so it's been a pretty smooth transition."

Steele has filled the role that Thomas envisioned for her. "She is a real leader out on the court and sees the big picture," Thomas said. "She's a bulldog and cares about one thing and that is being better. She will only make our team better by getting the ball to our scorers."

"There are a number of players that are legitimately competing for playing time in the backcourt." (Junior) Tayla Dalton is doing a great job along with (junior) Leia Hanafin,

(sophomore) Hannah Rapp, (sophomore) Makena Mastora and (senior) Jade Kirisome," Thomas said. "They are all going to play but it is yet to be determined as to who are going to be the starters."

Thomas has also been very pleased with sophomore Jasmine Farmer who is a transfer from Laney College. "I'm really happy where she is right now and she is going to get some time on the court playing the off guard," Thomas said. "She is a good rebounder and is aggressive to the ball."

There is also a competitive situation in the front court. "Ali Bamberger inside and Addy Wedin on the perimeter can do really good things," Thomas said. "Aspen Garrison had a great fall and has elevated herself along with Amy West and Ellie Croco."

With so many returning players, this is a team that really understands each other's roles, but there is still a concern for Thomas. "The players have a really good handle of what each other can do," Thomas said. "That's chemistry. For example, they know that they need to get the ball to Taycee on the perimeter and Ali Bamberger closer to the basket, Tayla cutting to the basket and Leia driving the ball. It's just that we don't always show the sense of urgency we need on the court."

Thomas is also looking for more physicality from the team. "We have to be a better and more aggressive rebounding team, particularly from our guards," Thomas said. "It's just a matter of getting after the ball and not counting on a couple of people to do that. On defense it's being in the right position and on offense, it's the most aggressive people that will get the rewards. I'm a huge believer in going after the ball and we need that from the entire team. We're talking about offensive rebounding with four people and leaving one player back on de-

fense and we're not there yet."

Thomas' other concern is with the team's finishing each possession. "They know what their teammates are going to do and what we still need to work on is timing such as not taking a quick semi-contested 3-point shot with 18 seconds left on the clock," Thomas said. "We can be really good and then be really bad all within one 30-second period on offense. We can really move the ball and then randomly turn the ball over or take a bad shot."

This concern also carries over to the team's defense. "We can play really good defense for the first 20 seconds of the shot clock but if one person gets out of position, we get ourselves in trouble and we're trying to correct that. Our margin for error is not very big so we can't play poorly and win a bunch of games."

Addy Wedin, a redshirt freshman, has missed the last two years with injuries and is finally healthy and is someone that Thomas is counting on. "Addy can be a big contributor this year. She can play the 2-3-4, having the ability to play big inside and shoot well from the perimeter," Thomas said. "She can score from all over the floor and has the potential to be our leading scorer at some point."

However, when you talk about their offense, the first name to come up is Taycee Wedin playing in her fifth year for Saint Mary's. Wedin, the career leading 3-point shooter at Saint Mary's and for the West Coast Conference with 323 3-point shots, is in a position that with another solid season, she could end up in the top 10 nationally as a career 3-point shooter. Wedin is very optimistic in how the team is developing. "We have the potential to be really good," Wedin said. "We're a hungry and motivated team that wants to do well this year."

Baseball by the numbers: one man's journey into the world of analytics



Photo provided

Moraga resident Zo Obradovic

By Jon Kingdon

It was Mark Twain (among others) who said, "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." Zo (Zoran) Obradovic, Moraga resident and Principal Engineer for Research and Development for the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team – along with the other analysts on the

Phillies and the analytics departments for the other 29 major league baseball teams – would beg to differ.

Prior to the creation of the analytics departments in major league baseball, most teams came to rely on Bill James, who in 1977 until 1988 published his annual 'Bill James Baseball Abstracts' which analyzed and studied baseball through the use of statistical data.

It was in 2016 when the Philadelphia Phillies became the last team in the major leagues to start an analytics department and Obradovic became the third person hired for the department, though his path to the Phillies was not as the crow flies.

Growing up outside of Chicago and a big Chicago Cubs fan, Obradovic was immediately attracted to computers. "I thought computers were cool," Obradovic said. "Initially

I found that you could play games on them and always thought they were super interesting and exciting. My dad felt that computers were not going anywhere but I told him to trust me on this one."

After graduating from the University of Chicago and Purdue University with a BS and MS in computer science, Obradovic worked on Wall Street for 10 years and began some startups in Chicago. With the unpleasant weather and lack of space in Chicago and at the admonition of his wife Jackie, Zo chose to move to the Bay Area. "We lived a mile off the 80 freeway and drove the 2,200 miles, getting off at the Golden Gate Bridge," Obradovic said.

After leaving Bank of America, Obradovic began working with some startups like VSCO, a photo and video editing app. The demands of

startups required Obradovic working late into the evenings and on weekends. "At that point, I decided that I did not want to be gone from my family," Obradovic said. "I wanted to be there for my wife and kids."

That's when fate stepped in and Obradovic learned that computers, videos and baseball were interconnected in the major leagues. "I saw an ad for a job in computers for the Philadelphia Phillies on their website and on a spur, I applied for the position just to see where it would go," Obradovic said. "A couple of weeks later, I received a call from Andy Galdi who has just been hired as the Phillies Director of Baseball Research and Development and learned that the Phillies were creating an analytics department."

Having settled in California with his sons in school,

Obradovic made it clear that he did not want to move but would be willing to work remotely. "Andy thought for a second and said simply, 'That's fine,'" Obradovic said. "Their goal was not to hire baseball lifers because they had plenty of people like that. They wanted people that knew statistics and computers. Our department now comprises 25 analysts which are evenly split between statisticians/mathematicians and computer people. The archetype now is the jocks and nerds working together to make the best team possible."

The book "Moneyball" by Michael Lewis, and the movie starring Brad Pitt, opened up a lot of eyes to what was possible with analytics.

... continued on Page C3

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7th/8th GRADE BOYS, ENGLAND

(Front row L to R): Christian Dunphy, Waylon Xiang, Harrison Sheffler, Edward Leung, Everett Hughes, Hirsch Peters, Reed Anderson, Jacob Mariampolski. (Back row L to R): Coach Kevin Wiggen, Ethan Adam, Calvin Wiggen, Hunter Crandall, David Ellerbrock, Danny Dunne, Connor Harley, Rayyan Khan, Coach Kevin Dunphy, Ian Lin, Coach David Mariampolski.



3rd GRADE GIRLS, ARGENTINA

(Front row L to R): Lauren Meehan, Chloe Sallat, Brooklyn Wilson, Poppy Sroka, Solette Rogers, Cali Walston, Georgia Rachuba, Macie Lusch, Ella Ciccio, Harper Wolff, Noor Elyse Kershaw. (Back row L to R): Coaches Mike Sroka, George Lusch.



4th GRADE GIRLS, GERMANY

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5th/6th GRADE GIRLS, MEXICO

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7th/8th GRADE GIRLS, ENGLAND

(Front row L to R): Claire Leanos, Camila Monahan, Emma O'Connor, Faye Pang, Olivia Parker, Isabella Polson Flanagin. (Back row L to R): Annie Andres, Olivia Bush, Lily Campbell, Reese Dankworth, Stella DeGroot, Noelle Dobies, Megan Ingham, Emiko Kuniyoshi, Sophie Kuss. Coaches Doug Ingham, Dave Monahan.



Baseball by the numbers: one man's journey into the world of analytics

... continued from Page C1

Obradovic, who sees himself as the Jonah Hill character on the screen, came in at the right time for the Phillies as they were the last team in league to have an analytics department. "Starting late ended up providing us with a paradoxical benefit because we were starting with the latest technologies, like all the startups do so, at that point, we were able to move a lot faster than the teams that were stuck with older equipment."

With dozens of high-speed cameras in each stadium, major league baseball uses a program called Statcast that was introduced in 2015 which measures all sorts of events that take place during a baseball game by tracking the movements of the ball and the players on the field.

The raw data from every game each day is downloaded to all 30 teams the next morning. That may seem simple enough, but last season Statcast recorded 53,380,301 metrics from 1,435,241 pitches and 328,405 balls in play, according to Yahoo Sports. Starting when the ball is

pitched, the cameras will track the spin of the ball, determining its speed, the axis of how it's spinning and curving through space. They also track the batters and where the players are on the field.

As the Principal Engineer of R & D, Obradovic's job is to facilitate the work of the analysts. "I create the technical infrastructure that allows them to ask questions efficiently," Obradovic said. "Statistics have always been an important part of baseball. Everybody could talk about batting average and earned won average. We just have better statistics right now, so we try to tease it out and yet there is also the element of luck. We get about two terabytes of data each game (a terabyte equals 1 trillion bytes in computerese). We have this avalanche of data, and the question is what we do with it. That's where I come in. I create the technical infrastructure that will allow our analysts to get the results they are looking for which allows the smart people to ask the relevant questions in every area of baseball

operations."

With the Phillies playing the Houston Astros in the World Series, a season's worth of data for each team is being used to find tendencies in their opponents as they each developed their game plans.

For example, the Phillies know that during the regular season, the Astros threw the third-highest percentage of four-seam fastballs that averaged at least 18 inches of Induced Vertical Break. Conversely, the Astros know that the Phillies performed well on pitches like that.

The Astros know that the Phillies threw the second-highest percentage of pitches located on the inner half of the plate during the regular season. Conversely, the Astros were the sixth best team on pitches located on the inner half of the plate.

"And that's what I love about this," Obradovic said. "The batter knows that the pitcher likes to throw outside but the pitcher knows that the batter knows this so he may throw a heater inside but he knows the batter may be thinking the same

thing so he may then decide to throw it on the outside corner. It's a real cat and mouse game that never goes away."

This only scratches the surface of what the analysts do. Not only scouting their opponents, they will also work with their coaches on improving an individual player's performance. "For example, with the videos and computer analysis, we were able to determine how a pitcher's motion was different on his good and bad days, something you could not see with the naked eye," Obradovic said. "It's the same with batters who may be in a slump, and often we'll find that all it will take is a minor adjustment for them to get back on track."

They will also work with the trainers in helping to determine the best therapy for each player and the scouts with their evaluations in preparation for trades, free agency, and the draft.

Analytics departments are no longer restricted to the major leagues. "All the stuff that we do is trickling down to the major colleges and even some of the


smaller schools," Obradovic said. "It's just a matter of time until it reaches down to the high schools and the youth sports as well."

Coaching little league in Lamorinda, Obradovic, also plays the numbers game. "We track the number of pitches thrown with a maximum of 55 pitches," Obradovic said. "However, it doesn't take into account the warmup pitches and the throws to first base."

As much as Obradovic enjoys his work, he makes it clear that it's not for everyone.

"Working in computers requires that you have a love of learning because the evolution of technology is a constant thing," Obradovic said. "When I spoke to students at Campolindo about a career in computer or data science, I made it clear that to work in this area, you have to love to learn new things all the time. It's a great career because every six months, there are new things being invented. It's a full-time job to stay on top of things and in my case figuring out how to apply it to a team's performance."


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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 16 Issue 19 Wednesday, November 9, 2022



Handyman discusses sink stoppers ... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall



Golden leaves of a red-branched Japanese Maple. Photos Cynthia Brian

*"Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day!
Every leaf speaks bliss to me, Fluttering from the autumn tree..."~Emily
Brontë*

When it rained this past week, did you smell it? The scent of earth mixed with fallen leaves and decomposing plant matter signals the transition of the seasons. On the calendar, autumn began on Sept. 22, but it wasn't until November that I inhaled this intoxicating aroma that brought back childhood memories of the end of harvest, jumping in piles of leaves, and blazing bonfires.

In just a week, it seemed that so many trees changed their wardrobe from vibrant green to sunset colors of amber, gold, red, bronze and yellow. The "foliage show" is late here in California, yet it is glorious. As the leaves turn, they also drop, blanketing our landscapes with a marvelous source of nitrogen phosphorus, potassium, and nutrients that the soil craves. As much as you want to tidy your



You can almost smell the fall fragrance of this autumn orchard.

garden, refrain from raking the leaves into your green bin. Leave a layer of leaves on the ground to encourage the photosynthesis process in the natural circle of life. If leaves are too big, mow or cut them and add them to a compost pile with food scraps, lawn clippings, eggshells, coffee grounds, and other biodegradables. After a few months, you'll have a rich mulch filled with worms and beneficial microbes to add back into your garden at no cost to you. When you add organic materials to your soil, you are providing food for the organisms that improve soil aeration and drainage while reducing soil compaction. The nutrients will release over time

As we inhale the delicious flavors of fall and experience the cooler temperatures, it is also time to perform tasks in preparation for winter.

... continued on Page D10

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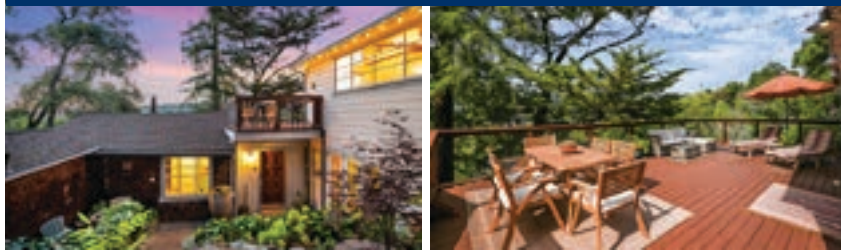
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	9	\$995,000	\$3,700,000
MORAGA	3	\$1,600,000	\$2,615,000
ORINDA	8	\$1,470,000	\$3,000,000

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

- 11 Almaden Court, \$1,879,000, 4 Bdrms, 1785 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-30-22,
Previous Sale: \$711,000, 03-22-12
- 939 Carol Lane, \$1,875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2569 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-19-22
- 109 Castle Court, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 3662 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 09-28-22
- 1000 Dewing Avenue #209, \$1,135,000, 2 Bdrms, 1328 SqFt,
2017 YrBlt, 09-26-22
- 16 Diablo Circle, \$2,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1730 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-20-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,605,000, 03-27-17
- 3650 Happy Valley Road, \$3,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 2876 SqFt,
1949 YrBlt, 09-29-22, Previous Sale: \$1,685,000, 09-05-07
- 46 Knox Drive, \$1,695,000, 3 Bdrms, 1926 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 09-27-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 08-13-19
- 3387 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 1646 SqFt,
1963 YrBlt, 09-28-22, Previous Sale: \$108,000, 03-01-79
- 3235 Mt Diablo Court #105, \$2,525,000, 2 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt,
2019 YrBlt, 09-19-22, Previous Sale: \$2,300,000, 01-13-20
- 482 Peacock Boulevard, \$1,410,000, 3 Bdrms, 1678 SqFt,
1954 YrBlt, 09-26-22
- 1631 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,758,000, 4 Bdrms, 2290 SqFt,
1972 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$299,000, 06-01-88
- 12 Springhill Lane, \$2,037,000, 4 Bdrms, 2631 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 09-30-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,259,000, 09-02-04
- 3109 Teigland Road, \$2,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 4824 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 09-29-22,
Previous Sale: \$450,000, 05-11-98
- 30 Woodbury Highlands Court #18, \$586,000, 2 Bdrms, 1200 SqFt,
2021 YrBlt, 09-30-22

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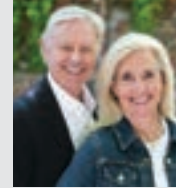
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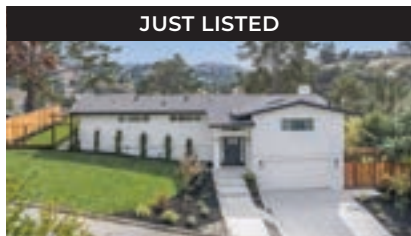
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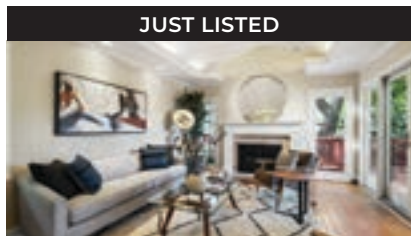
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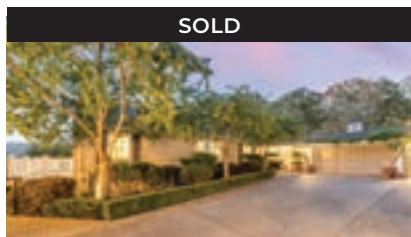
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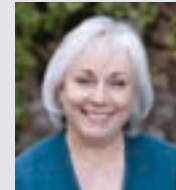
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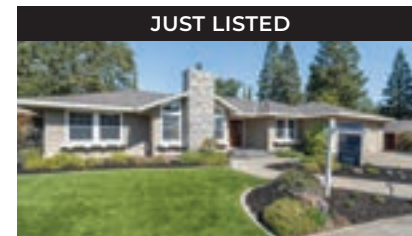
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Handyman tips to replace bathroom sink stoppers



Pop-Up Drain

Photo Jim Hurley

By Jim Hurley

How annoying is it when the sink stopper goes down and won't come back up? Is that worse than when it is just hanging loose, won't go up or down, in the drain of your bathroom sink? After previously advising you to call a specialist for your drainage problems, your bathroom sink stopper could be the exception.

If your sink stopper is working, my best advice to you is this: Don't pull up on that bar at the back of the faucet to close the stopper! Use your thumb instead to push the stopper down. Then push down on the bar at the back of the faucet to open it. Pulling up too vigorously is probably the most common cause of the drain stopper getting dis-

connected from the lever. Pulling up gently on the rod can work, but one hearty yank is all it takes to pull the thing out of place. Pushing the stopper down with your thumb will work every time.

Now if the stopper is not working, there may be a quick fix to the problem. Most older sink stoppers work with a lever bar to lift and lower the drain stopper. The lever is under the sink. You will find the lever about two inches below the basin where it is attached to the back of the drainpipe. (That piece of pipe connecting the sink to the P-Trap is called the "tailpiece"; I don't know why.) The lever bar has a Teflon ball attached to it and the nut on the tailpiece makes it pivot, like a teeter-totter, so that the stopper will go up and down when it is properly attached and adjusted.

Start with a little diagnosis. Gently lift the drain stopper: if it comes out of the pipe, the lever is not attached. Examine the stopper; there should be a ring at the bottom to attach to the lever. If the ring is there, it is time to reattach the stopper. Unscrew the nut that holds the lever to the back of the tailpiece, gently pull the lever a little way out of the tailpiece, then slip the tip of the lever back into the ring on the base of the stopper. This might take a few tries to get everything lined up, but when it's done correctly, rocking the lever up and down will make the stopper go up and down. Tighten the nut back in place: Use your fingers to screw the nut back on and gently tighten with a wrench. Then test the drain for leaks. The back end of the lever is attached by a piece of metal and a screw to the little rod at the back of the sink faucet. Sometimes that screw becomes loose and slips on the rod, so make sure it is tight.

If the ring is missing from the stopper, you will need to buy a replacement stopper. They are available at the hardware store and come in various widths and lengths, so take the old one with you to look for a match. Depending on the age of the sink, the lever may

also be corroded and need replacement. Finding an exact replacement lever might be tricky unless you know the make and model of your sink faucet.

Before you go to look for replacement parts, you might consider replacing the whole drain with a "Pop-Up" drain stopper. It will replace the worn-out lever and stopper without having to find an exact match to the old pieces. I would especially recommend this if the stopper seat in the sink is worn or corroded. With a pop-up stopper you push down to close, and push again to open, kind of like clicking a ball point pen. While I have encountered some broken pop-up stoppers, (the works can wear out and need replacement), the good news is they are all one universal size (1-1/4 inch) – easy to find.

The best approach to installing a pop-up starts with emptying the cabinet under the sink. This gives you access to the plumbing and prevents any stray water from damaging what you store down there. If the cabinet doors are easy to remove, consider taking one or both off to give you more room to move around beneath the sink. Grab a small bucket or pot and some rags to catch drain water as you remove the P-Trap. It also helps to have adjustable, channel-lock pliers handy. Lastly, get yourself a work light or flashlight, no sense groping around in the dark.

If this sounds like more trouble than you were looking for, it's time to call your handyman. Be sure to push that working drain stopper down with your thumb and enjoy many years of maintenance-free drainage.

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



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 Pool, tennis court, flat areas for play and entertaining, 8,514 square feet and an indoor gymnasium-racket ball court. Potential for subdivision of additional parcels.
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504 McBride Dr \$1,875,000
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 925.808.8390
 soraya4homes.com
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Lafayette
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 Updated, Charming & Unique, Flat Lot, Redwood Grove, Indoor-Outdoor Living.
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 TomStack.com Lic# 01501769



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308 Rheem Blvd \$1,795,000
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 308rheembld.com Lic#01272382



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 Top location close to shopping, Moraga Commons & Farmer's market! Cozy & charming.
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1351 Scenicview Dr. \$1,249,000
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 1351scenicviewDr.com Lic#01480008



Walnut Creek
4785 Terra Granada Dr., #2A \$1,000,000
 With one of the best golf course views in Rossmoor, this custom Montrose model is the epitome of elegance, with wonderful living spaces designed to fit today's lifestyle needs!
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Concord
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 Quiet cul-de-sac, great location, charming yard. Represented Buyers.
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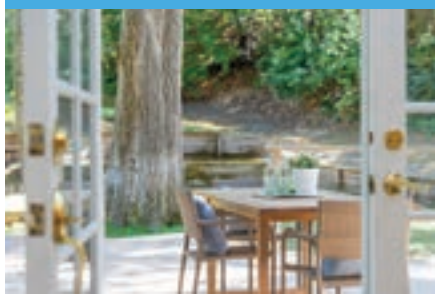


SORAYA GOLESORKHI
REALTOR®

Happy
Thanksgiving!

Wishing you and your loved ones a healthy, peaceful, joyful and bountiful Thanksgiving! My sincere gratitude for the exceptional people I've had the privilege of working with this year and for the beautiful properties I helped them buy and sell.

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242 Paseo Bernal, Moraga

SOLD

2001 Skycrest Drive #2, Rossmore

1115 Pearl Street, Alameda

11 Redwood Circle, Lafayette

8 Dale Court, Lafayette

1304 Walden Road #242, Walnut Creek

137 Shadewell Drive, Danville

296 Birchwood Drive, Moraga

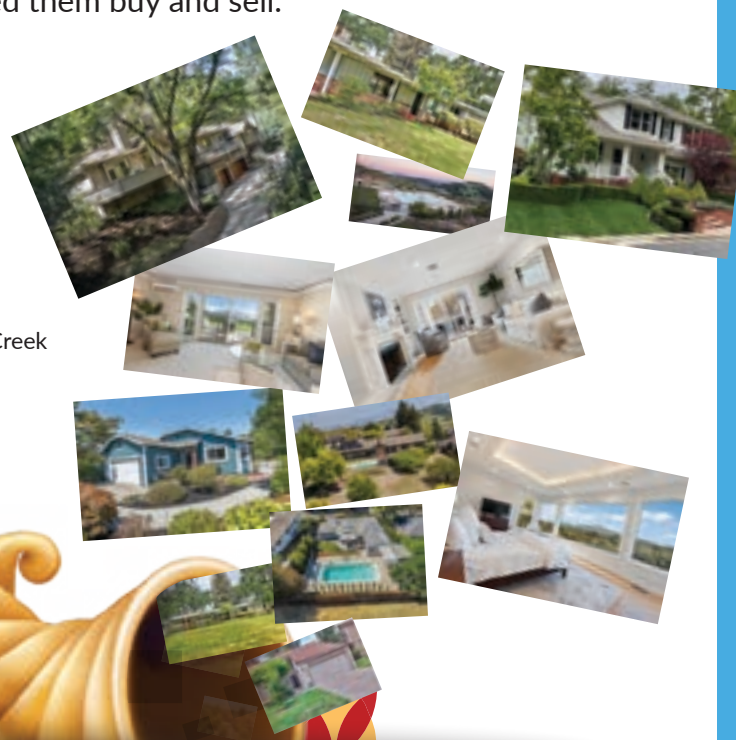
2655 Cherry Lane, Walnut Creek

1418 Los Vecinos, Walnut Creek

3335 Freeman Road, Lafayette

3172 Rohrer Drive, Lafayette

1 Twig Lane, Orinda



Call me if you have any questions or would like to chat about the real estate market. I'm here to help!

Soraya Golesorkhi

925.808.8390

sg@soraya4homes.com

soraya4homes.com

DRE #01771736



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92 Warfield Dr, Moraga



5 bd | 3 ba | 2527 sqft | 3 car garage | pool

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335Lakeview.com



LAFAYETTE

1268 Redwood Lane

5BD/4BA/2HfBA | 5,145 sq. ft. | 1.66 Acres

\$5,600,000 | 1268RedwoodLn.com



LAFAYETTE

6 Tofflemire Drive

5BD/4BA/2HfBA | 8,080 sq. ft. | 1.13 Acres

\$5,500,000 | 6TofflemireDrive.com



ORINDA

74 Yarrow Valley Lane

5BD/4.5BA | 5,060 sq. ft. | .55 Acres

\$3,999,999 | 74YarrowValley.com



ORINDA

407 Miner Road

3BD/3.5BA | 4,213 sq. ft. | 1.07 Acres

\$3,675,000 | 407MinerRd.com



ORINDA

270 Lomas Cantadas

27.59 Acre Lot Listing

\$2,999,999 | 270LomasCantadasOrinda.com



MORAGA

1125 Bollinger Canyon Road

4BD/4BA | 5,420 sq. ft. | 21.4 Acres

\$2,999,000 | 1125BollingerCanyon.com

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New listing
 29 Sullivan Drive, Moraga
 \$2,080,000
29sullivan.com

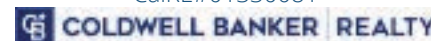
Terri Bates Walker, Broker, J.D.

510-282-4420

terribateswalker.com

terribateswalker.com

CalRE#01330081



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Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page D2

MORAGA

- 1478 Camino Peral #B, \$658,000, 2 Bdrms, 1043 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-28-22, Previous Sale: \$425,000, 04-27-05
- 4008 Campolindo Drive, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2290 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 03-06-06
- 7 Corte Pinto, \$1,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 2339 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-29-22, Previous Sale: \$975,000, 08-13-04
- 310 Glen Alpine Street, \$2,589,000, 5 Bdrms, 3098 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$1,560,000, 08-09-13
- 8 Thune Avenue, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 1992 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-30-22

ORINDA

- 427 Dalewood Drive, \$2,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2957 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-29-22
- 1 El Caminito, \$2,875,000, 4 Bdrms, 4114 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 09-19-22, Previous Sale: \$190,000, 07-01-87
- 11 Hall Drive, \$2,850,000, 5 Bdrms, 4177 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-27-22
- 55 Longridge Road, \$1,595,000, 3 Bdrms, 2580 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-21-22, Previous Sale: \$819,000, 07-09-03
- 28 Moraga Viax, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2655 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-27-22, Previous Sale: \$609,500, 12-11-14
- 170 Overhill Road, \$2,888,000, 5 Bdrms, 3806 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-22-22, Previous Sale: \$673,500, 09-01-88
- 36 Valley View Drive, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2829 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 09-22-22
- 22 Valley View Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1978 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$345,000, 06-01-90



589 Tahos Rd, Orinda
**Architecturally significant
Mid-Century retreat!**

Tucked in the hills of Orinda amongst mature oaks, sits this architecturally significant Mid-Century retreat! The renowned architect, Richard Danskin, masterfully created this custom home to focus on the contemporary California style of the 60's incorporating glass, redwood, and soaring ceilings. Sophistication combines perfectly with casual elegance and a functional floor plan to create this modern home where walls of windows bring views of the lush exterior, virtually blurring the lines between indoors and outdoors. Contact me for more details and visit 589tahos.com

4 beds, 2.5 baths
2,503 sq.ft .60 acres
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Is it a Good Time to Buy?

I believe the answer is unequivocally, YES. Most will say "Well you're a Realtor and we expect you to say that". However, I base my response on MLS data from central Contra Costa that I capture and analyze monthly.

Available, detached inventory in central Contra Costa at the end of Jan. was 195 and grew steadily to 739 by early Aug. Since then, it has been shrinking, currently at 520. Sales have decreased from 543 in May to 315 in Oct. Oct 2021 sales were 503.

With the number of sales shrinking, you would expect inventory to increase. This has not been the case. What has risen are days on market before a home goes Pending. Earlier in the year it was 8 to 9 days. Now it's just under 30 days on average.

Sellers are nervous, competitive bids are gone, and price reductions are the norm. Less buyers are looking because of mortgage rates. Some are waiting rates to drop next year. However, those buyers are likely to pay a huge price for waiting.

Many lenders and Fanny Mae expect rates to drop to the 4.5 – 4.7% level by late 2023. However, the trend of low inventory is likely to continue into next year. When interest rates start dropping and inventory is low, the law of supply and demand will kick in again, causing competitive bids and increased prices.

A solution is to buy now during the cooler market using yesterday's rates. This can be done with a 2/1 Buydown loan.

A 2/1 Buydown is for owner occupants. It allows them to 2 years of below-market rates (2pts. Year 1 and 1pt year 2), just enough time for rates to come down. It does require refinancing in a year or 2. But remember, prices are likely to go up as they have historically.

See my blogs at

www.YourContraCostaRealtor.com



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall



Keep deadheading your roses to have beautiful bouquets for the holidays. Photo Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

AUTUMN CHORES

CLEAN patio furniture before storing or covering it for the season. It is especially critical to remove bird droppings left on your umbrellas, hammocks, or other furniture.

TURN OFF sprinkler systems.

CHECK for any irrigation leaks.

LEAVE leaves where they fall, spread them around your garden, or add them to a compost pile.

FERTILIZE grass, especially when it is going to rain.

CONTACT EBMUD if you are considering investing in long-term drought resilience by modernizing your garden with water-wise plants. EBMUD has increased rebates for lawn conversions up to \$2.50 a square foot. For more information visit

www.ebmud.com/water/conservation-and-rebates/rebates

REMOVE debris, sticks, and weeds from garden beds.

PLANT cover crops to fix nitrogen. Fava beans, mustard, and clovers are excellent choices.

PICK pumpkins, apples, guavas, squash, and any fruits or vegetables left hanging before frost and rain.

DIVIDE overgrown clumps of perennials such as daylilies, agapanthus, iris, or naked ladies. Move to other locations or share with fellow gardeners.

... continued on Page D14

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall



Primroses add color to the garden throughout fall and winter.

... continued from Page D12

COVER any exposed soil with straw, grass clippings, aged wood chips, pine needles, or even shredded newspaper to reduce weed growth, moderate soil temperatures, retain moisture, and reduce erosion over winter.

BUY six packs of perennials including columbine, carnations, penstemon, and coral bells.

BRIGHTEN your fall garden with pops of color from pansies, cyclamen, violas, Mums, stock, Iceland poppies, and primroses.

FIND favorite fall color trees to add to your landscape where selections are vast at your local nursery.

SCATTER California wildflower seeds including poppies and lupines and sow seeds of sweet Alyssum, bachelor buttons, forget-me-nots, and milkweed.

DEADHEAD roses for continued blooms during the holidays.

PRUNE dead branches from trees and shrubs.

BEWARE hungry coyotes have been on a rampage killing poultry, cats, and small dogs. Keep your animals and small children safe.

ENJOY the many colors of lantana blooming throughout fall in purple, orange, red, white, and yellow.

GET READY to plant bulbs towards the end of the month for a spring show.

IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

During a cold winter, there is nothing better than knowing that you have organic, tasty, greens and vegetables growing right outside your door. Fall is the best time to get these nutritious edibles going for



Pick pumpkins now.

a bountiful harvest in the new year. Most of these plants prefer extra nitrogen. Side-dress them with a balanced fertilizer as they grow.

Plant seeds or seedlings of:

Varieties of	Swiss Chard	Cabbage	Cauliflower
lettuce	Chicory	Radish	Kohlrabi
Asian greens	Kale	Broccoli	Peas
Spinach	Cress	Broccoli rabe	Turnips
Arugula	Beets	Carrots	

Make sure to plant shallots and garlic now to harvest next summer.

Although I don't like the darkness that descends so much earlier when I still have so many chores to complete, I am reveling in the cooler days that allow for laboring longer with less strain. Digging in the dirt in fall bequeaths the most luscious autumn aromas ... musty, musky, intoxicatingly earthy. I wish I could bottle it!

Thank you to so many readers who sent me notes of healing. You touched my heart and my spirit, and I am very appreciative. I am following my own advice. Each day anew ... and a wee bit slower!

Go outside and breathe in the fragrance of fall and know that, as gardeners, we will be resting soon, along with Mother Nature.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing!

NOT TO BE MISSED

Saturday, Nov. 12 from 3 to 5 p.m., I'll be in-person reading, telling stories, and signing books from my new children's book, "No Barnyard Bullies," at Point Richmond Art Gallery, 145 West Richmond Ave., Point Richmond. Families with children are welcome. If you have purchased an NFT from www.StarStyleCommunity.com, you'll be given a gift.

Monday, Nov. 21 at 2 p.m., I'll be hosting a "Thanksgiving is Every Day" celebration via Zoom for members of the StarStyle® Community. Buy a StarStyle® NFT today that benefits Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3 charity and participate in numerous exclusive experiences designed for members only. www.StarStyleCommunity.com



Cynthia Brian in fall with the blooming Tecoma Chicklet Orange stock plant.

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian 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. Her newest children's picture book, "No Barnyard Bullies," from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences, buy StarStyle® NFTs at <https://StarStyleCommunity.com> Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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Holiday Open House

Thursday November 10 from 5:00 -7:00

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160/162 Camino Don Miguel
6 bd/6.5 ba Spanish Revival estate w/ views of OCC golf course and hills beyond. Exceptional location!
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121 Van Ripper Lane
1st time ever for sale! Stunning totally renovated 5+ Bd Sleepy Hollow estate on glorious 1+ acre!
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ORINDA



8 Tappan Court
Completely renovated 5 bd/ 4 ba home on an unparalleled level .82 acre knoll parcel!
\$3,595,000

ORINDA



5 De Soto Court
Mid Century Contemporary 4 bd/ 2.5 ba offers peaceful private setting on quaint court minutes from downtown!
\$2,395,000

ORINDA



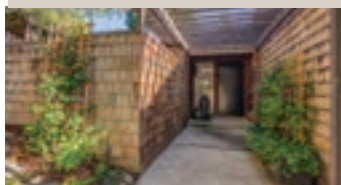
11 Los Altos Road
Special 4 bd/ 4 ba home sits on .70 parcel w/ privacy & filtered views in Orindas most popular neighborhood!
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ORINDA



40 Via Floreado
Charming 5 bd/ 3.5 ba gem is full of old-world features yet perfectly updated w/ all the modern amenities!
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ORINDA



120 Ravenhill Road
Completely renovated 3 bd/ 3 ba Orindawoods home offers an ideal setting w/ natural light, privacy & views!
\$1,795,000

ORINDA



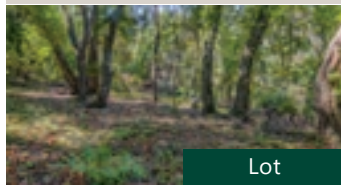
589 Tahos Road
Tucked in the hills of Orinda amongst mature oaks, sits this 4 bd/2.5 ba architecturally significant Mid-Century retreat!
\$1,675,000

ORINDA



2 Orchard Court
Home sweet home! 3 bd/ 2 ba home needs lots of TLC now & is awaiting the next generation!
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0 Camino Del Monte
Come see this desirable lot located minutes from Hwy 24/BART, top rated schools, downtown, regional parks & views!
\$225,000

LAFAYETTE



1336 San Reliez Court
Rare opportunity on .75 acre lot w/ 5 bd/ 3.5 ba 4098 sq.ft. in the heart of Springhill!
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LAFAYETTE



3015 Bradbury Drive
Nestled among majestic oaks 3 bd/ 2.5 ba plus loft sits on 3.2 acres w/ panoramic views, multiple decks & pool!
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MORAGA



92 Warfield Drive
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BERKELEY



7164 Buckingham Blvd
Sophisticated contemporary 3 bd/ 3 ba set in the Claremont Hills featuring lovely canyon views!
\$1,595,000

DANVILLE



501 Garden Creek Place
Updated 3 bd/ 2.5 ba end-unit townhome less than .5 miles from top-rated schools, downtown & more!
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GRASS VALLEY



16056 Mount Olive Road
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