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Over 400 children took turns hunting for eggs on March 25 during the Moraga Junior Women's Club Spring Festival at the Commons.

Photo Jeff Heyman

Families gather for some spring fun during respite from rain

By Sora O'Doherty

After more severe winter weather than many young Lamorindans can remember, the skies cleared up for the community to enjoy a bouquet of fun spring events over the weekend before the rains returned with a vengeance. Moraga kicked things off March 25 with the 40th annual Spring Festival at Moraga Commons Park, where over 400 basket-wielding children gathered for the hunt. Presented by the Moraga Junior Women's Club, the festival featured egg hunts for three groups of children, ages 0-2, 3-4 and 5-8, who were allowed to scramble for eggs at three scheduled times. In addition, the event offered food, face paint-

ing and a bounce house. The \$15 per child ticket proceeds will go to benefit local schools and community organizations.

For those who may have missed the Moraga event, two more spring events are happening in Lamorinda on April 8. Orinda Rotary will host their annual Spring Egg Hunt for children through second grade on Saturday, April 8, from 10:45 a.m. to noon at the Orinda Community Park. Rotary warns that while the Egg Hunt will start promptly at 11 a.m., it generally ends promptly 30 seconds later. Make sure you are there to hear the word "go!" The Bunny will be there before and after the hunt for pictures and high fives and rumor has it that this year's bunny will be a perfect fit.

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Saint Mary's rugby outlasts Cal 38-34



Joe Marchant



Mario Storti



Inoke Waqavesi

Photos Karen Drinkwater

By Jon Kingdom

There are rivalries and there are rivalries, but for the Saint Mary's and Cal rugby fans, there is no comparison to their annual games on the pitch. Chase Jones, a player on last year's Saint Mary's team, now playing professionally, carries that sentiment with him. "Cal-Stanford football doesn't even

compare to this rivalry which really runs deep," Jones said.

With the Saint Mary's grass field deemed unplayable, the game was moved to Cal's field turf, losing Saint Mary's homefield advantage. "It's a different game on turf, especially with an oblong shaped ball," Saint Mary's head coach Tim O'Brien said. For Jones, it didn't matter where he played against Cal. "Whenever we played at Cal, it gave me an op-

portunity to show them up on their home turf. I was always more hyped up for that game than any other I played."

Saint Mary's jumped out to a 12-0 lead and led by 27-19 at the half. After 17 minutes in the second half, Cal went ahead 34-26, but two scores by Saint Mary's with 16 and 14 minutes left in the game, clinched the Saint Mary's victory 38-24.

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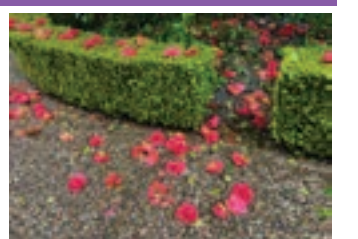
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Local father, son present proposals to preserve Lafayette Reservoir tower silhouette

By Elaine Borden Chandler

The Lafayette Reservoir tower can be seen everywhere in Lafayette, from the logos of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and Lafayette Strong, to the websites for Love Lafayette and the Lafayette Historical Society, to the banners along Mt. Diablo Boulevard, to the seasonal October flood of Lafayette Res Run shirts. Matt Bertics forwarded news of the proposed retrofit for the tower to his son, Andrew Bertics, who immediately thought, "We've got to do something."

The East Bay Municipal Utility District started building the Lafayette Reservoir and Dam in 1927, including a reservoir tower to act as a spillway. Partway through construction

in 1928, the earthen dam cracked and settled. It was redesigned to be 33 feet lower but the tower was not, leaving it a striking 40 feet taller than necessary. Starting in 2005, EBMUD has conducted studies showing that the tower's height and weight make it likely to suffer serious damage during large earthquakes. On Jan. 9, EBMUD Engineering Manager Elizabeth Bialek presented to the Lafayette City Council on the Lafayette Reservoir Tower Seismic Retrofit Project, featuring a tower shorted by 40 feet with a parapet and a crane. Responses were mostly centered on the tower's change in appearance. "We were warned that it was going to be ugly, but I was not considering it to be quite this ugly," said Council Member Susan Candell. Lafayette resident and

structural engineer Matt Bertics read a Lamorinda Weekly article about the proposed changes and texted it to his son Andrew Bertics, an architectural designer. Andrew suggested that recreating the removed portion of the tower with a steel framework would solve the seismic vulnerabilities while keeping the silhouette of the original tower. "He asked some questions of me as a structural engineer on feasibility of the design and impact on the seismic issues, and then he has taken the ball and run with it," described Matt. The father and son often talk about architecture together, but have never worked on a project before. "When we read about the seismic issue, saw EBMUD's proposal, and saw the city's dilemma, coming up with our own solution was a



Photo rendering of proposed steel framework design.

no-brainer. It was a perfect collaboration opportunity. We've been talking about the tower nonstop, much to my mother's chagrin," says Andrew.

... continued on Page A8

Lafayette e-lending program allows residents to try induction cooktops or electric leaf blowers



Photo provided

From left: Anna Tolle, Maria Gastelumendi, Ashley Louisiana, Brenna Shafizadeh, Nancy Hu, Jonathan Katayanagi, and Colleen McCormick

Submitted by Brenna Shafizadeh

Are you interested in using an induction cooktop or an electric leaf blower? Now you can thanks to a new e-lending program offered by the City of Lafayette's Environmental Task Force. Items can be borrowed by Lafayette residents for up to two weeks.

Induction cooktops offer increased health benefits, and greater precision in cooking. And they are available in all price points, from portable units under \$100, to high-end models. But for residents who would like a "try before you buy," the city is lending, free of charge, induction cooktop kits that include a portable induction cooktop, a pan, and a magnet with which to test your other pans. Induction cooking heats food via magnetic induction, and so you can tell which of your pans might work by testing them with the magnet. If you are a Lafayette resident (over age 18) and would like to sign up to borrow an induction cooktop,

visit www.lovelafayette.org/cooktop-lending. Electric leaf blowers offer a cleaner, quieter, and less destructive option compared to gas-powered leaf blowers, which emit high levels of toxic pollution, as well as noise pollution. Ironically, gas-powered leaf blowers can be harmful for the long-term health of a garden in that they are destructive to the topsoil, which is an important component for healthy soil and plants. For these reasons and more, gas leaf blowers will no longer be sold in California as of Jan. 1, 2024. If you are a Lafayette resident (over age 18) and would like to sign up to borrow an electric leaf blower, visit www.lovelafayette.org/leaf-blower-lending.

Rebates may be available if you purchase an induction cooktop or an electric leaf blower:

- for rebates on induction cooktops, go to <https://switchison.org/>
- for rebates on electric leaf blowers for professional use, go to <https://californiacore.org/equipmentcatalog/>



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Town Council:
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Moraga School District Board Meetings:
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Lamorinda Council Members meet to discuss Smart Signal Project



Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga Mayor Renata Sos, Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda, Council Members Steve Woehleke, Kerry Hillis and David Shapiro; Lafayette Mayor Carl Anduri, Vice Mayor Gina Dawson, Council Members Susan Candell, Teresa Gerringer and Wei-Tai Kwok; Orinda Mayor Inga Miller, Vice Mayor Darlene Gee, and Council Members Latika Malkani, Brandyn Iverson and Janet Riley accept Smart Signal federal funding check from U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (center).

By Vera Kochan

The Town of Moraga hosted a Joint Council Meeting at the Saint Mary's College campus' Soda Center on March 15 with the cities of Lafayette and Orinda. The purpose was to receive an update on the Safety and Mobility on Arterials (Smart Signals) Project.

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Lafayette Council Member Teresa Gerringer, who served on the Contra Costa Transportation Authority board, Lafayette was approached by the CCTA in March of 2021 to participate in a potential federally funded project to install fiber and smart signals in the Lamorinda area.

According to an April 2021 staff report by Lafayette's Director of Engineering and Public Works Mike Moran, "The projects will not only include updating signal technology but will also include installation of fiber [or cellular communications] to provide high-speed data connections between the connected signals, and even between a remote operator and the traffic signals. The smart technology would allow a signal to operate adaptively and more efficiently. Smart signals also provide data regarding use by all users and safety data, such as near-miss accidents, so adjustments may be made based on that data to help improve safety."

While CCTA targeted Lafayette for the project, Moran suggested that Moraga and Orinda be included due to the likelihood of a better federal funding situation if more jurisdictions were involved.

Moraga Mayor Renata Sos welcomed the assembled with a few words pertaining to the undertaking in general. "This project is a shining example of how staff and councils of three communities can work successfully together towards a shared interest facilitating effective emergency evacuations, safeguarding pedestrian and bicycle safety, improving traffic flow through our communities, and mitigating congestion."

Moraga's Police Chief Jon King extolled the virtues of Smart Signals by stating, "This project is going to save lives." King, while noting the concern of Moraga's residents with regards to a safe and speedy emergency evacuation, explained how his police depart-

ment and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District have rehearsed contra-flow traffic evacuations along Moraga Way using 85 first responders to conduct the drills. "It was done efficiently, but you won't have 85 people available during a real situation." With that in mind, MPD and MOFD have also done virtual evacuation drills while using Zonehaven (whereby Moraga's neighborhoods are divided into zones). It was proven successful with evacuations during the Merrill Fire in 2019.

Several Moraga residents have recently put forth the idea of building more traffic lanes along the town's busiest roads. In a text to this reporter, Moraga's Director of Public Works/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp responded, "We're not going to build ourselves out of the current and future congestion with more traffic lanes within our limited public right-of-way space. We need a holistic approach, and Smart Signals will help us get there."

During Knapp's presentation, he pointed out the advantages of the Smart Signal system which would improve safety; minimize crashes; eliminate injuries and fatalities; optimize mobility; relieve congestion and manage evacuation routes; and advance the Smart City System.

Knapp also touched on additional key benefits of the system which would support multi-modal transportation for all users; increase transit reliability; and reduce emergency vehicle response time.

When operational, the Smart Signal System will provide a pedestrian and bicycle detection system that supports proactive identification and prevention of "near miss" situations; Signal Synchronization controls and smoother traffic flow; Signal Control and Prioritization to reduce emergency vehicle response time, and effectively manage arterial traffic during day-to-day operations, major incidents on freeways, evacuations, or major events; and provide real-time monitoring of traffic conditions by allowing cities/Caltrans access to monitor all videos and signals to optimize operations. Knapp noted that, "CCTA will be using our Lamorinda Smart Signals Project to help create the blueprint for their Countywide Smart Signals Program."

Lafayette Council Member Susan Candell questioned how the new system can prevent pedestrian "near miss" situations, to which Knapp responded that the system will allow for longer lead times for people to cross the street thanks to camera detection equipment that determines flow. Municipality staff will have the capability to monitor on-the-spot issues via their computers.

Moraga Council Member Steve Woehleke wanted to know "how the system will interface with existing security cameras."

"Smart Signals will not, at this time, integrate with existing security systems," replied Knapp.

CCTA Director of Planning John Hoang answered Orinda Council Member Brandyn Iverson's question about when the system would be operational by informing the council members that construction should begin by 2025. Knapp added that the projects are funded but that details still need to be ironed out.

Moraga Council Member David Shapiro was concerned about what happens to the system in the event of a power failure. Knapp assured him that there would be battery backups, a generator, and if all else fails, the manual placement of portable stop signs. The total number of Lamorinda signals involved in the project comes to 56 (Moraga 8.5, Lafayette 30, Orinda 17.5).

Federal Funding for the project totals \$5,913,559. Of that amount, U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier of the 10th California District sponsored the project through the Federal Omnibus Bill and was on hand during the March 15 meeting to present a check for \$4,185,000. The balance of \$1,728,559 comes from the Countywide Smart Signals Project through the CCTA sponsored Federal One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) 3 with a portion focused on 18 key Lamorinda traffic signal intersections.

Lamorinda's funding of the project through the Lamorinda Fee and Financing Authority (LFFA) - Transportation Impact Fee totals \$1,235,615 (Moraga \$205,484; Lafayette \$650,742; Orinda \$379,389). All total funding available for the Smart Signal System Project comes to \$7,149,174.

Town council meetings' audio/visual recorder, Mary-Jane Muller, set to retire



Photo Vera Kochan

Mary-Jane Muller operates "Mission Control" during town council meetings

By Vera Kochan

For just over eight and a half years, Moraga Administrative Assistant Mary-Jane Muller has been the reason why the town council meetings have been recorded for later viewing by constituents with nary a hitch.

With an unassuming door separating Muller from any in-session council meetings, she can almost be mistaken for the "Great and Powerful Wizard of Oz" when she occasionally pops out of the tiny room (which resembles Mission Control) to tell council members, "Your mike's not on" or "Talk to the mike."

At two meetings per month and any additional Special Meetings, Muller has been responsible for recording over 200 of them since her first three-camera setup in October 2015. "It was difficult to learn," she remembered, but she soon mastered what looks like a miniature recording studio with things like camera controls, audio, on-screen graphics and technical aspects of a Tricaster. She also helps to prep the council chambers prior to meeting time.

"Mary-Jane was a ray of sunshine in the Town Offices," stated Mayor Renata Sos. "She was always ready to help, go

above and beyond the call of duty, and pitch in – with a smile and a cheerful disposition. I appreciated her dedication to the people of this town and her wry sense of humor. I will miss her and wish her all the best in retirement."

Muller wavered when it came to deciding whether to retire or not and had planned to keep on working, but then she decided, "Why not? I'm looking forward to traveling, which was delayed due to COVID. My husband has been retired for a year, and a lot of our friends are, too. It'll be nice to do things anytime we want to." Her last day will be March 30.

"Moraga was lucky to have Mary-Jane at the control seat. She is organized, positive, knowledgeable, and ready to do whatever it takes to make things work," Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda said. "She has been the woman behind the curtain during our Council meetings. I will miss her and am grateful for her friendship."

During her tenure with the town, Muller has seen five town managers (including two interims) come and go. Running recording equipment twice a month was only a drop in the bucket with regards to her daily duties with the town. Maintaining a liaison between

department directors and staff; assisting the public with any requests or queries; coordinating public hearings and workshops by preparing agendas; maintaining databases; interpreting and applying town policies and procedures; researching and compiling data for special projects; editing and updating the town's website; and so much more can be added to her list of duties.

"Mary-Jane is another member of the Town Team who we are going to sorely miss," said Council Member Steve Woehleke. "Mary-Jane is a central hub for Town Government, very competently and efficiently handling a wide range of support functions, including handling the challenging Town Meeting broadcasting duties. This a significant accomplishment considering the wide range of personnel she has supported. I cannot think of a case in which she didn't fully meet expectations."

Looking back on her time as part of the town staff, Muller replied, "I've liked the job itself – it touches all of the departments. It's not so insular, and I can assist where necessary. My most favorite thing is the people who work here – my co-workers. Every department helps each other out."

Longtime former town clerk, Marty McInturf, who herself has recently retired said, "I had the pleasure of working with Mary-Jane for over eight years and found her to be conscientious and diligent in all her efforts on the Town's behalf. She was the backbone of the Council meetings, tirelessly running the cameras and ensuring that all Council meetings were properly recorded for later viewing and preserving the transparency that Moraga is known for. Mary-Jane was very supportive of her co-workers and was always the first to volunteer to help other departments when they were shorthanded. She will be missed by all who have worked with her and I join everyone in wishing her a happy and fulfilling retirement."

Cathy Chang named 2023 Moraga Citizen of the Year



Cathy Chang

Photo Stan Holcenberg

By Vera Kochan

In a very tight field of nominees, all with extraordinary credentials for qualifying as a Moraga Citizen of the Year recipient, Cathy Chang has emerged as the front runner. Chang's substantial amount of volunteerism not only serves to benefit children on their road to becoming responsible and community-minded adults, but touches on the homeless and less fortunate,

as well as the environment. A future article will feature her many accomplishments and highlights from the Celebration Dinner to be held from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, April 28 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center (1700 School Street, Moraga).

To purchase tickets for Chang's 2023 Moraga Citizen of the Year event, visit www.moragavalleykiwanis.org or call (510) 499-0243.

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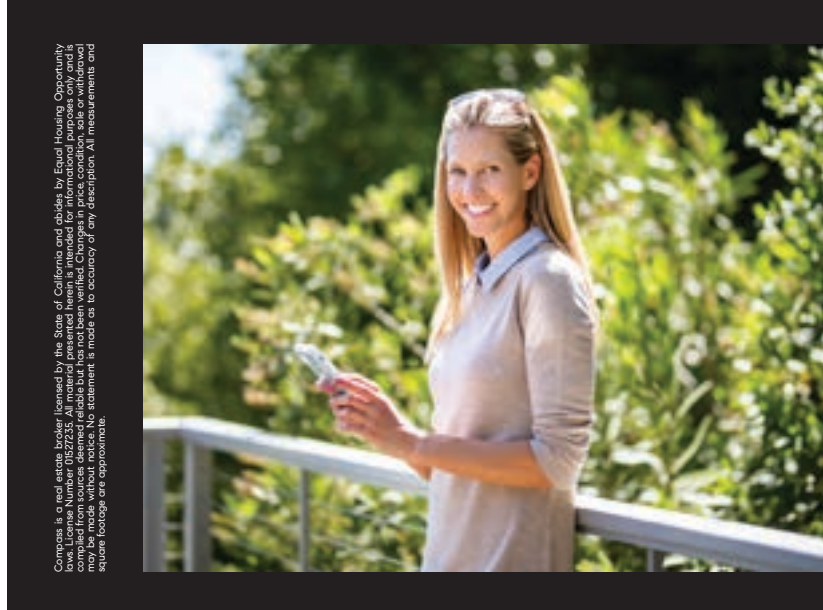
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Outgoing committee members recognized, new ones appointed

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council on March 21 thanked outgoing committee and commission members and recognized their contribution to the city. Bobbie Landers was recognized for her service on the Historic Landmarks Committee, Bergen Kenny Woodbury for his service on the Parks and Recreation Commission, Travis Blascheck-Miller for service on the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee and Jeffrey Lyon for serving on the Finance Advisory Committee. Later in the meeting, the council decided to appoint three applicants on the basis of their applications, without interview. Longtime resident Natalie Fay was appointed to

the Planning Commission, leaving one remaining vacancy to be filled. Fay is currently a board member of the Orinda Community Foundation and worked as a senior planner for the cities of Walnut Creek, Oakland and Berkeley. The council also filled the two remaining vacancies on the Finance Advisory Committee by appointing Joan Kiekaefer and Wendy Wee. Kiekaefer, who holds a degree in economics from Stanford University and an MBA from UCLA, had a 35-year career in banking and volunteers in various education-related positions in Orinda. She has lived in Orinda for 29 years. Wee is the newest resident of Orinda at only a year and a quarter, but brings to the city close to 50 years of accounting and finance experience. She worked as the chief financial officer for Kindred Biosciences, Inc., but is retiring and wishes to volunteer and serve the community. Council Member Brandyn Iverson commented that she was blown away by the candidates, whom she regards as



Photo Sora O'Doherty

fabulous. All three candidates were appointed by a unanimous decision of the council. Anyone who wishes to serve on the Planning Commission should contact Orinda City Clerk Sheri Smith.

From left: outgoing committee member Bobbie Landers, Mayor Inga Miller, and outgoing committee members Travis Blascheck-Miller and Jeffrey Lyon

serve on the Planning Commission should contact Orinda City Clerk Sheri Smith.

Attempt made to shorten Orinda City Council Meetings

By Sora O'Doherty

Newly elected member Janet Riley raised the issue of meeting length at the March 21 Orinda City Council meeting. When it came time for the annual review of the city's practice and procedure manual, Riley expressed her desire to start and end meetings earlier. Her proposal prompted a wide-ranging council discussion about meetings, and, in the end, the council agreed to try to shorten the meetings by requiring a majority vote of the council to continue a meeting past 10 p.m. and a unanimous vote to continue past 11 p.m. In addition, a unanimous vote and a specified end time would be required to continue a meeting past 11:30 p.m. Currently, meeting extensions begin at 11 p.m. However, the council declined to begin meetings earlier than the current 7 p.m. Council Member Latika

Malkani expressed concerns about parents and working people being able to attend meetings starting earlier than 7 p.m. While Mayor Inga Miller asked about the possibility of moving closed sessions to the end of city council meetings, it was agreed that this would not be a good idea for a variety of reasons. Riley also suggested that start times be added to the agenda for each agenda item, but the council rejected this suggestion as impractical. Miller noted that if something was published as beginning at 7:15 p.m., for example, but the council started the item at 6:50 p.m. they would get in trouble. Vice Mayor Darlene Gee said that she has been on the city council for almost eight years, and recalls times before the pandemic when the auditorium was full. She added that many closed sessions are challenging and complicated and cannot be

completed in one hour. Malkani was also concerned about consistency, as Orinda residents are accustomed to having city council meeting start at 7 p.m., and she believed that some of the suggested changes might discourage community discourse. On the other hand, Council Member Brandyn Iverson felt that when meetings go beyond 11 p.m. it effectively disenfranchises some community members, and suggested that the council attempt to offer a hybrid meeting forum. City Clerk Sheri Smith informed the council that at that meeting they had been testing a Zoom format as well as streaming on YouTube, but unfortunately had lost the internet connection. The practice and procedures manual was adopted unanimously with no changes other than that affecting the extension of meetings.

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In-person mixers return to Orinda



Orinda Chamber of Commerce members greeted each other in person March 16 at Mechanic's Bank, Orinda, after a long hiatus.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

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Orinda Nature Area closed due to storm damage



Photo provided

Giant trees fell during recent strong storms, forcing closure of the Orinda Nature Area.

By Sora O'Doherty

Early in March, the Orinda Nature Area was so badly damaged by winter storms that, in consultation with the Orinda Union School District, the Friends of the Nature Area agreed to close it, canceling all scheduled spring classes as well as the upcoming summer camp season. Bill Hudson, a naturalist on the Friends of the Nature Area Board, said that everyone was very sad, because they had in fact been looking forward to even greater use of the nature area, but the safety of students and personnel was paramount, and it was difficult to even survey all the damage yet.

Naturalist Toris Jaeger is currently not working, as the classes she teaches have been canceled. The nature area is locked up, and Jaeger cannot access the greenhouse even to water seeds that were newly

planted before the storms hit. The storms in early March brought down large old oak trees and bay laurels as well as undercutting the banks of the San Pablo creek as it crosses the nature area and another, smaller creek. This resulted in the trails along the creeks becoming very narrow with possibly dangerous banks. Every Sunday, prior to the closure, the nature area welcomed volunteers to help maintain the area and its plants. Jaeger says that until the closure there had been regular attendance of up to 26 volunteers, and she has had requests from students to reopen the nature area for volunteers, although it is not within her power to do so.

"The nature area is a place that heals people," Jaeger says. "Volunteers love working together and talking to each other about school and life."

Recently, since the OUSD took a more active role in the nature area, there had been

more successful programs, including the very popular summer camp program. Many children were interested in the camp for the upcoming summer, and teens wanted to work at the camp.

When the trees first came down, Reg Barrett, a member of the Friends board, tried to deal with the fallen trees with a chain saw, but the trees are too big to be handled that way. Hudson says that the friends have gotten together with the district, which owns the property, and were very excited to start working on more activities in the nature area. However, as a result of the strong winter storms, it was decided that there were too many unknowns on the property for people to be allowed in. "We don't want anybody to get hurt," Hudson said, "although we are very disappointed" not to be able to proceed with plans for the spring and summer, including a festival planned for April, which may be rescheduled in the fall.

Hudson believes that it will be necessary to wait until the ground dries out somewhat before it will even be possible to fully survey the damage. The district may also be able to secure some funds for dealing with the nature area from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

For Jaeger, it is the first time in 45 years that she isn't teaching, and she also isn't getting paid, which she admits is a great financial hit. Jaeger will celebrate her 80th birthday in August.

Orinda council is enthusiastic about BART site grant, not so much about MWELO

By Sora O'Doherty

Not wanting to suffer any potential ill effects of failing to meet the State of California requirement to adopt a Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) the Orinda city council agreed to adopt the state model ordinance on March 21. The matter will return to the council for a second reading and final action at a later date.

Council Member Brandyn Iverson called the state law "particularly poorly written," and Council Member Latika Malkani pointed out that the city can adopt the ordinance now but amend it in the future if needed. One question that remained unresolved is whether the restriction of the ordinance apply to public parks and golf courses. Staff may have additional information upon the second reading of the ordinance.

The city council was very enthusiastic, however, to support an application for a \$200,000 priority development area (PDA) grant submitted to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to work towards housing development on the site of the Orinda BART Station. The grant would provide funds to work towards a memorandum of understanding between the city of Orinda, BART and Caltrans regarding a path for-

ward for future transit-oriented development at the BART site.

In 2008, the city established downtown Orinda as a PDA. The PDA program is a voluntary partnership between local governments, the MTC and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to identify future housing and job growth areas served by transit.

The grant application was filed by Orinda on Feb. 15, but requires a resolution of support by local decision-makers by April 15, which was what the council adopted. The item was introduced by Planning Director Drummond Buckley who pointed out that the site has a number of constraints, such as high voltage lines running across the property, which is owned by Caltrans and not by BART.

The grant is intended to help the city work through the issues that need to be addressed before the development of housing on the site

can be considered. Vice Mayor Darlene Gee inquired what the agreement between BART and Caltrans says, but Buckley said it was a very old agreement and actually did not say a lot. Council Member Brandyn Iverson, who recently joined the city council after serving on the Planning Commission, said that she is very excited. "People would like to understand what might be possible," she said, although she acknowledged that it may be a very long, complicated process.

Council Member Latika Malkani was also excited by the prospect of moving forward, and Mayor Inga Miller noted that the BART station and its parking lots are at the center of the Connect Orinda project.

Buckley stated that BART also supports the city's application, and Gee said that if the city does get the grant, they should publicize it. The resolution of support was passed unanimously.



City Council Regular Meeting:
Tuesday, April 11, 6:00 p.m.
Planning Comm.:
Wednesday, April 12, 7:00 p.m.
Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
Wednesday, April 12, 6:30 p.m.

April 15th
9 am to 1 pm

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Friends of the Orinda Creeks celebrate San Pablo Creek Restoration



Photos Sora O'Doherty

A glorious warm, sunny morning on Saturday, March 25 graced The Friends of the Orinda Creeks celebration of the completion of Phase 1 of the San Pablo Creek Restoration Project, which marks the

beginning of the recovery of the creek as it flows through Orinda Village. Board members of the volunteer organization, including President Michael Bowen and David Hop, explained the project,

which removed large displaced portions of the concrete creek bed and installed natural boulder weirs. Guests, including Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and Orinda Mayor Inga Miller

spoke and also walked the newly leveled path along the river, viewing the work done. Bauer-Kahan told Lamorinda Weekly that it was "so beautiful to see this important first step towards the full restora-

tion of San Pablo Creek." The event was catered by a donation from board member Suzanne Uhland. —Sora O'Doherty

Lafayette Reservoir tower

... continued from Page A2

On Feb. 7, Andrew emailed his first proposal. He received a response from Director of Engineering and Construction Olujimi Yoloye at EBMUD, thanking him for his design but expressing concern that it would not address the functional need. "The approved design is the optimal height and weight to ensure

the seismic safety of the tower and conduit, and any significant changes to the tower design height and weight would adversely affect the safety," Yoloye cautioned. The Bertics disagree, saying the steel framework would be significantly lighter than the current concrete structure and mounting it on the top of EBMUD's proposed tower design would adhere to their

seismic needs. Nevertheless, Andrew and Matt decided to send in a shorter proposal that echoes the current tower's decorative house with inspiration from the Briones Tower's guardrail. Yoloye responded that EBMUD would consider this and other options before finalizing the design. "Understandably, it sounds like EBMUD is locked in to their current design. However, I believe there are many others in the Lamorinda community who would be disappointed to see the tower demolished," Andrew said. Despite the uphill battle,

Andrew and Matt remain hopeful, inspired by their regard for the current tower. Andrew grew up seeing the tower over the reservoir, and remains struck by its eerie appearance and poetic associations. "I distinctly remember as a kid looking at the tower and thinking that someone lived inside. There was something kind of haunting about its clouded windows and door to nowhere." Matt sees the tower as a beacon of Lafayette. "It's amazing to think that the designers of the dam and tower went to all that trouble just to add the decorative

house on the top. Think of the consideration and effort it took to build that structure up over 100 feet above the ground!" marveled Matt. "Just imagine if something beautiful can be created to replace the original tower for the next 100 years!"

EBMUD is accepting community input on the retrofit of the Lafayette Reservoir tower until May 1, in particular for comments and suggestions on aesthetic designs for the concrete parapet. They can be reached at construction-east@ebmud.com.

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Lamorinda Village partnership benefits

... continued from Page A3

Its purpose is to connect seniors and provide meaningful and practical services that support and help seniors to maintain independence and remain in their homes as they age. Services provided include information about cultural, social, and educational events, activities related to health, wellness, and fitness, home-based help such as transportation, grocery shopping, meal preparation, minor household repairs, assistance with computer issues, or volunteer visitors for conversations and simple non-medical check-ins. Referrals to a curated, screened list of other supportive services – gardeners, painters, attorneys, accountants, house and pet sitters, personal care providers, and more – are a valuable membership component, especially for seniors remaining

in their homes.

As part of the collaboration with the Village, the city will actively assist in building community awareness of the Village, improve and deepen existing programming and activities for seniors as they share program and activity ideas and resources, expand the volunteer opportunities for Lafayette residents and thereby improve the referrals available to members, and work with the Village to determine if there are services they are able and willing to provide to non-members as part of their service to the community.

Anticipating the partnership indicates a need to "scale up the level of volunteer support." Katayanagi said now is a good time for new people to sign up and join the team. Village volunteers include Village members, college students, retirees, and other people from

the community who commit to 1-3 volunteer hours, once or twice a month, if not more. Services provided range from driving a Village member to an appointment or shopping in the Lamorinda Spirit Van or in an individual vehicle, to visiting members, to changing light bulbs or helping with household repairs, watering plants, prepare a meal, helping with computers and mobile devices or assisting to complete office tasks.

During public comment Suzy Pak thanked Katayanagi and council members as well as the senior council commission for furthering the partnership and supporting connection for Lafayette residents. The council unanimously approved the reallocation of funds and directed staff to complete the city's agreement with Lamorinda Village.

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Police Dispatch: 24 Hours
925-284-5010
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com
Lafayette Police Department:
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt
925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line
94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues
94549Traffic@gmail.com
Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049
Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan
925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org
Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report
March 5 - March 18

Alarms	45
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	23
Traffic	85
Suspicious Circumstances	9
Suspicious Subject	21
Suspicious Vehicle	17
Service to Citizen	34
Patrol Req./Security Check	34
Public/School Assembly Check	4
Supplemental Report	16

Vacation House Check	14
Welfare Check	14
Ordinance Violation	1
Vehicle violations	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
900 Block Hough Ave.	
700 Block Solana Dr.	
900 Block Hough Ave.	
Moraga Rd./Via Granada, Mor	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo	
Bldv.Reckless Driving	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dolores Dr.	
St Marys Rd./Woodview Dr.	
Tc - Fire And Amb Enroute	
3300 Block McGraw Ln.	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
1600 Block Hunsaker Canyon Rd.	
Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Tc - Property Damage	
3800 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
900 Block Reliez Station Ln.	
Other criminal activity	
Identity Theft	
Police Department (3)	
Petty Theft	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
400 Block Silverado Dr.	
1000 Block Orchard Rd.	
800 Block Reliez Station Rd.	
Petty Theft From Veh	
3100 Block Linda Vista Ln.	
Petty Theft Other	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
Petty Theft Veh Parts	
Police Department	
Shoplift	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
Vehicle Theft	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Lafayette Cir.	
Nuisance to the Community	
Loud Music	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
300 Block Glorietta Blvd.	
Mario Way/Valente Dr.	

Loud Noise	
900 Block S Thompson Rd.	
4000 Block Valente Dr.	
3300 Block Walnut Ln.	
Loud Party	
3300 Block Moraga Blvd.	
Los Arabis Dr./Rahara Dr.	
Rahara Dr./Los Arabis Dr.	
Rowe Pl./Moraga Rd.	
3200 Block Camino Colorados	
Public Nuisance	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Happy Valley Rd./Rose Ln.	
Vandalism	
1200 Block Rose Ln.	
Other	
Terrorist Threats	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Threats	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Transient Contact	
1St/Eb 24 On Ramp	
Trespass	
900 Block 2Nd St	
3400 Block Golden Gate Way	
3600 Block Deer Hill Rd.	
Unwanted Guest	
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
1100 Block Oleander Dr.	
Disturbance-domestic	
3100 Block Lucas Cir.	
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Ivanhoe Ave./Highland Ave.	
Disturbance-fight	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd.	
Disturbing The Peace	
Lafayette Cir./Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Fireworks	
Walnut Ln./Sweet Dr.	

Fraud False Pretenses	
Police Department	
3100 Block Indian Way	
3600 Block Madrone Dr. (2)	
Harassment	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3300 Block Sweet Dr.	



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report
March 5 - March 18

Alarms	41
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	9
Traffic	160
Suspicious Circumstances	5
Suspicious Subject	7
Suspicious Vehicle	7
Service to Citizen	40
Patrol Req./Security Check	42
Public/School Assembly Check	0
Supplemental Report	21
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	5
Ordinance Violation	0
Vehicle violations	
Accident Property	
Las Vegas Rd./La Espiral	
40 Block Berkeley Ave.	
No House Number	
Orinda Way/Santa Maria Way	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
50 Block Muth Dr.	
Camino Sobrante	
Reckless Driving	
Orinda Way	
Glorietta Blvd./Moraga Way	
20 Block Bryant Way	
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.	

Other criminal activity	
Battery-felony	
Camino Sobrante	
Police Department	
Commercial Burglary	
Camino Sobrante	
Embezzlement	
60 Block Moraga Way	
Grand Theft Veh Parts	
20 Block Fiddleneck Way	
Irwin Way	
Identity Theft	
Police Department	
Petty Theft	
100 Block Ardith Dr.	
Residential Burglary	
10 Block Vista Del Orinda	
20 Block Sunrise Hill Rd.	
Robbery Strongarm	
Camino Sobrante	
Warrant Arrest	
Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Way	
50 Block Vashell Way	
Camino Sobrante	
Orinda Way	
Nuisance to the Community	
Disturbance-domestic	
100 Block Fiesta Cir.	
Loud Music	
Theatre Square	
Loud Party	
30 Block Broadview Terrace	
Public Nuisance	
20 Block Orinda Way	
Sundown Terrace/Happy Valley Rd.	
Other	
Mentally Ill Commit	
100 Block Ardith Ct.	
60 Block Sunnyvale Ln. (2)	
Possession Of Stolen Prop	
Brookwood Rd./Camino Pablo	
Unauthorized Possession	
400 Block Moraga Way	
Bart Orinda Station	

Honoring the reawakening of Divine Feminine energy – Goddess Gatherings opens in Lafayette



Photo Vera Kochan

Goddess Gatherings co-owners Jen Grossi (left) and Amy Miller

By Vera Kochan

Unlike anything in the Lamorinda area, Goddess Gatherings (3534 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette) has arrived to offer a space where according to their website, “anyone wishing to honor the reawakening energy of the Divine Feminine can join in celebration, ceremony and stillness.”

With a soft opening on Oct. 1, 2022, followed by an official ribbon cutting on March 22, co-owners Amy Miller and Jen Grossi, who have known each other for seven years, describe Goddess Gatherings as a small hybrid retail/gathering/art gallery center.

Don't let the name fool you, gentlemen. All are welcome; male and female, young and old, and the first reaction from anyone entering the room is “Wow!” An explosion of color in the form of paintings by local artists, new-to-you clothing, new clothing by the Karma Highway label, jewelry, home décor, wellness products, candles, crystals, furniture, ceramics and more are all for sale. But, the fun doesn't stop there.

The retail space turns into a participation venue with upcoming events such as “Freedom Flow Movement & Dance,” “Sound Sensations – A Sound Bath,” and “Energy Movement Yoga” when tables and chairs are pushed to the side to allow for spreading out.

Gathering Goddesses began as Miller's brain child. “It's the culmination of all my passions. I was a fine arts major and loved to create.” Miller crafts a lot of the jewelry for sale calling it “Peace and

Magic,” exhibits her paintings on the walls, and describes the furniture for purchase as a “Bohemian wanderlust of found, vintage and one-of-a-kind pieces.”

Grossi describes Miller as a “curator of magical things. She believes in putting forth positivity, and she keeps changing things in the shop so that it's always different.”

Before the concept of a retail space struck her, Miller and five other women started meeting within the small circle of friends. “We called it Goddess Gatherings and celebrated our femininity. It was so powerful. I tried doing pop-ups in different locations, and eventually was ready to bring this to a larger group.” In the meantime, Grossi was considering opening a yoga studio, so the two joined forces to open their Lafayette location.

The company logo is a Vesica Pisces surrounded by six rays of light. A Vesica Pisces is a mathematical shape formed by the intersection of two discs with the same radius, intersecting in such a way that the center of each disc lies on the perimeter of the other. It can be interpreted as the blending of masculine and feminine, and it is also believed to be an ancient symbol of the Divine Feminine. The six rays of light represent the original six members of the Goddess Gatherings who, by the way, help conduct the various events offered.

“We're grateful to be here,” said Grossi, “and grateful that the community has been open to us.”

For more information visit: www.goddessgatherings.com.

Saint Mary's rugby

... continued from Page A1

The Gaels' victory over Cal last year was in the national semifinals game. This penultimate game of the regular season did have playoff implications for both teams. “We're going to be in the playoffs because we're going to win our league,” O'Brien said. “Twelve teams will be in the playoffs and the top four teams get a first-round bye. With this win, we should be getting a bye.”

In what was a team effort on both offense and defense, Mario Storti, Inoke Waqaveski and Joe Marchant all came up with big plays. “Mario's score at the end of the first half was a pretty cool play that came out of nowhere,” O'Brien said. “Inoke is a baller who was only playing just his third game at scrum half and had a great game. Joe who made a beautiful breakout run was pretty remarkable on defense.”

After the two early scores, O'Brien was disappointed in the way Cal took advantage of Saint Mary's mistakes: “The game was more exciting than it needed to be. For the first 20 minutes, we were really hitting on the right cylinders but Cal is so athletic and when we made a couple of errors and missed a couple of tackles – doomsday.”

O'Brien kept things on an even keel all week in practice and anticipates an even better

performance if they were to face Cal in the playoffs. “We tried to not overhype the Saint Mary's – Cal thing,” O'Brien said. “I just wanted to come here and just get a taste of it because if things go well for us, we'll see Cal again, and we did not want to blow it all out now. We can be better because we wasted a lot of opportunities. We'd make a good run and then chuck the ball away. We did not capitalize on enough of our breaks to come away with points.”

The post-game self-analysis for O'Brien is something that he looks forward to. “One of the reasons I love rugby is because it's a problem-solving activity,” O'Brien said. “We're trying to solve problems like invading their space and coming away with points. There's a lot of great lessons that came out of our game today.”

Games like these are just what the game needs, according to O'Brien: “I think it's great for college rugby to have this type of rivalry. College rugby needs this; high school rugby needs this; U.S. rugby needs this. The United States is hosting the World Cup in eight years and we're not even in this year's World Cup. Enthusiasm drives everything. When people get to watch the sport and have people that they follow and kids see players that they follow, to me it just makes nothing but perfect sense.”



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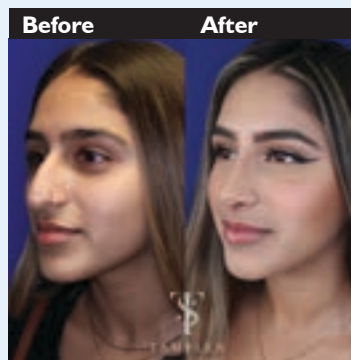
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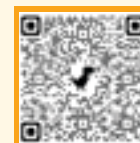


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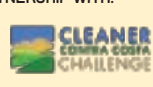
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Moraga and Orinda accept Lafayette's Sustainability Challenge



Photo Wei-Tai Kwok

Lafayette Mayor Carl Anduri issues challenge proclamations to Orinda Mayor Inga Miller (left) and Moraga Mayor Renata Sos (center).

By Vera Kochan

During the March 15 Lamorinda Councils' annual meeting, the city of Lafayette issued a Sustainability Challenge to the town of Moraga and the city of Orinda.

Sustainable Contra Costa Outreach Director Laura Wehrley stated that Lafayette Mayor Carl Anduri "really wanted a fun and friendly sustainable competition between the three Lamorinda cities, so we came up with this idea. He really wants Lafayette to win, so we are hoping to get a healthy number of registrants to make it a fun competition."

Wehrley explained, "Through our workshops, the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge website, our SLIA (Sustainable Leaders in Action) youth team and more, we help Contra Costa residents reduce their CO2 footprint by saving water, energy, waste and more."

According to a Feb. 15 Lamorinda Weekly article, Anduri guesstimated that

Moraga led the way with nearly one million points, Orinda has approximately 500,000 points, and the largest of the three municipalities, Lafayette, trails at approximately 300,000 points. Moraga Council Member Steve Woehleke was quick to credit Campolindo High School as leading the challenge in the group category for all of Contra Costa County.

As of March 24, as noted on the cleanercontra-costa.org/moraga webpage, out of a suggested 915 homes, Moraga has 718 participating in the challenge, and out of a 390 tons of carbon dioxide reduction goal by December 2023, Moraga is nearly there at 92%. Orinda has reached 67% of its 300-ton reduction goal, with 290 homes participating, and Lafayette is currently at 52% of its 250-ton goal with 314 households signed up.

Some of the many ways challenge participants can reduce their carbon dioxide footprint is to adjust thermostats, shut off lights in un-

occupied rooms, dry clothes wisely, switch to LED lights, replace air conditioning filters, weatherize the home, insulate the attic, carpool, recycle, plant trees, take shorter showers and fix leaky faucets.

Lafayette's challenge letter to Moraga and Orinda involves two competitions: the 2023 Lamorinda Sustainability Challenge to determine which city's residents take more actions to save carbon dioxide and water and therefore have a higher cumulative score on the CCC dashboard on Dec. 31; and the 2023 Lamorinda Zero Waste Challenge to determine which city's residents reduce waste more between April 3 and May 14.

Lafayette had scheduled a Countdown to Zero kickoff event at the Lafayette Library from 5:30 to 7 p.m. March 28 at the Don Tatzin Community Hall.

To sign up for the Sustainability Challenge and help your town/city win visit: www.sustainablecoco.org.

The gauntlet has been thrown. Let the games begin!

Service Clubs Announcements

March 2023 Weekly Speakers

April 14 Jeff Whalen, The outlook for superconducting mag-nets in fusion reactors

April 21 Shomit Ghose, The amazing world of data, cows and cars

April 28 Victoria Briskin, Early alert canines

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Families gather for some spring fun

... continued from Page A1

In Lafayette, the annual Lafayette Rotary Candy Scramble will start at 10 a.m. on April 8, and is to be held, rain or shine, at Plaza Park.



Easter bunny at Moraga Commons Photo Jeff Heyman

After the candy scramble, there will be opportunities to take photos with the Bunny, a fire truck and a police car, and kids can check out the emergency vehicles.

And lest you think that fun was only meant for kids, in Moraga there was also a first annual event sponsored by the Parks and Rec Department, Bunnies & Brews: a

Hacienda Hoppy Hour on Sunday, March 26. Limited tickets were sold for this special event, and included a souvenir event glass for unlimited pours from local breweries and live entertainment. Childcare was provided onsite by the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee.

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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Local foundation helps Afghans trapped under Taliban rule



Photo provided

Ahmad Shah's family received a \$100 sponsorship donation from TIE in February. Shah makes between \$1.15 and \$1.72 a day selling vegetables using the online conversion rate. Their rent is \$34.49 a month.

By Jon Kingdon

It was 20 years ago when Lafayette resident Budd MacKenzie happened to read a Parade article about Greg Mortenson with the title that said, "He fights terror with books." The article went on to explain how Mortenson built a school in a small village in Northern Pakistan where he saw students having to write their lessons in the dirt and wrote about it in his book, "Three Cups of Tea."

MacKenzie was able to contact Mortenson and learned that he was also building schools in Afghanistan. "I asked him how much money he would need to build a school in Afghanistan, and he answered \$25,000," MacKenzie explained. "I told him to pick another village, letting him know I was raising money for a school; we ended up raising \$60,000 and in 2005, the school was finished and that was when I first visited Afghanistan."

After that first visit to Afghanistan, MacKenzie made a commitment to do more and started his own charitable foundation, "Trust in Education (TIE)," to help educate the children of Afghanistan, particularly girls. A second project for TIE was providing 'food-clothing-shelter' for a country that had been devastated by the Russian invasion and the constant battles between the local warlords. The foundation also provided Afghan farmers with over 22,000 fruit trees, 300 sheep, delivered over 30,000 tons of clothing blankets to families

living in refugee camps and funded the building of bridges and the construction of wells.

Jump forward to November 2021 and much of what TIE had accomplished had been thwarted by the Taliban government. "On December 24th, we had 10 computer libraries with computers full of educational software that were run by women and utilized by over 1,000 girls a day," MacKenzie said. "On December 25th, they all had to be closed when the Taliban decreed that Afghan women could no longer work for foreign nonprofit organizations."

One program that has continued for the past 10 years was TIE's sponsoring of children, who had to work on the streets to help support their families. Sponsors in the United States provided \$50 per month in exchange for their parents' agreement that they would no longer work on the streets and would go to school. There were 152 children that were sponsored and 55 graduated from high school and 17 from college. Fourteen of the women who were attending college were barred by the Taliban from the universities. Many fled the country with their families after the Taliban took control and 52 children are still in the program and receiving support.

In November 2021, MacKenzie was prompted to establish a family sponsorship program after seeing a report on CNN about a 9-year-old girl being sold to a 55-year-old man for \$2,000. "When I saw that story, I realized that if a country is so destitute that

half-a-year (\$600) or the full year (\$1,200). This is a zero-sum program for TIE in that 100% of what's donated goes to the families.

"I don't believe that patchwork works, like providing food that lasts a month," MacKenzie said. "What I wanted to do was to provide support for the families that was long-term. At this point, 93 families have been sponsored and I have asked Mujeeb, our program director in Kabul, to send me the profiles of seven more. There are now 384 people (246 children and 46 widows) that continue to have a place to live and food to eat which is so important for those who have been living day to day."

Mujeeb interviews the poorest of the poor and sends profiles and photos of the families which he recommends to TIE. MacKenzie is also doing what he can to provide educational tools for boys and girls to use at home by having TIE buy tablets and loading them with educational software, creating a tablet library. "The tablets bring education into homes and provides every member of the family with the opportunity to learn," MacKenzie said. "The tablets have everything a child would learn from first through the 12th grade, and more."

With the sponsorship money, some of the families have been able to start small

businesses. TIE also funded a class on how to repair cell phones. "For those who are likely to get a job or start their own repair business,"

MacKenzie said, "we will pay the \$150 needed to purchase the repair tools, having provided these men with a marketable skill they did not have."

Since the women can't get out of the house and get jobs, TIE is finding ways for them to make money. "We are providing tailoring classes for them and will help them market what they produce," MacKenzie said.

Though the overall numbers of starving families are daunting, it's a matter of keeping things in perspective. "Once at a Rotary club, I gave a talk about our program, and someone shouted out that what we were doing was just a drop in the bucket. That may be true, I said, but if everybody took responsibility for a drop in the bucket, the bucket would soon be full," MacKenzie said.

For more information about Trust in Education, visit www.trustededucation.org, or email trustededucation@gmail.com and the phone number is (925) 299-2010. For information on the family sponsorship program, visit <https://trustededucation.org/get-involved/sponsor-an-afghan-family>.



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Savory veggie stacks make a colorful splash as a side or main dish



Roasted Veggie Stacks

Photo Susie Iventosch



By Susie Iventosch

We've enjoyed dining on these roasted veggie stacks that a couple of our friends have served, but finally got around to making our own the other day. It was a fun project and the great thing is that you can use whatever cheese and veggies you like, as long as it can all be stacked. We've had them with potatoes, too, which is also really good. We chose eggplant, onions, tomatoes, mushrooms, zucchini, and orange bell pepper for the veggies along with goat cheese, but I think a slice of summer squash would be fun on top with the scalloped edges ... kind of like a flower on top. It would also be fun to use a big slice of portobello instead of the smaller cremini, but I didn't think that one through before buying my veggies. I'd slice rounds from

the cap of each portobello for this recipe.

You can make the stacks well ahead of time and then do the final baking just before serving. I like to roast the veggies to al dente before stacking them. It's best to put the veggies that take longer to cook faster on another tray. I found that the eggplant took the longest amount of time and the tomatoes the least amount of time, with the onions, mushrooms, zucchini and bell pepper falling somewhere in between. As each kind of veggie is cooked to al dente, just remove it from the tray and place on a cutting board or platter while the rest continue to bake. Once the veggies are all removed from the oven and cool enough to handle, you can build your stacks. These make a delicious side dish, or a vegetarian main, and beautiful presentation on the plate!

Roasted Veggie Stacks

(Serves 6 as a side dish)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large eggplant
- 2 red or yellow onions
- 2 large tomatoes
- 3 portobello mushrooms
- 1-2 orange or red bell peppers
- 1 large zucchini
- 6 medium basil leaves
- 4 oz. goat cheese (or fresh mozzarella, or Gruyere)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves (or 1/2 tsp. dried)
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 6 fancy toothpicks (at 3-4 inches long)

DIRECTIONS

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Preheat oven to 400 F.

Blend olive oil with thyme, salt and pepper. Set aside.

Prepare veggies according to the directions below. Cut all of the veggies into slices between 1/4 and 1/2-inch thick.

Eggplant - lightly salt both sides of the slices and lay them on a rack to allow them to sweat for about 15 minutes. Pat them dry on both sides with a paper towel.

Onions - peel and slice

Bell peppers - remove stem and seeds from the bell pepper and cut into pieces that are about 2-3 inches wide.

Tomatoes - remove stem and slice.

Zucchini - slice into pieces about 3-inch long. You will need two slices per stack.

Portobello caps - clean caps and remove stem.

Lay all of the sliced veggies onto the two prepared baking sheets and lightly brush the tops with the olive oil mixture.

Roast veggies until al dente, about 20 minutes. Remove from oven and cool. Once the veggies are cool enough to handle, line a baking sheet with a new piece of parchment paper and layer each stack on the parchment, beginning with eggplant on the bottom, then onions, tomatoes, mushrooms, bell pepper, goat cheese, and zucchini. Secure each in place with a toothpick through a basil leaf.

Bake before serving for about 20 minutes at 400 F or until veggies just begin to brown and cheese is soft and melty. If you want the basil leaf to look pretty when you serve it, put it on after baking the stacks.

**Note - you can place the veggies in any order you like, but I like to use the most firm ones on the bottom.*

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>



Photos courtesy Saurav Mohapatra

Rites of spring - Holi Lamorinda

Submitted by Gayatri Krishnakumar

Many cultures around the world acknowledge the end of winter and the coming of spring. In the Indian subcontinent this welcome is the exuberant and sometimes riotous celebration of colors called Holi. The festival has evolved over the years, tacking on new traditions and symbolisms.

Urban centers see people from all backgrounds pour out into the streets and interact with each other. Greetings range from the genteel exchanges of colored powder (applied on the face, hair, or garments), running away from or running squirting colored water through a pichkari (a hand piston powered soaker) to rowdy, uninhibited revelries fueled by bhang (within known communities). Something about the bright colors that seems to unlock a sense of childlike abandon and mischief. At some point after everyone seems to be duly color checked, whatever color is left ends up thrown into the air. A grand finale to a festival filled with energy, laughter, and hope for the future.

This little bit of India was brought to Lamorinda on March 19 by a small group of volunteers from the Indian community who wished to share their own fond memories of the festival with their children, friends, and the Lamorinda community. After



Participants celebrate Holi at Orinda Community Park March 19.

much moving about due to the atmospheric river-soaked spring, the final venue at Orinda Community Park splendidly accommodated the festivities that included traditional sweets, food, music, games and colors (bleached flour with food coloring,

yummy ...cough, cough ...no don't eat that). The 100 or so festival attendees saved their appetite for the Vada pav (savory potato patty with buns) Jamuns and Jalebis. Yes, Mira. Yes, Alex. Today is your "Yes day." Sugar up. Go get your clothes dirty. Go spread joy.

Submit stories or story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Local company works to help Ukrainian orphans



Photo provided

Sydney Paige Foundation board member Noah Sims (center), celebrity chef Rachel Ray and Ukrainian children in Kyiv.

By Diane Claytor

When Sharon Girdlestone left the comfort of her Orinda home last April, heading to Poland to help feed Ukrainians fleeing their war-torn country, she didn't know what to expect. The war had started, she had sold her business and she simply felt the need to help in any way she could. A former chef herself, Girdlestone connected with the World Central Kitchen (WCK), an organization known for providing meals in response to humanitarian, climate and

community crises. Founded by Chef Jose Andres, WCK works on the premise that "food relief is not just a meal ... it's a plate of hope, telling you in your darkest hour that someone ... cares about you."

While there, Girdlestone prepared food with approximately 35 others from all over the world, feeding between 2,000-3,000 people per day. She worked in Przemysl on the Polish-Ukrainian border, spending time in both a commercial kitchen and a supermarket converted to a humanitarian center, cleaning, washing

and disinfecting laundry, and helping feed people who had been forced to leave their homes. She met wonderful, generous people. She heard heartbreaking stories and saw far too much sadness and devastation. But, she reports, "It was so worth it. Other than having my children, it's the best thing I've ever done."

Upon her return home, Girdlestone began her new job as director of development at Sydney Paige, a local nonprofit that provides high-quality backpacks, books and school supplies to kids in need.

Courtney Brockmeyer, Moraga resident and Sydney Paige's president and founder, refers to Girdlestone as her unicorn. "She gets things done that I would never have even thought of or had any idea how to execute," Brockmeyer reports.

Two of the incredible, resourceful people Girdlestone connected with during her time in Poland - who both now serve on the Sydney Paige Foundation board - are Noah Sims, social media influencer and former Master Chef TV contestant, and Tim Cronin, a retired business executive whose expertise includes product development, operations, sales and marketing. "Both of these men," Girdlestone states, "have amazing hearts and traveled to Ukraine just because they wanted to help." Sims is still helping out, currently spending time in Lviv.

Reports indicate that when Russia first invaded Ukraine,

there were about 100,000 Ukrainian children living in orphanages and boarding facilities. Today, that number has grown to more than 150,000 displaced children, many of whom have lost their parents in the war.

For 10 years, Sydney Paige Foundation has been helping homeless, low income and foster children, providing them school supply-filled backpacks. When she first started her company, Brockmeyer said that one of her missions was to enrich the lives of children in need, and, in fact, over 200,000 kids have been helped and one million backpacks and school supplies have been donated. Brockmeyer instantly knew that she and Girdlestone, who, while owning her own catering company, often fed homeless families, would make a perfect team, both sharing a passion for helping others.

With the impact of Girdlestone's trip still weighing heavily on her mind, and with the help of board members Sims and Cronin, Sydney Paige's latest donation campaign has a goal of providing at least 2,000 backpacks filled with highly requested school supplies and other essential items to Ukrainian orphans.

"The stories Sharon, Noah and Tim have shared are horrific," Brockmeyer says. "We all kept wondering what we could do." Acknowledging that these children obviously, first and foremost, need clothing, food and shelter, Brockmeyer reports that she always said Syd-

ney Paige would go in as second responders, "getting these kids the supplies they need once they are able to return to school." Working with two aid groups, Sydney Paige has been told that kids absolutely need school supplies, "anything to give them some sort of normalcy," Brockmeyer states.

"We're small but we're trying to do what we have the power to do," Brockmeyer continues. They are asking for donations to fund the backpacks and school supplies. It costs approximately \$35 for a filled backpack; "That's only a small portion of what a family meal out would cost," Brockmeyer reports. "It would be wonderful to have individuals help us and amazing if companies want to donate in larger quantities. We'll send as many items as we get," she notes.

With access to free shipping via NovaUkraine, Sydney Paige is also looking for donations of bulk hygiene items. "We could really use toothbrushes," Girdlestone proclaims. They have already received some hygiene supplies, as well as jackets and sweat-shirts. As she saw during her time volunteering in Poland, the need is great.

Brockmeyer is fond of paraphrasing a quote from Helen Keller: "Alone we can only do so much, but together the possibilities are endless."

For more information or to donate to the Ukraine Backpack and School Supply Drive, please go to <https://donate.sydney-paige.org/ukraine>.

Troop 219 honors new Eagle Scouts



Photo provided

From left: Mattie Ceridono, Tyson Bates, Drew Powell, Paul Kuhner

Submitted by Julia Bates

Troop 219 of Lafayette held an Eagle Court of Honor on Feb. 5 to recognize and celebrate four outstanding young men - Tyson Bates, Mathias Ceridono, Paul Kuhner and Drew Powell - all who have achieved BSA's highest rank, Eagle Scout. Troop 219 is immensely proud of their accomplishments.

In addition to earning 21+ merit badges to achieve the Eagle Scout rank, Scouts also completed the following community service projects: Bates helped construct and landscape

an outdoor classroom at Acalanes High School; Ceridono built out Lafayette's storm assistance sandbag station, Kuhner greatly enhanced the outdoor seating area of the Acalanes Student Wellness Center, and Powell built 20 protective Screech Owl nesting boxes.

These four new Eagle Scouts received recognition and proclamations from the City of Lafayette and Vice Mayor Gina Dawson, local U.S. Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, California State Sen. Dianne Feinstein, The White House and Contra Costa County.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

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

In Memory

Kathryn Adele Zuber

June 19, 1942 - Feb. 6, 2023



Surrounded by love and her favorite yellow roses, we share in sorrow the passing of Kathryn Zuber.

Born in Los Angeles, Kathy attended Dorsey High School where she met Ed Zuber. Kathy went on to attend The University of Southern California, graduating cum laude with a degree in Education in 1964 and was a proud member of Alpha Phi Sorority. True Gemini soulmates, Ed and Kathy married on June 22, 1963 and were married for 57 years until Ed's passing in 2020. A giver by nature, Kathy made her career in elementary school education. In 1974 she moved from a close-knit family neighborhood in Northridge to Moraga. She remained close to many of her Southern California friends throughout her life and enjoyed traveling back to watch USC football and visit friends.

In Moraga, Kathy taught at Camino Pablo and Donald Rheem Elementary Schools where she started the Gifted and Talented program. She taught second grade for over 20 years and in 1998 was awarded Teacher of the Year for the Moraga School District. To say she made an impact on hundreds of kids is an understatement. She remembered every student and would often see them around town which would bring a big smile to her face. She was a mentor to new teachers, offering guidance and encouragement. With Ed, she was a founder of the Moraga Baseball Association. She was an avid scorekeeper and could always be found at a game with scorebook in hand.

In 2004 Kathy hung up her pencil and gradebook to be a fulltime Nana. Nothing gave her more joy than spending time with her granddaughters, Madison and Tatum. She attended every sporting event and activity they participated in to cheer them on. She taught them how to make her famous mac & cheese which was always on hand. She and Ed loved to travel with the girls and visited Cape Cod, Washington D.C., Pennsylvania as well as trips to Disneyland, Hawaii and Mammoth where Kathy had been going since she was a child. Celebrating Christmas with the family together was her favorite time of year.

Kathy could often be found tending to the hummingbirds, filling her house with flowers from her garden, playing bridge with friends, volunteering at the Moraga Library where she managed the bookshop and mastering crossword puzzles.

Kathy is preceded in her passing by Ed and is survived by daughter Lynda, son Jon and granddaughters Madison and Tatum. The smile on her face and twinkle in her eyes will be missed by all whose lives she has touched. She will remain forever in our hearts.

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Do I really have to study a foreign language? Yes! And here's why

By Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D.

When preparing to apply for college, most students are aware that they must remain rigorous in core courses, like English and mathematics. However, many students do not think of foreign language as central to their applications. Many top colleges say otherwise. While two years of a foreign language is a common length of time for schools to require of applicants, many schools recommend three or four years and some highly selective schools prefer five. Students who take their first year of a foreign language in middle school can take four years of the same language in high school. It is important for students to note that these years should be in the same language. Consistency is key. If languages are your 'thing' you can add a second language but be sure to keep the

first.

Since, foreign language courses are a key component to any college application, future college applicants should be sure to research both the required and recommended number of foreign language courses at the colleges they hope to apply to and plan their high school courses accordingly. There is a rumor that the Ivy League colleges do not require foreign language. Each college website should be pretty clear about what they require. But even if a top college does not require a course, it does not mean they don't expect students to study it. In fact, you will be competing with students who have taken the most rigorous classes available at their high school in the five core academic areas, including the humanities, social sciences, laboratory sciences, mathematics, and foreign language. And if your high school does not offer a

course, many students will go out of their way to take a course in another setting – this shows initiative to learn, which colleges love to see in their applicants!

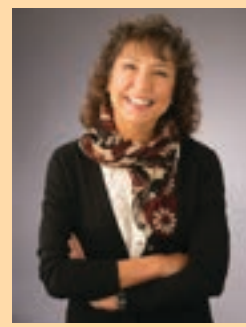
So, what should you do if language is not your favorite subject? I recommend you consider the following advantages:

- You can more deeply experience new cultures in ways that develop and encourage respect for diversity.
- You can acquire a greater opportunity to get to know new people as well as lessen fear of those who are unfamiliar to you, sometimes just because they are speaking a different language.
- You can learn to communicate better both orally and in writing. Often it is in the foreign language classroom that students gain the greatest understanding of grammar and expand their vocabulary.
- Through language and culture studies, you are ex-

posed to new ideas, thus broadening your perspective of the world.

The study of foreign language is a distinct advantage in the professional world. Job candidates who are proficient in more than one language have a competitive edge in the U.S. economy, where a large proportion of jobs involve work with immigrants and/or travel to and trade with foreign countries.

So why do colleges care so much about the study of foreign languages? Because the study of diverse languages and cultures is a gateway to greater understanding and appreciation for a wide range of other subjects, including art, music, cuisine, film, science, and philosophy. It educates and broadens the mind in limitless ways and is the true core of a liberal education and global citizenry.



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Teen artists recognized at Visual Arts Competition awards ceremony



Photos Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

Seventeen teen artists were recognized on March 16 at the culmination of the 20th annual

High School Visual Arts Competition. The competition is open to all high school students who reside in or attend school in Orinda. The winning competitors were also given

prizes of \$250 for first place and best of show, \$150 for second place, and \$50 for third place. Honorable mention winners were given certificates.

Best of Show was awarded to "Captured Youth" by 11th grader Joseph Pak. In the 2D category, first place went to "Bystander Behavior" by Ellia Chaney, second place went to "A Luxury Death" by Andrea Liu, third place went to "Michelle" by Rachel Chan and Honorable Mention was given to "Crystallization" by Benjamin Wang.

In the 3D category, first place was awarded to "Problem Solving" by Aaron Jiang, second place went to "The Khalkotauri of Colchis" by Walter Yip, third place went to "Hush" by Alexandrina Gutu, with the Honorable Mention awarded to "On The Edge" by Phoebe Sulis.

"Farmer's Tool" by Chase Hammond took first place in the photography category. Second place was awarded to "Midnight Scare," by Sasha

Jayne, third place went to "Big World, Little People" by Katelyn Metherd, and Honorable Mention was presented to Sonya Barnett for her work, "Halo."

Jason Gutstadt took first place in the Digital Art category for "Dystopian," second place went to "Handy Dandy" by Natalie Hsu, third place was awarded to "Reality" by Anisa Huthman, and Honorable Mention went to "Things of Nature" by Lily Kalmar.

The competition was sponsored in part by the Bentley School and the Lamorinda Arts Alliance.

All of the winners, along with their schools and their teachers, as well as images of their artwork can be viewed on the Lamorinda Arts Council website:

<https://lamorindaarts.org/vac/>



Boys Team Charity Orinda Chapter Graduates its First Founding Class



Photo Ann Murphy

From left: Gio Bottene, Jake Disston, Ryan Gardner, Charlie Burke, Kyle Odmark, John Williams, Carson Beury, Rome Jiannalone, Kellen Baker, Nico Grinold, Alexander Fordyce, Bennett Destino, and Ethan Conley. Not pictured: Logan Haines, Colin Fraser, Matthew Hawkins, Hayden Westover

Submitted by Michelle Bea

This spring, boys team charity, Orinda chapter, will celebrate the graduation of its first founding class, the class of 2023. This dedicated group of 17 seniors has been committed

to philanthropic work since founding the chapter in 2016, when they were in the seventh grade.

Over the course of their time with boys team charity, the class will have collectively logged over 1,900 volunteer

hours over the past six years, working on philanthropic projects for groups including 10,000 Lunches, Aegis Moraga, Contra Costa County Food Bank, Glide Memorial, Grateful Gatherings, Loaves & Fishes, Make-a-Wish, Monu-

ment Crisis Center, Orinda Fourth of July Parade, Orinda Classic Car Show, Orinda Rotary, Special Olympics Northern California, White Pony Express, and Wagner Ranch Nature Area.

One of the philanthropies that the group supports, Grateful Gatherings (www.gratefulgatherings.org), helps families who are transitioning from homelessness/shelters to government subsidized housing furnish their homes and create a true "home." Charlie Burke, graduating senior, describes his favorite and most memorable volunteer opportunity working with Grateful Gatherings: "We first organized a drive to collect donated furniture and household items and delivered it all to a new home where the team and I then moved the furniture into the house and stocked and organized the bathrooms and kitchens. Once we were done, the family came back for the big reveal and we showed them around their new home. It was really moving to see their reactions and helped me realize how less than a day of our work can make an immediate and lasting impact on a family's life. Until my volunteer work with Grateful Gatherings, I did not realize the

hurdles a family faces when transitioning from homelessness/shelter into a more permanent apartment. It is not the end of their challenges, but our help – providing basic household items such as beds, a dining table, desks for children, linens, dishes and cleaning supplies – makes the transition easier."

Each year, classes organize a large capstone project. The Class of 2023 focused their efforts to support St. Mary's Center. St. Mary's Center is a community of hope, healing and justice dedicated to improving the well-being of seniors and preschool families in West Oakland by meeting basic needs for food, housing, and social connection. The team organized the collection and delivery of food and toiletries to donate to the organization.

Not only are these graduates dedicated to supporting philanthropy in our communities, they are involved in school leadership, committed students, athletes (representing just about every sport you can imagine), and so much more. We look forward to hearing about how these young men continue to dedicate themselves to their community as they go on in their post-graduation pursuits!

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

Art

Lamorinda Arts Alliance Announces the Exhibit "Wellness & Wellbeing" at the John Muir Health Auxiliary Gallery at John Muir Health, Aspen Center, 133 La Casa Via Suite 150, Walnut Creek, Monday, April 10 through Thursday, May 18. The show features 13 artists and 31 original artworks in acrylics, oils, watercolors, etchings, monoprint, mixed media and photography. Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., for Saturday hours call (925) 937-8100.

Valley Art Gallery announces new exhibition, "Art Sparks," which opens April 1 and runs through May 11. Comprising 250 new works across a wide spectrum of media, motifs, formats, sizes and price points, Art Sparks continues the gallery's 74-year mission of presenting the best of the best East Bay artists. Free. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek, www.valleyartgallery.org; (925) 935-4311 or email us at valleyartgallery@gmail.com

Moraga Art Gallery announces "Spring Exhibit '23," opening on April 5 and featuring the eye-catching work of two member artists residing in Lafayette: Dan-

guole Rita Kuolas and Pat Prosek. A free reception will be held on Saturday, April 22 from 5 to 7 p.m. The gallery, at 522 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center, is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.moragaart-gallery.com or call (925) 376-5407

Music

"Chromatica," a popular local chorus that sold out its fall 2022 concerts, will perform the Dvorak D Major Mass with organ accompaniment along with a second half of eclectic vocal music on April 15 at 7 p.m. at Peace Lutheran Church in Danville and on April 16 at 4 p.m., at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church in Orinda. The Danville concert includes a wine reception after the performance. Tickets and other information at www.chromaticachorale.org

Final Gold Coast Chamber Players concert, "Souvenir." Saturday, April 15, Concert- 7:30 p.m. Pre-concert talk- 7 p.m. Reception follows performance DTCH at Lafayette Library. Purchase Tickets: https://www.gccpmusic.com/

Town Hall Theatre will kick off a quarterly performance series featuring local musicians performing

well-known as well as original songs in an entertaining evening for the whole family. Entitled Front Porch Presents, the first show will happen on Friday, April 7 at 7 p.m. on the stage at Town Hall Theatre and will feature special guest, Lafayette's Stevie Coyle of The Quitters, along with eight other musical acts. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette, tickets: \$15 townhalltheatre.com/front-porch

Literature

April events at Orinda Books. Thursday, April 6 at 11 a.m. Pat's Book Club will read and discuss "Rebel Cinderella" by Adam Hochschild, the astonishing but forgotten story of an immigrant sweatshop worker who married an heir to a great American fortune and became one of the most charismatic radical leaders of her time. 276 Village Square, Orinda, info@orindabooks.com www.orindabooks.com

The Sweet Thursday Author Series presents Vanessa Hua author of "Forbidden City" on Thursday, April 27 at 7 p.m. at the Lafayette Library in the Don Tatzin Community Hall. The talk is free of charge, but registration is required at tinyurl.com/sweet-apr23.

Other

RecycleSmart and Moraga Garden Club are sponsoring a worm-composting workshop April 1 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Moraga Library. "Vermicomposting" is easy, perfect for small spaces and what kid doesn't like a worm? The \$25 registration fee includes plastic bins and composting worms. Registration required and limited to 20 families: www.recyclesmart.org/workshops

Let's work together to establish sustainable habits in the 2023 Lamorinda Zero Waste Challenge! Residents of the three Lamorinda cities will compete to reduce waste using actions from the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge. April 3-May 14. Anyone age 13+ can register; but only 1 city will be the winner. Who will it be, Lafayette, Moraga or Orinda? Register today: tinyurl.com/zerowaste2023.

Garden

Orinda Garden Club Plant Sale Saturday, April 15, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Orinda Library Plaza, featuring Perennials, Pollinators, Succulents, Drought Resistant, Vegetable Plants (including over 20 varieties of tomatoes) and more. The club

also plans to provide informational tables on various horticultural topics. And lastly, there will be a Garden Marketplace with fun, garden-related products. Sale will be located throughout the outdoor plaza at the Orinda Library, located at 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. Open to the public. For more information, see www.orindagc.org/plantsale-public.html or email communications@orindagc.org.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting on Monday, April 10 at the Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Dr, in Walnut Creek. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brief business meeting, social time and educational program. The program "Floristry with Materials from Garden Pruning" will be presented by Steven Brown, AFID, department chair of Environmental Horticulture/Floristry at City College of San Francisco. Steven will show techniques in floral arrangements using cuttings available from the garden, including use of geraniums in floral arrangements. We welcome the public to visit our meetings and to become a part of the Walnut Creek Garden Club. For more information, please visit: www.walnutcreekgardenclub.org.

Lafayette Garden Club monthly meeting begins on April 13 at 9:30 a.m. for social time and munchies before the meeting begins at 10 a.m. It is held at the Veteran's Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. We are lucky to have the design skills of two longtime members, Laurelle Thom and Jean David, giving a talk and floral demonstration called "A Home Full of Flowers." They have done many programs and workshops for local garden clubs over the years and designed exquisite bouquets for Bouquets to Art at the DeYoung for many years. The meeting is free to attend. We welcome new members and if you would like to attend or consider joining, please contact LGCMembership Committee@gmail.com

Lamorinda's Religious Services



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org

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Sunday Service 10 am or join us online.

Mondays 9:30 am Centering Prayer in the Chapel

Wednesday 10 am Contemplative Worship in the Chapel



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www.holyshepherd.org

ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Facebook Premiere Community Worship every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Go to facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/

WORSHIP SCHEDULE In person worship at 9:30 a.m. Live stream on facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/

Visit our website to access the current and recent sermons.

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church
mvpcc
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SUNDAYS AT 9:30 AM
OR ONLINE AT MVPCTODAY.ORG



Lafayette United Methodist Church

955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 thelumc.org

Palm Sunday April 2nd at 10 am for Service

Maudy Thursday on April 6th anytime between 11 am and 6pm to walk our meditation labyrinth with music and candles

Good Friday April 7th for a 6:30 pm Service

and Easter Sunday for services at 8:30 am and 10:30 am

as well as brunch and an Easter egg hunt at 9:30 am.

All are welcome

We are a church that strives to love as Jesus loves. Our congregation welcomes, includes, and affirms everyone on their journey of faith regardless of race, ethnicity, age, economic status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

An Open, Affirming & Loving Community

In-Person & Virtual service Sun. at 9:00 AM

If someone would like to be added to our Zoom invitation please call 925-284-7420 or email cathy.w@stanselms.us 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, www.stanselms.us

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Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm

All are welcome

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Please join us for our Easter Sunday service with music and scripture inspired by Jesus Christ and His Atonement. All are welcome!

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Lamorinda Weekly

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to
sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda battling their opponents and the weather



Acalanes pitcher Henry Souza

Photo provided

By Jon Kingdon

Throughout this year, hot weather, cold weather and wet weather has interfered with all of the sports teams. For the baseball teams, it all came together with a combination of cold, wet and wind that has interfered with the teams' practices and scheduled games.

"The weather has been a challenge but there's nothing you can do about it so you have to play this scheduling Tetris game. I'd rather have three game weeks than try to play on a sloppy field. It's challenging but you just try to be as easy to work with as possible and we're trying to get games in," Miramonte head coach Sean Hennessey said.

Acalanes

Even with the bad weather, Acalanes has been able to have a 6-4 record and are ranked fifth by the Bay Area News Group. "A lot can happen but our wins over two big named Division I schools, Monte Vista (5-0) and Foothill (3-0), put us on the radar, but we still have to keep winning," coach Connor Hornsby said.

Hornsby has become most comfortable with this year's team. "This is the first year that I've been able to have a lot of my own guys and establish a culture around a blue-collar program," Hornsby said. "I preach mentality, culture, grit and grim as to how the game should be played which a lot of teams have gotten away from."

With the loss of 12 seniors

to graduation, the team is only returning three starters. "We did lose some talent, but we have a younger class that puts in the extra time," Hornsby said.

The team defense has been solid with only seven errors so far this season. Sophomore shortstop James Stadt and junior third baseman Gavin Bender have been solid on the left side of the infield. "James has played very well and Gavin, who was a middle infielder, is getting more comfortable at third," Hornsby said. "Coach Hal Marty has put a fire under our outfielders with Andrew Habas in center, Keegan Goddard in left and Benji O'Rourke in right."

The pitching staff has only given up six runs in their six wins, including two shutouts and are led by Henry Souza, Mason Zirkel and Peter Thorn.

"Souza had a tired arm early in the season but has been ramping it up and has the most experience and success," Hornsby said. "This is Zirkel's first time on the varsity and he's being used as a starter and a closer and he should keep adding quality starts and innings for us. Thorn is a very confident pitcher that does a great job in throwing strikes."

Senior catcher Sammy Lee has been a good leader for the young pitching staff. "Sammy has done a great job behind the plate," Hornsby said. "He's an intense player and when the pitchers miss their spots, he will let them know and hold them accountable."

The offense has been led by Habas, O'Rourke, Lee, and Stadt who are all batting over .300. "Stadt is my 'second lead-off hitter' who bats in the ninth spot. I like guys at the bottom of the order that can handle the bat," Hornsby said. "We're a small ball program and it's starting to unfold and show that the old school, west coast way of baseball can produce wins."

Hornsby likes to play the role of underdog and just do things a little better than their opponents: "We're the smallest team in Division I and we understand that we're going to have to work harder, run the bases better, and execute better. We preach being confident and leaning on each other when guys are struggling and to be ready when their name is called upon."

Campolindo

Having been hired last January, it was a short off-season for Julian Fiammengo who has seen the team start off with a 4-4-1 record. "We definitely have the ability and the potential to be good," Fiammengo said. "We need to come focused and engaged every day and with every pitch. If we can continue to buy in and look to engage every pitch, we'll be okay. I try to plan as much as I can, but things happen like the weather and our depth and injuries and whatnot. It's just putting the pieces of the puzzle together every day."

The Cougars are an amalgam of experience and youth with nine seniors and three juniors and two sophomores and three freshmen on the roster.

Leading the offense is senior Hideki Prather who will be playing for Clemson next year. "Hideki is a top catcher that can also play the infield and be a designated hitter," Fiammengo said. "He's a competitive batter and junior Cameron Imberg is getting a lot of experience behind the plate as well."

Fiammengo's philosophy is to be aggressive on offense: "We love to run and put pressure on our opponents and hopefully we can put good swings on balls. We really preach hitting the ball hard on the line and on the ground and making the defense play catch."

There is good depth on the

pitching staff which is crucial because with all of the bad weather and games to be made up, Campolindo, again depending on the weather, may be playing six games in seven days. "We've really been monitoring the pitch counts to make sure that the pitchers stay fresh," Fiammengo said. "We have tournament game and double headers coming up."

The staff is led by seniors Philip Jagard, Adrian Blumberg and Hudson Pergamit and freshman Graham Schlicht and has the depth to use others as starters as the need arises. It's still early in the season to know who will establish themselves as the team's closer. "We're still figuring out who is going to fill that role," Fiammengo said. "At this point, it's week to week depending on what happens but I feel confident in a number of guys like freshman Dom Caruso, a left hander who had a 2 1/2 save at San Ramon Valley."

The defense has been solid in both the infield and outfield. "Andy Moon (SS) and Miles Clayton (2nd base) have had good games up the middle and Nick Rogers will go and get the ball in center field," Fiammengo said.

Fiammengo is not one to be afraid to play his freshmen: "Obviously they're young and a little green and have a lot of learning to do but they're physical and talented and we're looking to get them some experience so that they can come back as sophomores and juniors and really compete. Blake Robeson is our right fielder, and his backup is Graham Schlicht and we've also used some freshmen in pinch hit opportunities."

Fiammengo won't let the team get complacent: "There's still a lot of room for improvement everywhere on the team. We just really need to keep digging in all areas - defense, pitching, hitting and base running."

Miramonte

Despite only having played six games (3-3), head coach Sean Hennessey feels good about his team. "I've been pleased. We played well against a top team in Amador Valley which was a good lead into our league and then we had a two-week gap because of the weather," Hennessey said. This is a mature team with

21 seniors (12) and juniors (9) and three sophomores. "We have very good leadership on this team, led by Mike Bohm and football players Cooper Bohlig and John Williams," Hennessey said. "Overall, the upperclassmen are very businesslike and they want to do well and I couldn't be happier with the team. They're a lot of fun to be around."

The pitching staff looks to be the strength of the team with Bohm and junior J.D. Pearce being the aces of the staff. "Michael has pitched a lot since his sophomore year and I've been thrilled to coach him and J.D. is just as good a pitcher," Hennessey said. "We can go 7-8 deep with varsity arms than can help us if we have three or four game weeks. After Bohm and Pearce, we have Alex Fordyce, Luca Gamboa and Justin Bellamy that can all be starters and also fill in as relievers and when we can play more games, we'll be able to really know who will fill those roles."

Complementing the pitching has been the defensive play of the Matadors. "We've been playing excellent defense in the infield, outfield, catching and pitching," Hennessey said. Max Friedman (SS) and Carson Beury (2nd base) and Gardner Dunne in left and Bohlig and the catchers senior John Williams and junior Joe Shallat have been the foundation for the defense.

The offense has been led by Bohlig, Friedman and Beury. "Once we can actually put some games together, we'll be able to figure out our offensive identity," Hennessey said. "We are more aggressive on the base paths than last year and we can do more with hit and run and bunting. I like to put pressure on the defense which is what we did late in the Borean Christian game."

As the team enters league play, Hennessey sees his pitching as the key to be successful. "We're in a league with Las Lomas, Concord, Alhambra and Borean this year and we will be competing for the league championship," Hennessey said. "We are all blessed with good pitching so it's going to be who can execute on the offensive end, being able to drive the ball and manufacturing runs."

LMYA SWIM TEAM



LMYA swim

April Conditioning begins **April 11th**
(get in swim shape!)

Summer Swim Team begins **May 2nd**

Parent Informational Meeting - **April 12th**

7:00pm, Springhill Elementary



www.lmyaswim.com

Lamorinda girls beach volleyball begins this spring

By Jon Kingdon

When beach volleyball began, most likely in 1915 in Hawaii, it took a long time for it to become recognized as a competitive team sport. The first professional beach volleyball tournament was the Olympia World Championship of Beach Volleyball, in 1976, at Will Rogers State Beach in Pacific Palisades and it has been an Olympic sport since the 1996 Summer Games.

There are now 90 colleges, at all three Division levels, that have beach volleyball teams, and that number is growing with most of the 54 Division I schools offering scholarship money for their teams.

Later this spring, the Lamorinda schools will be having girls beach volleyball teams that will be starting out as club teams this first year. At this point, the schools looking to have teams are Acalanes, Campolindo, Miramonte, Las Lo-

mas, Northgate and Clayton Valley, though if any of the schools do not have a sufficient number of players, there may be the merging of some of the schools.

"The CIF passed it as an official sport last year when it really caught on in Southern California," said Campolindo Athletic Director Ray Meadows. "We have a number of girls who already play beach volleyball with club teams that expressed interest and a number of parents reached out when they found out that it was a California Interscholastic Federation sport. When we went to the district level, they were in favor of sustaining a program like this that provides more opportunities for the students. It was easy on my end because I just put out an interest survey and we had over 20 girls reply back, letting me know that they wanted to play."

The omnipresent John

Vuong jumped at the opportunity to coach the team. "I'd say that about half of the girls on our regular team have expressed an interest in also playing beach volleyball, along with the kids who will be simultaneously playing for their indoor club teams," Vuong said.

The school district has helped with setting up the courts for the schools. "This was a district initiative to add beach volleyball to the schools that wanted it," according to Superintendent John Nickerson. "We've rented the Moraga Commons Park courts and also a facility at Heather Farms for this side of the district."

With only two girls a side competing in a beach volleyball match, the game is essentially the same but very different in terms of technique for the game. "In indoor volleyball you approach with your toe forward but on the sand, you have to put more weight on

your heel or you will sink in the sand," Vuong said. "There is more finesse on the sand with less killing the ball and more emphasis on placing the ball. I'm learning on the job and I'm going to depend on the players that are already playing on the tour that will help me."

Conditioning is also more important in beach volleyball, according to Vuong. "The players have to be more fit because every time they run, they are putting more pressure into the sand so we will be doing a lot of weight training, focusing on the arm, legs, cardio work, and explosive training. On the sand you have to see, react, and explode."

There is already the possibility of beach volleyball courts eventually being put in at Campolindo. "We have a parent committee that's met already, and they've contacted the CIF for the names of companies to get a baseline dollar

amount because there's a lot that goes into the financials to be able to do it," Meadows said. "We also want to get the district behind getting it in place and helping to maintain it once it gets completed."

The possibility of beach volleyball courts being added to the Acalanes campus is also under discussion. For coach Haley Walsh, the issue was not a shortage of players, it was a shortage of coaches. "We have about 20 girls on our team and I am also going to be coaching the 20 girls on the Los Lomas team," Walsh said. "Though we are practicing together, we're trying to keep each high school separate so that we can start a league. We also have some non-league games for Acalanes against Monte Vista and Redwood High Schools. Acalanes and Los Lomas will be practicing on Mondays and Fridays and playing on Wednesdays with one court for Los Lomas and the other for Acalanes at Heather Farm Park."

Rain or Sunshine Run Club athletes take top overall awards at the Brazen Victory race in Richmond



Submitted by Diane Batchelor

Last month 13 Stanley Middle School students from the Rain or Sunshine Run Club took part in the Brazen Victory Race out at Point Richmond with close to 250 participants racing in either the 5K or 10K. The athletes trained on the Lafayette trail and up at the Lafayette Reservoir three days a week for seven weeks to prepare for their race. Their hard work and dedication paid off with

outstanding performance at the race. The team started out front and stayed out front the whole course of the 5K: The young ladies of the Run Club rocked with Nora 1st female overall, Natalie 2nd female, and Aurelia 3rd female, Thea came close with 7th overall and within a second was Parker 8th female overall. On the gentlemen's side of the 5K Caden 3rd overall, Nikola 4th, Thomas 7th, Taiyo 8th with Jason a close 9th overall. In the 10K young Zoe came 6th female overall with Clark at 6th overall in the race and 6th male.

Top row, from left: Nikola, Taiyo, Thomas, Clark, Jason, Caden, Jr. coach Nia, coach Diane, Greyson; bottom row: Aruelia, Parker, Nora, Zoe, Thea, Natalie

Photo provided



7th grade American CYO team wins championship

Submitted by Craig Pinedo

The 7th grade American CYO team from St. Monica won the 2023 Oak-

land Diocese Championship with wins over teams from San Leandro, Dublin, and Orinda in late February and early March. This was the second consecutive Diocese championship for this team.

Top row, from left: coach Brian Shaffer, Jake Pinedo, Matthew Morelli, Ben Shaffer, Denzel Parker, Charlie Sullivan, coach Craig Pinedo; back row: Kian Malekazali, Riley O'Toole, Jayden Albiento.

Photo provided

Third- and fourth-grade girls The Storm win Championship



Photo provided

Front row, from left: Juliana Bellusa, Marlowe Bernier, Micaela Werner, Alicia Craig, and Olivia Weaver; back row: coach Mike Werner; not pictured: Finley Bernier, Avery Johnson, and Grace Zhao

Submitted by LMYA

Congratulations LMYA basketball third- and fourth-grade girls 2023 Champions.

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Tennis court space in a pickle



Photo Jon Kingdon

Budd MacKenzie (center) teaches pickleball at the Lafayette Community Center.

By Jon Kingdon

Pickleball is a game that borrows elements from tennis, badminton, and Ping-Pong. It is played on a pickleball court about one-third the size of a tennis court. Invented in 1965 in Bainbridge Island, Washington by three fathers, Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell, and Barney McCallum, looking for an alternative sport for their kids over the summer, over the last decade pickleball has seen a major jump in people actively taking part in the sport.

In the last two years, pickleball participation has grown by 39.3% to just under 5 million participants nationwide and The Sports and Fitness Industry Association announced it "as the fastest-growing sport in America for the second year in a row."

There are now more than 10,000 registered pickleball facilities in the United States, according to USA Pickleball, the

sport's governing body. "Pickleball's growth trajectory gives every indication it will be a significant part of the American sport landscape for the foreseeable future," said Tom Cove, President/CEO of the Sports and Fitness Industry Association.

Lamorinda has seen a similar growth in popularity for the sport, with courts now made available at the Lafayette Community Center, four courts out of 12 at Northgate High School converted to dual use, the Lafayette Tennis Club, and the Walnut Creek Pickleball Club among other sites.

So what is the issue that has come to loggerheads between the tennis and pickleball communities? Access and space.

The Lafayette Pickleball Club has 326 members, and the Walnut Creek Pickleball club has 726 members. Budd MacKenzie, a member of the Lafayette community, has for the last year, been trying to get Acalanes High

School to convert three of their six tennis courts into dual use courts with pickleball, though if approved, they would only start with one court.

MacKenzie is leading a network of Lafayette pickleball players, many who play at the Lafayette Community center that has eight oversubscribed courts because there are far more pickleball players than courts.

The North Coast Section let it be known that there was not an issue in having the tennis courts lined for dual purposes and MacKenzie said that fundraising for the laying out of the additional lines – which would cost approximately \$3,000 – would not be an issue.

"I was disappointed that the approval was for only one court but rather than argue, I wrote asking where to send the check," MacKenzie said.

The third and most telling issue was for the school's tennis community (coaches and players) to agree to the additional lines on the court.

MacKenzie has been dealing with a number of the Acalanes school district administrators. John Nickerson, the superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District, is also a pickleball player. "I started playing about a year ago and it's a whole lot of fun," Nickerson said. "You can be a complete novice and be pretty good in about an hour."

Nickerson then approached the Acalanes tennis community (coaches and players) about the idea of having at least one court being lined for pickleball as well. "Initially they said that we could try it on one court but

when they saw the design, their response was 'Absolutely not,'" Nickerson said. "It would be way too confusing, disruptive, and problematic. The board's position (and I support their position) is that our facilities are for the community but their primary purpose is for the educational and the extracurricular programming of the students."

Acalanes does have a form of pickleball that is played during gym classes. "Our P.E. department has played pickleball on our tennis courts without the pickleball lines for well over a decade," Nickerson said. "They use the regular tennis nets, and it is a different looking game."

Haley Walsh, one of Acalanes' athletic directors, echoed the feeling of the tennis team as regards to the extra lines on the tennis courts. "Where the lines are called by the players, we don't want there to develop animosity if there are problems calling the ball in or out," Haley said. "Our coaches said that it would be difficult to play on a dual court because of the confusion of the lines. We really have to support our coaches and the programs that are established at the school."

MacKenzie, a former tennis coach, does not see the additional lines being an issue. "The lining of the tennis courts is white and the lines for pickleball would be dark blue so it really would not be an issue in a tennis match," MacKenzie said.

MacKenzie points to the universal appeal of pickleball. "It's become an every-person's sport," Mackenzie said. "It's for athletes but also for kids that

normally don't get much exercise and seniors that use the sport to get their exercise and social interaction where previously they did this mostly by walking the reservoir."

Lafayette resident Michelle Holcenberg, a tennis and pickleball player herself, sees it as a family sport. "My son started playing when he was 10 and has even played in tournaments with adults."

Nickerson suggested that if the pickleball powers that be were willing to do the striping and get the netting, the elementary schools might be very interested in allowing their blacktops to be used. MacKenzie did not see that as workable because the surfaces are not level like a tennis court and with homes so near the elementary schools, the noise level of the game would prove to be too much a distraction for those residents.

Ultimately the issue is not the value of the sport by any of the concerned parties. "The board would like to support community interest but they just feel that right now there is such opposition from the student programs," Nickerson said. "We haven't heard any support coming from the general student body that this is something that we need on our campus."

Though continuing to try and find a way to work things out with the school, MacKenzie remains frustrated at the attitude of the Acalanes tennis community. "If creating dual purpose courts is to be based solely upon the input of the Acalanes tennis teams, there will never be a choice at the high school."

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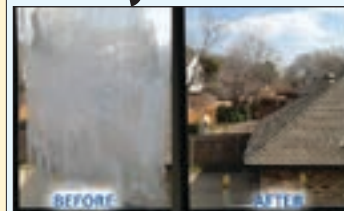
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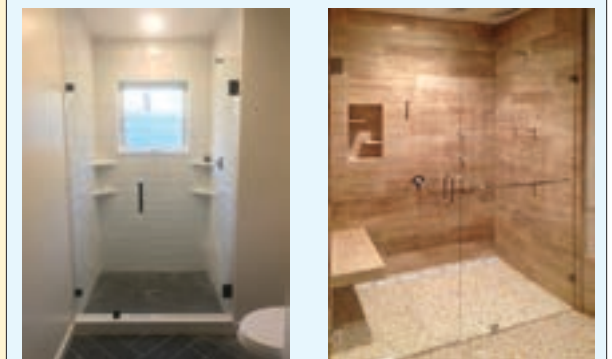
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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 3 Wednesday, March 29, 2023



Lamorinda ecosystems discussed ... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

April's potpourri of gardening tasks



Crabapple blossoms make wonderful cut flowers. Photos Cynthia Brian
By Cynthia Brian

"Spring is the time of plans and projects." ~ Leo Tolstoy, *"Anna Karenina"*

The first few weeks of April will indeed be days of watching, waiting, and planning our projects ... a veritable potpourri of gardening tasks. Instead of sunshine and songbirds, the first few days of spring arrived with heavy downpours and gale-force winds. Not to be discouraged, I put on my mud boots and rain gear to discover the harbingers of spring ... my hellebores. Hiding beneath a blooming azalea, I found my green and fuchsia-tinged aristocratic Lenten roses stretching upwards. If you haven't planted any hellebores in your shade garden, add them to your "must-buy" list. These perennial woodland beauties are available in a spectrum of colors including red, burgundy, yellow, green, pink, ivory and lime. Some varieties are even almost black. They are evergreen, deer and vole resistant, and provide long-lived blooms throughout spring. Since hellebores survive winter frosts, they can be planted now next to ferns, hostas, or other light shade denizens.

Although the weather doesn't look or feel like spring, my garden is awake and desires to delight. The crabapple, prune, and apricot trees



Bee on viburnum blooms

boast spectacular color and the buds on the cherry trees are ready to burst open. Iris, anemone, hyacinth, and cyclamen shimmer in the morning dew, and in the next few weeks the tulips and freesia will be at their prime. Pollinators are flocking to the fragrant white viburnum and the blue rosemary. I am a proponent of planting perennials and bulbs because no matter what the season, something is always in bloom. Over the years, and for several months, I planted daffodils and narcissi bulbs on a weekly schedule. My reward is five to six months of continuous flushes of flowers from countless specimens and cross-category hybrids, including the fragrant jonquilla, doubles, and trumpets.

If you haven't already prepared your soil for spring planting, don't waste any time getting started. Add compost, leaf litter, or manure to increase the nutrients and fertility. Chop cover crops before they go to seed. They can be composted or left on the ground to decompose. This green manure will increase nitrogen, and nutrients, and improve soil structure and quality. After cutting my cover crops, I will scatter them around the landscape, then wait three weeks before planting to allow for the breakdown. If the soil is not being fed, it is feeding on itself, and that will spell disaster.

... continued on Page D10

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	7	\$705,000	\$4,125,000
MORAGA	1	\$2,625,000	\$2,625,000
ORINDA	1	\$1,210,000	\$1,210,000

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

3193 Andreasen Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1988 SqFt, 1971 YrBlT, 02-15-23, Previous Sale: \$970,000, 06-28-13

1288 Candy Court, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 1740 SqFt, 1960 YrBlT, 02-14-23

3259 La Canada, \$3,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 3485 SqFt, 1950 YrBlT, 02-08-23, Previous Sale: \$549,000, 03-26-98

3290 Marlene Drive, \$705,000, 2 Bdrms, 1160 SqFt, 1972 YrBlT, 02-10-23, Previous Sale: \$295,000, 12-05-00

1299 Panorama Drive, \$4,125,000, 6 Bdrms, 5263 SqFt, 1975 YrBlT, 02-09-23

3401 Shangri La Road, \$2,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 3828 SqFt, 1983 YrBlT, 02-17-23, Previous Sale: \$1,495,000, 08-12-04

1003 Woodbury Road #207, \$960,000, 2 Bdrms, 1110 SqFt, 2015 YrBlT, 02-17-23, Previous Sale: \$960,000, 06-09-21

MORAGA

422 Fernwood Drive, \$2,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2898 SqFt, 1968 YrBlT, 02-13-23, Previous Sale: \$1,785,000, 04-22-19

ORINDA

18 Nelson Lane, \$1,210,000, 3 Bdrms, 2398 SqFt, 1962 YrBlT, 02-10-23



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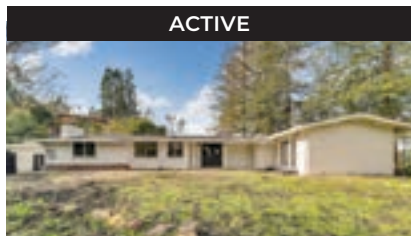
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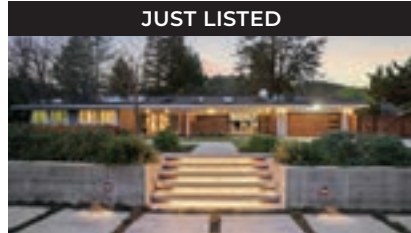
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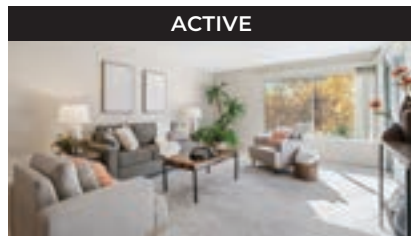
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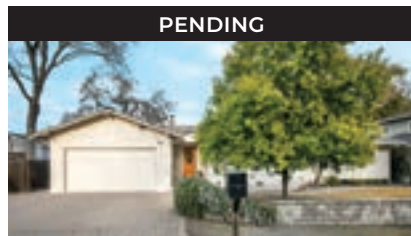
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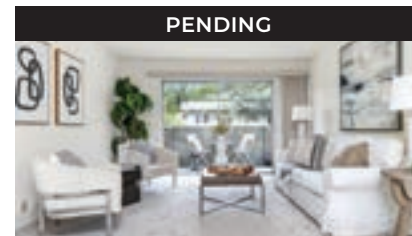
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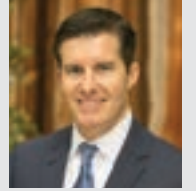


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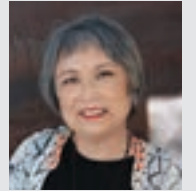
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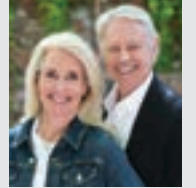
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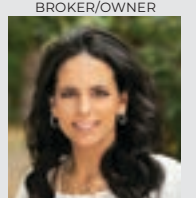
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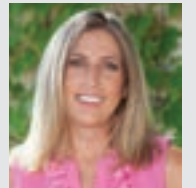
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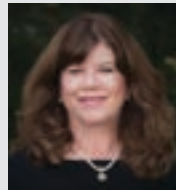
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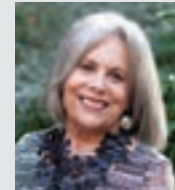
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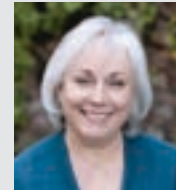
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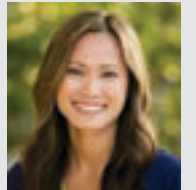
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Exploring Lamorinda's ecosystems



Riparian Ecosystem

Photos Toris Jaeger



Oak Woodland and Grasslands

By Toris Jaeger

We are fortunate to have six ecosystems in Lamorinda: Oak Woodlands, Grasslands, Wetlands, Riparian, Mixed Woodland and Chaparral. We also have Mount Diablo close by and the ocean is a short distance from here. To explore and discover the wonders of the desert would be a journey.

Each ecosystem has plants and animals that identify it and provide essential habitat for these plants and animals.

The Oak Woodlands provide over 50% of all life in nature with what is needed to survive, and we have some of the most beautiful and oldest Oaks in our area.

Grasslands were at one time all native grasses but now we have the "carpet grass" throughout California. Many animals like the deer and rodents eat the grass and many insects call the grass their home.

The Wetlands provide habitat for all forms of aquatic insects, frogs, turtles and water fowl and you will find Cattail and Tule growing in our ponds and lakes.

The Riparian habit is very dramatic and provides a place for animals, birds to drink and eat. It also provides an essential habitat for our fish. There are many different trees that grow along a creek like Willow, Alder, Buckeye, Black Walnut and Big Leaf Maple. And there are a

variety of shrubs like Ninebark and Dogwood that you will find growing along the banks. Of course, there are ferns, Horsetail, Yerba Buena, Native and Non-Native Blackberry there as well.

The Mixed Woodland above the creek beds provides habitat for a variety of tree species like Bay, Madrone, Toyon, Manzanita and Gray Pine. Animals use the Mixed Woodland like a freeway or passage trail to come into and pass out of areas. You may see several different animals travel along this route.

The Chaparral Ecosystems before the non-Native peoples arrived in California were the farthest from the Wetlands and Riparian areas. In Lamorinda this area is in the hills where the plant Coyote Brush and the animal it was named after can be found.

Coyote Brush has fallen into disfavor with our fire departments but it is essential for the insects to use as habitat.

A personal request of mine is that we learn to live with Coyote Brush and its name's sake, the coyote. Coyotes – as well as the owls and hawks and falcons – eat and control the rodent overpopulation in our area.

I encourage you to get out in your Ecosystems and identify them by their plants and animals.

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Mixed Woodland trail



Mixed Woodland



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Laura Abrams 510.697.3225
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Walk to 12 Years of School!
3 bedrooms | 2 full bathrooms
2140 sqft. | .50 acre parcel
Call Shannon for Price

15 Aspinwall Court, Orinda



Listed by
Shannon Conner
shannon@shannonconner.com
925.980.3829 | shannonconner.com

DRE# 01885058



villageassociates.com | @villageassociates | 925.254.0505 | It's Village. Of Course.

All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.





11 Kittiwake Road



Single Level Living with Nature at Your Doorstep in North Orinda

4 beds | 3 baths | 1975 sqft | .61 acre parcel | \$1,595,000



Listed by

Molly Smith, Shannon Conner & Amy Rose Smith

For More Information Contact Molly Smith

415.309.1085 | molly@mollyslist.com



villageassociates.com | [@villageassociates](https://www.instagram.com/villageassociates) | 925.254.0505 | It's Village. Of Course.

DRE# 01498053 | DRE# 01885058 | DRE# 01855959 All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



My Orinda Favorite

OPEN Sat & Sun 1-4PM



1 Crestview Dr., Orinda

4BD | 2BA | Studio | 2336 SF | .21 AC
Offer price: \$1,795,000



Suzi O'Brien

925.286.8520

suzi.orbrien@compass.com

DRE 01482496

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

April's potpourri of gardening tasks



Blue-eyed star grass is a perennial early spring bloomer.

... continued from Page D1

After your new crops are sowed, apply a layer of mulch for added protection, water retention, and erosion control.

The ground is too cold and wet to scatter seeds so many people have started their sprouting endeavors indoors. If this describes you, remember that before you transplant outdoors, your seedlings will need to be hardened off. Once we have reliable days of sunshine, hardening off is an easy process performed over seven days.

- On day one, move your seedlings outside in filtered sunlight for one hour, then bring them back indoors.
- On day two, the seedlings get two hours of sun playtime.
- On day three, offer three hours.
- Repeat each day adding one extra hour of sunshine before bringing them back inside.
- By the end of seven days, it is usually safe to transplant your seedlings wherever you want



Fennel has delicate fern-like foliage and delicious bulbs for salads and roasting.

them to establish. Use your best judgment and make sure the soil and temperature are warm enough.

Don't forget to spread organic snail and slug bait or your new sprouts will be supper for these gastropod mollusks.

Continue harvesting your winter vegetables of broccoli, kale, cauliflower, spinach, Swiss chard, and salad greens. Although my arugula is bolting to set seed, I continue to cut the leaves and flowers to use in my salads. Once the days get hot, I'll dry and save the seeds for scattering in the fall. Speaking of seeds, make sure to read the instructions on any seed packet you purchase. Many seeds must be soaked to help with germination. Wait to plant your vegetable seeds until the soil reaches 65-75 degrees. Most seeds require a planting depth and width that is twice the seed size, except for tiny seeds such as lettuce, celery, and dill which can be scattered and lightly raked. Tiny seeds don't like to be buried because they need sunlight to germinate.

Camellias have been illuminating the garden for several months, but the substantial storms have knocked a plethora of blossoms to carpet the ground. Pick up and destroy all fallen camellia blossoms as a prevention against camellia petal blight. If leaves are distorted, pale, and fleshy, you might have camellia leaf gall which causes the leaves to turn white and fall off. The best control is to pick up and destroy any affected leaves before they turn white.

Clematis leaves are beginning to unfurl on what appears to be dead vines. Don't be tempted to cut back unless you know what type of clematis you have. There are three types of clematis: Group 1: woody-stemmed bloom on last year's stems. Prune *after* flowering in spring. Group 2: double and semi-double varieties bloom twice. Prune *after* spring flowers fade and cut back dead wood in winter. Group 3: large blooms that appear in summer and fall grow on the current year's growth. Prune severely in winter leaving two buds on each stem.

These are just a few of the garden potpourri of chores that can be accomplished in early April in anticipation of spring sowing later in the month. Lawns will welcome an aerating and feeding anytime now. Shrubs, trees, and ground covers will benefit from fertilizing this month. For more ideas, check out my book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener" available at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store> or wherever you buy your garden books.

Happy Growing. Happy Gardening! Happy Spring!



Arugula is starting to bolt, yet still tender and delicious.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Mark your calendars:

April 15: Orinda Garden Club (“OGC”) 2023 Plant Sale

9 a.m. – 1 p.m., Orinda Library Plaza, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda
The sale will include perennials, vegetables, succulents, annuals, natives, as well as pollinator and drought-resistant plants. For more Plant Sale information, see <https://www.orindagc.org/plantsale-public.html>

April 29: Moraga Community Faire

11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Visit the Be the Star You Are!® booth sponsored by MBjessee Painting (www.MBjessee.com) and Dr. Brian Sheaff Family Dentistry (<http://www.drsheaffdentistry.com>) for free seed planting for kids, book signing, and giveaways. Info: <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/copy-of-events>

April 17- May 17: Be the Star You Are!® charity Shoe Drive

Campolindo High School. Chaired by Ella Kalpakjian. Drop off any clean, wearable, used, or new shoes and boots for all ages.
May 1-June 30: The BTSYA Shoe Drive continues at these sponsored locations: Mark Hoogs State Farm Insurance (629 Moraga Road Moraga, 925-254-3344, www.TeamHoogs.com) and 5 A Rent-A-Space (455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga, 925-631-7000, <https://5aspace.com/>). For more information, visit <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/shoedrive>



Cynthia Brian with blooming amaryllis.

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 <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <http://www.GoddessGardener.com>



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224 Camino Sobrante
Classic 5 bd/3 ba home sits on a .53-acre rare waterfront lot just right for morning & evening strolls around Lake Cascade & OCC!

\$2,695,000

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New Listing!

237 Glorietta Blvd
Fabulous 5 bd mid-century! Great level yard! Private lane near Glorietta Elem!

\$2,395,000

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40 Las Palomas
Charming 4 bd/ 3.5 ba home w/ European flair sits on serene .30-acre parcel featuring sunny patios & tranquil seating areas!

\$1,795,000

ORINDA



New Listing!

11 Kittiwake Road
Single story 4 bd/ 3ba home in a private setting close to downtown w/ an ideal floor plan & separation for today's modern living!

\$1,595,000

ORINDA



New Listing!

37 La Madronal
Nestled among majestic oaks w/ picturesque views of Mt. Diablo this property includes 3 bd/ 2 ba & 2427 sqft on a .25-acre parcel!

\$1,450,000

LAFAYETTE



1332 Reliez Valley Road
Perfectly updated 3450 sqft home w/ 5 bd + office/4 ba featuring formal living & dining rooms, chef's kitchen & French windows!

\$3,150,000

WALNUT CREEK



1682 Parkside Drive
Beautifully updated townhome in Walnut Creek's Buena Vista neighborhood features 2 bd/2.5 ba, lg living room & 2 amazing patios!

\$799,000

WALNUT CREEK



1881 Cannon Drive
Charming SkyWest dwelling featuring 2 lg primary bedroom suites, fireplace & backyard views of the pool & Mt. Diablo!

\$738,000

OAKLAND



8117 Skyline Blvd
Stylish, contemporary, light & bright 3 bd/ 2.5 ba, 2081 sq ft open floor plan. Not to be missed!

\$1,388,900

OAKLAND



New Price!

438 W Grand Ave, # 528
Amazing 2 bd/ 2 ba condo located in the Broadway Grand Building in the Heart of Uptown Oakland!

\$785,000

ALAMEDA



2110 Buena Vista
Duplex in Central Alameda, walking distance to Park Street! Unit A: 2bd/ 1.5 ba, Unit B: 2 bd/ 2 ba. Easy access off and on the island!

\$995,000

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