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This Moraga home lights up with a spooky landscape to scare even the most hardened trick-or-treaters. Photo Sora O'Doherty

# Halloween spirit alive and well in Lamorinda

The holiday season is upon us with creative, spooky Halloween decorations dotting front yards along sleepy Lamorinda streets. Whether cute or downright scary, the festive message of this fun, fall celebration will not go unnoticed by costume clad trick-or-treaters come Halloween night: Boo!

Lafayette has several pre-Halloween events planned for those who can't get enough Halloween. This year, the Lafayette Community Center's Haunted House, renamed the "Spooky Walk," will be held outdoors on the Bellenger Trail. It will feature a quarter-mile stretch of "bone-chilling encounters" – with offerings of "Not too Scary" versions from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

on Oct. 28 and 29, and "Very Scary" versions from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Oct. 28 and 7 to 9 p.m. Oct. 29. Pre-registration required, get your tickets now! <https://tinyurl.com/3jwwhj6x>

For the younger set, ages 9 and under, a stroll with parents/caregivers in Lafayette's downtown offers access to free candy at more than 50 participating businesses as part of the annual Trick-or-Treat Street event, sponsored by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Costumed trick-or-treaters can visit businesses displaying participation posters to fill bags from home with candy on Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Plaza Way to Dewing Avenue, Lafayette Circle and in

La Fiesta Square from 4 to 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 27. For a list of participants, visit <https://lafayettechamber.org/trick-or-treat>. And the Lafayette United Methodist Church (955 Moraga Road, Lafayette) will be hosting a Halloween Festival in the Fellowship Hall with food, games, face painting, free pumpkin patch, crafts and more from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 29.

Whatever you decide to do to get your scare on, Lamorinda Weekly wishes you all a happy Halloween! – J. Wake

**LAMORINDA WEEKLY**

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# Mental health crisis affects Lamorinda schools

By Sora O'Doherty

At the last Orinda Mayor's Liaison Meeting, a report on a new mental health initiative by Contra County sparked an unexpectedly intense discussion. Although the introduction of a new program to help schools access mental health care for students will largely not affect Lamorinda schools, because the program is aimed at the uninsured, representatives of schools in Orinda wished that it would.

According to Jill Ray, Community Liaison for Canyon, Moraga, and Orinda for Supervisor Candace Andersen, the goal of the Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program (SBHIP) is to bring mental health services into the school districts and, secondly, to enable the school districts to bill private and public insurance for services that they deliver to their students. SBHIP moves mental health therapy into the schools by providing therapy at school

sites and billing insurers directly for the therapy. SBHIP is funded by a \$400 million, 3-year grant running through December 2024. It is distributed across the state, with Contra Costa County receiving a budget of \$9 million and is being rolled out as a pilot program in the school districts Antioch, Pittsburg, John Swett and West County.

Orinda Union School District Superintendent Aida Glimme said, "We have become the mental health hub and it is like playing Whack-A-Mole." She explained that the need is so big, but appointments with mental health providers are hard to find. OUSD schools do provide some group therapy, but it is not appropriate for all situations.

OUSD board member and former Orinda mayor Eve Phillips spoke about the Healthy Kids survey, which she reported underscores persistent sadness

at alarming levels. "Things have really changed since COVID," she said, citing incidents of suicidal ideation, bullying and cyber bullying.

Miramonte High School Principal Ben Campopiano spoke of the challenges faced at the high school level. He spoke of the stressors and pressures experienced by the area's super high achieving students. Miramonte is constantly dealing with the "very real mental health problems," he said, adding that the school had recently received an anonymous report of a student self-harming by cutting.

Moraga School District Superintendent Julie Parks, who did not attend the Orinda meeting, echoed the wishes of the Orinda educators that the county would provide more help to schools dealing with mental health issues. ... continued on Page 7

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# Engineering Services Manager returns to council with Pathways Project update

By Lou Fancher

After reviewing staff reports with concept drawings, cost estimates, traffic analysis, design concepts, plans and alternatives, the Lafayette City Council on Oct. 10 heard an update on the proposed Pleasant Hill Road East Side Pathway Project from Engineering Services Manager Matt Luttrupp. In June, Luttrupp and staff had been directed by council to contact local and regional stakeholders for feedback about the impact a center median or east side pathway design might have on traffic, safety, and their communities.

Luttrupp spoke with Acalanes Union High School District Superintendent John Nickerson and Acalanes High School principal Eric Shawn, who said approximately 50 students may ride their bikes to school now, and he was uncertain about how those numbers might change after the pathway is constructed. Shawn said he'd support any measure or project that would improve the safety of bike paths and encourage more students to ride bikes to school.

Information from Streetlight Data showed bidirectional bicycle volumes during the school year on weekdays in 2021 was heavier between 3 and 5 p.m. than between 7 and 9 a.m. and varied along the roadway. "There's something in the neighborhood of 18 cyclists coming from north of Deer Hill, and something like 21 coming from the south," Luttrupp said.

Additional data gathered included average trip lengths, with pedestrian trips averaging 2 miles and bicyclists, 6 miles.

Luttrupp spoke with Robert Prinz, Advocacy Director for Bike East Bay regarding ramifications to bikers of removing the proposed bike lane on southbound Pleasant Hill Road between the future trap lane to westbound Highway 24 and the through-lane. Prinz voiced concerns about the southbound Pleasant Hill Road bike lane being adjacent to the trap lane because it creates an awkward weaving pattern which could place bicyclists within that vehicle pattern and could cause a safety hazard. Prinz supported an idea to have a protected, dedicated bike way center median or bike lane that would keep bicyclists out of any potential

conflict zone. "Sharrows" (bike lane markings indicating cyclists have the option of traveling in the vehicle lane) earned his endorsement. Prinz indicated that if asked, he would write a letter of support for the project.

At Prinz's suggestion, staff reached out to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District about the potential addition of a buffer that would be constructed along the east side of the road to separate vehicles from pedestrians on the sidewalk.

... continued on Page 13

# Lafayette teachers garner community support for salary increase

By Sharon K. Sobotta

Lafayette School District teachers, who have asked for a 14% raise along with recognition of all of their years of service as educators (regardless which district they've accumulated those years in) crowded into the Oct. 18 school board

meeting at Stanley Middle School Library with dozens of teachers and allies from Richmond, Antioch, Moraga, Orinda and Berkeley carrying signs saying, "You can't put students first, if you put teachers last."



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

Lafayette School District teachers and allies gather outside the Stanley Middle School library prior to the Oct. 18 board meeting.

On Oct. 13, District Superintendent Brent Stephens sent an email detailing the need for a \$1.8 million budget cut over the next three years in order to accommodate a 12% raise for teachers. Significant efforts are put into raising money for LPIE [Lafayette Parent Instruction Education] to fund state-of-the-art classroom supplies, and art, science and music programs to the extent that there are commercial breaks of sorts embedded in concerts and school activities underscoring the fact that what happens at school is powered by LPIE and inferring that parents should continue giving. LPIE funds are largely used for tools to help with teaching and some part-time positions relating to art, music and science. Teachers say that while those resources are important, so is the district's need to attract and retain excellent teachers.

Scott Moe, a fifth-grade

teacher at Lafayette Elementary School who's been in the district for 27 years, says classrooms are powered by teachers and their students. Moe pointed out at least one important cut that was missing or left unacknowledged in the email that the district sent out. "The list the superintendent sent out was very district-sided and it didn't include cuts we've made. [For example] some years ago, we agreed to a cut in our healthcare coverage. Instead of covering whole families, just the teacher themselves was covered. That money adds up over the years." The cuts made on the backs of teachers, he explained, may be rooted in the hope that teachers will join their spouse's plan. Of course, this begs the question - what about people who don't have spouses or are single parents?

Allie Jones, Instructional Support Teacher at Lafayette

Elementary School said she wants the 14% raise teachers are asking for and credit for all her years of service counted. "I'm pretty fired up. I wish the superintendent and the board would understand that what we're asking for is just what's due. We're trying to get a fair wage," Jones says. "I've been in the district more than 20 years and this is the worst it's ever been in terms of feeling undervalued."

Jones gets credit in the district for 12 years of service to the profession, in spite of having over 20. Even if the recognition of those other years doesn't necessarily bump her pay schedule, she says having all of her years of service recognized is an important level of validation. That being said, Jones was heartened by the overwhelming support from fellow teachers. ... continued on Page 3

## Housing & Safety Concerns in Lafayette

Thursday, October 26, 7 p.m.  
 Town Hall on ZOOM

Hosted by Lafayette Homeowners Council (LHC)

Guest speakers:

- Mayor Carl Anduri
- City Manager Niroop Srivatsa

Update and Q & A

LHC welcomes all Lafayette residents to attend our Annual Meeting.

More info and zoom link at <https://lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org/>



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| SFH Sales, % Chg    | 1.70% | -5.20% | -1.20% | 3.50%  | 7.90%  | -23.10% | -22.20% | 22.90% |
| Median Price, % Chg | 7.10% | 5.90%  | 4.00%  | 11.30% | 19.30% | 4.50%   | -1.50%  | 6.20%  |
| Affordability Index | 29%   | 28%    | 31%    | 32%    | 28%    | 19%     | 17%     | 17%    |
| 30-yr FRM           | 4.00% | 4.50%  | 3.90%  | 3.10%  | 3.00%  | 5.30%   | 6.70%   | 6.00%  |

p = projected  
 f = forecast  
 SFH = single family home  
 Source = California Association of Realtors

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## Increased Lafayette parking fees planned

According to Lafayette Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson, who spoke to the city council on Oct. 10 about a potential parking meter rate increase, the Parking Fund currently has a negative fund balance of \$440,000.

In her staff report, Robinson noted that in FY18-19, the last full 'pre-pandemic' year, net parking revenue was \$158,000, but in the last three years, net parking revenue has been negative. "The Council should consider raising the parking meter fees to recoup those losses or at least break even over the next five years," she stated in her

report.

Robinson noted that parking meter revenue does not go into the General Fund, but instead is used to purchase additional parking in the downtown, such as Oakbridge, 949 Moraga Road.

During discussion, Robinson stated that "it would make sense to have a conversation with the Chamber and there are some other issues we would like to discuss."

The city council voted 5-0 directing staff to return with a resolution to increase the parking meter rates to \$2 per hour.

— J. Wake

## Lafayette Historical Society displays poetry about Lafayette Reservoir Tower

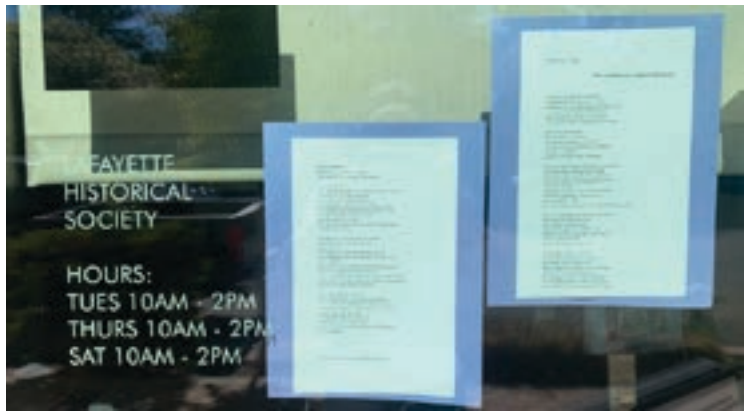


Photo provided

In the window of the Lafayette Historical Society at the back of the Lafayette Library, a blue mat surrounds a two-page poem entitled, "The Guardian of Lafayette Reservoir." It is written by local poet Ophelia Leong and focuses on the Reservoir tower.

Leong was invited to read the poem on April 15 during National Poetry Month at the Lamorinda Arts Council's inaugural Art Embraces Poetry program. Town Hall Theatre hosts the ongoing program which is funded by the Community Foundation of Lafayette.

On the side of the Whole Foods Building (across from Blue Ginkgo) the Society has posted information about the

Lafayette Reservoir. While debates swirl around the tower, the poem has a different effect. More than one person has said after reading it, "I'll never think of it the same way again." Plato's comment about poetry comes to mind: "Poetry is nearer to vital truth than history."

For more information check out the poem in plain view on the window at the Historical Society entrance on Golden Gate Way near First Street, call (925) 283-1848 or go to <https://lafayettehistory.org/lafayette-reservoir-display-at-whole-foods/>. View the Lafayette Reservoir exhibit on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

— Submitted by Elana O'Loskey

## Lafayette teachers

... continued from Page 2

"It felt so good to see Orinda and Acalanes [and teachers from other districts] joining in this," Jones said.

Lindsey Brown is a parent of two students in the district. She not only marched in with the teachers, she made a passionate statement to the board. "The teachers are the heart of the district. The district keeps saying they don't have money for teachers. My view is that teachers are more important than fancy smart boards or anything else in the classroom," she said.

Superintendent Stephens said that although there has been some frustration for both the teachers and the district in reaching an agreement, it ultimately signifies a deep level of care about the success of Lafayette schools. "We know that we are one team with a genuine sense of

common purpose," Stephens said. "The District views this process as an ongoing dialogue about our shared priorities and appreciates the engagement of our community to understand the issues we're working to resolve. We continue to feel great respect and gratitude to our amazing and dedicated staff."

Stephens adds that the district is looking forward to sitting down with teachers again next week. On Oct. 27, the District and the Lafayette Teachers Union will meet with a mediator. Meanwhile, although teachers strongly prefer to avoid a strike, over 90% of them indicated they would do so if necessary. For now, however, the teachers and the district are hopeful an agreement can be reached at the bargaining table.

"We are optimistic that we can reach an agreement," Stephens said.

**Correction:** In the Oct. 11 article, "Gas Leaf Blower Ordinance passes first reading at Lafayette council meeting," a provision mentioned where homeowners could "sign a release form to allow a landscape company to use a gas powered leaf blower on their property" was incorrect. There is no such provision in the ordinance which allows for homeowners or landscapers to apply for an exception. According to Anna Tolle, "Use of gasoline powered leaf blowers is exempt from this section as follows: (a) When utilized by or at the direction of emergency responders for the purposes of responding to an emergency, or necessary to restore, preserve, protect, or save lives or property from imminent danger of loss or harm; or (b) When used to clear downed trees or vegetation in areas needing expedient clearance when necessary to protect public safety, as authorized by the City." We apologize for this error.



**Lafayette Public Meetings**

### City Council

Regular Meeting  
Monday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

### Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

### Design Review

Monday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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**Moraga Citizens' Network:**  
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**Town Council**  
 Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.  
 Wednesday, Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m.  
**Planning Commission:**  
 Tuesday, Oct. 17, 6:30 p.m.  
**Park and Recreation Commission:**  
 Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.

# Town Council approves funding agreement for Smart Signals

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Town Council approved two proposed cost sharing funding agreements with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), to design and construct the Moraga Community Smart Signals Project, during its Oct. 11 meeting.

The federal government appropriates transportation funding approximately every four years through the Federal Highway Administration that flows to the state level and later is distributed to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for use in the Bay Area. This distribution is called One Bay Area Grant, and since it's in its third iteration, it is referred to as OBAG-3. The grants are

meant to improve, among other things, safety and induce economic development.

"The Town has a total of 8.5 traffic signalized intersections, with the Moraga Way and Ivy Drive intersection shared with the City of Orinda," stated Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp in his Oct. 11 staff report. "The existing signal system is antiquated and needs frequent repair and servicing. It lacks the required infrastructure, such as fiber and cellular/wireless-based communications, making it challenging to implement traffic signal synchronization and coordination. The traffic signal systems do not include signal control and

prioritization technologies to reduce delays for transit, increase safety for multimodal users, coordinate evacuation routes, and reduce emergency response times."

CCTA will take the lead with regards to this County-wide Smart Signals project which is intended to unify the major traffic corridors that will eventually monitor conditions in real time and help in managing traffic during disruptions to the normal flow.

Thanks to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (H.R. 2617) sponsored by Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, the Lamorinda communities were awarded \$4.185 million in funding for

the Smart Signals System project. As such, each municipality needs to provide its local matching contribution to CCTA before starting the design phase of the project. Moraga's is \$224,845.

Included in Moraga's Smart Signals project are the following intersections: 1) Moraga Way/Ivy Drive (shared with Orinda); 2) Moraga Way/School Street; 3) Moraga Way/Moraga Road/Canyon Road; 4) Moraga Road/St. Mary's Road; 5) Moraga Road/Donald Drive; 6) Moraga Road/Ascot Drive; 7) Moraga Road/Rheem Boulevard; 8) Moraga Road/Campolindo Drive; and 9) Moraga Way/St. Andrews Drive/Camino Ricardo.

# MPD officers experience odd noises at the station in 'the dead of night'

By Vera Kochan

Just in time for Halloween, residents at another Lamorinda location have admitted to unexplainable phenomenon within its walls. This time, the Moraga Police Department has acknowledged the strange happenings within the building in "the dead of night."

About four years ago, this reporter was told by an MPD member that there were odd goings-on at the station, but assuming that it was all a joke, the matter was dropped. Then another credible MPD member recently brought up the topic again. Chief Jon King agreed to email all of his officers about my request for an interview, and 17-year veteran, Officer Michael Dreyfuss offered to speak with me.

Arriving at the police station for the 8 p.m. scheduled interview, with no one else in the building, Dreyfuss did not waste any time diving into his experiences. The building was built in 1958, and Dreyfuss explained that since 2006, the police station has always been on the first floor. However, the second floor at that time did not house the town's current offices, but instead held individual businesses.

Between 2007 and 2008,

Dreyfuss and two other officers were on duty around 2:30 a.m. one evening writing their reports, when they heard an "identifiable noise," stated Dreyfuss. "It was the sound of a woman walking down the length of the upstairs hall above us wearing high heels. The sound started at the east end of the building, passed above us, and stopped before it got to the stairs. It was a normal walk – not like someone in a hurry. We were 100% certain it was high heels." One officer checked the doors at the east end, another checked the front door – all doors were locked. The parking lot was empty of cars, and no one was found upstairs. It should be noted that while the second floor is now carpeted, Dreyfuss doesn't recall whether there was carpeting 15 years ago.

And that was just the first incident. Some time later, during a Sunday afternoon, the same sound of high heels walking from one end of the building to the other was heard, only this time it was down the hall of the police station on the first floor – no carpets. An officer who was working in the evidence room



Photo Vera Kochan

Large orb in front of Town Offices just below Town Clerk's window and above MPD's conference room

came into the hall just as Dreyfuss entered the building asking, "Did you see Evelyn outside?" Evelyn was an MPD civilian employee who wore perfume, but not the scent that the officer smelled.

These were the only two incidents that Dreyfuss has experienced at the station. Another officer arrived during this interview, but refused to even discuss the supernatural, while hurriedly leaving our company.

Dreyfuss mentioned that during one of his evening patrols about 14 years ago, he pulled over a vehicle that was driving well below the speed limit. During his questioning, the driver said that he was a paranormal investigator hired by residents who lived near Rancho Laguna Park. "He had electronic equipment both in the front and back seat of his car," remembered Dreyfuss.

This turn of events struck Dreyfuss as a type of vindication, because during his routine patrols around town, he always "gets a creepy feeling" when he patrols that section of Moraga – a feeling of uneasiness. Although he disclosed the street's name to me, I chose not to include it in this article for privacy reasons.

Dreyfuss asked if I'd like to go on a ride-along, to which I agreed, and our first stop was the Moraga Library. As we approached the back parking lot (about 9 p.m.), we spotted a car just beginning to leave from the back of the

building. After questioning the driver, who turned out to be the custodian, Dreyfuss asked him, "Any ghosts?" To which the custodian responded, "No. No goats. Just two deer on the hill."

We proceeded to drive over to Rancho Laguna Park in order to lock the restrooms and the main gate for the evening. Dreyfuss rolled down both driver and passenger side windows before he left me sitting alone while he was securing the restrooms for the night. Other than spotting a couple of deer in the middle of the park's lawn, there was no accounting why I began to suddenly smell cigarette smoke inside the vehicle. At that moment, I decided to take a picture toward the darkness of the park and came up with a bright orb inside the police car. When Dreyfuss returned, I showed him my photo, and we were both rather speechless. I told him that I could send him the photo so that he could examine it on a larger screen, but he replied, "I don't want to see it any bigger than it already is." There was no logical reason for the cigarette smoke odor, because smoking is not allowed in a police vehicle, and neither Dreyfuss nor the partner he shares the vehicle with smoke.

I, for one, have no plans to visit Rancho Laguna Park in the evening ever again. If I can poach from Edgar Allen Poe's The Raven, "Nevermore!"

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# Moraga Library's interior remodel unveiled

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

**The newly refurbished Moraga Library retains its cozy atmosphere.**

When the Moraga Library temporarily closed its doors on July 29 for a 10-week refurbishing, patrons never expected the drastic changes that awaited them on the Oct. 10

reopening. Upon first entering the facility's main room, the "new look" included the removal of the front desk and its glass partition, replaced with comfortable chairs in an area

now called "the library marketplace," which is meant to resemble a living room where patrons can sit and read or have a quiet conversation.

Rather than go to staff, such as Community Library Manager Rita Carrasco and Part-Time Senior Clerk Lenny Medina to check out books, most people now use the self-checkout machines.

Additional changes include new carpeting (courtesy of the town), the resetting of bookshelves to improve accessibility, ADA turnaround space of 44 inches between stacks as opposed to the old 36 inches, a new scanner that has a flatbed and feeder (Scan EZ), replacement of exterior lights due to nesting bird activity, and new data lines which "is not that exciting, but because the carpet was being replaced it allowed us to do those updates," Carrasco explained.

The Stankus Family, in honor of their 102-year-old mother, donated a cushioned, green bench for her and others to sit and browse through books in comfort. Robert Muller, who had donated six new tables and 24 new chairs to the library, was so excited about the Oct. 10 reopening that he had marked it on his calendar. Sadly, his daughter had notified the library that a week before the reopening her almost 102-year-old father had passed away.

The Friends of the Moraga Library had contributed nearly \$90,000 toward the project through its membership dues, used book sales and private donations; and the Collection Development Department pushed to get new books on the shelves.

"We will continue to have a featured artist display on the walls behind the self-checkout,

and we've also added a 'puzzle swap' where you can check out a puzzle to work on at home and also bring one of yours to exchange," said Carrasco. "A lot of people have jigsaw puzzles that they bought during COVID. We've also enhanced our 'teen area' with a few added touches."

The reading area by the fireplace has remained unchanged. "The one thing we had talked about from the beginning was the homey, cozy feel that the library always had," stated Carrasco. "We didn't want to lose that. All of this was really a community, town, and Friends effort to make this happen. Big thanks to the Friends – they enabled us to do so much more."

The Friends of the Moraga Library will hold its semi-annual Fall Book Sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 28.

# Moraga Campus & Gun Safety event held at Campolindo

By Vera Kochan

Campolindo High School served as the venue for an Oct. 16 Moraga Campus and Gun Safety program that was geared toward informing parents of children going to school within the town's system about gun safety in the home, and what is being done to keep their kids safe from gun violence.

Concerned parents Liz Tausend, Liz Goulding and Stephanie Gleason Bickham organized the event which featured presenters and panelists: Moraga Mayor Renata Sos, Moraga Police Chief Jon King, Moraga School District Superintendent Julie Parks, Acalanes Union High School District Superintendent John Nickerson, and Campolindo High School Principal Peter Alvarez.

Bickham kicked off the discussion before a crowd of approximately 50 people with sobering statistics: 393 million civilians own firearms in the United States; firearms are the leading cause of death for kids in the U.S.; 4.6 million kids in the U.S. live in a home where the guns are not locked; and 1 in 5 high school students have contemplated suicide.

Sos stated, "Everyone in this room has two things in common. One, we love our children, and two, we want to keep them safe. When people in this town see an issue, they tackle it." She also reminded attendees that the Town Council had recently passed two ordinances that involved safe gun storage, and banning the sale of guns within town limits.

According to King, each MPD officer is issued a gun lock box for use in storing their weapon at home. He explained that safe storage is a critical issue since often guns are stolen from homes and used by criminals during residential burglaries. King added that in California, anyone who purchases a gun is entitled to a lock box from the seller, and if anyone in Moraga wishes to get rid of their gun, MPD will collect it. The Department also offers free gun locks/cables that can stop a gun from operating while under lock and key.

King added that MPD is working on Campus Active Shooter training exercises with the other Lamorinda agencies, as well as with the Moraga school system, to develop school safety. The next training exercise is scheduled for Veterans Day when the schools will be closed. He also stressed the importance of the phrase, "If you see something, say something" with regards to students reporting anything suspicious to their teachers.

"Safety is the center of what we do," stated Parks. She went on to explain the three Moraga Safety Plan goals for the current year. The Moraga

School District will utilize best practices for securing the physical safety of students and staff and will continue to prioritize mental health and wellness practices for social-emotional safety (this includes ensuring inclusive campuses for all students). It will also institute restorative practices to assist in positive behavior intervention systems (PBIS) and student discipline.

The MSD also follows through with extensive safety training for staff which includes regularly scheduled emergency drills, response to emergencies (through MPD or 911), staff training in child abuse reporting, youth suicide awareness and prevention, as well as standard response protocol, seizure, Epipen, CPR/First Aid training, crisis prevention intervention, threat assessment training and PBIS.

MSD also makes certain to have counselors and Wellness Centers at each school, suicide prevention education and training for Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School staff; and a Sandy Hook Promise Anonymous Reporting System.

Nickerson explained that during the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) for 2021, when it came to the question asking how safe do students feel in their school, only 77% of ninth-graders felt safe, and 75% of 11th-graders felt safe. He did point out that students were coming back from at-home learning during COVID that year, so they may have been responding to the mask mandates. The AUHSD has a Wellness Center at each high school, and it had been reported that over half of the students in the district have received some type of service through them. "When kids are in distress, the clues are there on their social media sites." He also felt that it is important to de-stigmatize mental health.

The AUHSD strives to offer campus safety through a District Safety Committee that examines preventative measures, response to crisis and communication systems and consults with law enforcement. The committee also creates school facilities improvements, has increased collaboration/standardization across school sites, monitors school climate, mental health support and crisis prevention, and approves school safety plans on an annual basis.

Alvarez stated, "I am very pro-relationship with our police officers. It's also important to have a good relationship with parents and students in order to truly be safe." Campolindo's Wellness Center offers crisis support and intervention, short-term individual and group counseling, case management, parent/guardian consultation, as well as staff training and consultation.

With regards to all around campus safety, staff has been trained in suicide prevention, incident training and response, and safety drills for staff and students. Staff was also trained to utilize targeted/redundant communica-

tion systems, coordinate with local law enforcement; and use anonymous reporting. There are plans in the works to also provide fentanyl overdose training.

The evening's presentation was filmed for the pub-

lic's future viewing, however the editing was still in progress as of Lamorinda Weekly's press time. For gun safety tips visit: [besmartforkids.org](http://besmartforkids.org) or [www.moraga.ca.us/police](http://www.moraga.ca.us/police).

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## Perfect weather and delicious cocktails make Art of Mixology a hit

By Sora O'Doherty

Photo Sora O'Doherty

**First place Mixologist of the Year 2023, Maxwell Freise from Wildseed, San Francisco for his cocktail, "Trippin to Manhattan."**

Fifteen bartenders wove their magic under clear, warm skies on Oct. 14, winning cash prizes and raising almost \$15,000 for The Lamorinda Arts Council. In addition to the craft cocktails, the 10th annual Art of Mixology competition featured four restaurants serving food to the 275 attendees.

First place Mixologist of the Year was won by Maxwell Freise of Wildseed in San

Francisco for his cocktail, "Trippin to Manhattan." Freise took home the trophy and \$500. Second Place Mixologist award winner Giuseppe Alagna, of Benvenuti Ristorante in Walnut Creek for "Sympathy for Nature," went home with a certificate and \$300. In addition, a certificate and \$150 went to Bells Hellman of Bardo Lounge & Supper Club in Oakland, for her

creation: "Super Sun." "Snow Way It's Fall Already" garnered Cynthia Songco of Casa Orinda a trophy and \$200 as the Audience Award winner, and the Top Amateur Award went to Spencer Padgett of Danville for his cocktail, "Ahead of the (Bell) Curve." Padgett took home a trophy and \$100.

Another local favorite, Jeremy Schlachter, of Canyon Club, Moraga, received the trophy for the Art of Table Staging for the cocktail entry, "Sandlot Treehouse Old Fashioned." Joy in Motion provided an entertaining flash mob before the awards ceremony.

The Masters of Ceremonies for the evening were Diane Dwyer of Compass Real Estate and Justin Cole of Joy in Motion. The competition was judged by Orinda residents David Roth of Trefethen Family Vineyards, Haley Moore, a nationally acclaimed sommelier, Shweta Srivastava, a local artist and foodies and two-time winner of the Best Amateur at the Art of Mixology. They were joined by provisional set designers and scenic artists, Fernando Ochoa Beltran and Ryan Smith.

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## California Independent Film Festival gears up for 2023 showing

'Eagle Hunters'

Photo provided

The California Independent Film Festival Association is part of an amazing worldwide community; a unique collaboration of multi-talented filmmakers. It celebrates diversity, human rights, and freedom of expression through an array of dramatic and comedic feature films, shorts and moving documentaries.

Since its inception in 1997, the California Independent Film Festival has captured both national and

worldwide press. This star-studded event scheduled Nov. 9-16 provides both local Bay Area residents and visitors with an opportunity to see world-class films and meet filmmakers and celebrities from around the world.

Screenings are held at the historic Orinda Theatre and the Castro Theatre in San Francisco.

For tickets and detailed information, visit [caiff.org](http://caiff.org) - J. Griggs

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|  | <p><b>City Council Regular Meeting:</b><br/>                 Tuesday, Oct. 17, 7 p.m.</p> | <p><b>Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission</b><br/>                 Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.</p> |
|   | <p><b>Planning Comm.:</b><br/>                 Wednesday, Oct. 18, 7 p.m.</p>             | <p>Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way</p>  |

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## Mental health crisis affects Lamorinda schools

... continued from Page A1

Parks stated that there is a statewide mental health initiative, which is being rolled out in phases, with some schools being in the first phase, which seeks to merge resources to expand mental health services.

It is a more efficient and effective way of getting resources to students, Parks explained. It can be very difficult for families to access the health care system and people are finding that there are not enough mental health professionals to cover the needs.

Moraga does contract with Care Solace, which provides more wrap-around services. "This is a great asset for us," she noted.

Although mental health issues are not as prominent in elementary schools as in high schools, Parks added that she and her staff do a lot of training to understand the signs of distress and to work on strategies for intervention. Suicide prevention training is required annually. They also work with middle school students to help them understand what chronic sadness or suicidal ideation can look like. Moraga also partners with Sandy Hook Promise on anonymous reporting of any concerns about threats to themselves or others, which was just rolled out this year.

In addition, wellness centers are in elementary schools this year and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School has had a wellness center for many years, since well before the pandemic, Parks added. Now, they've been able to expand staffing to have a full-time intake person to meet student needs. "Wellness is a human right," Parks affirmed, and student safety is always the top priority. "We know that young people can be at risk, and that doesn't look the same for every individual," she said.

Miramonte Principal Campopiano holds a master's degree in adolescent mental health. He agreed with Glimme and Parks, saying, "We appreciate all the help we get from the state, county, local and private resources, but it is still not enough to meet the crisis we are now facing." He believes that things are much worse now than they used to be, and he blames several factors, such as the more competitive environment that now exists, pointing out that it is much harder to get into college than ever before, harder to make school sports teams, harder to get into the play or the musical on campus, harder to be the starting quarterback.

"Everybody has elevated so much, academically, socially, and extracurricularly. This has created a huge industry of tutors, private organizations, teams and clubs, he added. What was once recreational has been replaced by private coaches, for example, or travel soccer teams. "All these have skyrocketed because of the competitive nature of today's adolescent world."

Campopiano spoke about the social changes that affect adolescents, including social media and what he sees as overscheduling of kids. "When I was 10 or 15, I wasn't scheduled every second, my mom or my coach weren't texting me all the time, telling me what I had to be and what I had to do." Overscheduling has taken away those chances for stress relief and joy, to have down time that isn't screen time. And this is

coupled with social media and the 24/7 news cycle where kids are bombarded with hate online. "Everywhere in the whole country," Campopiano noted, "kids are flooded with it and they are not mentally ready for it. But they hear about it all, experience it all."

The Wellness Center at Miramonte is funded by the Orinda Network for Education (ONE) and is now up and running. Funds from parents and the community help support the Wellness Center, in addition to the school district. Miramonte now has a full-time wellness coordinator and a full-time intake specialist, in addition to wellness interns, adults who are going through programs at Saint Mary's and other colleges to get their licenses and who need hours working with clients.

Campopiano spoke about the team of people, including academic counselors, teachers, and other amazing staff, who triage mental health situations. He noted that some kids come into the wellness center and maybe they just need some quiet time. They relax for 20 minutes, and they are good to

go. The next step is when a student wants to talk to someone about a one-time issue. Other cases escalate to ongoing support, perhaps once a week for a couple of weeks. After that, staff needs to tell parents that their child needs private professional services.

Miramonte does offer group therapy and counseling, along with programs directed to such issues as vaping or phone use, sleep, screen time, nutrition and hydration. Information is posted on the school's social media, in newsletter to parents, and at lunchtime booths. Information is pushed out to staff, who try to focus on it in the classroom. Within a very small budget, the school also provides fun activities, including therapy dogs, guest speakers, art therapy and so on.

But in the end, Campopiano concluded, "We're not properly equipped to deal with mental health issues, and even when we deal with it well, it takes us away from doing educational services. Every minute we spend on mental health is a minute not spent on education."

The Lamorinda Weekly reached out to the Lafayette and

Acalanes Union High School districts for comment, but was unable to connect with anyone prior to the deadline.

If you or a loved one is experiencing a mental health crisis call 911. For non-emergency

care, call the Contra Costa County access line at (888) 678-7277 or the Contra Costa Crisis Center at (800) 833-2900.

**For further information on available mental health services, see <https://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/>**

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Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt 925-299-3221  
Police Department Tip Line 94549Tip@gmail.com  
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**Moraga Police Department:**  
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Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049

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Accident Property  
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Canyon Rd./Country Club Dr.  
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Moraga Way/School St.  
Moraga Rd./Ascot Dr.  
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.  
Staging Area Canyon Rd.  
St Marys College (4)  
St Marys Staging Area  
Moraga Rd./Via Granada  
St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.  
Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd.  
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way  
Moraga Way/Coral Dr., Ori  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
Ascot Dr./Moraga Rd.  
St Marys College (2)  
Reckless Driving  
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way  
St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Moraga Way/Whitehall Dr., Ori

### Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report



**Oct. 1 - Oct. 14**

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms                        | 34 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 12 |
| Traffic                       | 84 |
| Suspicious Circumstances      | 5  |
| Suspicious Subject            | 24 |
| Suspicious Vehicle            | 8  |
| Service to Citizen            | 40 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check    | 36 |
| Public/School Assembly Check  | 5  |
| Supplemental Report           | 16 |
| Vacation House Check          | 31 |
| Welfare Check                 | 19 |
| Ordinance Violation           | 0  |

**Vehicle violations**  
Accident Injury  
Police Department  
Auto Burglary  
3400 Block Orchard Hill Ct.  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
Police Department  
Deer Hill Rd./Sierra Vista Wy  
4000 Block Happy Valley Rd. (2)  
3500 Block School St.  
Reckless Driving  
Old Tunnel Rd./El Curtola Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Olympic Blvd.  
900 Block Moraga Rd.  
Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Reliez Valley Rd.  
30 Block Lafayette Cir.  
Rancho View Dr./Pleasant Hill Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.  
St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Other criminal activity**  
Computer Fraud  
10 Block Kimberly Dr.  
Fraud False Pretenses  
2100 Block Ascot Dr.  
Identity Theft  
100 Block La Quinta  
Petty Theft  
600 Block Augusta Dr.  
1000 Block Alta Mesa Dr.  
700 Block Crossbrook Dr.  
Residential Burglary  
500 Block Augusta Dr.  
Robbery Strongarm  
400 Block Center St.  
Warrant Arrest  
Moraga Way/School St.  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Loud Music  
1700 Block School St.  
10 Block Miramonte Dr.  
80 Block Miramonte Dr.  
Loud Noise  
Police Department  
Loud Party  
80 Block Miramonte Dr.  
100 Block Miramonte Dr.  
Vandalism  
1000 Block Wickham Dr.  
1400 Block De La Cruz Way  
**Other**  
Harassment  
90 Block Corliss Dr.  
Other Infraction  
10 Block Harold Dr.  
Other Misdemeanor  
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.  
Moraga Way/County Club Dr.  
Trespass W/ Vehicle  
10 Block Sanders Ranch Rd.  
Unwanted Guest  
Campolindo High School



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20 Block Crest Rd.  
Counterfeit  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Fraud False Pretenses  
200 Block St Marys Rd.  
Grand Theft  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
Identity Theft  
1300 Block El Curtola Blvd.  
Panhandling  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Petty Theft  
900 Block Moraga Rd. (2)  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
Petty Theft From Veh  
1300 Block Martino Rd.  
Shoplift  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (9)  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
Disturbing The Peace  
3900 Block S Peardale Dr.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Loud Music  
40 Block Knox Dr.  
30 Block Knox Dr.  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Glen Rd./Monticello Rd.  
Loud Noise  
500 Block Silverado Dr.  
Police Department  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. (2)  
Loud Party  
40 Block Knox Dr.  
Rancho Rd./Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
Quandt Rd./Candy Ct.  
Quandt Rd./Springhill Rd.  
Public Nuisance  
900 Block Moraga Rd.  
1000 Block Oak Hill Rd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)  
800 Block Dewing Ave.  
900 Block Mountain View Dr.  
10 Block Tanglewood Pl.  
Vista Del Valle/Michael Ln.  
3700 Block Mosswood Dr.  
Vandalism  
Old Tunnel Rd./Leland Dr.  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.  
**Other**  
Arson  
500 Block Glenside Dr.  
Fireworks  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Litter  
900 Block Happy Valley Ct.  
Hidden Valley Rd./Diablo Cir.  
Loitering  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Threats  
3400 Block Monroe Ave.  
Unwanted Guest  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
3500 Block Brook St.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
Violation Custody Order  
1600 Block Hunsaker Canyon Rd.  
Violation Restraining Ord  
1400 Block Tichenor Ct.

### Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 1 - Oct. 14

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms                        | 26 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 6  |
| Traffic                       | 53 |
| Suspicious Circumstances      | 8  |
| Suspicious Subject            | 16 |
| Suspicious Vehicle            | 4  |
| Service to Citizen            | 65 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check    | 22 |
| Public/School Assembly Check  | 4  |
| Supplemental Report           | 25 |
| Vacation House Check          | 0  |
| Welfare Check                 | 5  |
| Ordinance Violation           | 1  |

**Vehicle violations**  
Accident Injury  
50 Block Overhill Rd.  
Accident Property  
Camino Sobrante  
10 Block Crest View Ct.  
Valley View Dr./Moraga Way  
Monkeyflower Ln./Twig Ln.  
Dui Misd  
Camino Pablo  
60 Block Moraga Way  
Camino Sobrante  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
Camino Sobrante  
10 Block Snowberry Ct.  
Reckless Driving  
Camino Pablo/Wb Sr 24  
Camino Pablo/Ardilla Rd.  
Camino Pablo/Eb Sr 24  
10 Block Orinda Way  
Wilder Rd./Big Leaf Rd.  
Moraga Way/Hall Dr.  
Wilder Rd./Big Leaf Rd.  
Vehicle Theft  
20 Block Bates Blvd.  
Brookwood Rd./Camino Pablo  
El Nido Ranch Rd./St Stephens Dr.  
Orinda Way  
**Other criminal activity**  
Fraud Credit Card  
Camino Sobrante  
Petty Theft  
100 Block La Espiral  
Residential Burglary  
30 Block Daryl Dr.  
Robbery Armed  
90 Block Orinda Way  
Warrant Arrest  
Camino Sobrante  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbing The Peace  
10 Block Lost Valley Dr.  
Loud Music  
Not Available  
Theatre Square  
Loud Party  
500 Block Miner Rd.  
10 Block Great Oak Cir.  
10 Block Moraga Ct.  
Robert Rd./Glorietta Blvd.  
Public Nuisance  
Moraga Way  
Moraga Way/Camino Pablo  
Vandalism  
200 Block Glorietta Blvd.  
200 Block Sundown Terrace  
**Other**  
Failure To Obey  
Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo  
Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante  
H&S/Pos Paraphernalia  
Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Way  
Harassment  
10 Block Hidden Ln.  
Terrorist Threats  
Glorietta Blvd./Moraga Way  
Trespass  
Camino Sobrante  
Unwanted Guest  
Moraga Way

### Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 3 - Oct. 16



|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms                        | 11 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 6  |
| Traffic                       | 46 |
| Suspicious Circumstances      | 4  |
| Suspicious Subject            | 3  |
| Suspicious Vehicle            | 6  |
| Service to Citizen            | 25 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check    | 23 |
| Public/School Assembly Check  | 7  |
| Supplemental Report           | 8  |
| Vacation House Check          | 0  |
| Welfare Check                 | 10 |
| Ordinance Violation           | 2  |



# The perfect combination of tart and sweet make these muffins burst with flavor

By Susie Iventosch



Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins

Photos Susie Iventosch

Cranberries and pumpkin are a perfect food combination, especially at this time of year. The colors are so festive, and the flavors are so good together. I use fresh as opposed to dried cranberries for this recipe, and even though they are fresh, mine are most often frozen. Why? Because I buy them up in the fall when they are readily available in produce sections and then freeze them for using the rest of the year. We like to barbecue turkeys in the summer, and cranberry sauce is a must in our house for turkey dinner.

In these muffins, the little burst of tartness you get from the fresh cranberries comple-

ments the sweetness of the rest of the muffin. We love that pop of flavor, and plus they keep the muffins nice and moist. I generally just toss the frozen cranberries into the batter, but if you have fresh ones, just toss them in as they are. The streusel topping for this recipe is made with oil instead of butter, and the liquids in the batter are apple juice, oil and egg, so this entire recipe is nondairy. By the way, you can certainly add chopped nuts to the streusel for a bit more crunch. I'd recommend pecans if you do.

This recipe makes 12 regular muffins but is easily doubled and that might be really

## Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins

(Makes 12 regular muffins)

### INGREDIENTS

- Muffin Batter
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil (like canola)
- 1/4 cup apple juice
- 1 cup fresh cranberries (or frozen)
- Streusel Topping
- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. cardamom or pumpkin pie spice
- 2 tbsp. canola oil

### DIRECTIONS

Line a muffin tin with paper or parchment liners. Preheat oven to 350 F.

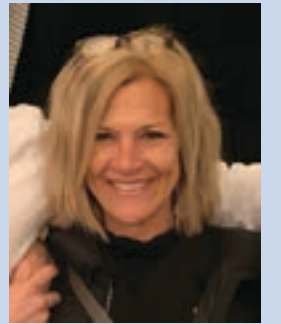
Place all dries (flour, brown sugar, baking soda, salt and pumpkin pie spice) in a large mixing bowl.

In a medium bowl, blend pumpkin puree, oil, egg, apple juice and cranberries. Stir the liquid ingredients into the dries and blend with a large spoon until integrated.

Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tins. Sprinkle a spoonful of the streusel topping over each.

Bake for about 25 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean and the centers of the muffins spring back when touched with your finger.

Remove from oven and either eat immediately or cool and refrigerate. These muffins also freeze well, in case you are doing some early holiday baking!



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

helpful during the busy holidays. They freeze very well, and you won't regret having an extra dozen on hand to feed your family and holiday guests.

A quick note – if you don't have pumpkin pie spice, you can blend cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and allspice together for a similar flavor. Some people add a dash of cloves to this

mixture too. Use more cinnamon than the other ingredients, but you can play with the quantities of each that you like best.

# Intuitive Writing Project holds book launch

By Emma Wong



IWP teachers Gretchen Cion, Elizabeth Perlman, and Melissa Quiter



Josslyn Grover reads her piece "Declarations of a Gen Z Stargazer"

Children, teens, and parents gathered at Orinda Books on Sept. 30 to celebrate the Intuitive Writing Project's launch of its biennial anthology, titled "Reemergence." There, young writers across age groups read aloud their newly published pieces.

The event reflects how far the Intuitive Writing Project (IWP) has come from its humble Bay Area beginnings, which included a studio in Orinda. Still, the organization holds to its roots by providing a safe space for students to express their emotions through writing.

Headquartered in the Bay Area, the IWP was founded by Elizabeth Perlman in 2013 to amplify the voices of young women and gender-expansive youth, celebrating various genres of writing, from fiction to general prose. Since then, the IWP has published over 750 works of student writing in their anthologies.

"I first had the dream for the IWP when I was 13, but I couldn't figure out how to implement it until many years later when I was in graduate school studying Transformative Arts," Perlman said. "I spent a year writing the 'Intuitive Leadership' curriculum, designing the brand materials, and developing a proper business plan."

Grounded in the principle of intuition, the IWP emphasizes a holistic approach to writing. Each session offers students ample time to jot down responses to a prompt, which they can revise and spin into larger pieces submitted to the anthology.

Many IWP students are local Orinda residents, having discovered the class via friends and family. "My sister has been writing with the IWP since she was in sixth grade — she's a sophomore in college now — so I became familiar with the organization through this connection," IWP student and high school junior Ava Moga said.

Parents were drawn to the IWP for its emphasis on uplifting teen voices. "I first remember seeing the writing space in Orinda's Theatre Square, with their beautiful photos and quotes outlined in pink in the windows," parent Sonya Grover said. "I loved their mission statement: 'declare what you know to be true!'"

As parents and IWP students filed into Orinda Books, they purchased copies of "Reemergence." While the anthology's title spotlights post-pandemic recovery and reclamation, student works run the gamut of genres, from dystopian fiction stories to poetic vignettes. When the open mic began, students read aloud from these pieces, having chosen passages or entire works to read.

"I loved reading [my work] aloud because there's so much more emotion and truth you can capture with your voice and facial expression," Grover, a high school junior, said of her essay about social media's impacts on Generation Z. "I think you can touch the heart of the piece more easily when reading it live."

Sonya Grover, who at-

tended the reading to support her daughter, added, "My daughter was included in the last two anthologies, so we knew about the launch. It's great that the reading was at Orinda Books this year — they are a wonderful local bookstore."

New writers also took to the stage, including high school junior Ava Moga. "I've never been published before, so this is really exciting for me," Moga said. "I decided to read and enter this piece into the anthology because I just really loved the entirety of it."

Writers weighed in on such topics as identity, mental health, and self-image. Many highlighted discussions of gender roles and societal expectations of young people. Ultimately, the anthology reading underscored the need to amplify teen voices through writing. Not only does creative writing allow for the expansion of young people's imaginations, but it also forms a crucial outlet for the youth to advocate for causes they support and call for change, allowing teens to feel truly supported.

"The value of sharing your writing is that it reinforces what we share in all our classes," Perlman said. "It's that who you are matters and that all your thoughts, feelings, stories, and ideas are valuable, important, and need to be heard."

Readers interested in a free class trial should contact [elizabeth@intuitivewritingproject.org](mailto:elizabeth@intuitivewritingproject.org) or visit [www.intuitivewritingproject.org](http://www.intuitivewritingproject.org).

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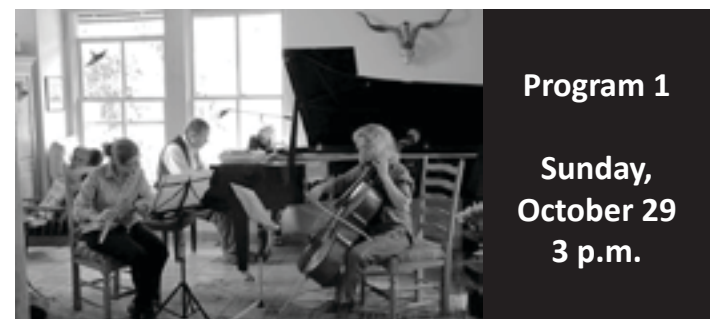
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## Olivia Williams: Fully fueled after 'Running on Empty'

By Jon Kingdon

Olivia Williams, a senior cross-country runner, has gone through a lot these past two years.

On Nov. 11 2021, for all to see, Williams, then a sophomore, was on top of the athletic world as a cross country runner and water polo player. Having just won the North Coast Section Division IV cross-country championship and breaking the meet record, Williams hopped into a car with her parents and drove 3 ½ hours down to the Cal Poly area to compete with her Acalanes teammates for the NCS girls water polo championship. Yet, for all that success, there were issues that Williams would soon have to confront.

Williams was suffering from anorexia (an eating disorder characterized by relentless drive for thinness) and orthorexia (an obsession with eating foods that one considers healthy). At the start of her sophomore season, Williams weighed 105 pounds and by the end of the season, she was down to 95 pounds. "There was a fixation on what I saw as healthy eating which was no fast foods or takeout foods, processed things and deserts," Williams said. "I would stick to whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and starches so I had a really limited diet. Because a lot of those foods were high in fiber, which tend to make you feel more full for longer, that made it really difficult to figure out what my energy needs were because I wasn't feeling hungry all the time. I was purposely choosing those foods that I saw were healthier, though not calorically dense, instead of foods that are great for athletes like peanut butter, desserts, protein bars and smoothies."

After the NCS victory in 2021, Williams was someone who did not look for adulation from her accomplishments and was not comfortable with it: "During that season, it was a real shock to me at how successful I was. I don't think I was really prepared for how much attention I was getting. It wasn't just everybody's expectations of me and the standards that they had for me because I tend to put a lot of pressure on myself, but a lot of people around me had really high expectations and I was really worried about disappointing them," Williams said.

The National Eating Disorders Association estimates that 30 million people in the United States suffer from an eating disorder. Research indicates that up to 47% of elite female athletes in "leanness sports" – ones that emphasize size – have experienced eating disorders as compared to 21% of a randomly selected control group of women who are not elite athletes.

Signs that something was wrong were becoming readily apparent to Williams: "I first noticed was that I felt cold all the time. I was still doing water polo and there were a couple of practices where I was so cold that I had to get out of the water and leave early. My hair started falling out. I had a vitamin deficiency, which I didn't know at the time, but I started getting a really serious rash on my hands. Instead of taking the signs and symptoms that I was feeling seriously, like that low energy and lack of rest and listening to my body, I decided that I needed to push harder and that I just wasn't working hard enough. If you'd asked my coaches or teammates, I don't think they would have noticed significant red flags because I was constantly eating, but I wasn't eating enough compared to what I was doing in training and with exercise. I did a really good job of masking it because I was having such successful results running in school and I was pretty positive because of that. But I think that my parents began to pick

up on some of my old habits so they began to weigh me in the morning, and my mom began to notice that I began wearing sweaters and drinking a lot of water before my being weighed."

In retrospect, Williams realizes she was taking cues from the wrong people. "Being in a sport where you're always searching for more, always searching for a better time or the next personal record, can be really toxic. And I think going to Footlocker and seeing other cross-country runners with similar issues made it feel like it was okay to have an eating disorder and doing what I felt I needed to do to get to that level."

It was during the spring track season of Williams' sophomore year that it became evident to her coaches that things were not right. "It wasn't really noticeable in the cross-country season. It was more noticeable in the track season in the spring," Coach Eric Morlan said. "She explained the rash on her hands was just an allergic reaction that she got from some cream or soap that she had started using."

When Williams' weight had dropped to 90 pounds, her doctors decided that she had to stop running immediately and had to address her eating disorders. Williams was still in denial when she was forced to stop working out. "Having that season cut short left me feeling really, really angry. I had a lot of anger towards my providers and my parents because I felt like they were being unfair because I didn't see myself as being unhealthy," Williams said. "I was reluctant to go into treatment and I didn't feel like trying to accomplish a doctor's goals. I eventually went on home Hospital, which meant that I didn't attend school. When I went to this treatment center, they told me I would have to reach a minimum of 125 pounds in order to be able to start training again."

Williams would not compete in cross-country her junior year as she began an inpatient program at the Healthy Teen Project in Los Altos, California (www.healthyteenproject.com) over that summer and went to the outpatient program once school began in the fall.

"The treatment program was very challenging," Williams said. "Besides the amount of weight I had to put on and the discomfort that comes with that, it was really challenging having to do that and having to step away from running when I felt I was in my prime and in great shape. They used a lot of experiential therapy such as eating your meals in a group setting, trying new foods with the staff of nutritionists and psychologists monitoring you. We would make the meals ourselves or get food from outside, just learning how to eat and behave normally around food again. I had been uncomfortable with eating out, so we got a lot of take-out meals. We practiced a lot of trying different ways to add calorically dense foods like ice cream or spreads and then we did a lot of mixing and matching with snacks because snacking for athletes is super important. We just tried to cater my appetite and meals around what would be realistic once I began running and going back to school."

It took about three to four months for Williams to get her weight up to the prescribed 125 pounds and she was eventually allowed to resume her training. "It took a lot longer than I wanted it to and that was off of doing no activities, but often times after a period of not eating enough to meet my body's needs," Williams said. "Once you start eating again, your body can go into hypermetabolism, so even though I wasn't



Olivia Williams Photo provided

running, I had weeks where I would need 3,000 to 4,000 calories a day to keep up with that faster metabolism."

As a self-described Type A, competitive perfectionist, Williams also had to adjust her lifestyle, beyond eating more, like learning how to rest. "I think just learning to be able to do nothing was really important for me. I had not been the kind of person to just sit and watch television with my family or relaxing. I just had to be constantly active and in motion, either running or working out or doing homework. So, I just really worked on learning how to sit and have a conversation, learning how to watch a movie and just be able to enjoy it, playing puzzles and board games. Just figuring out ways to make my life a little more balanced so it wasn't just this constant working cycle."

As a senior, with the additional weight, returning to running has been a bit of an adjustment for Williams. "Getting over that initial hump, I've been able to embrace it a lot more and I'm definitely a lot stronger," Williams said. "I started incorporating weights and weightlifting so that definitely helped me build back strength and speed. I've finally gotten to that point where I feel normal running again. I don't know if I'm back to the shape that I was my sophomore season just because I haven't had as long to build up my training, but I would say I'm definitely a lot closer to where I was two years ago, which is really exciting. I would say that I am definitely in a great place now. I try to meet with my providers about once a month now and I'll go in for weight and vitals checks to make sure that all of that looks good and I still definitely have a bit of a sensitive and quicker metabolism, so I still eat more than the average person for my size and height."

Williams also discovered a balanced way to approach running distances. "I just realized how toxic and detrimental my mentality was and how much stress it had been causing [myself]. Being able to take a step back and look at the big picture and realizing that everything is going to be okay and stay the same even if I don't win, helped me realize that this was going to be a lot less stressful for me if I just learn to enjoy it instead of trying to win all the time. It's still a work in progress but I'm definitely enjoying running a lot more, trying to stop and enjoy the moment and appreciate being back to racing no matter what my time is and soaking it all in."

Williams also came to a new understanding and appreciation about her teammates. "Looking back now, they were always there for me and super supportive no matter what I was going through and I'm really grateful I have the team and that support system," Williams said. "My goal for the season is just to have fun. I think a successful season for me would be just enjoying the whole process and the limited time that I have left with my teammates."

... continued on Page 11



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# Kring named Bay Area News Group girls athlete of the week

By Jon Kingdon



Photo provided

## Campolindo Goalie Sydney Kring

Despite not playing any water polo in the off-season due to a concussion and stepping into the water after several months with her first practice this season, Campolindo sophomore

goalie Sydney Kring, has had an outstanding season and was just named the Bay Area News Group' girls high school athlete of the week for Oct. 2-7. Kring received 34.27% of the vote among 10 nominees.

During that week, Kring had 51 saves, 12 steals and eight assists in the Arroyo Grande Classic with wins over Acalanes, Righetti, Saint Francis, Sacred Heart, and Carondelet.

Kring, who was second team all-league last season, was starting from scratch when this season began. "A big part of that was getting her fitness levels back up and getting back in shape," Campolindo head coach Kim Everist said. "Sydney has just gotten better and better and I would expect her to be pretty phenomenal here on the back end of the season."

Appropriately, Kring

learned of the award from her mother. "My mom sent me a screenshot of the story in the paper," King said. "I was super excited to win the award."

Kring thanked Everist and her teammates: "Coach Everist has been very motivating and encouraging and we have a really good team dynamic."

According to Everist, there is much more to Kring than just her talent in the goal. "Her teammates love her. She's a good teammate that has a great voice and is very respected."

Also finishing high in the voting was Miramonte water polo player, junior Audrina Kang. Kang had two goals and four assists against Sacred Heart Prep, the third-best team in the Bay Area, and followed that up with two goals and three assists against No. 2, Campolindo.

# Olivia Williams: Fully fueled after 'Running on Empty'

... continued from Page 10

The change has been apparent to Coach Morlan: "Olivia looks healthier, and she has grown two inches in the last six months. She is still driven and wants to succeed, and I kept reminding her to have patience with the process and six months later, she's back winning races again."

## "Running on Empty" video

Williams and Eric Morford, the photography and video productions teacher at Acalanes, discussed the idea of making a YouTube video about her experiences the past year but it was something that Williams was not ready to do. "I was still in treatment and feeling those strong emotions and resentments, so we waited to film it until I was done and ready and coming into this cross-country season feeling good and healthy," Williams said. "We decided it was the right time to do it and share it so that, hopefully, it can help anybody else who is struggling with similar issues."

Morford, also a runner, was one of Williams' cross-country coaches who had worked for a time at MileSplit, a running website. "I brought up the idea of doing the video 'Running on Empty' months ago," Morford said. "I knew that Olivia had a very inspiring story and how strong a person she is and said that I wouldn't ask her do a story about this

unless I thought that this would be an opportunity for her to make a difference in other people's lives. I also wanted Olivia's parents (Chris and Laura) to be sure that Olivia was in a good place. Even though her story continues, there is some type of conclusion that she has to get over in terms of her comfortability. It's a story I think that people can find something that they have in common with her, even if it's not an eating disorder."

Williams' goal is to reach other young athletes to have them understand when they are ignoring signs that things are not right with their bodies. "When those sacrifices impede your body's natural development, like missing a menstrual cycle or not growing, then that should be a serious red flag that you've left the territory of being a driven and dedicated athlete and you're entering a world of reckless habits," Williams said. "Although sacrifices have to be made, if certain things aren't happening that need to in order for you to grow and develop, then the sacrifices aren't worth it."

In just the first few weeks, "Running on Empty" has had over 25,000 views and the numbers are increasing exponentially. "I'm happy that the time that Olivia has taken and the vulnerability that she's shown is going to help, not defining her story, but that she can be a part of that message for so many others in terms of putting their

physical health first," Morford said.

Williams has received a lot of feedback as well: "I've gotten a lot of messages off the video which has been super rewarding, thanking me for getting the message out and sharing their similar experience, so that has been really cool to see."

The next step for Williams will be deciding where she wants to attend college and continuing to compete as a runner. "It's a mix between some East Coast and West Coast schools," Williams said. "I am looking for somewhere where the coach, staff and the team are going to be really supportive and continue to allow me to balance my physical and mental health where they have a positive relationship with that and where I can be academically and athletically challenged. At some point, I would love to try my hand at the marathons and longer distances but no matter where I am, I want to be able to run for as long as I can, even if it's not super-fast."

It's still an ongoing process for Williams, but one she looks back on with pride: "I would say that I am a much stronger person after that. Overcoming something like that is really challenging and hard for a lot of people to go through. I think that it has just made me a lot more resilient and allowed me to realize that I can get through whatever else can come my way and I'm really glad that I dealt with it when I did."

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# The First Champions of the Brand-New WRECK LEAGUE have been Crowned

Realizing the need for an all-fun, no practice, pick-up league for Middle School kids, LMYA spun-off a **Wreck League** for kids in the 6th-through 8th grade. The purpose is to **wreck** boring, traditional sports and bring, fun, competitive, edgy games to this age group.

It's first basketball season concluded on October 8 at Stanley School. Champions were crowned and an MVP named.

Coached by high school students, the players can relate to, the teams played every Sunday night beginning at the end of August. For those participants who wanted more, free clinics taught by a high school varsity coach were available each week, as well.

This exciting program will have its second basketball season this winter, every Saturday evening at Stanley.

Watch us grow.



### Winning Team - MAVERICKS

Pictured from left to right - Peter Endemann, Nate Lederman, Jayden Albiento, Jaxson Morantes, and Myles Langford.

Not pictured - Harrison Clark, Jaxson Wallace Terry, Treysen Roberts, Grant Cortez, and Joshua Sinha.

Coached by Spencer Clark and Kyler Roberts, not pictured.



MVP of the League, Jayden Albiento

sponsored by LMYA



## In Memory

### Loretta Delinger

1931 - 2023



Loretta crossed over the Rainbow Bridge greeted by the countless dogs that have been waiting to greet the Trainer they have loved so much! She was born in Villa Park, Illinois, the eldest child of Dorothy and Ronald Soper.

Her brother, Retired USN CWO 3, Ronald E. Soper, lives in San Diego. In her early life she roller skated on a platform attached to the top of her aunt and uncle's car, as they performed throughout the Midwest Summer carnival scene. Loretta met her husband, Jack Delinger (pre-deceased) at these carnivals. They married and settled in Orinda. Loretta held dog training classes at the Orinda Community Center for nearly 40 years. A marching group of her students were a colorful addition to the Orinda 4th of July Parade for many years as "Loretta's K9 Good Citizens".

She became a world recognized Obedience and Rally Judge for various organizations, primarily the American Kennel Club (AKC) and she was instrumental in developing the sport of Rally Obedience when it was introduced by the AKC in 2005.

A gathering will be held in memory of Loretta on Sunday, October 29, from 2-4 p.m., in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.

## In Memory

### Edward Lee Atwood

July 27, 1932 – Sept. 20, 2023



Ed Atwood was born in Sacramento to Edward Levi Atwood and Rega Theresa Huberty and made his first home in Walnut Grove. By 1940, the family relocated to the Stockton-Lodi area, where grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins were nearby.

Ed attended St. Rose Elementary and St. Mary's High at Assumption Cathedral before leaving Stockton to attend the University of Colorado at Boulder. Midway through his studies, he was drafted into the U.S. Air Force, spending two memorable years in Japan.

On his return, he completed his degree in industrial engineering at University of California, Berkeley. Most importantly, during this period, he met the love of his life, Rae Beth. They married the day after Christmas, 1959 and over the next 10 years, they had five kids and moved 10 times before settling down in Moraga in 1968."

He began his career at Continental Can Co. and worked in many plants in three coastal states. Ed was a member of St. Monica's since 1968 and was active in St. Vincent de Paul, Men's Fellowship, and the "Muffin Men". He also volunteered at California Right to Life and Casa Vincentia and was a member of "SIR's."

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Rae Atwood and his children; Ed Atwood (Sarah) of Seattle, Beth Atwood (Pleasant Hill), Michael Atwood (Jenny) of Stockton, Tom Atwood (Benecia), Kate Landers (Mike) of Saratoga and 12 grandchildren; Grace and Emily Landers, Chris, Anne-Marie, Patrick, Nicholas, Joseph, Julia, Lydia, Peter, John and Francis Atwood.

Friends and family are invited to attend a Memorial Mass at St. Monica's, 1001 Camino Pablo on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at 9:45 a.m. Reception to follow in St. Monica's Peace Room.

A private burial will be held later at San Joaquin Catholic Cemetery, Stockton.

## Moraga Community Service Day sets new records in volunteers and humanitarian aid

Submitted by Mike McCluer



Photos provided

The Moraga Community Service Day was a great success this year, with families and community members providing pride, spirit, and a great sense of giving from the volunteers who generously helped out.

There were 16 projects to choose from, with churches and businesses added to the event this year and over 700 hundred volunteers showed up to answer the call to "Care, Give And Connect."

One of the favorite projects involved families bringing their kids to paint messages and scenes of kindness on pots and rocks, and then donating them to local seniors.

Another favorite was assembling 1,341 Lady Bug Bags, which contain feminine hygiene products for unhoused women.

School projects were abundant, with Campolindo and Saint Mary's hosting projects inviting the community to come help in their sustainable gardens. The Moraga School District had beautification events at their three elementary campuses focused on weeding, cleaning and mulching, in addition to assembling 91 emergency containers for

classrooms.

Humanitarian projects included the assembling of 9,500 eyeglasses for donation to developing nations; donations of 674 items to Community Violence Solutions for victims of sexual abuse/domestic abuse; hand knitting 225 caps and scarves for patients of chemotherapy and the unhoused; 764 bags of clothing donations; 402 meals of food donations; 30 pints of blood donations; as well as gardening at the Commons and Rheem triangle for beautification.

Moraga Community Service Day is led by Community leaders Julie Parks (MSD), Andy Boggeri and Karla Juarez (Lions), Bobbie Preston, Katie Bidstrup (Chamber of Commerce), Larry Jacobs (Kiwanis), Janice Lieu (Garden Club), Wendell Baker (iKind), Ann Drevno (Saint Mary's), Brent Rubey (Campolindo) and Mike McCluer (Rotary).

Speaking for the group, Mike McCluer said; "This event represents months of meetings, new project ideas and discussions, project logistics, organization of resources, a comprehensive communication and engagement plan by these very busy community leaders with full-time jobs. It's incredibly rewarding to all of us to see the record volunteer turnout and the many ways in which we helped those in need, our schools and beautification of the community."

The impact of this Community Day will be felt beyond the city limits, as many of the projects involved international assistance.

## PG&E Corporation Foundation donates \$100K to the Park Theater Renovation Campaign

Submitted by Tracey Karsten Farrell

The all-volunteer Park Theater Trust has received widespread support from individuals, local businesses, and family foundations for the Park's rebirth. With the generous donation of \$100,000 from the PG&E Corporation Foundation, the Renovation Campaign moves even closer towards its goal. The Foundation stated the contribution to TPTT was one of the largest they will make in the East Bay outside of Oakland this year.

This is a particularly significant grant because it recognizes just how much impact a reopened and re-envisioned Park Theater will have on the entire re-

gion. Corporate donations are critical to the success of this project, especially as government funding is scarce with no redevelopment funds available.

The board plans to start construction once they have received 80% of the renovation funds. They are almost halfway to the \$12 million campaign to purchase, protect, and renovate the Park into the community cultural resource the Trust envisions. To see the renderings of this transformational community-wide initiative and for more information on how to participate, visit <https://parktheatertrust.org/how-to-help/>.

## It's goat shearing time with Lamorinda 4-H

Submitted by Stuart Schonfeld



Photo provided

Rachael Schonfeld (Left), Linnea Chang, Allison Curletto (right) with Beatrice before being sheared.

The Lamorinda 4-H Goat Club sheared three of their club's angora goats on Oct. 6. Angora goats are raised for their lustrous fiber called mohair and need to be sheared twice a year. Each goat can produce over five pounds of mohair a year. Much of that fiber is sold as finished specialty yarn at the Lambtown Fiber Festival in Dixon every October.

The local 4-H goat project is run by adult leader

Allison Curletto and the kids (human) learn the entire process, from Farm to Fashion. The group meets at Campolindo High School where many of the goats are housed. Rachael Schonfeld, a seventh-grader at Joaquin Moraga, sheared her 8-month-old goat Beatrice. Rachael raised Beatrice from 2 weeks old until she was old enough to live with the other goats at Campolindo's Garden.

Lamorinda 4-H Club President Chloe Haussman, a senior at Carondelet High School, sheared Totes. Miramonte High School student Linnea Chang, sheared Princess. Chang owns three of her own angoras at home and shows them each May at the Contra Costa County Fair. Campolindo students Sandro Curletto and Madeline Carpenter were also helpers for the day.

Goats are only one of more than dozens of fun projects for kids in Lamorinda 4-H. 4-H is the largest national nonprofit youth organization in the country. In addition to the hands-on learning the club prioritizes, 4-H fosters community service and youth leadership. 4-H is open to youth from 5-19 years old and offers STEM animal projects from goats and rabbits, to baking, bee keeping, and many more. To learn more, find them on social media Lamorinda4h or, to join 4-H, contact lamorinda@contracosta4h.org

## Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 200 words) to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations or 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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

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# Moraga learns lessons during The Great ShakeOut

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Millions of people around the world practiced their skills on Oct. 19, hoping to be ready in the event of a major earthquake. The town of Moraga joined in with government agencies, schools, and other organizations in the U.S., Canada, and other countries.

The scenario for Moraga was a 7.2 Earthquake struck the Hayward Fault near Berkeley at around 10 a.m. The quake lasted about a minute and a half and caused major damage in Moraga. As the drill continued, Moraga Police Chief Jon King added reports of major incidents, including a ruptured gas line and fire at the Moraga Center, power outages, landslides, broken buildings and roads. Schools needed to release students to their parents, and needed to know what to do with children whose parents could not be reached.

In major disasters, it is usual that normal means of communications fail, such as telephones and the internet. In order to assure that the area can maintain communications through radios, the Lamorinda Area Radio Inter-

est Group (LARIG) was asked to set up a radio communications drill in the Moraga Public Works Department. The drill was scheduled for 10:19 a.m. Unfortunately, many Californians were awakened at 3:19 a.m. when the alert was erroneously sent out by the MyShake App seven hours early. MyShake apologized for the glitch, and promised that it will not happen next year.

But at 10:19 a.m. the alert did go out across the Bay Area. LARIG began its drill, reaching out on the General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS), using its repeater located in the Berkeley Hills, calling for people to radio in their positions. About two dozen people responded, throughout Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga. In addition to the volunteer radio groups, the town owns about 20 radios and maintains a radio channel

for Public Works.

However, the radio system failed when it came to contacting the schools in Moraga. Moraga School District Superintendent Julie Parks later reported that, although they could clearly hear the radio transmissions, for an unknown reason they were unable to respond.

After the exercise, Chief King conducted a "hot wash," where participants get together and discuss when worked, and what didn't work, and what can be improved for the future. Some suggestions for improvement included the need for more interactive incident tracking, and King said that WebEOC has that capacity. WebEOC is a secure, internet-based emergency information management application that provides real-time information sharing of opera-

tional details from various government and public safety groups in response to an imminent threat, emergency or disaster.

Emergency supplies are kept in a trailer on town property, and it was discovered that the contact information stored in the trailer was not as up-to-date as needed. It was also determined that Moraga needs a copy machine in the town offices, and that the trailer needs refreshed maps, forms, dry erase boards, and message pads. A resources list should include contact information for local businesses, schools and churches.

King wrapped up the exercise by saying that the town would try another such exercise in 8 to 12 weeks, to retest with improvements in place.

## Letters to the editor

### Litter lessens beauty and causes issues for the Earth

Once a year there is a Coastal Clean-up. This year it took place from 9 a.m. to noon on Sept. 23 and was sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Creeks.

I was inspired by the number of volunteers who attended. They came from Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda and worked very hard on cleaning up the areas around San Pablo Creek and Orinda, downtown parking lots.

I was disheartened by the amount of litter, including cigarette butts that were removed. There was also a tire, oil and a toy car that were left

at the creek.

There are facilities that will recycle tires, oil, and other unwanted items. As the saying goes: "Just Google It" for where to take the items. Let's make Lamorinda litter free communities.

I believe once the litter hits the ground, it is everyone's responsibility to pick it up. The problem with litter is it does not stay where it falls but is transported by wind to our storm drains, creeks and eventually travels to the Bay and the ocean. We can do this!

Toris Jaeger  
Orinda

### Crosses serve a purpose

I have heard complaints of the crosses that dot the hillside next to the Lafayette BART station, and an ongoing movement to take them down.

Some claim that they have served their purpose and that they are now just an "eyesore." But as American citizens we have a duty to remember and respect those who have died in service of our country. The crosses on the hillside represent those

soldiers who have fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan, and while the U.S has withdrawn, those lives should never be forgotten. Removing the memory of those who fought for our country, in an attempt to beautify a hill in Lafayette lacks respect. Furthermore, it is only a singular hill, one of few memorials we have in the Lamorinda area. And one of fewer still that directly commemorates the United States' most recent conflict. Yet these crosses are more than just the

memory of a singular war, they exemplify Lamorindians gratitude to our veterans and active duty personnel in addition to those who perished and must never be forgotten.

Cooper Chang  
Moraga

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence — we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be a maximum of 350 words long and must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

# Engineering Services Manager returns to council with Pathways Project update

... continued from Page 2

Fire Marshall Chris Bachman said he preferred a design that allows fire trucks and other emergency vehicles to travel on the left side of the road in any direction and have all the cars pull to the right side. With the construction of the center median pathway, some of that access for cars to provide more space for emergency vehicles would be compromised, especially in the southern portion of the pathway. Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt said his primary concerns were emergency evacuations during which people would be heading from the southbound side toward the freeway (not past or away from it).

The real time-consuming aspect, Luttropp said, was to contact Caltrans. The city engineering staff and council members Teresa Geringer and Susan Candell met with Greg Currey, the Caltrans Pedestrian and Bicycle Branch Chief for District 4. They reviewed the project's various

configurations and Currey was in favor of the ideas presented, including the center median pathway, an east side pathway with and without signalized on and off ramps, elimination of slip lanes at Mt. Diablo and Pleasant Hill Road, and installation of raised crosswalks at the on- and off-ramps. He indicated that Caltrans would only conduct one courtesy review of the project and after that, any further reviews would need to be part of a formal encroachment permit application after the project plans are 100% completed.

The process for obtaining the permit was confirmed by Caltrans staff and would require considerable time and a document explaining how and why the plan deviates from Caltrans' standards — the pathway plan does differ in multiple ways — which could impact approval of the project. Email correspondence with Mark Wong, project manager for Caltrans, indicated the Highway Operations office would ask for extensive information related to the idea of signaling the Highway 24 on-

off ramps. Luttropp said that caused him to be notably concerned, because heavy traffic in the area often has cars on the ramps backing up onto Pleasant Hill Road. Luttropp said a study about the matter would cost about \$30,000.

Luttropp said no additional information was anticipated and the alternatives remain viable. He invited input and direction from the council.

Council Member Gina Dawson asked about the median not meeting Caltrans' standard width. Luttropp said near Mt. Diablo Boulevard, the median on Pleasant Hill Road is the standard 12 feet wide, but under the freeway it dips down to 7 feet and then down to 4 feet in some areas.

"The beautiful thing is that if we do the center median project, we have a 12-foot median," he said.

In addition to council's extended discussion, public comment on the project had residents encouraging the city to do more research and acquire additional input from the local community about the

project. The suggested alternative solutions short of constructing a center median were numerous.

Council's closing conversation involved whether or not to pursue one of the design alternatives now, if traffic signals should or should not be included and studied, could the design plans they are con-

sidering be made more robust, and the efficacy of staff making an attempt to gain access to CCTA's vision of the Pleasant Hill Road corridor and what that might mean in terms of funding. They voted unanimously to carry the matter forward and asked staff to bring another updated report to the Nov. 13 meeting.

## Res Runners show up for each other

By Sharon K. Sobotta

More than 2,000 runners, walkers and strollers filled the drizzly streets of downtown Lafayette for the Lafayette Res Run Oct. 22, along with dozens of four-legged furry family members. Thirteen-year-old Caden Ehrhorn, an eighth-grader at Stanley Middle School ran the 5K in 17 minutes and 14 seconds, which made him the first student in the district to put his foot over the finish line, and put him in third place overall. "It felt really good because I improved from last year," Caden said. "This was my third time at the Res Run. It's great to have so many people out here. It shows that we have a big community of people that we can rely on." Abbie and Dave Ehrhorn beamed with pride, as their pet Ruby wagged her tail, while posing for a picture. "I love living and working here," Abbie Ehrhorn, who is also a teacher at Burton Valley, said. "It's such a special place." Dave Ehrhorn was at the Res Run to cheer on his son Caden, but he couldn't help noticing who showed up. "It's great to see so many teachers and administrators out here supporting the kids," he said. "I really hope that the teachers in the district get the raise they're asking for."



Photo Sharon Sobotta

Third place winner, Stanley Middle School student Caden Ehrhorn, with his parents Abbie and Dave, and dog Ruby.

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## Not to be missed

### Art

**The Moraga Art Gallery**, located at 432 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center, announces the opening of its 2023 "holiday" exhibit "Now and Then," a striking array of artwork by more than two dozen member and guest artists, and featuring paintings by two of the gallery's favorites: Susan Erickson and Margaret Lucas-Hill. The exhibit runs from Wednesday, Oct. 25 until Dec. 31. Free gala reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 18. By Dec. 1, the gallery will be bursting with an array of original gifts of art and will be open daily from noon to 5 p.m. Take note that on Thursday, Dec. 14 from 6-8 p.m., the gallery has invited the public to "Shopping Night and Craft Beer," a festive mid-week beer-tasting event with appropriate foodstuffs and holiday entertainment. [www.moragaartgallery.com](http://www.moragaartgallery.com) or call (925)376-5407.

**Art that rocks and rolls** at Valley Art Gallery. Among the hills. Over bridges. Along beaches and beside bays. Up mountains and down towns. Until Nov. 11. Valley Art Gallery, 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek. (925) 935-4311, Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Art Gallery at the Orinda Library:** Plein Air Painting by The Glover Group & Friends. The Lamorinda Arts Council celebrates the beauty of nature with paintings by 17 artists from The Glover Group & Friends through Nov. 3 in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. The late, great Pam Glover taught at the Orinda Community Center for many years and these artists continue to visit plein air sites favored by Glover. "We plein air painters visit local sites outdoors and work to capture the moment on canvas," said exhibit organizer Maria SantoStefano. View their work online at <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits/>.

**Virtual Art Gallery at Wilder:** "Bay Area Photography II" by Ryan Magpusao. The Lamorinda Arts Council presents a solo Virtual Wilder Art Gallery exhibit in featuring photographer Ryan Magpusao. He uses photography as a creative expression of the peace and beauty he finds in his relationships with people and places. This exhibit runs through Nov. 4. View and purchase his photographs with one click online at <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/>

**Art Embraces Words:** Oct. 28, 2 - 3:30 p.m. Costume Event with Prizes. The Lamorinda Arts Council invites you to show up as your favorite literary or artistic character at this free program in the Lafayette Library. Writers Lani Longshore, AnneMarie Gouveia and Willa Drew read from their work surrounded by visual artwork from Lance Jackson (whose work is in the 2023 de Young Open) and Helen Chu-Hirschberg. For more information visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/>. This program is made possible by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Lafayette.

### Music

**Berkeley Chamber Performances** presents Alexander String Quartet with quartets by Haydn, Ravel, and Schoenberg at Lafayette on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., at Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Cost: \$0 to \$45. For more info see [www.berkeleychamberperform.org](http://www.berkeleychamberperform.org) or call (415) 531-1480 or email [rcarlin16@gmail.com](mailto:rcarlin16@gmail.com).

**California Symphony presents** "Rivers of Inspiration," a concert featuring the music of Handel, Viet Cuong, and Robert Schumann, and the program is the highly an-

icipated world premiere of California Symphony's 2020-23 composer-in-residence Viet Cuong's Chance of Rain. Schumann's exuberant Symphony No. 3 and Handel's spectacular Water Music, Suites No. 1 and No. 2 accompany Cuong's world premiere. Artistic and Music Director Donato Cabrera leads the California Symphony through a musical journey from the Baroque period to the modern day. Nov. 11 at 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 12 at 4 p.m. [www.californiasymphony.org/shows/handel-rivers-of-inspiration/](http://www.californiasymphony.org/shows/handel-rivers-of-inspiration/); (925) 943-7469

**Dia de los Muertos Concert and Celebration.** On Sunday, Oct. 29, you are invited to embrace the wisdom and spirit of Dia de los Muertos as we honor the tradition of connecting to the ancestors that have gone before us. A night filled with the music of Bay Area favorites, Cascada de Flores, taco truck, candlelight, sangria, pan de muerto, and projects for kids. Creekside Commons Main Hall 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. Tickets available online or at the door. [www.creeksidecommons.org/upcomingevents](http://www.creeksidecommons.org/upcomingevents)

**California Symphony presents** "Composing the Future: A California Festival Panel Discussion" on Nov. 7 at 7:30 p.m. at the Leshler Center for the Arts. Moderated by KDFC's Dianne Nicolini, the panel delves into how collaborations

shape classical music, and the challenges—and opportunities—that contemporary classical composers, performers, presenters, and audiences face. Panel participants include Resident Composer Viet Cuong, San Francisco Symphony CEO Matthew Spivey, and pianist Sarah Cahill. Reserve your free tickets at [www.californiasymphony.org/calendar\\_events/composing-the-future-a-california-festival-panel-discussion/](http://www.californiasymphony.org/calendar_events/composing-the-future-a-california-festival-panel-discussion/)

### Theatre

**Town Hall Theatre Company** present "A Christmas Story" Adapted by Philip Grecian, story by Jean Shepherd. Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 (Previews), Dec. 2-17. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$20-45, Pay-What-You-Can tickets will be available at all performances at the door. [www.townhalltheatre.com/christmas-story](http://www.townhalltheatre.com/christmas-story)

**Improv comedy company** Synergy Theater is invading the Leshler Center for the Arts, at 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, with its madcap improvised horror spoof, "Z is for...Zombie: An Improvised Zombie Apocalypse!" Oct. 19 - 29, Thursdays - Saturdays at 8:15 p.m. and Sundays at 3:15 p.m. The Leshler Center for the Arts, George & Sonja Vukasin Theatre 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, tickets: \$25 buy online at [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org) or by phone at (925)943-7469.

## Not to be missed

**Saint Mary's College**, Performing Arts presents William Shakespeare's beloved classic, "A Midsummer Night's Dream." In-person performance dates: Thursday, Nov. 2, 8 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 3, 4 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 4, 2 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 4, 8 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 5, 2 p.m. Tickets limited - reserve early. E-tickets: \$8 SMC students; \$12 SMC faculty and staff, non-SMC students; \$15 general. Purchase tickets online at [stmmarys-ca.edu/midsummer](http://stmmarys-ca.edu/midsummer) at least 24 hours prior to performance. A limited number of tickets are available at the Box Office 30 minutes before curtain via cash/check only. Info: (925)631-4670 or [tms8@stmmarys-ca.edu](mailto:tms8@stmmarys-ca.edu)

**At Town Hall Theatre**, Lafayette 'Front Porch Presents' is back with their Folk Music Showcase, Nov. 3 at 7 p.m. This exciting quarterly collaboration brings together local musicians and performers for a showcase of talent that is both entertaining and inspiring. The event was a big success, and now a third one-night only Folk Music Showcase will happen at Town Hall Theatre. 3535 School Street, Lafayette, [www.TownHallTheatre.com](http://www.TownHallTheatre.com)

### Literature

**The giant fall book sale** sponsored by the Friends of the Moraga Library will be held on Saturday, Oct. 28 from

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Moraga Library. Books, CDs and DVDs in every category will be sold at prices ranging from 25 cents to \$3. Beginning at 1 p.m., a bag can be purchased for \$5 and filled with all the books it can hold. 100% of the proceeds of this sale support the Moraga Library's children's and adult's programs, books, other materials and library upgrades.

**Join the Sweet Thursday** Author Series on Thursday, Oct. 26 at 7 p.m. in the Don Tatzin CH at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center to hear author John Lescroart discuss his latest book, "The Missing Piece." This is a free event, but registration is required at [tinyurl.com/sweet26oct23](http://tinyurl.com/sweet26oct23). The doors will be open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and treats. The program is sponsored by The Friends of the Lafayette Library.

... continued on next Page

Please submit events to: [calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com](mailto:calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com)

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE In person worship at 9:30 a.m. Live stream on [facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/](https://facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/)  
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◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

Literature... continued

**November Sweet Thursday** Author Series presents author Andrea Lankford. Beautifully written, heartfelt, and at times harrowing, "Trail of the Lost: The Relentless Search to Bring Home the Missing Hikers of the Pacific Crest Trail" paints a vivid picture of the hiker culture and its complicated relationship with the ever-expanding online realm. This program is offered on Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. in the DTCH. This free event is sponsored by the Friends of the Lafayette Library, but registration is required at [Tinyurl.com/sweet-nov2023](https://tinyurl.com/sweet-nov2023). The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and treats.

Other

**Haunted House Moving Outside!** For the first time ever, the Lafayette Community Center's Haunted House is venturing beyond its haunted halls to the great outdoors! We proudly present to you the newly named "Spooky Walk" – a hauntingly thrilling adventure on the Bellenger trail, featuring a quarter-mile stretch of bone-chilling encounters that will leave you trembling with delight. Not Too Scary: For our younger

friends and those who prefer a more festive atmosphere, our "Not Too Scary" version offers a delightful, family-friendly experience with just the right amount of spookiness to keep the smiles going. When: Oct. 28 and 29 from 5-6:30 p.m. Very Scary: Are you courageous enough to confront your deepest fears? In our "Very Scary" version, fear lurks around every corner, waiting to send shivers down your spine. It's a pulse-pounding thrill for the bravest souls! When: Oct. 28 from 7:30-9:30 p.m. and Oct. 29 from 7:30-9 p.m. Pre-registration required, get your tickets now! <https://tinyurl.com/3jwwhj6x>

**Dan Hanel**, award winning author of the historical mystery series "In The Shadow of Diablo" is Moraga Historical Society's next featured speaker. Hanel combines fact with fiction bringing to life locations such as Brentwood's John Marsh House; the abandoned Byron Hot Springs Resort; Antioch's 19th century Black Diamond Coal Mine; and Contra Costa County's Winehaven - once the world's largest winery. Event held Sunday, Nov. 5, from 1-3 p.m. in the Casita @ Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Dr, Moraga. RSVP: [ranchsu-](mailto:ranchsu-san@aol.com)

[san@aol.com](mailto:san@aol.com) by Oct. 27. Reservations only -- limited seating. Moraga Historical Society members free, guests \$5.

**Don't toss that repairable bike** on the garbage heap; it's time once again for the Cycle Recycle! Over the last 24 years Bobbie and Tom Preston have collected over 3,700 repairable bikes Nov. 1-31 on their driveway. This year, partnering with Moraga Troop 246, bikes can be dropped off at Scout Hut at 1279 Moraga Way, Moraga. No rusty bikes helmets, razors, scooters, or trikes are accepted but bike racks, bike baskets, pumps and tools are accepted. The troops will accept biking clothing in primo condition as well (Place in a plastic sealed bag). No need to call. This year's recipients of Cycle Recycle include Water-side Workshops, Bay Area Bike Rescue, Trips for Kids, and White Pony Express.

**California Independent Film Festival** at Orinda Theatre Nov. 9 -16. The festival will feature about 29 films from 14 countries and at least 9 Directors will offer Q&A sessions following the screening of their films. For more information and tickets go to [caiff.org](http://caiff.org) or visit The Orinda Theatre Box Office.

**LUMC Halloween Festival.** Oct. 29 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lafayette United Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Road, Lafayette. Join us for a fun-filled afternoon in the Fellowship Hall for food, games, face painting, free pumpkin patch, crafts and more!

**A Benefit Bash for Save Mount Diablo**, Party for the planet. Featuring Eco-themed live music by the Jim Ocean Band and Blue-Eyed Grass. Date: Saturday, Nov. 11, Time: 6 p.m. Doors, 6:45 p.m. Show. Location: Creekside Commons, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Admission: \$20 adv/\$25 door – Ages 18 and under are free. Tickets: [https://P4TP\\_SaveMtD.eventbrite.com](https://P4TP_SaveMtD.eventbrite.com) Information for public: <https://jimoocean-music.com>. Publicity Contact: Kathy Ocean, (707)869-9403, [kathy@communityconcerts.com](mailto:kathy@communityconcerts.com)

**Attention, Asian food aficionados:** The Contra Costa Chinese School will be holding its annual carnival on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Diablo Valley College Liberal Arts Building courtyard at 321 Golf Club Road in Pleasant Hill. It will feature a variety of Asian food and drink specialties for sale, reminiscent of a traditional

Asian night market. Featured delicacies will include Chinese tea eggs and egg tarts, Japanese spam musubi, as well as Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches, vermicelli salad and pandan waffles. Carnival games and crafts will be available for the kids. The proceeds from food sales will go to fund individual classroom activities at the non-profit language school with a 48-year history in the county. For more information, go to <https://cococs.org> or <https://cococs.org/site/images/carnival-2023.pdf>.

Garden

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club** will hold its free monthly meeting on Monday Nov. 13 at the Elks Lodge, in Walnut Creek. Join us for a special program Fascinating Foliage: The Drama of Variegated Plants. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brief meeting, social time and an educational program, Complimentary tea and coffee are available. Address: Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive, Walnut Creek. [www.WalnutCreekGardenClub.com](http://www.WalnutCreekGardenClub.com)

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# SMC's Museum of Art opens two new exhibits: "heroes & sheroes" with "Hold it Lightly"

By Vera Kochan



Photos Vera Kochan

Lisa Congdon's "Hold it Lightly" 2023 exhibit with "Boxes" in the center of the room



Corita Kent's (from left) "third eye" 1969, "heart of the arrow" 1969, and "i in daisy" 1969

Saint Mary's College has recently opened two new exhibits in their Museum of Art that many could agree closely resemble each other in color and style. The works in the "heroes & sheroes" exhibit, featuring artist Corita Kent, were created between 1968 - 1969, while the "Hold it Lightly" exhibit was created specifically for this exhibit by Lisa Congdon as a type of homage to Kent's work.

Kent (1918-1986), was born Frances Elizabeth Kent, but changed her first name to Corita (which means "little heart") when she joined the Catholic order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles upon graduating high school.

According to SMC, "Working primarily with serigraphy,

or silkscreen printing, Corita wanted her work to 'infiltrate the masses' and reach the largest audience possible. Often incorporating imagery from consumer packaging, popular media, and other everyday objects, her vibrant text-based compositions would become closely aligned with the Pop Art movement." This exhibit is seen publicly for the first time on the West Coast.

SMC Academic & Engagement Curator Britt Royer explained that Kent sold her early prints in order to raise funds for her college, and it wasn't until the '60s that her work began to reflect the political climate of the times with a focus on war, poverty, racism, and other aspects of the tumultuous decade. As her popularity grew, so did the

criticism from the archdiocese of Los Angeles. Tired of this conflict and her duties as a national lecturer, Kent sought dispensation from her vows, and at the age of 50, moved to Boston, Massachusetts.

Royer added that during her career, Kent strived to make her works contain messages of hope and love, often using bright colors, newsprint images, song lyrics, poems, and occasionally her own thoughts - always pulling from pop culture. During the 1960s, Kent worked with printmaker Harry Hambly, sending him notes and references along with her layouts to create her posters.

"Hold it Lightly," an installation by SMC alum Lisa Congdon, closely resembles Kent's "heroes & sheroes" in appear-

ance and message by also invoking hope and love. Graduating in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in history, Congdon's approach to this exhibit, according to Royer, "is very holistic. Her sayings are general phrases and some she pulls from Kent. She draws digitally on an iPad and then creates her own symbolism and language." And, like Kent, she also uses the services of an off-site printmaker.

Congdon labeled her exhibit "Hold it Lightly" in order to explore "the paradox of caring deeply and letting go," something that is possible "when we actively strive toward something meaningful, while simultaneously knowing and accepting that the desired outcome may not happen."

Congdon stated in an SMC

press release, "I've always understood art, including my own, to reflect the human struggle. For a long time, I existed in a place of disconnect since I felt to be taken seriously, my work needed to be dark and edgy. As humans, we want to make everything sit at opposite ends of the binary. To be a revolutionary, someone who cares about how they show up in the broken world, and to be joyful, means sitting in this gray area where both can exist. Corita is not only a role model in this area but also through her approach to making art, providing a space for me to feel that joyful work could be playful and serious."

Both "heroes & sheroes" and "Hold it Lightly" are on view at SMC's Museum of Art through Dec. 10.

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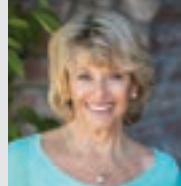
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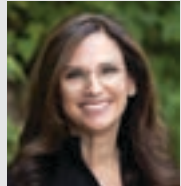
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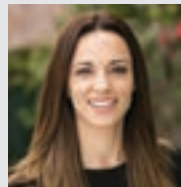
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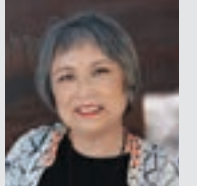
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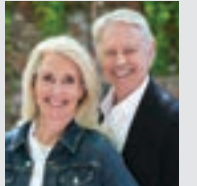
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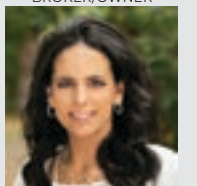
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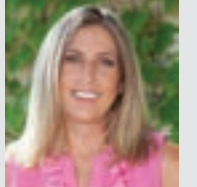
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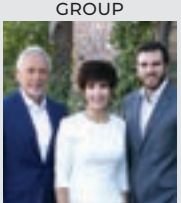
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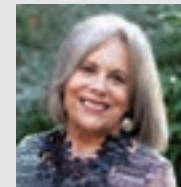
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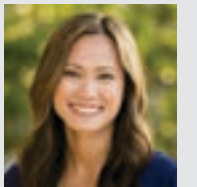
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# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 18 Wednesday, October 25, 2023



The Real Estate Quarter in Review ... read on Page OH4

*Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

## Rock solid

By Cynthia Brian



Succulents thrive tucked into crevices in rocks. Photos Cynthia Brian

*“River stones remain, while water flows away.” ~ Romanian Proverb*

Growing up on the farm, our home was surrounded on three sides by hills and a creek that flowed year-round. In the spring we enjoyed the emergence of pollywogs and watched them mature into frogs. In summer we hung ropes over the oaks to swing into the deeper pools. Knowing that winter storms would erode the banks, fall was the time to work in tandem with Mother Nature reinforcing the rock formations to ensure the stability of the land.

I still live surrounded by hills

and creeks. River rocks allow the rainwater to flow smoothly and sustainably during winter months while maintaining appealing dry creek beds in summer. By adding terracing and retaining walls, I’ve managed to reduce hillside run-off.

Recently I visited the garden of Victor R. whose home is backed by a running creek. After removing several decaying pine trees with deep roots that were holding the soil, he realized that his creek needed reinforcement. Rocks and stones are effective ways to buttress the banks of creeks, riverbeds, and hillsides, and Victor utilized them.



Riprapping with rocks keeps this stream from eroding the soil.

His rock retaining walls are enhanced with meandering paths, fruit trees, statuary, and flowering plants that provide erosion control and flood prevention.

If your property is flanked by a creek or resides on a hillside, there are various methods to make your landscape rock solid.

**Riprapping:** A common erosion control technique is called riprap which entails placing large rocks and stones along the banks. The rocks absorb and deflect the energy of the flowing water, reducing erosion.

**Gabions:** Wire mesh boxes or bas-

kets are filled with stones to stabilize slopes and creek banks as the water flows through them reducing flooding.

**Terracing:** On steep slopes, using rocks and stones for terracing reduces soil loss.

**Retaining Walls:** To prevent mudslides and flooding, retaining walls made of rocks are beautiful as well as effective.

**Rock Gardens:** Adding well-placed boulders in a garden creates an aesthetically pleasing landscape while also retaining soil stability.

... continued on Page OH6



**JUST LISTED | ORINDAWOODS | 114 RAVENHILL ROAD  
3 Bedrooms | 3 Bathrooms | \$1,750,000**

Prepare to be mesmerized by the panoramic views of the surrounding hills. As the fog gracefully rolls over the landscape, you can indulge in evening dinners on the wraparound deck or welcome the day with a warm cup of Joe as the glow of the morning sun highlights the surrounding hillside.

Step inside and experience the grandeur of this home. High ceilings and walls of glass create a dramatic living area that immerses you in natural light and the picturesque landscape beyond. Rich, cherry hardwoods grace the floors throughout most of the upper level and with a touch of a button you can effortlessly control the lighting and privacy with electric shades. These are just a few of the modern conveniences this impressive home has to offer.

**Glenn Beaubelle & Kellie Beaubelle**  
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TheBeaubelleGroup.com

CABRE# 00678426, 01165322



## Lamorinda home sales recorded

| City      | Last reported | Lowest amount | Highest amount |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| LAFAYETTE | 13            | \$1,100,000   | \$2,618,000    |
| MORAGA    | 1             | \$960,000     | \$960,000      |
| ORINDA    | 8             | \$1,325,000   | \$4,295,000    |

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

- 859 Acalanes Road, \$1,698,000, 3 Bdrms, 2495 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 09-14-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,380,000, 09-27-16
- 920 Brown Avenue, \$1,580,000, 2 Bdrms, 1343 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 09-12-23
- 18 Del Rio Court, \$1,295,000, 4 Bdrms, 1685 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 09-18-23,  
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 03-28-12
- 3145 Gloria Terrace, \$1,610,000, 4 Bdrms, 2417 SqFt, 1944 YrBlt, 09-18-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 12-19-17
- 1789 Ivanhoe Avenue, \$1,700,000, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-13-23
- 865 Juanita Drive, \$1,855,000, 4 Bdrms, 2657 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 09-21-23
- 1244 Laurel Lane, \$1,785,000, 3 Bdrms, 1740 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-11-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,785,000, 03-03-21
- 2 Lois Lane, \$2,618,000, 3 Bdrms, 3498 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 09-18-23,  
Previous Sale: \$372,000, 11-13-03
- 4027 Mario Way, \$2,202,000, 5 Bdrms, 4572 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-12-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,995,000, 05-05-21
- 110 Peaceful Lane, \$1,860,000, 4 Bdrms, 2479 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-12-23
- 1155 Sierra Vista Way, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 2002 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-21-23,  
Previous Sale: \$790,000, 11-10-04
- 1202 Vacation Drive, \$1,219,000, 3 Bdrms, 1243 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-12-23,  
Previous Sale: \$514,000, 12-12-11
- 3589 Walnut Street #E, \$1,100,000, 2 Bdrms, 1506 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-18-23,  
Previous Sale: \$640,000, 04-15-13

### MORAGA

- 1430 Camino Peral, \$960,000, 3 Bdrms, 1360 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-15-23

### ORINDA

- 44 Bates Boulevard, \$2,110,000, 3 Bdrms, 2060 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-22-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 03-20-17
- 367 Dalewood Drive, \$2,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2832 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-22-23,  
Previous Sale: \$2,565,000, 06-04-07
- 270 Holly Lane, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3031 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 09-19-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,275,000, 09-26-17
- 51 La Cuesta Road, \$1,875,000, 5 Bdrms, 3712 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 09-21-23
- 56 Oak Drive, \$1,350,000, 2 Bdrms, 2823 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-20-23
- 28 Southwaite Court, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 2780 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 09-22-23,  
Previous Sale: \$700,000, 07-11-02
- 248 The Knolls, \$1,325,000, 1 Bdrms, 1532 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-14-23,  
Previous Sale: \$375,000, 09-28-98
- 59 Tiger Tail Court, \$4,295,000, 5 Bdrms, 4640 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 09-13-23,  
Previous Sale: \$2,895,000, 06-04-08

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# The Real Estate Quarter in Review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T

The third quarter of 2023, as expected, showed a significant slowing of the volume of closings on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate. This is mostly a result of the continued increase in mortgage rates over the last several months and a lack of supply.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from July 1 through Sept. 30, 66 single-family homes closed in Lafayette which was a decrease from the 85 in the year ago quarter and from the 120 that closed in the third quarter of 2021. In the quarter of 2020, 136 homes closed.

Sales prices ranged from \$830,000 to \$13.69 million. The average number of days on market was 26 versus the same period a year ago when it was 17. The average sales price was \$2,198,109, a decrease from the third quarter in 2022 when it was \$2,273,646. In 2021 it was \$2,067,747. In this same quarter in 2020 it was \$1,972,380. In 2019 it was \$1,716,517.

In Moraga, the number of single-family closings was 22, versus a year ago at 25 – a big drop from the 53 in 3Q2021. Prices ranged from \$1.4 million to \$3.55 million. The average sales price was up at \$2,094,182. This was an increase from \$1,890,272 a year ago. In 2021 it was \$1,993,792. In 2020 it was \$1,588,132 in the same three-month period. In 2019 it was \$1,443,253. The average marketing time was 15 days, down from 18 days a year ago.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings continued to fall to 48 from 56 a year ago – more than half as many as the 111 in 3Q2021. Sales prices ranged from \$1.15 million to \$4.295 million with an average price of \$2,265,458 – close to 3Q2022 when it was \$2,243,571, continuing to rise from the \$2,147,497 in 2021. It was \$1,900,069 in 3Q2020 and \$1,651,117 in 3Q2019. It took an average of 20 days to expose a home to the market this last quarter. One year ago, it took 19 days.

In the third quarter of this year, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$835.79. This is a decrease from \$897.11 a year ago. Moraga homes sold for \$822.43, a slight increase from a year ago at \$817.63. In

Orinda it was \$821.29, an increase from summer 2022 when it was \$781.02.

The biggest change came in the area of list price versus sales price. In Lafayette, the average sales price was at 102% of the final asking price in this quarter of 2023. In Moraga, it was also about 102% of asking, and in Orinda it was just under 102%.

This is likely a factor of sellers realizing that they needed to be more realistic in pricing and buyers understanding that there were fewer buyers to compete with so they were not as aggressive in their offers.

On the Oakland/Berkeley side of the hills, many agents have still been asking far below the market value of homes in order to generate the multiple offers and the sales prices well above asking. Often this has failed to work so they raise the asking price and call the list price “Transparent.” This phenomenon (sometimes known as “Teaser Pricing”) has started to slow down in Lamorinda.

In Lafayette, 40 of the 66 sales sold at or above their final asking price. A year ago, it was 45 of the 85. In Moraga, 16 of the 22 sold at or above asking. A year ago, 15 of the 25 sold at or above asking and in Orinda it was 28 of 48 versus 35 of 56 in the third quarter of 2022.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had 10 resale closings. They were priced from \$581,784 to \$2,144,672. Moraga had 17, up from 15 a year ago. Sales prices ranged from \$425,000 to \$1.8 million. Orinda had two sales at \$1.325 million and \$1.85 million.

As of Oct. 6, there were 50 pending sales in the three communities combined. A year ago, there were 56 pending sales per the MLS. The asking prices for the pending single family detached homes range from \$899,000 to \$4.4 million. It should be pointed out that there are no “Potential Short Sales” or foreclosures that are currently pending although this trend may change.

It is interesting to note that of the 56 pending sales in the area, 11 received acceptable offers in the first six days of October. That is an average of almost two per day. Usually many of the sales are completed prior to the start of school. Depending upon

how many of the homes are being purchased by families with children who are new to Lamorinda, it may impact certain grades at the elementary level.

Inventory, however, is fluctuating. When looking at the available homes in Lafayette there are 36 homes on the market as of Oct. 6 and there were 57 at this time one year ago.

In Moraga buyers have their choice of only 20 properties, consistent with the 18 properties a year ago.

Orinda inventory has decreased to 23 currently available from 45 one year ago.

Current asking prices range from \$519,441 for a BMR (Below Market Rate) condo in Lafayette to \$12.9 million for a Lafayette property.

At the high end, 17 homes closed above \$3 million in the three communities combined during the quarter – down from 22 one year ago.

There are 19 currently available above this amount, while a year ago there were 25.

The increase in interest rates that were at historical lows have forced some people out of the market as affordability has decreased.

You also have a lot of homeowners who refinanced when rates were very low that are reluctant to sell their homes because they do not want to have to give up this “cheap money” that they may have at 3% or less to go and buy something and have to pay 7% or more. This will help limit supply.

And, some buyers are in the market to buy anything, regardless of the interest rates. They feel that if rates fall, two things will happen...more buyers will be back in the buyer pool and if rates go down, they will just refinance again.

We are still seeing Oakland, San Francisco and Peninsula agents representing buyers in their purchase of Lamorinda homes. They are coming from higher priced areas and have more available equity to use in Lamorinda.

Corporate relocation has also increased as more workers who were working remotely from their old locations are now moving to work in the destination offices.

# A Happy Valley Playground on Double Lot



**3943 Happy Valley Road, Lafayette**  
**Listed for \$10,995,000**

This retreat sits on a dual lot at the end of a private drive, a world away from life's cares. The principal lot (3941 HV Rd) is 2.3 acres, adjoining the undeveloped second lot (3943, .98 acre), now a garden, which can be preserved as open space or developed or sold separately. It offers entertainment for those of any age and so much more!

**Call Ann for a private showing.**



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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for Mid-October

- **BOOST** your levels of vitamin C before flu and cold season begins by brewing a homegrown rose hip, sage, and peppercorn tea. Pick ripe red rose hips from your rose bushes and red peppercorns from your pepper tree. Smash or grind and add to a teapot with shaved ginger, lemon rind, lemon juice, sage leaves, and honey. Peppery and delicious, hot or iced. Substitute garlic for the honey for a zesty herbal broth yummy with steamed vegetables.
- **AVOID** pruning hydrangeas that bloom on old wood as you won't have flowers the following year or more.
- **FERTILIZE** and aerate lawns this month.
- **PRUNE** shrubs and overgrown branches.
- **CLEAR** gutters and drainage lines of leaves and debris.
- **PROVIDE** food and water for migrating birds.
- **PLANT** cool season vegetables including kale, lettuce, arugula, and broccoli.
- **PROTECT** sensitive plants by covering them with burlap or bringing them indoors.
- **APPLY** a layer of mulch to garden beds to retain moisture and regulate soil temperature.
- **FILL** cracks in the driveway or garden paths to prevent further cracking.
- **APPLY** snail bait around plants susceptible to snail and slug damage.
- **TREAT** for aphids with a spray of water mixed with dishwashing detergent.
- **RAKE** fallen leaves to add to the compost pile or make a mulch.
- **GREEN TOMATOES?** Here's a tip for rapid ripening from reader Sally F. "In late fall, cut tomato vine at the base and hang upside down in a dry place, such as a garage or shed, with newspaper or cardboard underneath to catch any falling tomatoes. Tomatoes will ripen from the nearest stem base."
- **CARVE** your pumpkins, light the Jack-o'-lanterns, weave your webs, and decorate your yard with skeletons, ghosts, and scarecrows.

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing. Happy Halloween!



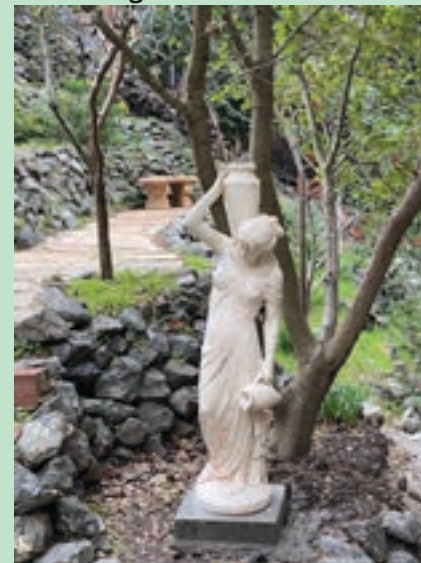
Rocks and stones anchor this spectacular waterfall and pool.



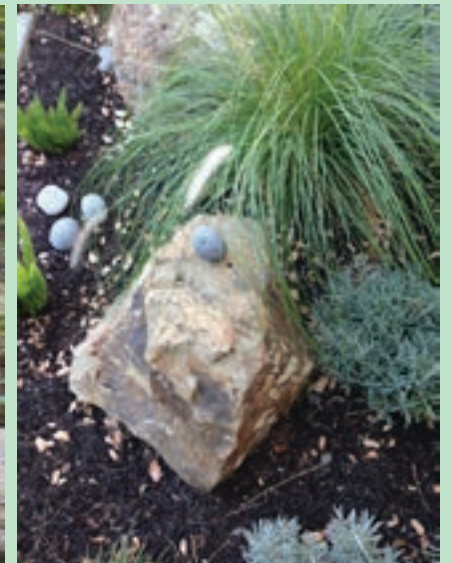
Yellow seaside ice plant grows in sand and gravel.



White lantana spills over a rock wall flower bed.



Terracing with rocks, Victor placed a statue Cynthia calls, The Water Bearer, along the stone pathway at the base of the creek.



Place a few significant rocks appropriately with plants or grasses to instill interest.

Photos Cynthia Brian

*Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

## Rock solid

... continued from Page OH1

**Pathways:** For improved accessibility that adds a much-wanted decorative element to the environment, add pathways with stepping stones along creek banks and hillsides.

**Habitat:** Strategically placed rocks in creeks create habitats and shelters for pollywogs, frogs, turtles, fish, salamanders, and other aquatic species. On hillsides, rocks provide hiding places for terrestrial wildlife.

Before embarking on any erosion plan for your creek or hillside, consult with experts and local authorities to ensure the correct methods for your project. You want the result to be environmentally friendly and ecologically effective. Local regulations and permits may be required, especially when working with bodies of water or hillside landslide areas. Once you've completed the rock work, make sure to add plenty of plants to complete the design and make the area aesthetically pleasing.



Cynthia Brian with her newest children's book, *Family Forever*. Proceeds benefit *Be the Star You Are!*® charity.

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. 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](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, *Family Forever*, 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](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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### 41 La Noria

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**\$3,795,000**

## ORINDA



### 2 Stanton Court

This open concept 4 bd/ 3 ba home feels like a brand-new build! Bright & airy w/ 2782 SF, chef's kitchen, wood oak floors & a detached office!

**\$2,250,000**

## ORINDA



### 51 Las Palomas

A light-filled home on a sun-drenched lot features 4 bd/2 ba, a glistening pool & expansive views in the hills of OCC!

**\$1,480,000**

## ORINDA



Lease!

### 102 Camino Don Miguel

Old World charm in a 1937 Orinda hacienda, updated w/ a chef's kitchen, wood floors throughout, private office & an open floorplan!

**\$9,800/mo.**

## LAFAYETTE



### 3445 Shangri-La Road

Desirable Reliez Valley neighborhood offers amazing privacy, stunning views, beautiful architecture on an almost 1 acre lot!

**\$1,999,000**

## LAFAYETTE



Lease!

### 3152 Maryola Court

3 bd/ 2.5 ba rancher located near town/trails/freeway w/ bonus room downstairs & additional sun room!

**\$5,850/mo.**

## MORAGA



New Lease!

### 56 Wandel Drive

This single level home features 4 bds/2.5 ba and 2,178 square feet plus a bonus office space in the garage!

**\$6,000/mo.**

## MORAGA



New Price!

### 1944 Ascot Drive

Amazing 2 bd/ 1.5 bd 1234 sqft Moraga townhome w/ views of the hills from the upper & lower decks!

**\$3,200/mo.**

## PLEASANT HILL



### 550 Odin Drive

Single level 4 bd/ 2 ba rancher has a great floor plan w/ wonderful indoor/outdoor flow!

**\$975,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



Lease!

### 1655 N California, #312

Beautiful 1 bd + den/ 1.5 ba condo with modern finishes in the highly sought after Mercer building in downtown Walnut Creek!

**\$3,500/mo.**

## OAKLAND



### 2014 13th Avenue

This single family home features 5 bd/ 3 ba, laminate floors & plenty of room to entertain family & friends!

**\$595,000**

## BERKELEY



### 1409A Spruce Street

Beautifully refreshed & filled with light! 1bd/1ba unit is quiet & private yet close to UC, shops, transportation & parks!

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