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From left: Aidan Mahaney (20) and Augustas Marciulionis (3) Photo Tod Fierner

Success continues to breed success for Randy Bennett and the Gaels

By Jon Kingdon

With a streak of 16 straight years making it to the post-season, (17 in total), a No. 5 seed the last two years in the NCAA tournament along with five West Coast Conference Coach of the Year honors, Saint Mary's head coach Randy Bennett, starting his 23rd season leading the Gaels, is able to keep things in perspective.

Bennett reacted with a shrug when informed that Saint Mary's was the favorite to win the WCC and even chosen by one analyst to make it to the NCAA final four. "Teams change because players are different, but this is not unfamiliar territory for us," Ben-

nett said. "We've been picked to win the league before and whether we're picked or not, it doesn't matter, but the point is valid though it isn't affecting anything. It's all about getting better and our team goals are pretty high. There are going to be challenges and it's going to be hard to get it done so all we can do is to bring it every day and that's our mental thought process, though we are getting a little bit more national attention."

This is a team with an interesting mix of youth and experience made up of 10 freshmen and sophomores and five juniors and seniors. However, four of

the sophomores had significant playing time last season led by guards Aidan Mahaney and Chris Howell, forward Joshua Jefferson, and center Harry Wessels. "The most comforting thing for me is that most of our guys know our system so we've been able to move pretty fast as far as teaching, putting stuff in and advancing," Bennett said. "Our leadership's intact with our older players like Alex Ducas, Mitchell Saxen and (Harvard transfer/redshirt) Mason Forbes. It's actually a pretty good balance this year and that's the way you want it."

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CAIFF
WWW.CAIFF.ORG

CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

NOV 9 - 16, 2023

RETURNING TO THE ORINDA THEATRE

A Spotlight on Artistic Excellence: California Independent Film Festival begins Nov. 9 in Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



The California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF) 25th edition starting this week at the Orinda Theatre is quite simply a quality cinematic extravaganza, featuring many great films and documentaries. It is a platform for showcasing diverse and creative voices of independent filmmakers from around the world.

CAIFF will feature over 25 films coming from 14 different countries; nine documentaries; and 14 Bay Area premieres. The program created by Efi

Lublinter, Jo Alice Canterbury and Lucinda Boyle is all about the festival's commitment to bringing fun, amazing quality storytelling and events like no other. From the opening night with the delightful French film, "Driving Madeleine," to the Irish closing film, "The Quiet Girl!" - Oscar finalist for Best International film - the festival is a dense stream of films and events for all audiences, including families.

On Saturday, Nov. 11 the festival offers a free morning viewing of "E.T." on Orinda Theatre's big

screen. Lubliner believes there is nothing that compares with the experience of watching a movie on the silver screen and he hopes that parents will take that opportunity and offer it to their children.

Lublinter describes the movies that he and his team have chosen as high-quality crowd pleasers, not avant-garde artsy films. They can nonetheless be thought provoking, such as the three double features offered - something rarely done in this country.

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Color shifts in foliage signal seasonal change of the guard - Page OH1



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COMPASS

Downtown and DeSilva South development a continued topic in Housing Element discussion

By Lou Fancher

Senior Planner Renata Robles began a presentation Oct. 23 to the city council about Lafayette's updated and revised 6th cycle Housing Element by outlining the primary features of the staff report, written by Planning and Building Director Greg Wolff, Robles and Housing Consultant Diana Elrod. Robles and staff sought to hear council discuss realistic capacities, prospects for future developments, and the red line underscored revisions to the previous Housing Element draft.

At the Sept. 26 meeting, council had considered several options related to Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and housing at those sites consistent with the provisions of SB 4, which was signed Oct. 11 by Gov. Gavin Newsom and ensures that churches, faith institutions, and nonprofit colleges will be able to build affordable housing on their land without having to go through an expensive and difficult rezoning and discretionary approval process.

Robles reported that staff had submitted several appendices to Housing and Community Development (HCD) for its informal review and had

reached out two additional times requesting confirmation of receipt, with no response from HCD.

Staff asked for feedback from council regarding consideration of revisions to zoning and minimum density requirements, approval for staff to submit the revised HE draft to HCD on Oct. 26 (or as soon as possible, given further revisions), and direction for preparing necessary preemptive general plan and zoning amendments that will allow adoption of the HE and zoning by Jan. 31, 2024.

Elrod said staff would ask for an expedited review, but noted there is no guarantee an expedited review from HCD would occur and council should expect the review period to take the allotted 60 days.

Discussion about changing the zoning to 88% minimum density at opportunity sites consumed considerable time throughout the meeting. Elrod said staff calculations show it is the only density level that would avoid endless back-and-forth with HCD and would place the jurisdiction in the best position to receive certification. The downside to requiring 88%, she

said, might be the development of very large townhomes that might leave parts of an opportunity site under-developed.

Notably, HCD has not approved capacities that approach 100%, but has approved HE plans, such as Danville's, that include more conservative estimates. In reviews of approved HEs for both Orinda and San Ramon, the capacity analyses are conservative. Orinda's average capacity of project samples was 88%, but the HE projects only a 60% realistic capacity against its opportunity sites.

Staff also evaluated impacts on wildfire and evacuation under three scenarios and added language to clarify development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and options for ladder reductions in density and zoning in areas close to Highway 24.

Public comment from 33-year Lafayette resident Rob Lavoie said reasons to upzone in the downtown core should be limited and upzoning would be best done in areas such as the DeSilva property. Others agreed that building out on parcels outside of the downtown core would preserve the city's aesthetics and the vitality of the businesses located there.

Many comments referred to the "builder's remedy," which means cities noncompliant with HE law and housing number requirements must approve a housing project of any size as long as at least 20% of the homes are low-income or 100% of them are moderate-income. Additionally, a member of the public warned that SB 4 does not protect the city because Faith Based Opportunity areas could allow higher densities that might result in permanent, six-story buildings in Burton

Valley, among other examples. The 88% density level caused many during public comment to express reservations that the number was too high to be realistic and would result in the HE not being certified by HCD.

Elrod reminded the council and members of the public that there are "many moving parts" to the HE and changes requiring entire revisions of entire sections—such as those involving density and zoning—could place the city in an insurmountable time crunch. Major elements such as the DeSilva area, for example, if largely altered or not included would require multiple layers of new analysis and text changes related to the final EIR with details that would take considerable time to compile and recirculate for review and commentary.

Council discussed the FBO sites and upzoning density levels and applying SB 4 height standards and the city's CEQA requirement to all of the sites. The conversation about the DeSilva South site included recognition of public comments supporting placing it on the opportunity site list. The staff report noted that the city could include no more than 9.5 acres of the DeSilva site for housing using the distribution of units among very low-, low- and moderate-income.

Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok said on the plus side, it was a large property, the owner is interested in developing, it's near a freeway entrance and, because it is a large property, it could still provide parks and open spaces in addition to housing. On the negative side, he said DeSilva is not walkable to downtown or any schools. He warned it could result in several hundred more cars on city

streets, and although he said compromise and discipline were required to "get us to the finish line," he believed investing in the downtown core and a walkable city is more desirable and was "leaning toward a no" on the matter.

Extended discussion resulted in the council agreeing that setting an 88% minimum density decision was vastly complex, carried objectionable but also favorable implications, and DeSilva South was a vital element to include in the HE in order to receive HCD certification.

Staff encouraged council to keep in mind applying density levels consistently in the downtown area. The potential impact of upzoning to a 75 or 50 density percentage versus maintaining a 35 unit-per-acre figure to one city block caused Mayor Carl Anduri, in one example, to say, "I would not want to see a 10-story building across the street from the library." Council directed staff to continue using streets as boundaries between districts for stepping density levels up or down.

With the meeting extended beyond midnight, council closed with directions to staff to make amendments in appendices' language that addressed things such as missing middle housing, which references incentivizing mixed-use or multi-unit developments to make sure the city achieves the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements. A seven-day comment period would then be enacted.

The council approved the changes be added to the draft, including adding the 88% minimum density, and directed staff to file the revised HE with HCD as soon as possible.

Fridays at 7 AM
Lafayette Veterans Bldg.

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- Dec 1 - Collaboration, Ashdeep Seth, Mechanical Engineer
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PHOTOGRAPHY

Hopeful & Optimistic: Will 13 be the lucky number?

By Sharon K. Sobotta



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

Lafayette school District teachers picket at Plaza Park.

As Lafayette bustled with early trick-or-treaters during the city's annual downtown pre-Halloween event on Oct. 27, teachers picketed in the downtown plaza and outside of Stanley Middle School while crossing their fingers that a deal would be struck at the negotiating table.

Kristi Gingrich is a third- and fourth-grade teacher at Lafayette Elementary School and the president of Lafayette Education Association. "We're in the first of hopefully one mediation meeting with negotiators from the district and the state at the district office. We are staying positive and hopeful that we can come to a resolution today," Gingrich said as she stood beside a dozen other teachers, while the negotiating meeting was still in progress. "We got a text update that things were moving in a positive direction. We just want the mediator to see our presence and see how committed we are to getting a fair contract."

Teachers standing alongside Gingrich wore shirts saying #StudentSuccess and chanted "Students First" and "Lafayette Strong" as a steady flow of drivers and passersby honked and cheered them on. When asked to talk about the slogans and chants, Gingrich reiterated that the contract teachers are seeking – which boils down to a 14% raise, credit for years of service, and more comprehensive health-care coverage for families – is about the students.

"The misconception is that this contract is for us. It's really all about the kids," Gingrich said. "We've seen a drop in teachers wanting to work here. In order to hire and retain the best teachers for these students, we have to offer competitive compensation. We see the difference when people don't stay or we can't fill positions."

Scott Moe, a fifth-grade teacher at LES was at the negotiating table. Moe said that although he wasn't at liberty to share the details until members had voted and a final agreement was ratified, he is feeling hopeful. "We had a productive meeting with the mediator and are discussing a possible agreement with LEA members at this time," Moe said.

The Lafayette Education Association members were still in the voting process as Lamorinda Weekly went to print. Although Moe stopped short of revealing specific information, he did confirm that a viable offer is under consideration: "In past sessions we did not feel that we could stand behind the offer made and did not bring it

to our membership for ratification. The impasse process was positive and we feel that we reached a good settlement for our LEA members."

Even if there's a bit of a waiting game while the LEA votes are tabulated, teachers seem to be breathing easier and carrying a sense of hopeful optimism as they wait for the final word. "I am very proud of how LEA came together to show the district that we are a strong unified team. We fought hard for what we felt was right for our students and teachers and with the support of many community members made our message heard," Moe said. "We appreciate the support from the community; I really think it helped make a difference!"

There is some speculation that perhaps there will be a meeting in the middle between the district's offer of a 12% raise and the teacher's ask for a 14% raise – with a 13% raise. However, neither the teachers nor the district confirmed that.

Either way, it seems the impending contract may be days away from being settled. If there is a need to return to the bargaining table, the next meeting will happen on Nov. 9.

Meredith Ranahan is one parent who is crossing her fingers that the teachers get a great contract. As the daughter of a PE and science teacher and a self-described beneficiary of great teachers during her own formative years, Ranahan has deep respect for teachers everywhere. "[As a society], we pay so much for so many careers, but the people who are teaching our children and helping to shape them into productive [citizens of the world] are not being honored," Ranahan says. "My children love school and they love learning. That's what our teachers in Lafayette make possible by setting up a nurturing, loving learning environment."

Ranahan has a second-grader at LES and a sixth-grader at Stanley. "It was a dream for Lyla [my daughter] to get Mrs. Marsden as a teacher. She loves following in the footsteps of her brother who also had Mrs. Marsden," Ranahan says. "She feels like her teacher understands her. That's the kind of teachers we have in Lafayette – teachers that make children excited to go to school and learn."

Correction: In a previous story, we referred to the LPIE acronym incorrectly. The correct words in the acronym are Lafayette Partners in Education.



In the season of thankfulness, come and join us to honor and give thanks to our police and fire personnel for all they do for our communities.

Moraga Police Chief Jon King, and Moraga Orinda Fire chief Dave Winnacker have accepted our invitation and will be there with some of their staff.

We will also have the honor of the presence of Mayor Renada Sos to help say thank you to these amazing individuals.

Location: Serbian Church - 1700 School Street, Moraga
Date & Time: November 13th at 5:00PM
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Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting
 Monday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, Nov. 20, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

Design Review

Monday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room



MORAGA

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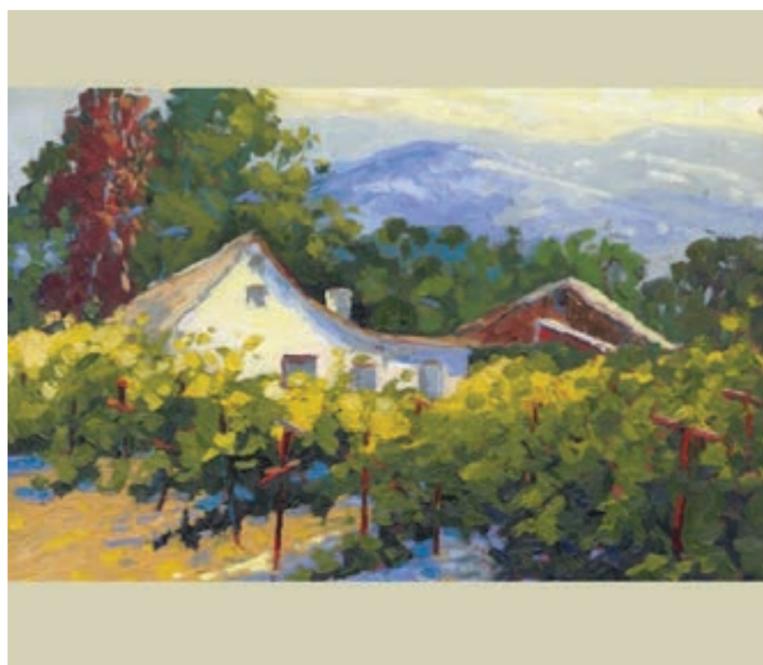
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Bay Area Ballplayers vacating outdoor facility

By Vera Kochan

When many businesses struggled during COVID-related mandates, Bay Area Ballplayers owner Steve Hammond hit a home run by opening Ballplayer Field behind Moraga's Safeway. This extension of his Moraga Shopping Center's indoor facility allowed kids to keep up with their training despite the pandemic's challenges.

Ballplayer Field developed its offerings to include camps, birthday parties, baseball practice and clinics, outdoor batting cage rentals, and community events. However, they did this with the knowledge that the permits granted by the town were always going to be temporary, in order to allow for property development due to the Housing Element. "We never intended to do all of these outdoor activities," Hammond recalled. "They became part of our business and determined what ideas we have

moving forward.

"The property owner isn't kicking us out (they have let us know from day 1 that as soon as a development is in the pipeline, they will give us notice and we'll be on our way)," stated Hammond on his website. "There is no impending development planned (this may change of course, but it's complicated and any development that does take place will likely need a few years to be ready to break ground)."

Hammond said, "I understand that the town wants it ready for development," and even though he would have liked to stay put while eventually upgrading Ballplayer Field into a more stylish and permanent facility, he didn't want to spend more money on attorney fees. "During our last approval, 18 months ago, the town's attorneys needed to be consulted which cost me thousands of dollars, and I was not told this up front. The total cost of getting a permit was becoming prohibitive."

Ballplayer Field's last day was Nov. 5, and it literally went down to the wire as several pre-booked parties had to be honored before it was time to roll up the turf. However, Hammond is in the process of searching for another more permanent location in Moraga that is zoned for what his facility offers. As such, he has ap-



Photo Vera Kochan

Ballplayer Field prior to this week's dismantling.

proached both the Acalanes Union High School District and the Moraga School District with the idea of forming a type of partnership. At this point, MSD has proven to be the more receptive of the two, and the possibility of Ballplayer Field relocating to the seldom-used field at Los Perales Elementary School is probable.

"The Bay Area Ballplayers is a welcome small business to the Town of Moraga, and we are excited that Mr. Hammond is now working on a long-term solution for the continued growth of his business," stated Moraga's Planning Director Afshan Hamid. "The Town and the Planning Commission have worked with Mr. Hammond during and after COVID ended to facilitate and allow a temporary outdoor sports and training facility which is zoned to allow for mixed use and hous-

ing. The State, the Planning Commission, the Town Council and residents understand the importance of having housing sites available for all of Moraga. The Town's recent certified Housing Element demonstrates the community's desired long-term vision."

Having resigned himself to the move, Hammond's Oct. 4 statement on his website noted that "we have appreciated all of the support we've received along the way and are really happy with what we built and provided at our oasis by the trailer park. After months of discussion and research, we're (almost) at peace with the fact that we won't have a multi-use field across the parking lot from our indoor facility. Maybe this will be a blessing in disguise for a bigger and better opportunity to present itself in the future."

Commons Park restroom nears demolition in readiness for replacement

By Vera Kochan

Moraga Commons Park was developed in 1974, the same year that the town was incorporated. Its main restroom is also nearly 50 years old and long overdue for an upgrade.

The Moraga Community Foundation (MCF) proposed orchestrating a fundraising project in 2018, with the purpose of replacing the old restrooms and worked with the town toward the installation of a pre-fabricated restroom facility to take the place of the outdated one. Also that year the Park and Recreation Commission recommended an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) restroom design.

In 2022, the Town Council authorized \$324,320 for the purchase of a pre-fabricated ADA restroom structure from Public Restroom Company which included shipping, crane service, and onsite construction coordination from the manufacturer that would work with the town's hired contractor.

According to the Sept. 27 staff report by Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady and Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp, "The proposed Commons Park four ADA all-gender restrooms with two drinking fountains and water bottle filling stations construction and installation scope includes the fol-

lowing major work items: Demolition and removal of the existing restroom structure, foundations, utility connections, adjacent concrete hardscape and minor vegetation; site preparation including grading and earthwork for new restroom foundation; and placement and compaction of aggregate base."

A part of the construction process also includes the installation of utilities conduits to hook up locations for the restroom including plumbing for sewer and water and extensive electrical (including new PG&E meter pedestal installation, pull boxes, and new wiring from pedestal to restroom).

Additional construction involves "pouring new concrete foundations and ADA path of travel sidewalks to the restroom; assisting with crane placement of the new restroom on new foundation and completing all utility hookups and building finishings inside and outside of the restroom; and coordination with permitting agencies."

McNabb Construction's \$165,319 bid for the project, as the demolition and installation contractor, was accepted by the town. The demolition and installation are expected to be completed by the end of the year.



Town Council Wednesday, Nov. 8 & 22, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, Nov. 21, 6:30 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission: Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.

New Moraga school bond? Superintendent Parks reviews what last bond accomplished

By Sora O'Doherty

As the Moraga School District (MSD) moves toward the possibility of placing another school bond on the ballot, Superintendent Julie Parks wants residents to know what was accomplished with the last school bond, known as Measure V. Passed in 2016, Measure V provided \$33 million for school facilities. MSD's schools were built in the '50s and '60s and were badly in need of renovation. According to Parks, although the district is required to allocate a percentage of its budget to facilities, that barely covers staff and a bare minimum of deferred maintenance.

Parks joked that essential maintenance, like replacing roofs, isn't showy, like getting a new kitchen in your home, but, she added, every homeowner knows the misery of a leaky roof. Replacing some essential roofs meant that MSD got through last year's heavy rains without having leaks in the classrooms.

Before the COVID pandemic, MSD replaced most of the HVAC systems in schools, with the exception of Los Perales' multi-purpose room. MSD's modern HVAC facilities in all school properties allows for remote control to close dampers to keep out smoke that drifts into Moraga from distant fires.

Parks says that the district has many high priority items on which they are making

progress. Many improvements involve safety. A report on the overall safety of Moraga campuses recommended increased visibility of campus entry points from the school offices, and the renovation of Donald Rheem Elementary School accomplished that goal for Rheem. Earthquake retrofitting is also a priority.

Moraga's only playing fields and gymnasiums are at the schools, and Measure V allowed MSD to update and replace floors, bathrooms and locker rooms. The district would like to install sustainable fields, playgrounds and physical education facilities for community use.

With the introduction of universal school meals in California in school year 2022-23, kitchen facilities became one of Parks' high priorities. MSD does not have any full kitchens at the schools, although they do have increased capacity to bake and prepare food. However, MSD does not have a commercial kitchen, like the one that was recently added to Sleepy Hollow Elementary School in Orinda.

MSD is also concerned about preventing overcrowding, in the face of lower age limits on school attendance. By the 2026 school year, all 4-year-olds will be eligible for transitional kindergarten, or TK. TK was introduced back in the 1990s to provide for a small

group of children whose birthdays fell between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2, which prevented them from starting school when the requirement that children be 5 years old by Sept. 1 was introduced. However, two years ago legislation pushed access to TK for all 4-year-olds.

Parks explained that this presents a specific challenge, because there are requirements for TK classrooms that differ from other classrooms. TK classrooms must meet size requirements and must have attached bathrooms. MSD needs additional classrooms to provide for TK students, who generally attend classes from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., staggered between earlybirds and latebirds.

Parks is proud of the child care program available at MSD schools, and notes that it is available at the very affordable cost of \$7 per hour. Although MSD had the foresight to apply for state funding in 2022, they were not selected. However, Parks hopes that they might still receive state funding in the future, adding that they did receive state matching funds of up to \$9 million. She explained that this is one of the reasons that bond measures are so important because to qualify for matching funding, you have to be able to show that you can actually match the funding provided by the state.

A new bond measure

would allow MSD to fund deferred maintenance to protect the improvements that were funded by Measure V. The

board is considering placing a new \$52 million bond measure on the March 2024 ballot.

Moraga cul de sac cocktail gatherings continue post pandemic

By Diane Claytor



Photo Diane Claytor

Neighbors gather for another Friday evening "Cul de Sac Cocktails" gathering in Moraga.

It started out as a group of neighbors in Moraga's Rheem Valley Manor getting together outside on a Friday evening in mid-2020 when California was literally shut down due to COVID-19. They were attempting to combat the isolation, loneliness and boredom being felt by so many. They brought their own chairs, placing them in a circle, six feet away from one another. They brought their own refreshments. Some wore masks, no one touched anyone or anything. While most knew each other, at least to wave when driving down the street, the majority were acquaintances at best.

That one gathering, dubbed Cul de Sac Cocktails because the location was at the top end of the neighbors' street, continued week after week, bringing together people hungry for socialization. More than three years later, Cul de Sac Cocktails is still taking place every Friday evening. (Full disclosure: this reporter was one of the initiators of this get-together.)

Chairs are no longer socially-distanced. There are handshakes and hugs. There is a pot-luck dinner once a month, where food and drinks are shared. Acquaintances are now good friends, almost like family. Birthdays are observed, accomplishments are celebrated, and support, when needed, is given lovingly. A caring community has been formed.

A fire pit is lit, staving off the chill of a Moraga evening and allowing participants to linger even as darkness falls. Laughter fills the air as everyone shares their stories, both past and present.

Some who participated in those first cul de sac gatherings no longer come; some show up occasionally. Neighbors out for an evening stroll stop by to chat; friends, adult children and grandchildren sometimes join in. But there remains a core group of about 15 people (plus dogs) – ranging in age from 4 to 80-something – who show up almost every week. And every one of them agrees that Cul de

Sac Cocktails is, without a doubt, the best thing to come from the pandemic.

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

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Orinda names Citizen of the Year, Volunteer of the Year

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda Community Foundation honored Orinda's Citizen of the Year and Volunteer of the Year, 2023 at a celebration dinner on Nov. 5 at the Orinda Community Center

Founders' Auditorium. Bill Waterman, past president of the Orinda Association, was named Citizen of the Year, and John Fazel was named Volunteer of the Year. The dinner



Photo provided



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Bill Waterman, Orinda's Citizen of the Year **John Fazel, Orinda's Volunteer of the Year**

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was catered by Shelby's Restaurant of Orinda.

Waterman was raised in Orinda and came back as an adult with his wife Marie to live in the family home. He joined The Orinda Association in 2000 and has worked with the organization ever since, volunteering his time to put on community forums, to drive seniors to medical appointments, and to chair the Fourth of July Celebration for four years as well as the Classic Car Show.

Waterman has also been a

member of Orinda Rotary for the past five years and has served on numerous city committees including the Historical Landmark Committee (still a member) and disaster preparedness committee.

A semi-retired attorney, he is on the board of directors of the nonprofit organization Congress of Neutrals and volunteers his time as a mediator, helping the courts mediate cases where people don't have attorneys. He also finds time to volunteer as a judge pro tem (a temporary judge) for the Superior Court, hearing small claims cases, traffic cases, and restraining order applications.

Retired real estate agent John Fazel was honored as Orinda Volunteer of the Year. Fazel is responsible for introducing several events into the Orinda Fourth of July Parade: the pancake breakfast, the fun run, (later turned over to Run for a Reason), and the flag raising, and was an active July 4 volunteer for many years.

Fazel also orchestrated the very successful, long running

Three-Quarter Century Club luncheon which is hosted with donations by many local businesses and grocery stores. In the past, over 100 residents in Orinda aged 75 and older enjoyed the event, which is now being expanded to include Moraga and Lafayette. Fazel is also now working with Orinda schools to launch a California mission discovery trail.

Active in the Orinda Trail Council, he helped the Creeks Committee get started, as well as the Orinda Hiking Club, one of the largest in the Bay Area, and was on the board of the Orinda Senior Village, serving as president for five years. Separately, he is an active member of the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club which takes on a number of initiatives benefiting all three communities.

Fazel has been a member of Orinda's Road Runner's since 1978. Nowadays Fazel has coffee with the Road Runners and goes on weekend walks with the group, which goes out six days a week.

'Zoombombing' temporarily halts Council's remote public comments

By Sora O'Doherty

Remote public comments at Orinda City Council meetings conducted on the Zoom video conferencing application have been temporarily suspended starting with the meeting on Nov. 7. According to an announcement by Orinda City Clerk Sheri Smith, this is due to an increase in "Zoombombing" at public agency meetings; Zoombombing includes offensive and derogatory statements. City staff asked the City Council to ratify this decision by City Manager David Biggs at the Nov. 7 meeting and to plan to revisit the discontinuance prior to March, 2024. (That meeting occurred after press time, so we were unable to include the results here.)

The public is invited to present comments to the council in person at their meetings or in writing prior to a meeting. Written communications received prior to 3

p.m. on the day of the meeting are forwarded to the city council and posted on the city's website prior to the meeting. Emails can be sent to ssmith@cityoforinda.org or cityclerk@cityoforinda.org

Although there have been no such incidents in Orinda, Biggs was concerned that other cities in the Bay Area and Contra Costa County have been subject to remote comments that contained offensive and derogatory statements targeting persons of color, the LGBTQ+ community, and various religious faiths. According to Biggs's staff report, "These comments are made by people appearing remotely and anonymously using fictitious names," and "have often been expletive laden or obscene in nature."

City Council meetings can still be viewed online as listed on the agenda either via Zoom Webinar and on YouTube.

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City Council Regular Meeting:
 Tues., Dec. 5, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
 Wed. Nov. 8, 6:30 p.m.
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

Planning Comm.:
 Wed., Nov. 15, 7 p.m.

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Orinda Ballet Academy kicks off holiday season with 'A Sweet Dream Nutcracker'

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda Library Auditorium will once again ring with the sounds of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite as the Orinda Ballet Academy presents "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker" the second weekend in December this year. Under the direction of owner and Artistic Director Patricia Tomlinson, the students of the Academy will be joined by professional guest artists Kendall Sparks, Fiona Hutchens and Michael Wells.

Tomlinson, a former professional ballerina, formed the Orinda Ballet Academy in 2009. Her earlier career in-

cluded performing as a principal dancer with a number of ballet companies. She represented the United States in the "Masaka Ohya Japan World Ballet Competition" in Osaka, Japan, placing fourth among a group of competitors from 32 countries. She has guest performed, taught and set ballets throughout the United States. Tomlinson has been teaching, ballet mistressing, and choreographing in the East Bay for

over 25 years.

Show dates this year are Dec. 8 at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 9 at 1 and 5 p.m., and Dec. 10 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Tickets cost between \$23 for children and \$25 for adults. Tickets may also be available at the door. Payment at the door by cash, check or Venmo only.

Tickets are available on the Orinda Ballet Academy website: www.orindaballetacademy.com



Photo provided

From left: Maya Elkind, Amy Li, Chloe Sabo-Nichols, Renee Silberschmidt, Ella Pierce, Sadie Elkind, Phoebe Higgins, Bailey Brothers, Emily Charo, Mia Jeric, Gianna Galando, Zoey Ying and Frances Giquinto

Orinda Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan bills signed by Governor

By Sora O'Doherty

After the conclusion of the 2023 Legislative session, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed many bills passed by the Assembly into law, including 13 authored by Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, an Orinda resident who represents the 16th Assembly District that includes Lamorinda.

Bauer-Kahan bills signed into law include AB 352, which addresses basic reproductive rights which are being criminalized across the country and patients seeking abortion who are increasingly coming to California seeking care. When these patients return home, they may be at risk when information on abortion is shared through their digital health charts. AB 352 puts up guardrails on cross-state sharing of medical records to protect abortion patients and providers across the country. In addition, AB 254 protects sensitive data collected by fertility tracking and sexual health digital services by adding this data to the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act. Bauer-Kahan said that this new law is a precedent-setting measure to prevent abortion information from being automatically shared via health information exchanges. AB 254 prevents period apps from selling menstrual health data.

"I'm thrilled the Governor has signed my reproductive privacy bills. Patients seeking care in California will be safer when they return home," commented Bauer-Kahan. "Currently, information sharing through digital charts and period tracking, including abortions, can be seen, reported, and criminalized once patients leave California. AB 352 and AB 254 will secure this data to keep abortion seekers, providers, and helpers from being arrested."

AB 1369 addresses another medical issue affecting terminally ill patients with rare diseases who have to go to great lengths to see out-of-state specialists. AB 1369 creates a limited licensure exemption to allow terminally ill patients access to care via telehealth from out-of-state providers and AB 1720 requires that ultrasound procedures occur in licensed clinics or settings supervised by licensed providers.

AB 267 protects children and campers by updating outdated fire suppression standards to remove ineffective

additions of toxic chemicals to small camping and play tents.

AB 363 protects pollinators and human health by ensuring agency regulation of unnecessary non-agricultural uses of toxic neonicotinoid pesticides. The law bans over-the-counter sales of lawn and garden neonicotinoid (Neonic) pesticides by 2025, limiting their use to trained professionals. The bill also directs the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to complete a timely, thorough, and long overdue review of non-agricultural neonic uses. "California is taking the sting out of an increasingly toxic environment for bees," said Laura Deehan, State Director for Environment California. "Taking these pesticides off the shelves is a critical step to saving the bees."

AB 1643 increases the accessibility of probation for youth by broadening the threshold for eligibility and AB 301 safeguards the security of communities by allowing judges to consider the acquisition of body armor as an important piece of evidence when deciding whether or not to grant a gun violence restraining order.

AB 618 reforms the camping reservation system to reduce no-shows and improve public information about availability of campsites to encourage equitable access to campsites, while AB 1150 increases access to parks by authorizing State Parks to enter into community access agreements with nonprofits and tribes that provide programming for underserved park users.

The bill most recently signed by the governor is AB 1076, which protects workers by prohibiting non-compete agreements in an employee's contract. Restroom equity on job sites is addressed by AB 521, which makes construction jobs more accessible for women by requiring OSHA to revisit regulations to ensure there are adequate numbers of restrooms for women on job sites. "No employee should be tricked into thinking they don't have mobility," said the Assemblymember. "Non-compete agreements undermine an employee's ability to build a better life. AB 1076 empowers workers by prohibiting the inclusion of exploitative clauses in their contracts." Non-compete agreements have

been unenforceable in California since 2008. In spite of this, about 45% of California business still include non-compete agreements into employee contracts.

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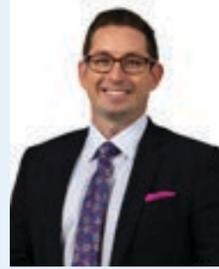
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Fire hazard abatement deadline looms

By Vera Kochan

The Dec. 31 deadline for the removal of roadside junipers and bamboo is fast approaching. Residents and businesses must remove any of these

trees if located within 10 feet of roadways, according to a Moraga-Orinda Fire District ordinance. "This task is especially important because the

intense flames produced by these scrubs can impede road transit, including fire-fighting equipment," stated Steve Woehleke, Moraga Town

Council Liaison with MOFD. The deadline has been in place for several years, and while much of the public has conformed, those who have not

will be issued a citation in 2024. For more info, visit MOFD's website (mofd.org) or call (925) 258-4599.

Lafayette's Citizens' Police Academy graduates recognized

By Lou Fancher



Photo courtesy City of Lafayette

The ceremony finished with a group photo of graduates taken with Lafayette City Council members, Crime Prevention Commissioner Judy Peterson, and Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt.

Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt introduced Lafayette's Citizens' Police Academy graduates - 11 from Fall 2022, and 12 from Spring 2023 - at the Oct. 23 city council meeting. The fall graduating class was the first class back since COVID-19 put the program on hiatus.

Employee in Lafayette, and willing to undergo a cursory background check, including not having been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor in the past year.

He encouraged interested Lafayette citizens to sign up for and attend. He noted that the graduating classes included four couples, indirectly suggesting it is an activity enjoyed by spouses or life partners.

People enrolled in the Citizens' Police Academy spend a night with Chief Alldritt, and nights with traffic patrol, the crime scene investigative team, and go through simulated scenarios while learning what tools on a police officer's belt are best used in each situation. A day on the department's firing range has them learning about firearm safety.

The participants give of their time during five to seven sessions to learn what police officers do, Alldritt said. "I appreciate the investment community members make to do that."

The Academy takes place on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. In addition to programs involving field visits, the programs are held at the Library and at various criminal justice sites throughout the county. The firearms session is optional and is conducted on Saturdays at the range in Clayton. The academy is offered at no cost and each graduating class is limited to 18 participants.

The Citizens' Police Academy is not intended to certify a participant as a police officer. Hands-on experiences and lectures delivered by police officers and city staff are designed to make the sessions both informative and enjoyable. Questions and suggestions for how services are enforced or might be improved are welcomed. Participants must be at least 21 years old, a resident or em-

ployee in Lafayette, and willing to undergo a cursory background check, including not having been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor in the past year.

As the liaison to the public safety commission, Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok thanked graduates for taking the extra time to observe the police department and encouraged them to recruit other people who might enjoy the program.

The department will be hosting a Spring 2024 academy

Judy Peterson (along with Denise Brown, who was unable to attend the ceremony) are on the Crime Prevention Commission that leads the organization and logistics of the academy. In his closing remarks, Alldritt said although the program is a lot of work for the department to put on, the feedback about the law enforcement services provided to the community is always valuable and rewarding to receive.

For more information, contact Commissioner Denise Brown at cpdenise@gmail.com or Cathy Surges-Moscatto at c-surges@lovelafayette.org. To apply, fill out the application

form (www.lovelafayette.org/home/showpublisheddocument/5738/636856772935200000) and bring the signed form to the

Lafayette Police Department for processing.

Public Safety

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Police Dispatch: 24 Hours 925-284-5010
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com

Lafayette Police Department:
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt 925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line 94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues 94549Traffic@gmail.com

Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049

Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan 925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report
Oct. 15 - Oct. 21

Alarms	13
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	6
Traffic	49
Suspicious Circumstances	3
Suspicious Subject	7
Suspicious Vehicle	13
Service to Citizen	8
Patrol Req./Security Check	11
Public/School Assembly Check	1
Supplemental Report	14
Vacation House Check	26
Welfare Check	10
Ordinance Violation	0

Vehicle violations

Hit And Run Misdemeanor	Police Department (2)
Reckless Driving	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 1st St./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Tc - Property Damage	10 Block Wendy Ln. Mt. Diablo Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd. (2)
Vehicle Theft	900 Block Moraga Rd.

Other criminal activity

Fraud Credit Card	600 Block Glenside Dr.
Fraud False Pretenses	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 3500 Block Boyer Cir. 900 Block Anita Ct. (2)
Grand Theft	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Identity Theft	3600 Block Chestnut St. 1000 Block Orchard Rd.
Panhandling	Whole Foods Laf
Petty Theft	900 Block Anita Ct. El Nido Ranch Rd./Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Shoplift	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (4)

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-domestic	1000 Block Carol Ln.
Disturbing The Peace	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Loud Noise	700 Block Solana Dr.
Loud Party	Rancho Rd./Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Public Nuisance	La Caminita/Reliez Valley Rd. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 4Th St./Moraga Blvd.
Vandalism	Springbrook Pool

Other

Fire/Ems Response Info	Lafayette Cir./Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3300 Block S Lucille Ln. 3800 Block Happy Valley Rd. (2)
H&S Violation	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Harassment	Hidden Valley Rd./Acalanes Rd.
K9 Outside Assist Request	44Th St./Barrett Ave., Ric
Threats	3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Unwanted Guest	3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 900 Block S Thompson Rd. 1000 Block Glen Rd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Violation Custody Order

Police Department (2)	
Violation Restraining Ord	10 Block Roxanne Ln.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report

Oct. 17 - Oct. 30

Alarms	7
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	3
Traffic	51
Suspicious Circumstances	4
Suspicious Subject	8
Suspicious Vehicle	7
Service to Citizen	28
Patrol Req./Security Check	16
Public/School Assembly Check	5
Supplemental Report	10
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	6
Ordinance Violation	2

Vehicle violations

Accident Property	Library 1400 Block Moraga Rd.
Accident Injury	400 Block Moraga Way
Accident Property	Miner Rd./Camino Pablo Camino Pablo/Ardilla Rd. Moraga Way 10 Block La Noria Camino Pablo/Wildcat Canyon Rd. 200 Block Camino Sobrante
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	Wildier Rd.
Reckless Driving	Moraga Way/Eastwood Dr. Moraga Way/Sanborn Rd. Camino Encinas/Moraga Way Hall Dr./Moraga Way Moraga Way Camino Pablo
Tc - Property Damage	Miner Rd./Bien Venida
Vehicle Theft	70 Block Bates Blvd. 70 Block El Toyonal 10 Block Irwin Way

Other criminal activity

Panhandling	Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd. Moraga Way
Petty Theft	40 Block El Toyonal Orinda Way
Nuisance to the Community	Disturbing The Peace 20 Block Ardor Dr. (2) Loud Music 400 Block Moraga Way 30 Block Wildier Rd. (3)
Public Nuisance	Moraga Way/Camino Pablo
Vandalism	St Stephens Dr. 60 Block Tara Rd.

Other

Failure To Obey	Wb Sr 24 At Wildier Rd. Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo
Fire/Ems Response Info	70 Block Scenic Dr. 100 Block La Espiral 10 Block Soule Rd.
Mentally Ill Commit	500 Block Miner Rd.
Trespass	Camino Sobrante Camino Sobrante/El Ribero
Unwanted Guest	Orinda Way

Excessive Speed

Moraga Way/School St. St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd. Ivy Dr./Moraga Way Country Club Dr./Canyon Rd. Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way Rheem Blvd./Kindall Cir. Moraga Way/Moraga Valley Ln. St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd. Moraga Rd./Buckingham Dr. (2) Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr. Moraga Way/Moraga Rd. Rheem Blvd./Fernwood Dr.
--

Hit And Run Misdemeanor

Police Department	1500 Block Canyon Rd.
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Reckless Driving

St Marys Rd./Rheem Blvd. Ivy Dr./Miramonte Dr., Ori Rheem Valley Shopping Center Moraga Way/Ivy Dr. Rheem Valley Shopping Center Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.

Tc - Property Damage

Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd. Campolindo High School

Vehicle Theft

Police Department	1500 Block Canyon Rd.
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Other criminal activity

Fraud False Pretenses	10 Block Haven Ct. 100 Block Whitethorne Dr.
Identity Theft	Police Department (2)
Petty Theft	10 Block Woodford Dr. 800 Block Blk Augusta Safeway
Petty Theft From Veh	Ace Hardware
Shoplift	TJ Maxx Safeway

Nuisance to the Community

Loud Music	Canyon Club Brewery
Loud Noise	3800 Block Campolindo Dr. Not Available
Loud Party	200 Block Scofield Dr. 10 Block Julianna Ct. 100 Block Draeger Dr. 80 Block Miramonte Dr.
Public Nuisance	100 Block Fernwood Dr.

Other

Fire/Ems Response Info	900 Block Country Club Dr. Campolindo High School
Fireworks	10 Block Kestelsen Dr.
Unwanted Guest	30 Block Hetfield Pl.

ORINDA POLICE

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

Oct. 15 - Oct. 28

Alarms	33
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	7
Traffic	59
Suspicious Circumstances	5
Suspicious Subject	12
Suspicious Vehicle	3
Service to Citizen	41
Patrol Req./Security Check	16
Public/School Assembly Check	2
Supplemental Report	16
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	2
Ordinance Violation	0

Vehicle violations

Accident Injury	400 Block Moraga Way
Accident Property	Miner Rd./Camino Pablo Camino Pablo/Ardilla Rd. Moraga Way 10 Block La Noria Camino Pablo/Wildcat Canyon Rd. 200 Block Camino Sobrante
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	Wildier Rd.
Reckless Driving	Moraga Way/Eastwood Dr. Moraga Way/Sanborn Rd. Camino Encinas/Moraga Way Hall Dr./Moraga Way Moraga Way Camino Pablo
Tc - Property Damage	Miner Rd./Bien Venida
Vehicle Theft	70 Block Bates Blvd. 70 Block El Toyonal 10 Block Irwin Way

Other criminal activity

Panhandling	Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd. Moraga Way
Petty Theft	40 Block El Toyonal Orinda Way
Nuisance to the Community	Disturbing The Peace 20 Block Ardor Dr. (2) Loud Music 400 Block Moraga Way 30 Block Wildier Rd. (3)
Public Nuisance	Moraga Way/Camino Pablo
Vandalism	St Stephens Dr. 60 Block Tara Rd.

Other

Failure To Obey	Wb Sr 24 At Wildier Rd. Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo
Fire/Ems Response Info	70 Block Scenic Dr. 100 Block La Espiral 10 Block Soule Rd.
Mentally Ill Commit	500 Block Miner Rd.
Trespass	Camino Sobrante Camino Sobrante/El Ribero
Unwanted Guest	Orinda Way

Fire crews successfully battle house fire in Canyon

By Vera Kochan

Residents in Canyon had their Nov. 1 evening disrupted when a structure caught fire prompting a quick response from not only the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, but Contra Costa County Fire, San Ramon Valley Fire, CalFire and the East Bay Regional Park District.



Photo courtesy Dennis Rein

Nov. 1 structure fire in Canyon

According to a Nov. 2 MOFD press release, the home was unoccupied at the time, but suffered a "total fire loss." Flames from the structure spread to surrounding vegetation, but were contained to approximately a half acre in size, thanks to the joint firefighting efforts. "Due to the limited access, steep slope, limited water supply, and potential for wildfire spread in a high-risk area, a second and third alarm response was called." A total of 65 personnel were on hand to contain the fire.

The Contra Costa County Sherriff's Office issued a precautionary evacuation warning to approximately 65 structures and 104 residents which was later lifted around 2 a.m. Crews remained on scene until 5 a.m. once they had mopped up the destroyed home and surrounding vegetation.

MOFD reported no injuries to residents or responders, and the cause of the fire remains under investigation.

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Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report

Oct. 17 - Oct. 30

Alarms	7
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	3
Traffic	51
Suspicious Circumstances	4
Suspicious Subject	8
Suspicious Vehicle	7
Service to Citizen	28
Patrol Req./Security Check	16
Public/School Assembly Check	5
Supplemental Report	10
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	6
Ordinance Violation	2

Vehicle violations

Accident Property	Library 1400 Block Moraga Rd.
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Savory smoked salmon cheesecakes offer a flavorful gluten-free bite

By Susie Iventosch



Smoked Salmon Cheesecakes

Photos Susie Iventosch

I wanted to come up with a savory salmon cheesecake recipe and this is so delicious and festive for the holidays. Most of the recipes for salmon cheesecake are not really a cheesecake at all, but rather a salmon cheese spread. This one is actually baked just like a regular cheesecake made with cream cheese, egg and plain yogurt. The aroma as these tarts bake in the oven is so alluring. Some of my very favorite flavors grace this dish, including smoked salmon, pecans, Gruyere and Boursin cheese, shallots and fresh dill. This list of ingredients might help explain why they taste so yummy!



Daughter Courtney fills tart pans.



The pecan crust pairs perfectly with the salmon and also helps keep this dish gluten-free. Besides, toasted pecan crust is fabulous. This recipe could also be good for anyone on a Keto diet, due to the egg, cheese, pecans, etc. ... all ingredients with high fat content. I used the nova smoked salmon for these cheesecakes, but we also plan to try it with some regular smoked flaky salmon to see if there is any difference in flavor. The way these turned out

is really tough to beat, though, so thinking we will like the nova salmon better.

I made these cheesecakes in 4-inch tart pans with the removable bottom, but if you plan to make them as appetizers to pass around for holiday parties, you could always use the mini muffin tins so they would truly be bite-sized. If you do that, be sure to adjust your baking time. Have fun with this recipe. It's so delicious!

Smoked Salmon Cheesecakes

(Makes six 4-inch mini tarts)

INGREDIENTS

Pecan Crust

1 cup pulverized toasted pecans

1 1/2 tbsp. melted butter

1/2 tsp. salt

Smoked Salmon Cheesecake Filling

4 oz. cream cheese, softened to room temperature

2 oz. Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese

1 large egg

1/3 cup plain Greek yogurt (I use nonfat)

1 tsp fresh dill, snipped

1 small shallot, finely chopped

3 oz. smoked Nova salmon, shredded into small pieces

1/4 cup Gruyere cheese, grated

1/8 tsp. white pepper

Garnishes: fresh dill sprigs and long, thin cucumber slices rolled into spirals.

DIRECTIONS

Pecan Crust

Spray the bottoms and sides of the tart pans with cooking spray or rub all over with butter. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Toast pecans in 350 F oven for about 5-7 minutes, or just until very aromatic and beginning to brown. Set aside to cool. Place cooled pecans into the bowl of your food processor and pulse until very finely chopped but be careful not to turn them into a paste.

In a separate bowl, mix processed pecans, melted butter and salt.

Divide this mixture evenly among the 6 tart pans and press down with the back of a spoon to smooth out into an even layer at the bottom of each pan. Set aside while you make the filling.

Smoked Salmon Cream Cheese Filling

In a medium mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and Boursin cheese until smooth and fluffy. Add egg and continue to beat just until incorporated. You don't want to over beat, because that can cause cracks in the filling.

Stir in yogurt, fresh dill, shallots, smoked salmon, grated Gruyere, and white pepper. Evenly distribute the filling mixture among the 6 tart pans, and carefully spoon on top of the crust. Smooth out with a spatula.

Bake at 350° F for approximately 30-35 minutes, or until the center is barely jiggly and the edges look done. Remove from oven and cool for at least 15 minutes to allow to set up before serving. Serve warm, cold or at room temperature.

Garnish with thinly sliced cucumber rolls and a sprig of fresh dill.



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

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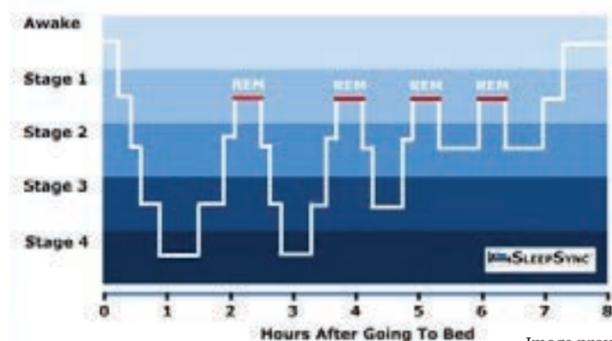
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Sleep disorders & memory

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC

A Typical 8 Hour Sleep Cycle



Trouble sleeping? Discovering what is keeping you from getting 7-8 hours of sleep should be a priority. Long-term disturbances in sleep can lead to problems with age-related health decline. Bad sleep – linked to increased age-related discomfort and pain – also causes beta-amyloid to build up, which harms brain function and is associated with Alzheimer's disease. It can also hurt your immune system, increase your chance of illness, and prolong recovery time.

Memory and the importance of sleep might be the number one reason you want to work on getting a good night's sleep.

Remembering takes: Acquisition/Encoding – learning or experiencing something new (at this point memories are highly vulnerable to being forgotten); Consolidation (during sleep) – the memory becomes stable in the brain.

(New memories get integrated into already existing knowledge networks in the brain – so you can recall them later); and Recall/Retrieval – having the ability to access the memory in the future.

Both acquisition and recall are functions that take place when you are awake. However, researchers believe sleep is required for consolidation of a memory, no matter the memory type. Without adequate sleep, your brain has a harder time absorbing and recalling new information.

Sleep also helps remove toxic proteins, which if allowed to accumulate in the brain can clog and kill healthy neurons as well as the memories they store, according to research by NIH. These are the "amyloid" proteins that build up in the brains of those with Alzheimer's disease.

REM sleep is important in that it is critical to procedural

learning. And slow wave sleep is the period of deep sleep when the brain begins to sort through, recognize, and consolidate declarative or factual information that you acquired during the day. Before the memory is filed, it is evaluated for its relevance to what else you might know. If what you heard, read or experienced is not relevant to you now, you probably will not remember it.

Remember sleep aids and prescriptions sedate and truly do not lead to healthy sleep. There are some natural herbal supplements that can help and we will discuss those in a free Zoom class, "The Elusive Thing Called Sleep," at 11 a.m. Nov. 10 on how you can become a detective to your sleep issues and impart ideas for a good night's sleep. To receive a link to the recording of this workshop email me at Lindafj620@outlook.com.



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Below are listed articles from respected sources and one sleep program promoted at Stanford.

- <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/sleeps-crucial-role-in-preserving-memory/>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/want-to-improve-your-memory-get-a-good-nights-sleep-2021040222255>
- <https://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/sleep-deprivation-effects-on-memory>
- <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works/memory-and-sleep>

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

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

New coach, new optimism for Saint Mary's women's basketball team

By Jon Kingdon



Saint Mary's women's basketball team

Photo Tod Fierner

It's been six months since Jeff Cammon was named the Saint Mary's women's basketball coach, so on Oct. 15, he held an open practice for the team's fans to show "the energy in the gym and the connectivity between the young ladies."

Cammon's initial aim was to make a clean break from last season's team. "It was getting to know the players and trying to move on from the past and go forward," Cammon said. "If there's an emotion from it, it can linger, which can prevent you from growing and moving forward. The main thing was 'Hey, clean slate. Let's get to know each other genuinely and let's all be on the same page with moving forward.'" We did a lot of team bonding and had a lot of dialogue, trying to connect and get on the same page, mentally, physically and emotionally, and making sure that the players are all in a healthy place."

As if to show where his coaching priorities lie, Cammon had the players come out and work for a large section of the practice on defensive drills. In comparing Cammon's Long Beach State defensive numbers with Saint Mary's from last year, the differences are fairly significant. Long Beach State gave up 57.4 points per game to 68.0 for Saint Mary's. Long Beach State forced 656 turnovers to 433 for

Saint Mary's (223 more possessions), and Long Beach State had 184 more steals than Saint Mary's.

"I believe in defense so much because no matter how great you are offensively, some nights your offense isn't going to be there, but if we can defend and rebound, along with our ability to create more possessions, we don't have to be great all the time," Cammon said.

There were few breaks in the practice with the players going all out in each drill. "That's a reflection and a product of our mentality," Cammon said. "It's desire, design, talent, philosophy, vision, and leadership. All of that are our core and standards, meaning how you respond to adversity and having an optimistic mindset. Our players are going to be energy givers, not takers."

Senior Ellie Croco, who unfortunately will be missing the season due to a recent knee injury, saw a big difference in Cammon's coaching from last year's team. "There is just a big emphasis on effort and competitiveness," Croco said. "Our defense is going to be so much better because the coaches have been really focused on the details, effort, and competitiveness."

Cammon was aware of Saint Mary's offensive skills and looked to change the team's

mental approach to the game. "We spend a lot of time with culture, building a foundation and finding out where our talents are," Cammon said. "It's a matter of trying to improve the skill sets on the floor, getting our players more comfortable and acclimated as to how we want to play on a defensive side of the ball. Our identity now is how we're going to defend, and we do that by changing habits and mindsets. I don't care how well you shoot; you have to be able to defend. It's a matter of not getting into a bad position, which comes from discipline, and not putting yourself into a position where you have to take yourself out of the game."

Croco saw the change immediately: "I would say there was an instant connection. We went straight into working hard and went through some adversity, having really tough practices. We did something called the program, which was Navy SEAL training, and it was a really good team bonding experience for us."

Offensively, again the numbers speak for themselves. Long Beach State shot 42.7% from the field and 76.8 from the foul line to 40.6 and 70.9 for Saint Mary's. Turnovers which have long been an Achilles heel for Saint Mary's should be reduced as evidenced by Cammon's team having only 13.9 per game compared with Saint Mary's 17.3 per game.

"Taking care of the ball is a huge focus for us," Croco said. "We've been doing passing drills with heavy balls, making sure that both our left and right hands are as good as the other. Ball security is huge and getting the loose balls and making the effort plays are really important, which is going to get us more steals."

Pace is the operative word in Cammon's offensive philosophy. "We like to get up and down the floor but that doesn't mean we're going to necessarily be a fast break fast-paced team, but we want to be able to play with pace," Cammon said. "We want to be able to sustain and

outlast our opponents. We're not going to be outworked and we did a lot of training in the offseason, putting in a lot of time and energy, establishing our fitness and making sure that we're in great shape."

Cammon is also bringing an aggressive attitude to the team's offense: "We're going to attack the basket, emphasizing paint touches, throwing it in or getting in off the dribble, we have to get a paint touch whether it's our guards or posts and that in turn will allow us to get to the free throw line. That's something we do differently from other teams in that we post our guards, and we have the big guards to do it. Our players have to know who they are and who their teammates are."

Cammon has installed the basic principles for the Gaels' offense and defense but it's the fine points that still need to be installed. "Foundationally, we're in 100% but in the weeds of the intricacies, we're about 60%," Cammon said. "We're going to be a multi-defensive team, showing a lot of different looks and we've just started putting in our presses. We're teaching concepts and trying to get the players to feel great within our continuity offense before we start to put in set plays."

The team is returning four starters: 6'3" redshirt senior forward Ali Bamberger (14.2 ppg, 8.4 rebs), senior guards 5'11" Tayla Dalton (7.4 ppg, 56 assts), Leia Hanafin (3.5 ppg, 78 assts) and junior guard Hannah Rapp (7.0 ppg, 5.4 rebs).

"Ali and Tayla's leadership has been outstanding," Cammon said. "For Ali to come back and want to finish this thing off has been great. She, Tayla, Hannah, and Leia set the tone. Hannah is someone that can manufacture points because she's tough and is able to get out in transition."

There are five new freshmen on the team: 6'4" freshman forward Nadia Bernard (Santa Clarita, Ca.), 6'3" forward Ruby Vlahov (Perth, Australia), whose father played at Stanford, 5'10" redshirt freshman guard Maia Jones (Tasman, New Zealand),

6'1" freshman guard Emily Foy (New Castle, Australia), and 5'10" freshman guard, Zeryhia-Lee Aokuso (Amarillo, Texas).

"I have no problem playing freshmen," Cammon said. "I've had the Freshman of the Year twice at Long Beach State so if they earn it, I have no problem playing them. Maia, and Z (Zeryhia-Lee) and Ruby are talented but we need to see if they can put it together in a Division I game so we may have to do it collectively so you should see a number of scorers in the box score."

Redshirt sophomore Addison Wedin and junior Makena Mastora will also see a lot of playing time and have already taken on leadership roles. "They've been great teammates for our young kids, setting the example with their actions and verbally which has been great," Cammon said. "It's not easy playing Division I basketball and keeping up with your studies and I couldn't ask for a better group of young ladies. When you have young ladies who are willing to take coaching and want to be great, it makes it easier. Time isn't on our side, but we've been efficient with it and it's a credit to the players. When we can't work with them, they're always in the gym working out on their own and that's what it takes because you're not going to get better just doing the things in practice. They've committed themselves to putting in extra work and it's made a difference."

As Cammon begins his first season at Saint Mary's, he's also been able to take advantage of what Randy Bennett, the men's basketball coach who is beginning his 23rd season at Saint Mary's, has to offer. "Coach Bennett has been great," Cammon said. "He's poured into me already. He's been amazing and along with his staff, have put together what a program should be."

The Gaels opened the season at Grand Canyon University on Nov. 6 for the first-ever meeting between the two programs.

Team and individual success for Lamorinda golf

By Jon Kingdon

The North Coast Sectional Division 1 Championship was held Oct. 30 at the Tilden Park Golf Course in Berkeley.

The Acalanes Lady Dons competed as a team at the tournament, finishing 12th out of 21 teams, a result that first year head coach Roger Chelemedos was proud of. "We did not finish high enough to advance but we did beat Northgate (by 11 strokes) which was a big deal because they were undefeated in our league this year," Chelemedos said.

Haley Chelemedos led the Lady Dons, shooting an 81 under conditions that were initially trying. "At the start, it was pretty difficult because I was wearing a couple of layers which was impeding my swing but after it warmed up, I was

able to play a lot better," Chelemedos said.

Chelemedos and her sister (Hana) were freshmen when their sister Makena was a senior. "Makena really helped me with the competitive aspect of golf when I was just playing for fun," Haley said. "Having someone like her when I was constantly competing with her and trying to beat her was helpful for me as a player and began to set my priorities straight and I saw what I needed to focus on and what I could do to improve. Hana and I tend to work together more than compete with each other."

The other players for Acalanes were Campbell Evans, Taylor Baker, Jordan Huskins, and Miracle Gu.

Roger Chelemedos stepped

in to coach the Acalanes team when the need called. "I've had a lot of experience coaching so I offered to step in for two years maximum," he said. "The girls were so much fun to coach in that they were nice, attentive and listened to me and tried to apply what I told them, and they were super pleasant."

The week before, Miramonte, after finishing second in the league and in the DAL tournament, finished third at the Division 2 championship which was held at the Metropolitan Golf Links in Oakland. "I told the girls we were the D2 champions if you only count the public schools as we competed against a number of tough, private schools," coach Doug Senz said.

The Miramonte players were Paige Sovocool, Emma

Wang, Marley Vlieks and Antong Cao. Sovocool, a sophomore, has been playing for six years and has a 7.2 index, shot a 79 at the championship and qualified as an individual to compete at the D1 championship and shot another 79 at Tilden.

With only one graduating senior, Senz is already looking forward to next year. "We got better as the year went on and the best part about the team was that they all carried that air of camaraderie and competitive joy," Senz said. "They're good golfers and better people and were always helpful to our opponents when they were playing on our home course at the Orinda Country Club."

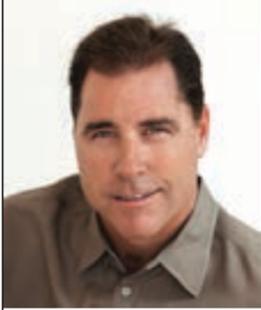
Though lacking some depth to advance to the D1 tournament, Campolindo head coach Gary O'Neill had some young

talent on the team that should show well in the future, led by junior Jasmine Malekafzali and freshmen Alina Wang and Dahye Park.

"Jasmine really improved dramatically from last year and was second team all-league," O'Neill said. "Alina was one of our best scorers and has a very bright future and Dayhe is really a nice golfer with a beautiful swing. They both just need to improve on their short game to be top golfers."

O'Neill also singled out and referred to senior Daisy Artist as "the Artist formally known as Daisy."

"Daisy could hit it a mile and played well in several of our matches and did well to make the league tournament," O'Neill said. "With the rest of our team, we did lead the league in having fun."



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Next Level Orinda fifth-grade basketball champions

Submitted by Joe Polacco



Photo provided

The fifth grade basketball team won the Next Level championship game in Orinda last month.

From left: Jonathon Xiao, John Wolbert, Lucas Freeman, Calen Wong, Logan Zmugg, coach (name unknown), Richard Gardiner, Carter Lynn, Luca Polacco, Dillon Anderson (not pictured: Kai Oslugi)



LMYA 2023 SOCCER CHAMPIONS



3rd GRADE BOYS, JAMAICA

(L to R): Sohum Chitnis, George Williams, Archer Neil, Alex Peters, Mack Nelson, Alden Stone, Cooper Bennett, Jacoby Kim, Isaac Ching, Tenzel Schneider, Joseph Oks, Logan Lawall-Ng, Coaches Dodge Williams and Charlie Nelson.



3rd GRADE GIRLS, JAPAN

(Front row L to R): Addison Weiler, Alaina McVay, Athena Oparowski, Greta McCarthy, Sabeena Bezold. (Back row L to R): Coach Joe McCarthy, Alexandra Wang, Amelia Jauregui, Kerianne Kersten, Kenna Patel, Juliana Tyndall, Laurel Creedon, Coach Rich Wang.



4th GRADE BOYS, GERMANY

(Front row L to R): Quinn Fong, Elisha Savinovich, Walter Frey, Henry Berolzheim, Frederick Seymour, Connor Tarrab, Nathanael Alem, Hudson Lynn, Hudson Albini. (Back row L to R): Coach Drew Bolger, Will Bolger, Milo Lieber, Henry Hill, Coach Nick Tarrab, Kai Min, Scott Carmin, Coach Adam Carmin.



4th GRADE GIRLS, GERMANY

(Front row L to R): Harper Eyet, Maria Delco, Arissa Lahsaei, Grier Smigielski, Logan Gaulke, Sierra Heffernan, Sarah Madanes-Craig, Megan Fong. (Back row L to R): Haley Blanz, Molly Jo Moran, Ava Nackord, Ella Ciccio, Chloe Sallat, Emory Hemkin, Coach Jeff Eyet.



5th/6th GRADE BOYS, BRAZIL

(L to R): Coach Josh Clendenin, Fletcher Hall, Richie Gardiner, William Kelly, Harper Shearer, Julian Harper, Joshua My, Baron Schweifler, Dylan Pierce, Mateo Roig, Dash Aiken, Lucas Hansen, Tate Foster, Oliver Wernimont, Connor Clendenin, Coach Rick Wernimont.



5th/6th GRADE GIRLS, CANADA

(Front row L to R): Addison Hoover, Keira Dunphy, Madison Jones, Sadie Shuai, Avery Hughes. (Middle row L to R): Cassidy Wiggen, Campbell Pigeon, Edith Fritsch, Rose Bindernagel, Evelyn Hulst, Sienna Murphy, Aysha Biboletova. (Back row L to R): Coaches Kevin Wiggen, Kevin Dunphy. (Not Pictured): Audrey Vargas.



7th/8th GRADE BOYS, AUSTRALIA

(Order of players L to R): Alex Martinez de Hoz, Eli Rosenberg, Maurice Yorozu-Miller, Niklas Farner, Aiden McCune, John Vieira-Ducey, James Stoltzfus, Noah Baker-LePain, Kiran Kusumaatamdja, Caleb Khalil, Michael Vieira-Ducey, Anthony Bishop, Aydin Kahn, Eric Rodriguez, Andrew Phan. (Not pictured): Gideon Bachour.



7th/8th GRADE GIRLS, AUSTRALIA

(Front row L to R): Marie Speltz, Bella Albiento, Quinn Hickey, Hope Anderson, Gabriella Rickman. (Back row L to R): Coach Kimberly Anderson, Julia Polson Flanagan, Azucena Cano, Sophia Reaves, Ava De La Cruz, Grace Wheeler, Lucia Giallorenzo, Coach Christina Hickey. (Not pictured): Coach Loto Rickman.



In Memory

James "Doc" Hale

Oct. 13, 2023



James "Doc" Hale, 72, passed from this earthly plane on Oct. 13 in Walnut Creek after a brief hospice stay.

James was born in Inglewood, CA, but lived most of his life in Contra Costa County. James was a

graduate of Acalanes High School in Lafayette and earned a Masters Degree in Zoology from California State University, San Jose, and was a professor at University of California, Santa Cruz in the Wilderness Studies program. James was a professional vertebrate zoologist / wildlife biologist and worked as a professional ecological consultant for over 47 years throughout California conducting surveys, research, and preparing reports for various agencies. He led many natural and cultural history interpretive field trips, and gave lectures throughout the S.F. Bay Area.

He is survived by his sister Olivia Hale and brother John Hale, and his wife Toby and their three children, Jana, Holly and Heather.

James especially enjoyed hiking the many trails of Mt. Diablo and the East Bay Regional Parks with his many good friends, camping, and was an avid supporter of the local music scene. He will best be remembered for his love of nature and his passion for educating others about the natural world and the indigenous people who were guardians of the land. Contributions can be made to Save Mount Diablo or other wildlife conservation charities.

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, and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.

Campolindo Leo Club continues to support MEF

Submitted by Robert Murtagh



Photo provided

From left: Patricia Davilagil, Secretary, Noori Kwon, Vice President, Principal Peter Alvarez, Bella Straford, President, Kathrine Guy, Teacher Advisor

The Leo Club of Campolindo High School, which has participated in fundraising activities with the Moraga Lions Club, including Fourth of July festivities, the Pear Festival, and Community Service Day, presented a \$1,000 check for the Moraga Education Foundation to Campolindo Principal Pete Alvarez at its October meeting.

The Leo Club presently has 38 members and plans to continue to provide community service throughout the school year to help the visually impaired, homeless, environment, and others in need. This is the 19th year the club has donated to the Moraga Education Foundation.

Moraga Interact president plans Eagle Scout project in India

Submitted by Nia Ho



Photo provided

Campolindo senior Nia Ho presents Moraga Rotary banner to the Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam, India, which is cooperating with her Eagle Scout project.

Campolindo Senior Nia Ho and her family recently returned from visiting family in India, where she met with the

Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam. Nia is president of the school Interact Club, sponsored by Moraga Rotary, and was

planning her Scout project to earn the Eagle rank. With the Rotary Club in India, Nia visited several school tuition centers where disadvantaged children are educated, and returned with the goal of making videos on a variety of subjects which can be viewed by these students. The content of the videos will be provided by volunteers from Scout Troop 200 in Lafayette, the Campolindo Interact Club, and Rotarians from Moraga and Visakhapatnam. The intent is to grow the students' perspectives on unfamiliar topics, so

the videos will cover topics such as sustainable environmental practices, music of unfamiliar genres such as jazz and classical, and food traditions in other countries. They expect to play the videos at international Rotary meetings. Moraga Rotary, sponsor of the Campolindo Interact Club, is a 56-year-old service club within Rotary International, and meets most Tuesdays at noon at La Finestra restaurant. To inquire about membership, or for further information, check out the website: moragarotary.org.

Kiwanis Contributes to Oakland's Cantare Program

Submitted by Ed Beatson



Photo provided

David Morales, Cantare Artistic Director and Mary Finch, Cantare Executive Director, receive the check from Kiwanis.

The Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley is proud to contribute to the Cantare Non-Profit Music and Choir Programs, which benefit underserved youth in the East Bay area. Cantare provides weekly classroom music and after-school choir instruction, tuition free, to over 3,000 Oakland Elementary students. In addition, a summer music camp, field trips, and performance opportunities are offered as another part of the Cantare mission of lifting voices and uplifting lives. This contribution is consistent with the Kiwanis motto: Serving the Children of the World.

LARIG's semi-annual tower cleanup complete

Members of the Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group participated again in the semi-annual cleanup of the tower where their radio repeater is located. From left: Sandi Gritzer, Matthew Vurek, Todd Gritzer, Gene Tucker, Ray Breslau, Al Archangel, Dan Lamey, Mary Solon, Mike Roemer, Kent Long, and Michael Brown. - S. O'Doherty

Photo Sora O'Doherty



Community comes together for common good

To make room for new equipment being installed, Saint Mary's College rugby players arrived at the Lafayette Community Center playground on Oct. 26 to load the old playground equipment onto a truck heading for Choice in Aging - a 501(c)(3) non-profit in Pleasant Hill that combines senior living, senior services and a Montessori school on one

campus. Kerex - the contractor retained by the city of Lafayette to perform the reconstruction of the playground - has a 65% recycle requirement in its contract, according to Rand Chritton, who participated in the transfer. "By donating the equipment to Choice in Aging, 100% of the playground equipment has been recycled."

Chritton said the

players showed up on time, worked as a team to move all of the equipment and then traveled to Pleasant Hill where they unloaded the playground structures at the Choice-in-Aging campus. "This is one of those times when a number of individuals and entities come together for a common good," Chritton said. "Everyone, from John Warshaw at

the Lafayette Community Center, the City of Lafayette attorney, Choice-in-Aging, Herc Rentals and the Saint Mary's rugby team worked together to provide playground equipment that will be used by literally hundreds of kids and the seniors that interact with them."

- J. Wake



Photo courtesy Susan Chritton

Tim O'Brien, the head coach of the St. Mary's rugby team, designated Mario Storti (far right) as the lead contact for the Gaels rugby player volunteers.

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

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Moraga Safeway employee nears 50 years with the store

By Vera Kochan



Safeway's Greg De Carli at his checker's post. Photo Vera Kochan

Most shoppers at Safeway's 1355 Moraga Way location in Moraga simply know him as "Greg" thanks to his name tag, but the stalwart checker's nearly 50 years with the company has earned him additional recognition on social media.

Greg De Carli first began working for Moraga's Safeway in 1974, when it was at its orig-

inal location, just across the parking lot in the spot now occupied by McCaulou's.

De Carli was 23 years old at the time and fresh from taking courses with Safeway about things such as correctly identifying various types of produce. Once he "graduated" he was handed an envelope that told him which store he'd be assigned to work. A fellow

"graduate" told him that Moraga was a great location.

Through the years, De Carli has worked a variety of positions such as grocery clerk (restocking shelves between 3 p.m. to midnight), ice cream/dairy stocker, produce stocker (for one day, because he didn't like it), and his current position as checker (for the past 20 years).

"The first thing I bought with my earnings was a used car," recalled De Carli. "The next thing I bought was a camera." An avid amateur photographer, he practically took daily photos in 1986, when the current Safeway was under construction, documenting every aspect of the process including a picture of the new-fangled scanning machine that would become every checker's dream. "There were so many changes that we never thought would catch on."

De Carli remembers when the shelves were not as tall as today's, and on one occasion shoppers could see someone dressed as a Granny Goose

mascot handing out lunch box-sized bags of potato chips to little kids in the next aisle. "It was funny, because all you could see was the goose's head floating around on the other side."

Another memory involves a celebrity sighting of the late actor, Dennis Day, who was in town to attend his grandchild's graduation from Saint Mary's College.

Speaking of SMC, De Carli is amused by the grocery purchases the students make. "When the school year starts, and their parents come to the store with them to stock up their supply with healthy items, it all changes later in the year when the kids come on their own and buy junk food."

Safeway customer, Clay Watkins, has high praise for De Carli. "I have known him since I moved to Moraga 21 years ago, and he is a 'rock' at this store; very dependable and was at the store every day during the pandemic making sure we were all able to pur-

chase the food needed for our families. Greg is always polite, and kind, and just an all-around nice guy."

"Working during COVID was scary," remembers De Carli. "We all had 'Essential Worker' cards to be able to work during it. I remember that customers had to line up to come into the store, and some were even coughing. I'm glad that I have a high immune system."

De Carli plans on retiring from Safeway in August 2024 - his 50th anniversary. He will continue with his second job delivering pizzas for Round Table in Martinez, and does plan on traveling to Europe, especially Switzerland, and taking loads of photos to add to his collection of various locations around the Bay Area, such as the Golden Gate Bridge and Mount Diablo.

Memories of Moraga will include his many customers. "The people are really fun," he stated. "And, I've worked here long enough to see the babies now having babies."

Success continues to breed success for Randy Bennett and the Gaels

... continued from Page 1

Bennett is very comfortable with the team's starting guards, junior Augustas Marculionis and Mahaney, both who played in every game last season as starters and substitutes. Each is able to play the point or two guard and Bennett is effusive in his praise of both: "Augustas has really improved as a shooter that can score. When he was a freshman, he was just a really good kid, coming into a country where English was not his native language, dealing with so many things growing up so far away from home and he's matured in so many ways on the court, we feel his impact a lot more now."

After averaging 13.9 points a game last season, Mahaney received many accolades - named WCC's Freshman of the Week 10 times, becoming the second freshman (Patty Mills) in the program's history to be named First Team All-WCC and has just been named a top-20 finalist for the Jerry West Shooting Guard of the Year. "I just know he's gotten better," Bennett said. "He's gotten stronger, more durable, and faster along with being even a better shooter by being more on balance and is a better defender. He's pretty conscientious about trying to improve his weaknesses and strengthen his strengths. He and Augustas are able to play off each other now. They definitely move the ball better than we did last year, and I think they really enjoy playing with one another."

Redshirt sophomore Chris Howell will be the first guard off the bench. "He's a good size guard that can play all three positions," Bennett said.

Redshirt freshmen Rory Hawke and Cade Bennett and freshman Jordan Ross will be competing for playing time in the backcourt. "Hawke is a two-guard who is growing right now and is going to be a good player," Bennett said. "He's really tough and has a good work ethic and attitude. He can get to the basket and shoot it along with bringing it on defense. Cade has the advantage of having been in our program, so he's been through it, and he's been doing well. Jordan has really improved the last few weeks. He's getting better offensively and defensively and he's learning to bring it every day and could eventually be the backup point guard to Augustas and Aidan."

The forward position is also blessed with talent, experience, and youth. Fifth year senior Alex Ducas is ranked sixth at Saint Mary's in most 3-point field goals made and fifth in foul shot percentage (83.9%) for his career and has been named honorable mention all-league the past two seasons. Backing him up will be red-

shirt junior Luke Barrett. "Luke Barrett has also gotten better and is going to be a backup perimeter player that gets stuff done and gives us something different on the perimeter and is going to see good minutes for us," Bennett said. "He plays really hard and has become a good defender."

The power forward position is going to be manned by Mason Forbes and sophomore Joshua Jefferson. Forbes' playing time at Harvard was limited due to injuries and the COVID pandemic. Forbes reminds Bennett of Diamon Simpson (2005-2009), Saint Mary's career rebound leader and Dane Pineau (2013-2017), a 61.6 shooter from the field and the Gaels' fifth all-time shot blocker.

"Mason is going to really improve as the season goes on and he continues to learn our system," Bennett said. "He just keeps improving every day because he was able to redshirt for us last year and he's made a big jump in our first four weeks of practice. He can score inside and can also hit the three-point shot enough to keep you honest. He's a rim protector and scores around the basket."

In only his second season, Jefferson has established himself as an all-round talent. "Joshua is a good scorer on the boards and is a terrific passer," Bennett said. "He is different because he's such a high IQ player and he complements our group. He has become a good defender and offensively, he just makes everyone else better."

Kevin Gad, who redshirted last year, has been out with an ankle injury since December and has started practicing and is doing well. Freshman Jensen Bradtke, from Australia, is still in a learning situation. "Jensen is getting better, but he is in the normal freshman growth situation and will keep improving as he keeps going."

At the center position, returning starter senior Mitchell Saxen will be backed up again by sophomore Harry Wessels. "Saxen and Wessels have both really improved," Bennett said. "Mitchell has put on 15 pounds, gotten stronger and is a better scorer and more confident. Wessels is weighing 275 now. He has improved, is more confident and a better scorer around the basket, giving us an additional low power player. Freshman Andrew McKeever (Livermore), gets to play against these guys every day in practice and he's getting better fast."

With so much talent on the team, the key for the team's success, according to Bennett, is to avoid injuries. "Staying healthy - that's the big one," Bennett said. "We also have to be unselfish. We do have that character but that doesn't mean it's an automatic and you

have to deal with it and we want to make sure that's our identity. If we can do those two things and keep improving, which is easy to say and hard to do, we have a chance to have a really good year."

Bennett's particularly proud of the way so many players have developed since their arrival at Saint Mary's: "We've always been good as far as the development of players. We see Jordan Ford go from a guy who had to work to get any minutes as a freshman to now playing in the NBA (Sacramento Kings). (Assistant coach) Mickey McConnell being a player that had a lot of DNP's (Did not play) as a freshman to being named the Player of the Year as a senior in the WCC and Jock Landale going from playing about 15 minutes a game as a sophomore, along with his DNP's as a freshman also getting named Player of the Year and also playing in the NBA (Houston Rockets), and that's been kind of our narrative."

Although each team that Bennett has coached has had unique talents, character and personalities, there has been four constants that he has addressed with each team. "The first things I talked about to the guys I inherited in my first season are the same things that I talk to our guys about right now," Bennett said. "We had to do the things that we could control. The big things were work ethic, which was something that we could not get around if we were ever going to be any good at Saint Mary's, and we can control that. Then there's attitude which is another thing that we can totally control and we had to start developing that. We also needed leadership, which is something that they did not have, and I had to start developing that, which was hard. When you inherit a team (2-22) that is really beat down and struggled as far as winning and losing, we had to get some senior leadership, then develop it from our younger guys and then become an unselfish team. At that point, we hammered it, and we still hammer it because we had success with it. It gets down to the same stuff, but we're playing for different stakes now. We did those things early and we were able to recruit players like Anthony Woodards and Adam Caporn and Samuel St. Jean (all 2001-2003). Players like that helped us start building the program and then here comes E.J. Rowland and Daniel Kickert. Those guys were talents and now some of the foundation had been laid. When we were able to finally build it with freshmen like Diamon, Omar Samham, Wayne Hunter and then Patty Mills, Mickey McConnell, and Matthew Dellavedova, we've been pretty much freshmen ever since."

Bennett also identifies with successful programs at Duke, North Carolina and Syracuse that have had such little turnovers with their head coaches. "Continuity with a successful team is so underrated if you can do it right,

keeping your players and assistant coaches, but most importantly, with the head coach because you can build a family, you can build a program, you can build tradition. It's hard to beat if you get the right people and double down on it."

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Not to be missed

Art

Lamorinda Weekly photographer Jeff Heyman's series of photographs of oak trees, "Oak Scars No. 3," was selected to hang in The de Young Open 2023, an exhibit showcasing Bay Area artists at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. The exhibit runs until Jan. 7, 2024. www.famsf.org/exhibitions/de-young-open-2023.

LAA is pleased to announce their member show "Brilliance" Nov. 4 to Dec. 15 at the Village Theatre & Art Gallery in Danville, located at 233 Front Street, Danville.

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

The Moraga Art Gallery cordially invites Bay Area art fans to a free holiday reception on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 5 to 7 p.m. to mark the opening of "Now and Then," an exhibit featuring stunningly colorful paintings by member artists Margaret Lucas-Hill and Susan Erickson, on display with works of other artists: painters, ceramicists, jewelry makers, printmakers, woodworkers, photographers, and more. Guests will be served light snacks, wine, and live music befitting the gallery's gracious ambiance played by flutist Nika Rejto and guitarist Robin Lewis. The gallery, at 432 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center, is open from noon to 5 p.m., Wednesday to Sunday, but daily

starting Dec. 1. For more information, visit moragaartgallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.

Oakland Art Murmur is excited to continue the rich, 48-year-old history of East Bay Open Studios during its Winter Event, Dec. 2 and 3 from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day. Hundreds of East Bay artists will open their studios to the public in this free, family-friendly self-guided tour of the East Bay's unique art scene. Visitors to artists' studios will find unique and affordable artwork, with some artists offering work starting at \$20. The event provides an opportunity to connect with artists in your community and purchase gifts with heart! Details at <https://eastbayopenstudios.com/>

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library: Four Men And A Gallery - Reception Saturday Nov. 18, 3-5 p.m. In the past, the Lamorinda Arts Council hosted more than half a dozen exhibits solely with women artists. They're balancing the scales in November by presenting "Four Men and a Gallery." You are invited to view paintings by Lance Jackson and David Lew; ceramics by David Shapiro and small scale framed paintings by Bill Russell from Nov. 4 to Dec. 2. Meet the artists at a reception in their honor on Sat. Nov. 18 from 3-5 p.m. and enjoy light refreshments while viewing their artwork. We will celebrate Lance Jackson's entry #87 in The de Young Open. View their artwork at <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits/>

Music

Berkeley Chamber Performances presents Einstein at Princeton, a Chamber Opera on Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., at Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley. This opera is a snapshot of the daily life

of Albert Einstein in the waning years of his life, filled with music and friendships. Cost: \$35 General, \$15 Higher Ed Students, FREE for students through high school. For more info see <https://www.berkeleychamberperform.org> or call (510) 525-5211 or email info@bcp1.org.

Cantare, an Oakland-based non-profit community choral organization, presents its annual December Holiday Concert, featuring the 100-voice adult Chorale and Nova Youth Choir accompanied by full orchestra and organ on Sunday, Dec. 3, at 4 p.m., First Presbyterian Church of Oakland, 2619 Broadway, Oakland and Monday, Dec. 4, at 7:30 p.m., Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Ave, Walnut Creek. General admission is \$40; Seniors, \$35; Students, \$10. Tickets at www.cantareconvivo.org or (510) 836-0789.

St. Paul's Concert Series is excited to host Pianist John Wilson in a dazzling performance of classical music, including works by Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, Liszt and Mozart. The concert takes place Sunday, Nov. 19, 3 p.m., In-Person - 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek, Online broadcast: visit stpaulswc.org/concert-series/ for the concert link and program. Donations graciously accepted at the door (avg. \$20/\$10 Students) and online registration. All are welcome regardless of donation!

Concert pianist Markus Pawlik and his 16-year old son, violinist Ariel Pawlik-Zwiebel (11th grade at Campolindo High School) will perform a program of European classics ranging from Baroque through Modern on Nov. 12 from 4-5:15 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church 1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. Contact: Dwight Stone, Music Minister, (510) 512-2623; stone-musique@gmail.com, <https://trinitypleasanton.org/> Tickets: \$20 Gen-

eral; \$5 Student; Children free; no one turned away!

Pacific Chamber Orchestra and Conductor Lawrence Kohl ushers in the holiday season with the sublime melodies, uplifting messages, and sheer beauty of George Frideric Handel's beloved Messiah on Saturday Nov. 25 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church and Sunday Nov. 26 at 3 p.m. at Livermore's Bankhead Theater. PCO features the soaring, rich vocal tones and commanding stage presences of soprano Leslie Katter, contra alto Sara Couden, tenor Jon Lee Kennan and bass-baritone Ben Brady, along with the Pacific Chamber Orchestra's thunderous 50-member chorus. Tickets may be purchased for either performance online at PacificChamberOrchestra.org

Theatre

The Saint Mary's College Dance Company proudly presents Mo-saic, the fall dance concert created by 10 senior choreographers from the Class of 2024. Tickets: \$8-\$15. On-campus LeFevre Theatre, 1928 St. Marys Road, Moraga. Thursday, Nov. 16, 8 - 9:30 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 17, 8 - 9:30 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 18, 2 - 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 18, 8 - 9:30 p.m.

Town Hall Theatre Company presents "A Christmas Story" Adapted by Philip Grecian, story by Jean Shepherd. Previews are available on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1, and the show will run from Dec. 2-17 at 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

Literature

November Sweet Thursday Au-

thor 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. The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and treats.

Other

Hospice East Bay is proud to be celebrating their Annual Tree of Lights beginning Nov. 5. For 37 years these ceremonies have provided a way for families and friends to honor their loved ones and find solace in the symbolism of light as the names of their loved ones are read. The Moraga tree will be on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 4:30 p.m. At the Moraga Country Club, 1600 St. Andrews Dr. The Lafayette tree will be on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 4:30 p.m., located at 21 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. The Orinda event will be on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 4:30 p.m. In the Village Square by McCaulou's. All ceremonies will be held in the Village Square by McCaulou's.

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. The event takes place on Saturday, Nov. 11, with the doors opening at 6 p.m. And the show starting at 6:45 p.m. at Creekside Commons, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Admission: \$20 adv/\$25 door - Ages 18 and under are free. Tickets: https://P4TP_SaveMtD.eventbrite.com

Introducing the first Contra Costa Shark Tank Youth Competition, where young entrepreneurs can Win \$1,000 to launch or grow their business. The competition is a fun way to promote youth entrepreneurship among Kindergarten through 12th grade students in Contra Costa County. Visit www.contracostasharktank.org to learn more and apply. Winners selected by a panel of judges on Feb. 6 at the Lafayette Library. Deadline to apply is Nov. 15.

... continued on next Page

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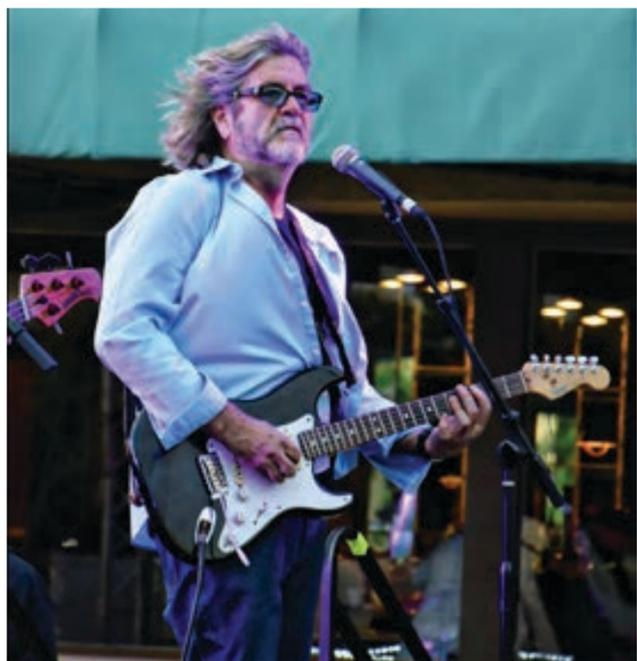
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Live music at Town Hall

By Sharon K. Sobotta



Jeff Tamelier

Photo provided

If you've got a hankering for some live music but the idea of traveling to the city or even a bar is not quite what you're in the mood for, Peter Sabine is curating and producing what may be just the thing for you, as he brings some concerts back to the Town Hall Theatre. The concerts kicked off on Nov. 3 and the next one, featuring The Sunday Paper, is just days away on Sunday, Nov. 12.

Sabine says that outside of a few concerts that happen in

the summer and in early fall during the Lafayette Art & Wine festival, there's very little live music during fall and winter. "The Town Hall Theatre is the perfect venue to host live music events because it's centrally located," Sabine says. On top of that, he says, the theatre's rich history makes it perfect. "The theatre capacity is 180, which makes it large enough for ticket sale proceeds to cover the event and the cost of top-notch musicians."

Sabine is particularly ex-

cited for The Sunday Paper's performance because, he says, it's been a long time coming. It'll represent their first concert since March 2020, at which time they were the featured final performance at a Martinez venue called Armando's. "This is their come-back performance to showcase the phenomenal talent of the musicians."

Sabine describes The Sunday Paper as a musical force backed by tight arrangements by powerful musicians with a special Bay Area Funk style. The group includes and has included the likes of members of Tower of Power, Cold Blood, Sly & The Family Stone, Santana and Herbie Hancock, guitarist Jeff Tamelier, keyboardist Tony Stead, bass player David Margen, drummer T Moran, saxophonist Daniel Casares, trumpet player Mike Olmos, and vocalists Tony Lindsay and Alex Ligertwood.

For guitarist Jeff Tamelier, playing in Lafayette at the Town Hall Theatre is a homecoming of sorts. "Lafayette is where I learned to play music," Tamelier recalls. "We moved from San Francisco to Lafayette in 1964. I went to Burton Valley Elementary School, Fairview Middle School and Acalanes High School. I'm very sentimental about Lafayette. I have a lot of great memories here."

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Tamelier describes the band's music as "all over the map," but says there will be some special musical surprises for partakers. "We play rock, funk, fusion and we have two former Santana vocalists joining us so you'll get some Latin rock as well. The crowd can definitely get their groove on." Although Tamelier is in his early 60s, he says his fiery passion is still burning strong. "I've been playing with some of these guys for 50 years. I'm still trying to play as often as

possible, whether it's live or making records," he says. "I'm very grateful that people still come out and watch us play and now kids and grandkids come too."

The music of the group streams on all major platforms. The live concert will be at Lafayette's very own Town Hall Theatre at 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12. For more information about this and other plays, performances and educational opportunities, visit townhalltheatre.com.

As others see us

By Alison Burns

I recently read about a fellow expat who, despite having lived in Orinda five times longer than I have, still feels that she is regarded as a foreigner. Whilst in no way wishing to belittle her sentiments, I'd like to reassure Orindans – with just one exception – that my own experience has always been entirely different.

I first moved to the U.S. in the mid-70s, three days after my wedding (my husband, already working in Detroit, had told his employers he had a dentist appointment around the Fourth of July ... but hopped onto a London-bound plane instead).

America was a different country back in 1975 – the dust was still settling from the fall of Saigon, the grass on the White House South Lawn, flattened by Nixon's departing helicopter the previous August, had finally

sprung back, and beach attendance all across the U.S., after the release of "Jaws," had plummeted to unprecedented numbers.

Americans were delighted with these young English newlyweds who had suddenly turned up in their midst.

My Michigan years found me hovering at many a deli counter while I listened to some man 30 years my senior waxing lyrical about his escapades in wartime England. We met their kind again on flights home to England as they rampaged up and down the aisle, thrilled as kids to be going back to military reunions. I hope that all those faraway places with strange sounding names were every bit as good as they remembered. And that not too many of their buddies were missing.

Michiganders who'd never met any Brits used to ask us to

"say something English" and we'd always reply (in magisterial tones) "this is the 9 o'clock news." Their questions were so unvaried that we joked we should hold up boards with phrases already printed on them, like "I'm from Surrey, he's from Yorkshire," "since 1975," and "yes, we love it here."

Almost 50 years after leaving Britain, I still have the accent, despite having lived in several other countries along the way. And maybe that's not such a bad thing since I've been told that anyone with an English accent appears at least 25% more intelligent than your average American. Not true!

I have never felt that other people's enquiries about my birthplace are intrusive or ill-mannered, knowing that their interest is borne out of genuine curiosity and enthusiasm: inno-

cence rather than guile. Nor have I ever considered those questions to be confrontational (except for that one exception). In fact it's rather endearing.

I, in my turn, love to pinpoint the subtleties of American accents, having lived not only in the Midwest, but also the East coast, South Carolina and California.

And that one exception when a stranger yelled at me to go back to my own country? It happened one Friday afternoon earlier this year, when I opened my front door to insistent bell-ringing and found a man videoing me, laughing maniacally and informing me it was 5 p.m.

When you're a guest in someone else's country, you're very careful to abide by the rules – I have the Orinda Noise Ordinance emblazoned on my heart – but I felt it best not to argue. He obviously didn't like

the sound of chainsaws. Neither do I, but since I had a massive live oak (rather an oxymoronic term at that stage) straddling both my house and cottage roofs, and its three conjoined tree trunks hovering on the brink of crashing down at any moment, I was anxious to get the problem solved before 6 p.m. Personally, I'd think twice about including a chainsaw-wielding tree feller in my abusive rant, but our uninvited guest continued his tirade, totally unaware of the foolhardiness of recording every offensive word and gesture on his phone. Apparently, I had to go back to where I came from, "back to the United Kingdom," because "nobody wants you here."

But as I told him: I'm not going anywhere, thanks. I like it here.

CAIFF begins Nov. 9 in Orinda

... continued from Page 1

The first double feature couples the documentary "Sean Connery vs. James Bond" with "The Hill," Connery's favorite film. The second double feature combines the documentary about Maurice Chevalier, "A Straw Hat in Hollywood" with the movie "Gigi" featuring Leslie Caron with Chevalier. The third double feature connects two documentaries that are extraordinary tales of two women, one a very young Mongolian girl who wants to become an Eagle Huntress, while the other is an accomplished mountaineer in search of meaning in "Beyond

the Summit."

Music will also be heard during the festival. "Il Boemo," a Czech movie in Italian, tells the true story of Czech composer Josef Mysliveček in 18th century Venice. The festival director said that since "Amadeus" he had not seen a movie like this. "Piano Forte" is set during the International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw where the best young pianists from around the world showcase their virtuosic talent. The Israeli movie "Karaoke" is a bittersweet comedy about a couple in their late 60s who meet a glamorous neighbor who is going to shake their world. The projection will

be followed by a karaoke experience offered to the movie goers in the Orinda Theatre lobby. Finally, in the musical genre, the festival will once again present a marvelous singalong version of "Grease." Lubliner says that this is going to be an annual event as people really enjoy it. Last year, 200 to 300 attended, singing -- and some even dancing.

Several films from France are presented at the festival. The opening night features "Driving Madeleine," a true treasure of a movie featuring French singer and actress Line Renaud, now 94 years old, playing the role of 92-year-old Madeleine

who is driven from the house she loves to a retirement community where she will end her life. The entire movie is about the taxi drive that will take unexpected turns down memory lane. The taxi driver is played by Dany Boone, who is in real life Renaud's spiritual son. Because of Renaud's age, and because of her long life in show business and fighting for feminist causes, this film has the feel of a testament; a sweet and tender farewell to the public she loved and who loved her so much.

Another great film from France will be shown during the festival, "Full Time," a poignant

thriller with Laure Calamy about a hard-working woman trying to make her way in a society that is very harsh to the disenfranchised. It is one of the amazing portraits of women presented in the festival along with "LA Civil" taking place in Mexico and "Gyeong-ah's Daughter" from South Korea.

There are many other fantastic films to be seen during the eight days of the festival. You can get a pass for the entire festival, or part of it, or also to buy individual tickets. The program is available online at www.caiff.org and includes trailers for all the films as well as links to buy tickets.

◆ Not to be missed ◆

Other ... continued

Join the community for the 2nd Annual Lafayette Community Sunrise Stroll on Sunday, Nov. 12 at 8 a.m. Organized by everyday citizens, this casual, walk-at-your-own-risk, family-friendly walk is a great way to start the day, get in your steps and enjoy the beauty of the Lafayette Reservoir. The walk starts at 8 a.m. on the path across from the gate house. Donuts and coffee will be served courtesy of local Dunkin' owner and Lafayette resident Matt Cobo. Dogs on leash, bicycles, and scooters are also welcome during this time of day according to EBMUD and the Lafayette Reservoir. If you think you will be joining, especially to ensure plenty of donuts, please go to

bit.ly/SunriseStroll2023

Hospice East Bay is offering their workshop Coping with Grief During the Holidays on Thursday, Nov. 16, from 10-11:30 a.m. In-person option: Large Community Room, Pleasant Hill City Hill, 100 Gregory Lane (pre-registration requested); Virtual option: Please pre-register by Wednesday, Nov. 15. Pre-register at CommissionOnAging@pleasanthillca.org or by calling Juanita Davalos (925)671-5283. Walk-ins will be accommodated on a space available basis.

The Lafayette Hillside Memorial Service and Conservation Opportunity to paint, replace fallen crosses and other symbols, and generally spruce up the site. This

is a chance to gather with the community, honor the fallen, and with your time and energy acknowledge the tragic costs of war. The event will be on Veterans Day, Saturday Nov. 11 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Open to volunteers 12 years or older. Minors must be accompanied by chaperones (4 volunteers per 1 adult) Wear old clothes, long pants, long sleeves, and close-toed shoes. Participants will have to fill out a waiver required at check-in. For more information email info@lafayettehillside.com

Community Thanksgiving Breakfast. On Thursday, Nov. 16 from 7-8:30 a.m. at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Center, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. The

Lafayette Chamber invites everyone to all come together to share in a breakfast and enjoy the special speakers. Michael Collier, Co President of the Las Trampas Board of Directors will present Las Trampas, Success Beyond Disability. Invocation by Rev. Jimmy Macalinao, St. Perpetua Church. Benediction by Rev. Stephen M. Siptroth, Rector, St. Anselm's Episcopal Church. Music by Wendy Tamis, Harpist. Tickets are \$40 each; table of 8 for \$300. Registration required, no walk-ups. Tickets will only be available until 10 a.m. Friday, Nov. 10 unless sold out prior to this date. This is an indoor event, maximum 150 persons. Catering by Sunrise Bistro. Register at https://lafayettechamber.org/breakfast.

Garden

Lafayette Garden Club monthly meeting begins on Nov. 9 at 9:30 a.m. for social time and nibbles before a short business meeting at 10 a.m. This week's guest speaker is Marissa Zoeteway, who is the owner of The Wild Fleur Company based in Concord. Marissa is committed to sourcing sustainable, locally grown flowers. She will prepare a holiday wreath, arrangements and a tablescape with a Thanksgiving and Christmas theme. The meeting takes place at the Lafayette Veterans Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. It is free to attend, and guests are welcomed. Please visit www.lafayettegardenclub.com for more information.

New college advisory business comes to Lamorinda

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Advantage College Planning staff, from left: Sunny Grewal, owner; Saumya Garg, consultant; Myrna Volpentest, community manager; Hayley Gabri, events coordinator; Cole Filipek, consultant; and Naomi Grewal, owner

Sunny Grewal has brought a new business to Lamorinda: Advantage College Planning. While the business has been around for about 18 years, Grewal and his partner and wife Naomi Grewal are bringing it to the East Bay. The couple

lives in Orinda and have their business premises in Moraga, but hope to serve a wider geographical swath of the East Bay. Advantage College Planning opened in early September, and Grewal reports that things are going great.

“We have created a ton of free content,” Grewal says, and are hosting workshops with groups of families. The business focuses on students from the eighth to the 12th grade and is, as Grewal expresses it, “student centered, not college cen-

tered.” Counselors (currently the company employs five) work with students to do a better job of supporting them and understanding what makes them tick.

Advantage will offer fireside talks with admissions officers via Zoom and financial budgeting boot camps. For example, educating families about the Western Undergraduate Exchange, which can reduce tuition costs for schools in the Western United States. Helping students acquire athletic scholarships will be offered in the future. In addition to helping students decide what they would like to pursue in their careers, Advantage wants to help them understand what is financially affordable, and what academic/social/environmental factors will be the best fit for them.

“Colleges want to see the true authentic selves” of applicants. Instead of trying to force students into particular schools, Grewal says, he wants to provide acade-

mic planning and goal setting to help students identify what they really want to do, and how to accomplish it. Grewal says that the company has access to a large number of admissions specialists to gain insight into the admissions process.

Grewal’s goal is to take the stress out of college planning, using a process developed by industry experts. For example, he notes, you don’t have to be a doctor to work in the medical field, you don’t have to be an engineer to work in tech. The firm will host monthly career panels to acquaint students with different options. Grewal himself spent years working in the financial sector, before switching to health care technology. The company he founded went public and was acquired.

Advantage College Planning will offer individual counseling sessions, in addition to the group activities. Counselors will meet with stu-

dents at the office, via Zoom, or wherever might be convenient for the student and family. Current staff includes Consultant Saumya Gang, Community Manager Myrna Volpentest, Events Coordinator Hayley Gabri, and Consultant Cole Filipek.

Grewal is Canadian and grew up in a small town. He attended Cornell University and earned a degree in economics, before attending business school at Columbia University, where he met his wife, a native of Piedmont, California. Co-owner Naomi Grewal holds a Ph.D. in cognitive psychology and in addition to being director of research at Workday, she is also a lecturer at the University of Southern California. They have three young children at home.

Find out more about Advantage College Planning on their website: <https://advcp.com/team/east-bay>

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Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 19 Wednesday, November 8, 2023



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Changing color guard

By Cynthia Brian



Tuck a sampling of various plants into a window box as a fall favorite.



An urn planter with elephant ears, lantana, and petunias.



Sugar maples in several colors line this path. Photos Cynthia Brian

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower." ~Albert Camus

After a dry and hot summer, I look forward to the warm days and cooler nights of autumn. Mostly, I get excited about the changing of the guard whereby the leaves on my many deciduous trees turn into a kaleidoscope of vibrant colors mimicking a glorious sunset.

It is November and only a handful of my trees are changing their foliage, much to my dismay. This is the time of year when I want to decorate with orange, yellow, crimson, burgundy, and gold. Because of a combination of weather conditions, chemical processes, individual genetic traits, and physiological changes, trees change their colors. When the days get shorter and the temperatures drop, trees reduce the production of chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is the green pigment that is responsible for photosynthesis and in the fall, it breaks down and disappears from the leaves allowing other colors to surge to prominence. The yellow and orange hues that we see in leaves in autumn are always present but masked by the dominant green. When the chlorophyll disappears, the sunset or sunrise colors emerge.

Some trees, specifically maples and oaks, produce anthocyanin pigments. These pigments create blue, purple, and red in the leaves. As consumers, we are familiar with anthocyanins when we "eat the rainbow," enjoying the antioxidant properties of berries, grapes, cherries, plums, pomegranates, red cabbage, eggplant, black beans, and of course, wine!

Species of trees that showcase a colorful changing of the guard in fall include Japanese Maple, Sugar Maple, Ginkgo Biloba, Red Oak, Liquidambar, Aspen, Dogwood, Black Tupelo, Chinese Pistache, Sumac, Honeylocust, Hickory, and Beech. Several of these species grow in my garden, and I hope that by Thanksgiving they will have changed into their wondrous wardrobes before the branches shed their leaves for winter.

This year I joined the ranks of tourists who are dubbed "leaf peepers" because I traveled to the Great Lakes and Canada to witness the spectacular fall foliage displays. Of all the trees I admired, it was the glorious sugar maples that won my heart as they flaunted their brilliant yellow, red, orange, and burgundy leaves.

... continued on Page OH11

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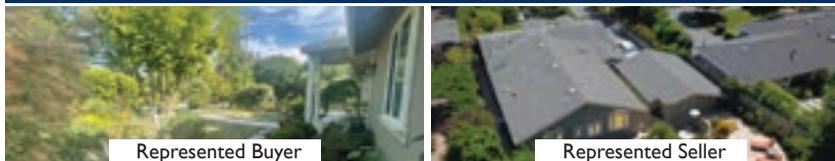
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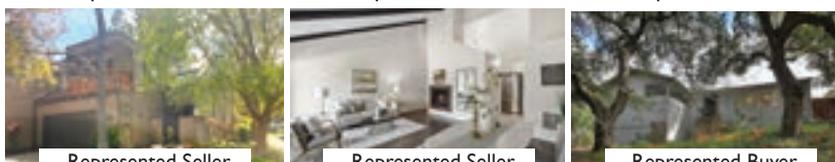
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

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

- 701 Glenside Circle, \$1,875,000, 3 Bdrms, 2507 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-29-23, Sale: \$1,875,000, 06-29-21
- 1029 Hampton Road, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2320 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-05-23, Sale: \$1,735,000, 11-22-17
- 1005 Hawthorne Drive, \$1,195,000, 2 Bdrms, 1580 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$842,000, 06-29-06
- 568 Merriewood Drive, \$2,355,000, 4 Bdrms, 2430 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-28-23, Sale: \$2,050,000, 10-19-20
- 858 Reliez Station Road, \$1,215,000, 3 Bdrms, 1416 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$1,175,000, 12-07-20
- 50 Silverwood Drive, \$1,200,000, 6 Bdrms, 2856 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-29-23, Sale: \$375,000, 06-01-87
- 1717 Springbrook Road, \$840,000, 3 Bdrms, 1223 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-06-23
- 3385 Stage Coach Drive, \$3,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 4229 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$1,340,000, 04-24-03
- 706 St Marys Road, \$1,165,000, 3 Bdrms, 1426 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$510,000, 02-20-02
- 3189 Teigland Road, \$1,584,500, 3 Bdrms, 2644 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 10-02-23, Sale: \$340,000, 01-01-92
- 1210 Via Gabarda, \$1,760,000, 3 Bdrms, 2554 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 09-29-23
- 1062 Via Roble, \$2,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 3525 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-03-23, Sale: \$1,625,000, 07-19-17
- 14 White Oak Drive, \$2,425,000, 5 Bdrms, 2938 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$1,405,000, 08-27-15
- 1006 Woodbury Road #102, \$1,550,000, 2 Bdrms, 1495 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-02-23, Sale: \$1,520,000, 04-21-21
- 20 Woodbury Highlands Court #30, \$2,450,000, 3 Bdrms, 2732 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 10-02-23
- 45 Woodbury Highlands Court #31, \$1,645,000, 3 Bdrms, 1878 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 09-28-23

MORAGA

- 722 Augusta Drive, \$1,800,000, 2 Bdrms, 1820 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-26-23, Sale: \$710,000, 03-13-13
- 1357 Camino Peral #C, \$554,000, 2 Bdrms, 951 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$465,000, 06-15-20
- 163 Corliss Drive, \$1,695,000, 4 Bdrms, 2228 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$1,175,000, 11-01-16
- 49 Corte De Rosas, \$1,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 2028 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 10-03-23, Sale: \$665,000, 01-15-04
- 26 Corte Monterey, \$1,740,000, 3 Bdrms, 2038 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 10-02-23
- 2121 Donald Drive #12, \$650,000, 2 Bdrms, 1224 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 09-28-23, Sale: \$224,000, 10-11-00
- 1082 Larch Avenue, \$2,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2170 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$1,385,000, 07-07-20
- 515 Woodminster Drive, \$880,000, 3 Bdrms, 1572 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 09-26-23

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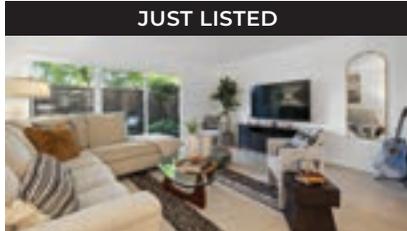


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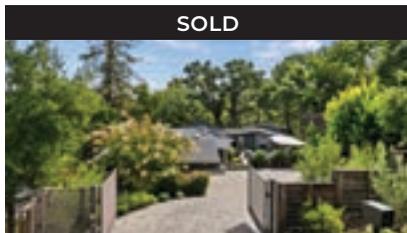
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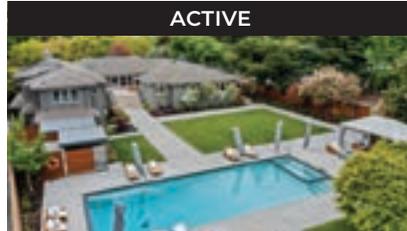
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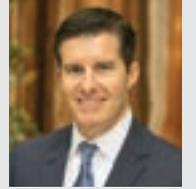
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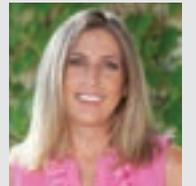
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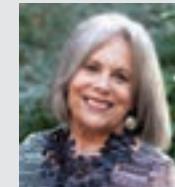
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Molly Smith | molly@mollyslist.com

Amy Rose Smith | amy@amyrosmith.com

Shannon Conner | shannon@shannonconner.com

925.254.8585

All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

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Shannon Conner (DRE# 01885058) | Amy Rose Smith (DRE # 01855959) | Molly Smith (DRE # 01498053)



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5328 JAMES AVENUE OAKLAND

2 BED | 1 BATH | 1,552 SQ. FT. SALE PENDING!
MATT GOMEZ 415.216.1268



457 IRON HILL STREET PLEASANT HILL

4 BED | 2.5 BATH | 2,135 SQ. FT. \$1,395,000
JEANNETTE BETTENCOURT 925.787.3464



16 CANDLESTICK ROAD ORINDA

4 BED | 2 BATH | 2,499 SQ. FT. \$1,849,000
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page OH2

Orinda

3372 Camino Sobrante, \$2,275,000, 3 Bdrms, 2653 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$1,625,000, 04-29-22
 33 Charles Hill Circle, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2201 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 09-27-23, Sale: \$1,650,000, 02-04-21
 11 El Gavilan Road, \$2,125,000, 3 Bdrms, 2769 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$1,390,000, 02-12-03
 351 El Toyonal, \$2,085,000, 2 Bdrms, 2678 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$890,000, 12-06-02
 259 El Toyonal, \$1,065,000, 2 Bdrms, 1200 SqFt, 1944 YrBlt, 10-06-23, Sale: \$620,000, 12-03-19
 208 Glorietta Boulevard, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2278 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 10-02-23
 216 Ivy Drive, \$1,480,000, 3 Bdrms, 1293 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 10-05-23, Sale: \$459,000, 08-09-99
 222 Moraga Way #L, \$3,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 3457 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$2,600,000, 07-23-18
 13 Orchard Road, \$1,750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1799 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 09-28-23, Sale: \$980,000, 09-23-05
 246 Orchard Road, \$1,335,000, 3 Bdrms, 1431 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-29-23, Sale: \$929,000, 02-27-06
 5 Poco Paseo, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2128 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-05-23
 9 Robert Road, \$1,853,000, 3 Bdrms, 1461 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-05-23, Sale: \$1,355,000, 10-15-20
 29 Saint Stephens Drive, \$2,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3792 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 09-25-23, Sale: \$1,775,000, 07-13-07
 210 Tappan Lane, \$1,950,000, 3 Bdrms, 4167 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 10-04-23

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Finding the Right Fit in 2023

Represented Sellers:

254 Manzanita, Orinda	\$1,550,000
75 Barbara Road, Orinda	\$1,850,000
404 Wovenwood, Orinda	\$1,850,000
24 La Cuesta, Orinda	\$2,685,000
367 Dalewood Dr., Orinda	\$2,800,000
59 Tiger Tail Rd., Orinda	\$4,295,000
120 Via Floreado, Orinda	\$2,900,000
161 Ardith Drive, Orinda	\$2,450,000
124 Sleepy Hollow Lane, Orinda	\$2,600,000

Represented Buyers:

46 Camino Sobrante, Orinda	\$1,975,000
2501 Golden Rain Rd., WC	\$355,000
2548 Joseph Drive, Alamo	\$1,950,000
5 Hidden Lane, Orinda	\$2,600,000
3158 Hambletonian Lane, WC	\$1,140,000
832 Solana Drive, Lafayette	\$1,310,000



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but my focus never wavers. I'm here to help.

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Amy Rose Smith
Partner - Village Associates
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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

ADD your carved pumpkins to your compost pile as it is high in nitrogen. Or break the pumpkins into pieces to feed the wildlife.

DEADHEAD perennials and roses to extend the blooming season.

RESEARCH the best spots to experience the changing of the color guard. Hike, bike, or drive to photograph the fall foliage.

SCATTER wildflower seeds for a surprise spring showcase.

DIVIDE perennials including dahlias, iris, and daylilies.

PLANT dark leafy greens such as kale, chard, and arugula in containers near the kitchen for easy harvesting.

FERTILIZE your entire landscape. For maximum absorption, fertilize immediately before it rains.

CHECK the stability of your trees. Contact a professional arborist to help with limb pruning.

BUY brilliant fall foliage trees and shrubs now at your local nursery so you'll know what colors to expect when they are planted in your garden.

CONTINUE planting spring-blooming bulbs.

CREATE a cornucopia of fall colors in a basket with cut roses, dahlias, and tentacles of euphorbia.

SOW cover crops such as clover, mustard, peas, brassicas, and alfalfa to enrich and protect the soil as well as suppress weeds and feed the birds.



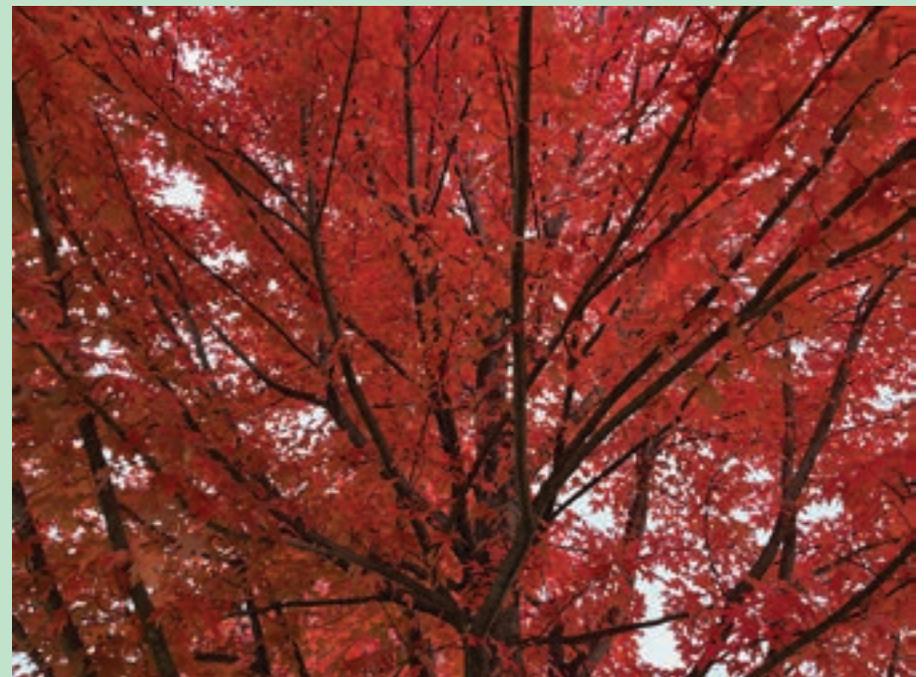
The glory of dahlias!



A stunning pot of purple chrysanthemums.



A colorful combination of canna lilies, impatiens, and marigolds.



A sugar maple with bright crimson leaves.

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Changing Color Guard

... continued from Page OH1

Sugar maples boast an added benefit; the sap can be tapped and boiled to make a rich and delicious maple syrup. At the home of my cousin, Donnie, and his wife, I sampled two versions of this delectable syrup that they made from their backyard sugar maple tree. Holes in the tree trunk were a testament to the tapping. The sap must be boiled down to the correct consistency and the process is time-consuming. The syrup will be light, medium, or very dark depending on what month the harvesting is done. The flavors vary with the darkest syrup being the richest and most dense.

The vibrant colors of autumn are not only experienced in the chang-

ing of the leaves, but also in containers and beds planted with mums, dahlias, cannas, marigolds, petunias, roses, phlox, calibrachos, salvias, sages, verbenas, impatiens, and coleus. It's easy to design a beautiful combination by tucking several different species into a container filled with potting soil, allowing calibrachos, verbenas, and petunias to spill over the sides.

As I wander my garden, I anticipate that every leaf will become a flower bursting with burgundy, maroon, bronze, gold, red, yellow, and orange. The color guard of autumn is majestic and worth the wait. Be a leaf peeper!

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Be the Star You Are!® charity volunteers will once again collaborate for the Santa Day at 5A, Dec. 2 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga. FREE crafts, holiday treats, plus a photo with Santa and his elf! More info: www.bethestaryouare.org/copy-of-events



Cynthia Brian advocates to continue to deadhead roses through winter.

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. 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 <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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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



New Listing!

228 El Toyonal

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\$899,000

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.

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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



New Price!

3152 Maryola Court

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

\$5,550/mo.

MORAGA



New Listing!

1379 Camino Peral, Unit B

Spacious 3 bd/ 2.5 ba townhouse features updated kitchen, private patio & convenient access to shopping, restaurants & more!

\$869,000

MORAGA



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!

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MORAGA



Lease!

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550 Odin Drive

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