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Photo Jeff Heyman

# Heatwave fun at the Moraga Commons splash pad

By Jeff Heyman

This was certainly a heatwave to remember. Thanks to the splash pad at the Moraga Commons Park, summer relief came in the form of water-sprouts and cooling sprays for all to enjoy. Activated by touching cleverly designed sensor pads with a foot or hand, undulating and seemingly random water bursts – which surprised the uninitiated as the water appeared to come from nowhere – de-

lighted young and old alike. Families flocked to the water feature at the 40-acre multi-use park at 1425 St. Mary's Road in Moraga to have a little bit of sunny fun and beat the heat.

And there was heat to beat: the mercury reached into the triple digits this past Fourth of July weekend due to a temperature-trapping heat dome that drove parents and kids seeking cooling relief

to the Moraga Commons' splash pad. Kids waved flags, others hung out for a cool spraydown – all recorded on video by parents who also jumped in to enjoy the temperature-defying mist. The Town of Moraga operates the splash pad everyday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. – another reason to enjoy living in Lamorinda.

**LAMORINDA**

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## Lafayette City Council votes for ask for sales tax measure to fight looming deficit

By Elaine Borden Chandler

On July 8, the Lafayette City Council held a discussion whether a sales tax increase should be placed on the Nov. 5 ballot. This potential sales tax increase would be to address the annual financial deficit of \$2 million that Lafayette will face starting this year. This deficit will occur if Lafayette continues only ongoing operations and does not account for additional expenses such as inflation or wildfire preparedness. A half percent sales tax would keep current operations going while a three quarters percent tax or one percent tax would give additional funding to cover other expenses.

A previous poll by Strategy Research Institute (SRI) had been taken in order to gauge knowledge of Lafayette's fi-

nancial difficulties and the support among Lafayette voters for different percentages of a sales tax raise. A digital packet was distributed beforehand by SRI with the results of their new tracking poll.

Beginning the discussion was Dr. Gary Manross of SRI, who presented the tracking poll results. It showed that after Lafayette's information campaign, the 'Likely Yes' support for a one percent increase rose from 36% to 48%, for a three quarters percent rose from 41% to 50.5%, and for a half percent increase rose from 46% to 55.5%. He also showed that popularity increased with a sunset clause of seven or ten years and a citizens' oversight committee. He stated that SRI would not

make a recommendation but that he personally thought that the Council should aim for a one percent tax increase with a seven-year sunset clause and a citizens' oversight committee.

This tracking poll, however, included a new chart that was not in the distributed packet. It detailed the specific levels of support for each percentage of tax increase instead of the broad support for "Up to 1%" that had been provided earlier. In this chart, it was revealed that after being presented different arguments for the tax raise, support for a one percent tax increase dropped from 48% to 42.5% while support for the other options rose.

... continued on Page 2

## Orinda offers residents more money to increase fire code compliance

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council recently approved an increase that doubles the matching funds available to residents for work done to bring their property into compliance with the fire code. Using funds raised by the increased sales tax approved by the voters in 2020, the city will match 50% of expenditures by homeowners annually, up to \$1,000 per year.

The grants under the Measure R Fire Fuels Reduction Incentive Pilot Program were previously limited to \$500 in matching grants. Orinda residents may now apply for the program each calendar year, so long as funds are available.

Additionally, in the past the grants were limited to evacuation routes, but now residents on any roads that may be accessed by fire equipment qualify. Residents also need to be in a current Firewise community, have had a Fire Adapted Community Assessment completed within a calendar year, or have received a notice from the Moraga Orinda Fire District that the property is not in compliance.

The types of work that will qualify for the grants include: total removal of Eucalyptus and/ or Monterey Pine trees; total removal of dead or dying trees; removal of ladder fuels (shrubs and bushes), ... continued on Page 6

**Civic News**

Orinda's new City Manager – Page 6

**Public Safety**

MOFD designated by California Board of Forestry – Page OH13

**Life in Lamorinda**

Chalk art in the Lafayette Saranap neighborhood — Page 9



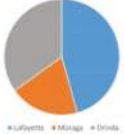
**Sports**

Campo student in the running to make the United States Archery team — Page 11



**Our Homes** OH1-OH16

The Real Estate Quarter in Review. — Page OH4





See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements  
**City of Lafayette:**  
 www.lovelafayette.org  
 Phone: (925) 284-1968  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
 www.lafayettechamber.org

**Lafayette Public Meetings**

**City Council**

Regular Meeting: Monday, July 22, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
 Monday, Aug. 5 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall  
**Design Review**  
 Monday, July 22, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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**Lafayette City Council votes for ask for sales tax measure to fight looming deficit**

... continued from Page 1

Next, City Manager Niroop Srivatsa gave a presentation of the City Council Staff Report for July 8. She covered the two potential options for dealing with the deficit budget, either placing a sales tax measure on the November ballot or making cuts to Lafayette's budget. She noted that with the information previously given by SRI, the staff recommendation was for a one percent tax raise with a seven-year sunset and citizen oversight committee.

The City Council members immediately began discussing the new chart in the SRI presentation. In particular, they became increasingly concerned with the

one percent tax raise, which peaked at 48% approval and after arguments dropped to 42.5%. Susan Candell stated that a three quarters tax would be safer while providing funds for necessary, non-ongoing projects. Wei-Tai Kwok noted that support increased with outreach and could continue to do so. Mayor Gina Dawson argued perhaps these numbers indicated that they needed to find the right way to present the tax raise to voters. Candell disagreed. "I understand why you're saying you still want to go for the one [percent] but this is too risky to miss. If we miss this, we are," she paused and then continued, "not happy." John McCormick stated how worried he

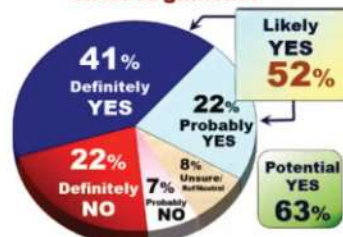
was over failure and wanted to prioritize a smaller success over a larger failure. Carl Anduri argued that a half percentage with plans to ask the voters if they wanted to fund more projects in the future would be best. The discussion quickly shifted to exclusively half or three quarters percent. While Dawson and Kwok made arguments for the viability of the three quarters percent tax raise, Anduri and McCormick continued to argue for the half percent. "I'm worried if we reach too far, we'll have a disaster," said Anduri. Dawson asked the City staff for recommendation and was informed their previous recommendation came before the new chart and that they cur-

rently supported the half or three quarters percent.

Dawson asked what each of the council members thought. McCormick said he thought the half percent for 10 years was the best option. "We can't lose," he said. "I'm just too scared. I want a solid single right now, not a home run." The rest of the council agreed and Kwok moved that the Council direct the staff to prepare a resolution. After arguments from Manross and Mayor Dawson, the committee agreed to seven years instead and the motion was amended to a resolution for a general-purpose half percent tax for seven years with an citizens' oversight committee to be voted on Nov. 5.

Figure 7B  
 TEACHING POLL  
 June 2024

**Support for Up to 1% Increase After Arguments**



**Support by Threshold of Willingness to Pay**

Support at Threshold	Definitely YES	Probably YES	Likely 100% Def + 50% Prob	Potential 100% Def + 100% Prob
1%	35	15	42.5	50
3/4%	49	12	55	61
1/2%	51	12	57	63

Image SRI presentation

**Yoga studio Yoga Village opens in Lafayette**

By Elaine Borden Chandler

This April, a new yoga studio opened its doors in Lafayette. Yoga Village is located in two tidy, white walled rooms with the occasional hanging

vine and accents of teal and pale pink. Upon entering, its founder Valerie Moore, a friendly woman with alert eyes, welcomes visitors and

gently answers their questions. "I really wanted to create something here that is for our community, that is about connection, because that's what I was craving in the last ten years," she said sincerely as she gave a tour of the studio. "Lamorinda is a great place for young families and we need more support for that."

Moore started her career in the notoriously grueling profession of dance in New York City, performing modern dance and ballet. When

she stopped after giving her last performance while five months pregnant with her first child, yoga was the only way she found that let her heal physically and emotionally. Inspired, she soon became a trained instructor, teaching in New York and then in New Mexico. However, when she moved with her family to Orinda in May 2020, Covid forced her to pause her teaching.

This time off proved motivational for Moore. She had previous experience with how isolating

motherhood could be and how hard it was to create a community. "That's when I really started thinking, 'Why doesn't this exist? And can I make it exist?'" Moore said as she nimbly balanced on a chair to turn on the AC unit.

She started planning how to make her dream reality. Her first step was to establish herself by teaching yoga at the elementary schools in Orinda and Lafayette. She designed her classes to act as a bridge between PE and psychological

wellness, with emphasis on the latter. "Yoga is healing physically but the root of it is mental health," Moore said firmly. Moore's next step was to start looking for a place where she could teach adults and eventually make into a community space. She wanted to find somewhere in Lafayette due to its cute downtown with local stores and central location within Lamorinda. She looked for a year and a half without finding anything that met her needs when she saw an article on the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce website. It was about Holistika, a newly opened conscious social club in Lafayette. Intrigued, she reached out to the owner Ash Lew and, upon finding a common interest in creating healing communities, they agreed to share the same space. Less than two months later on April 2, Yoga Village opened.

Moore felt that it was important to choose teachers that she would want to learn from. "I've collected these amazing people that really know their stuff. That kind of hunger for learning is what I love about yoga — there's so much to learn," she said before enthusiastically describing all of her teachers and their specialties. One teacher is no doubt familiar to many, "Coach" Chris Walsh who was formerly a PE teacher and the track coach at Cam-polindo. He teaches an Absolute Beginner class as well as Viniyoga — a gentle, slow yoga with a strong breathwork. Another more unusual class is Yin yoga, where poses are held for three to five minutes, taught by Cyndi Lezcano. Dave Larot teaches the Gentle / Slow Flow class and Michelle White teaches Flow and Restore.

... continued on next Page

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# Front Porch Music Festival at Town Hall Theatre

By Lou Fancher

Town Hall Theatre Company's ongoing collaboration with the Front Porch Music Festival brings an exciting roster of local acoustic musicians to the historic downtown venue on Aug. 2. Appearing in the third performance of the Lafayette-based Front Porch Music second season, the one-night-only show opens with singer/songwriter Joe PETERS warming up the crowd in the lobby bar at 6 p.m. Moving from the lobby into the warm, intimate theater space, the full production begins at 7 p.m.

First to take the stage and welcome audiences eager to enjoy close proximity to the artists, are five local musicians who craft a unique program offering folk, Americana, bluegrass, blues, country, jazz, and traditional acoustic music. The range is noteworthy, and a feature Front Porch co-founders Austin and André Hurst established early on, when the casual jam sessions began—on their Lafayette home's front porch, appropriately. Now a non-profit organization, Front Porch offers educational workshops and monthly Open Mic night's in addition to concerts.

On Aug. 2, the show begins with accordionist Sarah Gronquist joined by guitarist Mark Gill. The duo will set a lively tone with gypsy jazz and swing, after which guitarist and singer/songwriter Eric Smith will launch into country and bluegrass covers and original tunes with bassist Kerry Hays and percussionist and vocal-

ist Laura Dorman. Lafayette-based Mike Danese, who dove into his long-time love for guitar upon retirement, contributes a storyteller's approach, with songs based in humanity and connective themes that render feelings of harmonic unity.

The special guest artists for the evening are five members of the Berkeley-based band, Charlie Torch. Each a master bluegrass artist in his or her own right, the band's multigenerational old-time style fiddlers include Chad Manning, Jasper Manning, Jayna Manning, Tyler Stegall, and Paul Knight.

Chad Manning and his wife, Catherine Manning, founded and operate the Manning Music school that has several hundred students. Chad Manning began playing fiddle at age eight, and has performed with artists such as David Grisman and Laurie Lewis. During his teens, Manning's musical interest infected his parents—his father began paying bass, while his mother, picked up the piano. Shortly thereafter, his siblings joined in and the family band toured to local fairs and other events. He also started teaching and found special thrill in passing along the fiddling legacy to people of all ages.

Catherine Manning was a classical musician who performed as a violinist with orchestras and appeared primarily in concert halls. She took up fiddling as a student of Manning, her soon-to-be-spouse. Intrigued with learning music by



ear, instead of reading notes on sheet music, she became a proficient artist and instructor in the fiddling genre.

The couple's original jam sessions with friends and students they taught out of their El Cerrito home laid the groundwork for the teaching studio they eventually opened in Berkeley. The school's curriculum has expanded beyond fiddling with the addition of guitar, banjo, mandolin, ukulele, Dobro, music theory, and voice teachers. During COVID, when the school was closed, scheduled performances were canceled, and classes held only on Zoom, they countered the isolation with outdoor, backyard get-togethers and live-streamed the shows.

That kind of energy—local, intimate, upbeat, and community enriching—is exactly what the Front Porch showcase aims to affirm and amplify at Town Hall. With local established and emerging musicians sharing their art through performance and mingling with audience members before and after the show, the opportunity strengthens bonds and creates new friendships. Who knows what might happen? If the stars align, the festive evening might even result in a person, young or old, pursuing a long-buried or just-discovered musical passion.



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DAYS ON MARKET:	19	14
AVG. SOLD PRICE:	\$2,250,000	\$2,473,000
HIGHEST SOLD PRICE:	\$6,500,000	\$5,500,000
LOWEST SOLD PRICE:	\$750,000	\$1,080,000

	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER
TOTAL HOMES SOLD:	17	34
DAYS ON MARKET:	9	15
AVG. SOLD PRICE:	\$1,943,000	\$1,985,000
HIGHEST SOLD PRICE:	\$2,800,000	\$2,800,000
LOWEST SOLD PRICE:	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000

	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER
TOTAL HOMES SOLD:	33	61
DAYS ON MARKET:	22	14
AVG. SOLD PRICE:	\$2,272,000	\$2,229,000
HIGHEST SOLD PRICE:	\$4,970,000	\$6,337,500
LOWEST SOLD PRICE:	\$1,075,000	\$877,000

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## Yoga studio Yoga Village



Photo Elaine Borden Chandler

Valerie Moore holds her new sign in her Lafayette yoga studio Yoga Village.

... continued from Page 2

Moore teaches several different levels of Vinyasa yoga, a popular variety that emphasizes flow, and the

more uncommon Buti yoga, which blends yoga, high intensity interval training, plyometrics, cardio, and tribal dance. "It's really fun," said Moore, before demonstrating several athletic, rhythmic moves to help reduce tension and release energy, before standing up beaming. "When we blast the music, it is not a relaxing class at all."

Moore has been enjoying these first couple of months getting to know her new regulars and first members, but she isn't done yet. She is already looking to the future to evolve Yoga Village even further. In the short term, there is going to be a Saturday morning all ages class for families. In the long term, she wants to create a community for mindful families where both parents and kids can learn. "For a long time I've thought, 'Wouldn't it be magical if I could go and take a class from a really good teacher and at the same time my kids nearby were also doing yoga or something mindful?'" After saying this, she looked around the studio with hope and determination before turning back. "That's what we're striving toward. And we're starting here."

Yoga Studio is located at 3416 Mount Diablo Blvd Suite B and classes can be found at <https://yogavillagecafe.com>.

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Chamber of Commerce:  
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Moraga Citizens' Network:  
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Town Council Meetings:  
Wed., Aug. 28, 6:30 p.m.  
Planning Commission: Tuesday, Aug. 6, 6:30 p.m.  
Parks and Recreation Commission:  
Mon., Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.

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## Town Council approves FY 2024-25 Budget Adjustments

By Vera Kochan

After switching to a Biennial Fiscal Year (FY) in June of last year, with regards to Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, the Town Council has recently approved some proposed adjustments by staff which have become effective July 1.

"The adopted FY 2024-25 Operating Budget projected a General Fund contribution to fund balance of \$63,913 and an estimated unassigned fund balance of approximately \$6.1 million as of June 30, 2025," stated Administrative Services Director Katie Bruner's June 26 staff report. This "equates to a 50% General Fund Reserve, which meets the

Town's General Fund Reserve Policy." After some review, staff has identified areas in need of budget adjustments.

General Fund revenues are expected to increase by \$598,520. Based on Moraga's property tax rolls and projected property tax revenues from FY 2023-24, staff recommends "increasing property tax revenues by \$140,000, which represents a 4% increase in property tax revenues over the current fiscal year." Also recommended is an increase in "interest earnings revenue by \$200,000 to account for increased interest revenue due to a favorable interest rate on the Town's portfolio. This brings the FY 2024-25 Budget in-line with projected results in the current fiscal year."

The Parks & Recreation Department revenues are expected to increase by \$58,520 thanks to recreation programming registrations such as summer camp.

The Public Works Department increased revenues of \$140,000 involves staff time that will be charged to Capital Improvement Program projects with regards to the Senior Engineer position authorized by the Town Council in February.

There will be an in-

crease of \$60,000 in General Government revenues that involves overhead recovery for staff time also charged to CIP projects by the Senior Engineer position.

Staff noted an increase in General Fund Appropriation Adjustments by \$392,239. The General Government & Non-Departmental Appropriations include a CalPERS Unfunded Accrued Liability Payment of \$115,475, and an increase in 2024 Election Costs of \$21,000. Animal control contract increases of \$23,764 for Moraga Police Department appropriation with Contra Costa County, and an increase in Public Works Department appropriation by \$188,000 with regards to the Senior Engineer salary and benefits. Additionally, there was a reclassification of the Parks & Recreation staff which accounted for a departmental appropriation by \$44,000.

Other General Fund Adjustments, while having no direct impact on the FY 2024-25 Budget, were included in the staff report as informational items. Insurance premiums for general liability, workers compensation, and town owned vehicles and property have drastically increased in the last two years. Staff is exploring ways to reduce these costs by possibly changing insurance providers or increasing Moraga's general liability deductible from \$10,000 to \$100,000 given the town's low liability claim history, which in turn would lower premiums.

It is expected that this move would decrease the premium by approximately \$85,000. This savings could be directed to areas where premiums have increased, such as workers compensation insurance. Bruner added, "Staff also recommends creating a specific reserve for insurance claims, which could be used for a significant claims event(s)."

Another informational item suggested was to increase the accounting technician's hours from .45 Full-Time Equivalent to .60 Full-Time Equivalent with the reasoning that the Administrative Services Department will have additional support in implementing process improvements and staff efficiencies. The increase of approximately \$15,000 in costs will be absorbed with no net budget impact thanks to the department's operation and maintenance budget savings.

"With the recommended revenue and appropriation adjustments," stated Bruner, "the FY 2024-25 Budget is projecting revenues exceeding expenditures by \$270,194. Using the beginning unassigned fund balance of \$5.99 million, the estimated FY 2024-25 unassigned ending fund balance will be \$6.26 million. This maintains the town's 50% reserve requirement."

On another note, the Town Council voted to amend the Town Manager's Employment Agreement based on the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Review Committee (Vice Mayor Steve

Woehleke and Council Member Renata Sos).

The Committee recognized that Town Manager Scott Mitnick showed "proactive and consistent outreach in the community" and that he has forged "strong relationships with Saint Mary's College, the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, the Moraga School District, Moraga-Orinda Fire District, Moraga businesses and property owners, the Cities of Orinda and Lafayette," and more. Mitnick was also praised for his relationship with staff, his proactive fiscal management, and implementation of the Town Council's goals and priorities.

As a result of the positive performance review, the Committee analyzed town manager compensations from various municipalities within Contra Costa County in determining Moraga's Town Manager salary adjustment. A 2% merit salary adjustment from \$285,000 to \$290,700 will be retroactive to April 10. The position is also entitled to the same 3% Cost of Living Adjustment that the town's department directors are entitled to, resulting in an annual salary of \$299,421 effective July 1.

The Ad Hoc Committee noted that, "Sufficient funds were included in the Adopted FY 2023-24 and 2024-25 General Fund Biennial budget to cover the proposed adjustments for both fiscal years. As a result, budget amendments are not needed for either fiscal year."

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## Moraga residents clean up Bollinger Canyon Road

With help of MOFD and Moraga Public Works  
Submitted by Barry Behr



Photo provided

The residents of Bollinger Canyon Rd., Valley Hill Dr. and the Bluffs teamed up to clear the tall grasses and dead plants along Bollinger Canyon Road, in addition to clearing flammable brush per Moraga-Orinda Fire Department's roadway code/recommendations. The first workday was done on June 29 between Saint Mary's Road and

Joseph Drive, with 18 neighbors volunteering their time. The second workday will occur in mid-July and will cover Joseph Drive to Valley Hill Drive. These three neighborhoods together have achieved Firewise Neighborhood Certification status, through collaborative projects such as this, as well as individual neighbor efforts to harden

their homes against fire. Special thanks to Moraga Public works for all their help in supplying the appropriate traffic signs to ensure our safety. Also, thank you to MOFD for supplying advice, some of the needed equipment, and their free Chipper service to remove all the cleared foliage.

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## Moraga 2040 General Plan Community Workshop surveys net a variety of responses

By Vera Kochan



Photo courtesy Moraga Planning Department

### Attendees complete the visual preference survey

An estimated 60 residents attended the Moraga 2040 General Plan Community Workshop on April 30. Held at Saint Mary's College, it was the town's way of getting feedback with regards to key areas of Community Design, Sustainability, Transportation, and Economic Vitality. Many who took the survey requested that the results be made public.

Attendees were divided into four groups in order to report to the four interactive stations and participate in a provided survey particular to each station. At the end of a signal each group rotated to their next station. On hand to answer any questions were Town Manager Scott Mitnick, Planning Director Afshan Hamid, Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp, Principal Planner Brian Horn, Associate Planner Mio Mendez, Senior Administrative Assistant Suzie Mele, Consultant Barry Miller, and Moraga Police Chief Jon King.

At the "Transportation" station, participants were given five adhesive dots and asked to mark their top five transportation priorities out of 15 choices. Getting 31 votes as a top priority was ensuring the safety of children walking or bicycling to school, including improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes. Garnering 30 votes

was working with Lafayette and Orinda to improve traffic flow on Moraga Way and Moraga Road. Earning 26 votes was maintaining free parking in the commercial districts; 19 votes for a shuttle service connecting SMC, Rheem Center, Moraga Center, and BART; and 17 votes for road/pavement maintenance.

The "Transportation" station also gave attendees the opportunity to write responses onto post-it notes with regards to "What's Working Well? What's Not Working?" Most of this feedback was directed at what wasn't working. These comments noted the limited access to BART, lack of pedestrian safety features, poor walkability, school-related congestion and idling, and congestion in general. Notable suggestions included school buses for the high school, more transportation options for seniors, a BART shuttle and greater pedestrian improvements (push button "HAWK" - High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk) beacons.

At the "Community Design" station, participants were given a scorecard and asked to participate in a Visual Preference Survey by looking at 48 photographic images located on four wall

posters and scoring their preferences. The posters included images of mixed-use areas, townhomes, streets, plazas, crosswalks, etc. In the multi-family category, the highest scoring image was of a four-story project located in Southern California's San Gabriel Valley. The appeal was the contemporary residential architecture, with outdoor common space and decorative lighting. Also scoring high was an image of The Mill on Brown in Lafayette - a new, three-story condominium project with earth-toned, multi-colored siding.

Of the 12 townhome images, the highest scoring was from Danville, which featured a mix of wood and stone exterior materials, earthen colors, craftsman-style architectural elements, and a landscaped corner setback. Another high-scoring image came from Portland, Oregon featuring a row house incorporating a wood and stone exterior façade, trellised entryways, and units set back a considerable distance from the street.

The mixed-use projects, with a combination of office/retail/restaurant, scored higher than the previous two categories. The Mercantile in Lafayette scored the highest out of 10 images to choose from. Another high-scoring was a three-story, downtown San Rafael development that included 10 housing units over ground floor retail with a Mediterranean-style architecture.

Public space images included 12 examples of outdoor areas. Scoring high were images of Santana Row in San Jose where outdoor dining, decorative lighting, large trees, live music, and a fountain were depicted. Also, Lafayette's Pizza Antica's exterior was one of the favorites.

The "Sustainability and Resilience" station asked participants to place 31 dots onto 16 sus-

tainability strategies and 15 resilience strategies that were listed. Adjacent columns were rated in priority levels of "low", "medium", "high", and "highest." The top rated sustainability strategy was to encourage denser housing in the commercial districts in order to improve walkability and reduce dependency on cars. Second was to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to reduce dependency on cars.

Of the resilience strategies, ranking high on the list was to conduct additional planning for evacuation in the event of a wildfire or other natural disaster. Second was to coordinate with the Moraga Police Department and Moraga-Orinda Fire District to create shelter in place strategies.

The final station, "Economic Vitality," featured aerial photos of both the Rheem and Moraga Center commercial areas. Participants were asked to place a post-it note with their suggestions of what types of services and businesses they'd like to see in the future. At the Rheem Center, some suggestions included adding housing, modernizing, preserving the Rheem Theatre, brewpubs, kid-friendly activities, electric vehicle parking, higher-end stores, and nicer restaurants.

For the Moraga Center, comments included improving pedestrian/cyclist access, better marked crosswalks, improving public transit, fix deteriorating asphalt, improve facades and overall maintenance levels, improve selection of retail stores, adding medical services, adding housing, and something that's already in the works - upgrade Safeway.

"The town is gratified by the level of participation, commitment, and input of its citizens," stated Mitnick. "We were pleasantly surprised by the support for density housing in the two shopping centers."

For more information visit: [www.moraga.ca.us/600/General-Plan-2040-Community-Workshop](http://www.moraga.ca.us/600/General-Plan-2040-Community-Workshop).

## SMC's NEW Leadership program geared to encourage political involvement in women

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

### SMC Professors Myrna Santiago (left) and Maria Luisa Ruiz head the steering committee for NEW Leadership

Saint Mary's College has taken up the banner in California when it comes to hosting the first, and hopefully annual, New Education for Women's (NEW) Leadership pro-

gram thanks to the efforts of the school's Women's and Gender Studies Department. The week-long program taught undergraduate women how to become actively involved

in politics, advocacy, and public service.

Rutgers University first came up with the NEW Leadership concept 30 years ago, and have expanded NEW to approximately 15 colleges nationwide. SMC's steering committee members for the program, who are also with Women's and Gender Studies, are Professor Myrna Santiago, Department of History, and Professor Maria Luisa Ruiz, Department of World Languages and Cultures.

According to Santiago and Ruiz, SMC applied for the "job" and was accepted. That entailed a visit to Rutgers to see how the program was operated, although each school is encouraged to

make the program their own while preparing the students for a possible career in politics or social activism. "It's about women coming together and finding their own voice. Some students don't know if this is a field that they'd like to get into, so we intentionally picked guest speakers who were seasoned in their areas. Women are more apt to be under a microscope in these types of positions, so you need to build a thick skin."


Both professors were enthusiastic about offering the June 21 - June 28 course to the 17 applicants from community colleges and universities around the Bay Area.

... continued on Page 9



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College Coach's Corner

WITH Sunny Grewal

Welcome to Coach's Corner, where we address questions asked by local student families. If you have a question for us, please email us at [contact@mystrivepath.com](mailto:contact@mystrivepath.com).

**Question:** My son is a rising senior at Miramonte. He plans to apply to public and private schools. When should he start writing his application essays? And do you have any tips?

**Answer:** The best time to start writing is a week or two after school lets out—so he should get started ASAP! However, if he wants to write his Common App essay on an activity he's doing this summer, he should wait until the summer ends before beginning that essay. Instead, he should work on his UC essays.

**Tip 1 and 2: Use Specific Details and the List of Three!** Specific details—about what you ate, what people actually said (in quotation marks), what you thought (in italics), how you actually changed—make the essay! The Rule of Three involves using three adjectives or three examples to add depth and vividness to descriptions.

- Vague: I learned a lot during my internship.
- Specific: My internship honed my skills in graphics, newsletters, and UX design.
- Vague: My two students improved in algebra.
- Specific: I saw an upward trend in their understanding of functions, solving of equations, and comprehension of many other topics.

**Tip 3: Work on Essays One at a Time!**

Students run out of creative juice or mana when writing essays consecutively. To achieve better results, students should mostly complete their essay (90%+) before starting a new one. Also, as students revise, rewrite, and integrate feedback, their writing will improve and the next essay will be better written. Don't rush the writing process but...

**Tip 4: Stick to a Schedule.**

As you will need to write four total essays, try to finish each essay in 2-4 weeks. If you procrastinate, you might not have time to share your essays with family, friends, and teachers.

**Tip 5: Share Your Essays with Others but Use Feedback Wisely.**

Don't use all of their feedback! Your uncle (who went to Harvard Law) might tell you that your second paragraph is awesome while your chemistry teacher suggests you trash it. Who's right? Share it with a few more people and triangulate! Maybe the second paragraph is great but could use a few tweaks.

In the end, trust your gut. Many editors want to do a great job and will over-edit your essay. Don't let other people take over your essays!

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www.orindachamber.org  
**The Orinda Association:**  
www.orindaassociation.org

**City Council Regular Meeting:**  
Tuesday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission**  
Wednesday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

## Dublin City Manager Linda Smith selected as new Orinda City Manager



Photo provided

### New Orinda City Manager Linda Smith

Orinda Mayor Darlene Gee announced the selection of Linda Smith to serve as Orinda's next City Manager on July 11. The Orinda City Council will consider approval of the City Manager Employment Agreement at its July 16 meeting.

Smith, who is the current City Manager of Dublin, CA, will start her tenure with the City of Orinda on Oct. 14. "Orinda is excited to have attracted an experienced and knowledgeable City Manager who is from a nearby community and who is familiar with regional and other issues of interest to Orinda to serve as our next City Manager," said Gee. "Her strong background in economic development, communications, and a wide range of local government operations will serve the City and community well."

The selection of Smith came after an extensive recruitment process which resulted

in a well-qualified candidate pool. Smith was determined by the city to be the best choice.

Smith has spent more than 22 years working in local government. She joined the City of Dublin in 2009 and served in a variety of positions before becoming City Manager in 2019. She previously worked for the cities of Brentwood and Tracy in economic development roles.

Prior to working in local government, Smith spent a decade working in the private sector as a communications and marketing executive for emerging technology companies in the Silicon Valley, as well as for companies such as Levi

Strauss, Visa, Bank of America, and the Clorox Company. A graduate of San Jose State University, Smith is also active in a number of professional associations including the International City/County Management Association.

In anticipation of the approval of her employment agreement, Ms. Smith said "I am thrilled by the opportunity to join the City of Orinda. I plan to deliver on the priorities set by the City Council, provide leadership and mentorship to the city's team of professionals, and tackle issues faced by this community." - S. O'Doherty

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## Orinda hires new Planning Director, previously with Contra Costa County

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda officials, including Mayor Darlene Gee and City Manager David Biggs, are expressing their delight at hiring Lashun Cross to be Orinda's next Planning Director, replacing long-serving Drummond Buckley who retired after many years with the city. Cross was a senior planner at Contra Costa County before joining the city team.

Originally from Miami, Florida, Cross moved to California when her childless aunt and uncle offered her a home in San Leandro. They had only one condition: she had to agree to work. Cross had no problem with that, and was soon working at a pizza restaurant, while she finished high school early. She enrolled in classes at Chabot college during her senior year, and only applied to UC Berkeley and San Luis Obispo.

Knowing that her aunt and uncle would prefer that she stay close to them, Cross enrolled at Berkeley in 1992, entering the School of Environmental Design. Cross says that her grandfather has averred that she

always wanted to be an architect from a young age.

The new Planning Director agrees that she has always been fascinated with how things look. "I've traveled a lot," Cross says, "from Egypt to Russia to France and Italy, and Egypt impressed me the most because of how different it looked."

After graduation, Cross worked for the city and county of San Francisco, under then Mayor Willy Brown in the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Streets and Environmental Services, and later working at the airport dealing with regional water quality control compliance issues. Cross still remembers getting a license to drive on the tarmac, and being the subject of a complaint from a pilot on her first time trying it out. "I didn't think I was that close to the airplane," she recalls.

In her more than 24 years with Contra Costa County, Cross worked on the airport land use commission and the Doherty Valley development in San Ramon - a



Photo Sora O'Doherty

### New Orinda City Planning Director Lashun Cross

development of 11,000 housing units in the unincorporated county area later annexed to San Ramon. Cross was with the county as the project went from paper to built.

Cross, who lives in Pinole with her partner and her adopted son, says that what really drew her to Orinda was Plan Orinda. She likes the small town feel of Orinda and wants to see the downtown precise plan implemented. Cross added that she looks for

inspiration close by, citing the development of downtown Lafayette and Walnut Creek.

Cross is spending her time getting to know the staff and the Orinda code. She had her first meeting with city attorney Osa Wolff. "I fell like this will be a good relationship," Cross said. "I like that she gives her reasoning and respects you." After taking a quick break to Hawaii, Cross is now settling in to work at the Orinda Planning Department.

## Orinda offers residents more money to increase fire code compliance

... continued from Page 1

creating 6-foot gap between the lower tree canopy and the ground; removal of juniper and

bamboo; and removal of hazardous vegetation or combustible material to a minimum height of 15 feet within three feet of

a fire apparatus road measured from back of curb or edge of pavement.

Cash payments can-

not be reimbursed; there must be written proof of payment, such as a cancelled check or bank statement.

More details are available, along with the application form, on the City of Orinda's website: [www.cognitofirms.com/CityOfOrinda1/MeasureRFireFuelsReductionIncentivePilotProgramApplication](http://www.cognitofirms.com/CityOfOrinda1/MeasureRFireFuelsReductionIncentivePilotProgramApplication)

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## Council updated on Historical Society year in review

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda Historical Society (OHS) president Alison Burns presented the annual review of the year from May 2023 to May 2024 to the City Council on July 2. Burns reviewed social and educational events that the Society has hosted or participated in, beginning with the group's first Open Evening held Dec. 1, 2023. Burns noted that the outreach event was a great success, mentioning the non-stop guitar music and songs by Patrick and Luke Burns, her husband and son.

During the reorganization of OHS, school programs were halted, but are now gradually coming back. Schools coordinator Laurie Smith was unavailable for several months, but Burns reported that there was a very successful Sleepy Hollow Kindergarten session last May, and this May Burns and Smith went to Glorietta Elementary to give a presentation to 89 third-graders.

"Laurie also made around 100 cookies, all in the shape of an O for Orinda," Burns added, and "our two student

volunteers, Miramonte juniors Ethan and Ryan Lee, produced 90 workbooks which were distributed to all the students."

Downtown walking tours, led by Kay Norman, former OHS President and longtime board member, have also resumed. Burns and Norman took a group of ten people from the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a philanthropic educational women's organization, on a tour in early June. The tour began at the Community Center, formerly the 1924 2-room school, and ended at the de Laveaga 19th century train station on Bryant Avenue.

Burns also reported on the progress of a historical marker for Orinda Motors. "Two years ago, Bill Waterman, leader of the Orinda Historic Landmarks Committee, asked the OHS to produce a plaque for the exterior of Orinda Motors," she stated in her report. "We managed to get a \$1000 grant from the Orinda Community Foundation" Burns stated.

OHS found Orinda

resident, Scott Cuyler, Creative Principal and Co-Founder of Square Peg, who was, Burns added, "kind enough to design this for us, pro bono." Burns informed the council that the OHS has recently taken possession of the plaque and will be organizing a small ceremony when it will be installed on the exterior of Orinda Motors in the fall in celebration of the garage's centenary.

Burns was also pleased to say that the OHS has been changing their display window more often than the twice-a-year required. The window has been changed frequently to reflect current seasons and events. OHS plans to celebrate the opening of the Cal Shakes season in September with another window display.

The OHS also received funds from the Orinda Woman's Club, which has enabled them to buy two new signs to put outside the Museum during opening hours, as well as a grant for software and grants from Sacramento-based company, California Re-

vealed, to preserve Orinda's history as part of their Digitization and Preservation Assistance program.

Under the grant, old issues of the Orinda Sun newspaper are being scanned, in addition to 41 historic audio video tapes. Once the digitization is completed, the originals will be returned to the OHS and the materials we be available to the public through California Revealed and links on the OHS website.

During the past year the OHS initiated a project to purchase a suitable museum collection management system to improve record-keeping and tracking of museum objects and research items. "After extensive research we selected Catalogit and were able to purchase it thanks to a grant received from the Orinda Woman's Club. We are currently in the process of implementing the product, which will also allow us to expand our web presence and make more of our collection easily accessible to the public," Burns concluded.

## New Orinda business focuses on sunglasses for children

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo provided

Megan Miyamoto's life plan was not to create sunglasses for children, but after she had a daughter and her optician aunt in Los Angeles educated her about the damage done to children's eyes by sun exposure at early ages, she wound up doing just that. She learned that 80% of UV exposure occurs before the age of 18, and can lead to serious eye health concerns such as cataracts and eyelid cancer.

The management consultant went out to purchase sunglasses for her daughter, but found that styles suitable for Asian children, who tend to have shallow nose bridges, were rare. "Ray Ban made a low-bridge fit, but only offered it in limited styles and colors," Miyamoto noted.

She also looked for private labels, but couldn't find what she wanted; so, she found a great designer to work with to produce sunglasses in styles and colors that both kids and parents would like. She now produces and sells sunglasses in two sizes and four colors: deep matcha, lychee cream, mochi crumble, and yuzu. Her daughter got the first pair. Miyamoto held a launch event in June at the Quarry House in Wilder.

Miyamoto's glasses are designed in Europe and are being manufactured in Asia. She has conducted most of her meetings with designers and manufacturers via the Zoom meeting platform. Her marketing plan includes the use of influencers and grass

roots word of mouth.

Her brand, Miko, is available online and in limited retail shops, including Min'Na in Berkeley. The Pacifica frame comes in one size for littles and another that fits bigger children and smaller adults. Although they are designed for people with low nose bridges, they are comfortable on almost everyone, Miyamoto says.

The design includes enhanced built-in support and high quality polarized lenses that reduce glare. The sunnies, as Miyamoto calls them, are also hypoallergenic for sensitive skin, and her company is a local Asian American and Pacific Islander woman-owned small business.

The sustainable acetate frames can also be used by opticians for prescription lenses. Each pair comes with a hard case and a microfiber cleaning cloth. She also offers accessories, such as straps and wet/dry bags. She is also exploring the use of recycled materials.

While continuing to work in technology full time, Miyamoto describes her sunglass business as a "passion project." "I am passionate about kids products and education," she says.

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## In Memory

### David Martin Ernsberger

July 27, 1945-July 2, 2024



David Martin Ernsberger, July 27, 1945-July 2, 2024, passed away on Tuesday, July 2 at the age of 78 in Austin, Texas. He lost his beloved wife, Nancy, on April 26 after her own battle with cancer. They were married for 57 years and apart for two months. They had many adventures together and loved to meet new friends and travel. He was born in South Bend, IN, making him a lifelong Notre Dame fan, and was predeceased by his parents, Martin and Ledoshia Ernsberger and his brother, Don Ernsberger, and is survived by his children, Eric, Stacey and Marci, his brother, Jack Ernsberger, and his

grandchildren Avery, Harper, Penny and Nolan.

He was a hard-working man with a successful 30-year career at IBM, where he was a great mentor and colleague to many. He lived in the town of Moraga for 12 years and loved the group of friends that he met there. He was a big supporter of the Campolindo women's basketball team, which his daughter Marci was a part of and was thrilled when they won the state championship in 1994 and 1995. He was also very proud of his wife's teaching career at Orinda Intermediate School. After retiring, they spent their years split between Texas and New Hampshire. Anyone who was lucky enough to know him knows how he could light up a room with his charm and fun-loving nature. There will be a celebration of life for Dave and Nancy on Friday, July 26 at 5pm at Camp Ogontz, 14 Ogontz Rd. Lyman, NH 03585 and a service in Austin for Dave on Saturday, August 24 at 11am at Weed-Corley-Fish Lake Travis.

Please RSVP for New Hampshire 7/26 at <http://evite.me/xNyQNunVrj>  
Please RSVP for Austin 8/24 at <http://evite.me/daveernsberger>

If you wish, in lieu of flowers, please feel free to donate to one of the projects Dave & Nancy supported. Partridge Lake Property Owners association/Water Quality Fund, PO Box 4, Littleton, NH 03561 an organization keeping Partridge Lake safe for all who enjoy it. The Littleton Cultural Arts Commission, c/o Town of Littleton, 125 Main Street Littleton, NH 03561, which supports the growth and expansion of culture and arts in the community. Littleton Rotary Club Charitable Fund, PO Box 302, Franconia, NH 03580, whose primary effort is raising funds for secondary education.

## Letters to the editor

### Sales Tax measure

I would strongly urge Lafayette not to put a sales tax increase on the ballot.

Our current sales tax is 8.75%, or 8.75% on every dollar. The proposal is for a 1 penny increase. In truth this is an 11% plus increase in the sales tax, far above the 2% inflation rate the fed is aiming for.

Many cities and counties in California have sales tax rates below 8.75%.

Currently on any property tax bill there are already numerous additional fees and taxes added onto each bill, for homeowners and renters this is a burden.

Lafayette residents recently are getting pummeled by numerous other increases to homeowners insurance, car insurance, utility rates, inflation from every corner, not to mention increases in fees just about everywhere from tolls to entrance fees.

And the state has added a new bond measure for the November election that if passed will be additional fees to homeowners and in turn renters.

The middle class is being overburdened, it's endless.

Lafayette doesn't want to tighten it's belt yet wants us to cut back and

tighten ours.

Ty Allison  
Lafayette

### MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker

I commend Chief Winnacker on all he has done for the community, especially his attention to wildfire prevention, a necessary service that was essentially ignored prior to his arrival. He created the North Orinda and the Tunnel East Bay Hills fuel breaks and the Community Wildfire Prevention Plan (CWPP).

Unfortunately, we have a long way to go. State Farm, Orinda's main fire insurer, recently cancelled 55% of Orinda's policies because of our unacceptable wildfire risk. Other insurers, apparently all other insurers (because it appears that replacing State Farm is virtually impossible), have agreed with State Farm's assessment. If any organization understands risk, it would be the insurance industry.

Bottom line is, we do not have an effective wildfire prevention policy. We have not modeled where the risk is highest and should be addressed (the 2022 proposal by the Center for Catastrophic Risk Management was rejected by Orinda because it had "other priorities). And we are not spending our tax

dollars on mitigating the risk, namely removing excess vegetation.

Rather, MOFD sets code and expects the district's 13,000 private property owners to do the heavy lifting.

This is what other communities do. But Orinda and Moraga are not "other" communities.

MOFD is awash with cash. The District will take in \$34.7 million in property taxes plus \$3.5 million in other revenue this year. It projects a \$1.1 million surplus ending up with \$27.6 million in its General and Capital Funds. It's long range financial plan shows a combined balance of \$69 million in ten years. The District could generate an additional \$2 million in parcel taxes annually, but every year the board chooses not to, most recently at their June 19 board meeting.

If Orinda burns, and someday it will, it will be the responsibility of "our" fire department not spending "our" taxes on critical needs. It has been estimated by a wildfire prevention expert that it would cost about \$12 million to mitigate Orinda's excess vegetation. The money is there, it is just not being spent on what it should be.

Steve Cohn  
Orinda

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

## In Memory

### Laura Marie (Hardoin) Olson

September 20, 1957 - June 19, 2024



Laura Marie Olson, 66, of Moraga CA, passed away peacefully in her sleep on June 19, 2024 after a brief battle with cancer. She was a beloved mother, grandmother, wife, and sister, and a dedicated member of her local community and church.

Born in Mt. Clemens, MI in 1957, to Raymond and Cora Hardoin, Laura moved with her family to Santa Barbara, CA in 1968. She grew up surrounded by siblings Michael (Rosalie), Susan (Paul Jordan), Evelyn (Jim Reizer), and Donna (Chris Terpening). Laura met Chuck Olson at San Marcos High School and they married in 1978, embarking on their journey filled with love, family, and faith.

Their first child, Charlie Jr. (Jill), was born in 1981, followed by Jonathan (Danielle) in 1984 and Vanessa (Bobby Wilson) in 1986. Laura devoted herself to raising their children, setting roots in Moraga, CA in 1995. Laura loved being a grandmother and cherished her time with her grandchildren, including Charlie's sons Van and Reid, and Vanessa's daughters Amelia and Isla.

Once her children started school, Laura returned to work as a Teachers' Aid, completing a remarkable 33-year career in 2024. She made a lasting impact on the lives of countless students and colleagues at Camino Pablo Elementary School, working alongside educators like Michael Adler and Barbara Elliott.

Laura's faith was central to her life, evident in her active involvement at Willow Spring Church. Laura's kindness, devotion, and unwavering love were testaments to her character as a true angel on Earth.

A memorial service was held at Willow Spring Church on July 13th. Laura leaves behind a legacy of love, faithfulness, and selflessness, survived by her husband, children, siblings, as well as her cherished grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers and to continue her legacy, items for the children at Camino Pablo can be purchased in her honor through the QR code below linked to an Amazon Wish List:



## Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

## Public Safety

**Emergency response:**  
Emergency: 24 Hours 911  
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours  
925-284-5010  
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or [www.nixle.com](http://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  
945497tip@gmail.com  
Police Department Traffic Issues  
945497traffic@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](mailto:Orindatip@cityoforinda.org)

## Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

**June 23 - July 6**  
Alarms 60  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 18  
Traffic 49  
Suspicious Circumstances 5  
Suspicious Subject 14  
Suspicious Vehicle 13  
Service to Citizen 19  
Patrol Req./Security Check 17  
Public/School Assembly Check 1  
Supplemental Report 20  
Vacation House Check 57  
Welfare Check 24  
Ordinance Violation 4

**Vehicle violations**  
Accident Injury  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Auto Burglary  
911 Block Hidden Valley Rd.  
3500 Block Terraden Way  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
1st St./Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.  
3830 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Police Department  
Brook St./Dewing Ave.  
Stanley Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.  
Reckless Driving  
Deer Hill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Upper Happy Valley Rd./Happy Valley Rd.  
900 Block Acalanes Rd./Glenside Dr.  
Moraga Rd./St. Marys Rd.  
Te - Fire And Amb Enroute  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./2Nd St  
Te - Property Damage  
900 Block Acalanes Rd.  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Moraga Rd./Moraga Blvd.  
Vehicle Theft  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Lafayette Cir.  
10 Block Crest Rd.

**Other criminal activity**  
Computer Fraud  
1000 Block Manzanilla Pl.  
Forgery  
3600 Block Mosswood Dr.  
Fraud False Pretenses  
3400 Block St Marys Rd.  
600 Block N Silverado Dr.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Grand Theft  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Panhandling  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Petty Theft  
700 Block Solana Dr.  
3200 Block Kohrer Dr.  
Petty Theft From Veh  
900 Block Hough Ave.  
Shoplift  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (12)  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
1200 Block Panorama Dr.  
10 Block Lois Ln.  
Loud Music  
10 Block Tanglewood Ln.  
Edwards Ct./Mcgraw Ln.  
Loud Noise  
3200 Block Acalanes Ave.  
900 Block Moraga Rd. (2)  
800 Block Solana Dr.  
Loud Party  
No House Number  
Valory Ln./Happy Valley Rd.  
Public Nuisance  
3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Vandalism  
10 Block Greenvalley Ct.  
1400 Block Sunset Lp.  
El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.  
900 Block Dewing Ave.  
**Other**  
Animal Cruelty  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Fireworks  
3600 Block Mosswood Dr.  
1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
Huntleigh Dr./Lucas Dr.  
Mosswood Dr./Village Center  
Mosswood Dr./Sundale Rd.  
100 Block Bacon Ct.  
Acalanes High School  
Sundale Rd./Village Center  
Kohrer Dr./St. Marys Rd.  
500 Block St. Marys Rd.  
Loitering  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Trespass  
3800 Block Las Huertas Rd.  
20 Block Woodbury  
Highlands Ct.

**Vehicle violations**  
Auto Burglary  
1100 Block Cedarwood  
1100 Block Larch Ave. (2)  
1300 Block Larch Ave.  
Excessive Speed  
Moraga Rd./St. Marys Rd.  
Chalda Way/Rheem Blvd.  
St Andrews Dr./Country Club Dr.  
No House Number  
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. (3)  
Dollar Tree  
Moraga Rd./St. Marys Rd.  
700 Block Moraga Rd., Laf  
Campolindo Dr./Moraga Rd.  
Camino Pablo/Canyon Rd  
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.  
St Andrews Dr./Country Club Dr.  
Rheem Theater  
Moraga Orinda Fire Station 41  
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr. (4)  
Ascol Dr./Moraga Rd.  
Ifo 711  
Reckless Driving  
School St./Country Club Dr.  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
**Other criminal activity**  
Fraud Credit Card  
20 Block Juniper Way  
Police Department  
Fraud False Pretenses  
1200 Block Rimmer Dr.  
3900 Block Paseo Grande  
Grand Theft  
1100 Block Moraga Rd.  
Panhandling  
Taco Bell  
Petty Theft  
1100 Block Larch Ave.  
1200 Block Larch Ave.  
1100 Block Rimer Dr.  
Residential Burglary  
60 Block Gaywood Pl.  
1100 Block Cedarwood Dr.  
1100 Block Larch Ave.  
Not Available  
Shoplift  
500 Block Moraga Rd. (2)  
Warrant Service  
Police Department, Ori


**Nuisance to the Community**  
Loud Noise  
1000 Block Del Rio Way  
Loud Party  
100 Block Paseo Del Rio  
Hacienda  
Glora Ct./Carr Dr.  
Public Nuisance  
Starbucks  
Kendall Cir./Moraga Rd.  
Vandalism  
10 Block Shannon Ct.  
**Other**  
Animal Cruelty  
Safetyway (2)  
Not Available  
Fireworks  
Canyon Rd./Larch Ave.  
Moraga Country Club  
Trespass  
St Marys College  
10 Block Miramonte Dr.

**Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report**  
**June 25 - July 8**  
Alarms 13  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 2  
Traffic 42  
Suspicious Circumstances 2  
Suspicious Subject 3  
Suspicious Vehicle 4  
Service to Citizen 35  
Patrol Req./Security Check 8  
Public/School Assembly Check 8  
Supplemental Report 18  
Vacation House Check 1  
Welfare Check 5  
Ordinance Violation 0




**Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back**






# Give them a Sense of PRIDE





**Summer Adult Choir**  
Guest Director: Darita Seth



**Sat. July 27, 2024 | 7:30pm**  
Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church

**Sun. July 28, 2024 | 4:00pm**  
First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

General Admission: \$25 | Student: \$10  
cantareconviso.org | ph: 510.836.0789

## Popover Strawberry Shortcake with Yogurt Whipped Cream & Dark Chocolate Sauce

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

This is such a fun variation on strawberry shortcake, using popovers in place of the shortcake biscuits! I love the spongy texture of the cooled popovers filled with strawberries and cream. Nowadays, whenever whipped cream is called for in a dessert like this, I usually blend it on a one-to-one ratio with nonfat plain Greek yogurt. The combination is so delicious and gives a hint of tanginess to the whipped cream that offsets the sweetness of the berries and chocolate sauce. But, if you are not a yogurt fan, just stick with the whipped cream!

Popovers are so much fun to watch bake

as they poof up and rise way above the pan, leaving an airy open center. But, don't open the oven while they are baking. Be patient and if you have a glass window in your oven, you can see them rise! Once you take them out of the oven and they begin to cool, they settle back down into a spongy texture. If you prefer to keep them open, airy, and crispier, then poke a little air hole in the top of each popover as soon as you take them out of the oven to allow the steam to escape. If they do collapse, don't worry at all, because the texture of the inside is a delicious spongy bread that soaks up the strawberry juices

and cream in this recipe.

You'll need a non-stick muffin tin or an actual popover tin, which is available at most kitchen stores. The popover pan allows for more air to circulate around the batter than a muffin tin, but I find that a well-greased non-stick muffin tin works very well too.

Popovers are very versatile and can be made with cheese and savory spice blends or left plain and scooped up with your favorite jam for breakfast. We've made them with Parmesan, salt, and pepper to use as dinner rolls and they are fantastic and light.

Strawberries and chocolate pair so well together, so I made our simple dark chocolate sauce to drizzle over the top of everything!

### Popover Strawberry Shortcake

(Makes 6 Servings)

#### INGREDIENTS

- Popovers
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tbsp. vegetable or extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Strawberries
- 2 pints strawberries, stems removed and sliced

#### Whipped Cream

- 1 cup heavy cream
  - 1 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
  - 1 tsp. vanilla
  - 2 tbsp. powdered sugar
- Using an electric beater, or your standing mixer, whip cream to stiff peaks. Fold in the yogurt, vanilla, and powdered sugar. Refrigerate until ready to use.

#### Chocolate Sauce

- 10 oz. dark or bittersweet chocolate chips (or bars, cut up)
  - 1/4 cup light agave syrup
  - 1/3 cup water (+/-)
  - 1-2 tsp. vanilla extract
- In a saucepan, melt chocolate along with agave and water. Whisk until smooth and stir in vanilla extract.

#### DIRECTIONS

##### POPOVERS

Preheat oven to 400 F. Prepare your muffin or popover tin by rubbing the entire inside of the cups with a thin layer of butter. Then, spray them with cooking spray. This will really help to get them out of the pan more easily. Set aside.

In a medium sized bowl, whisk the eggs until well blended. Whisk in milk, oil and salt and stir well. Slowly whisk in the flour and continue to whisk well until blended and smooth.

Pour batter into prepared tins and fill to about 3/4 full. Bake for about 20-25 minutes, or until popovers are super puffy, tall, and are golden brown. Remove from oven and immediately poke a little hole in the top of the popover with a long toothpick or small knife to allow the steam to release. This will keep your popovers from collapsing. Cool completely.

While the popovers are baking, it's a great time to clean and slice the strawberries, whip the cream, and make the chocolate sauce. Then, you'll be all ready to serve as soon as the popovers are baked and cooled.

When ready to serve, you can open up the top of the popover to fill it with the sliced berries, or simply serve the berries over the top. Either way, put a dollop of the yogurt-whipped cream both under and over the top of the berries. Arrange a sliced berry on top and drizzle chocolate sauce over the top of everything.



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

## Chalk drawings bring color to Saranap neighborhood

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Photo Elaine Borden Chandler

Annie Andres, Lily Andrews, and Leah Andres with one of their chalk drawings.

Amidst the Fourth of July traditions of grilling, fireworks, and parades, Saranap neighborhood has one that is beloved but unique. As two women at the Forma Gym informed their friends: "We're going to see the chalk drawings." At Annual Ponderosa Lane Fourth of July Celebration, the street was closed off and filled with people in themed outfits, Ameri-

can flags, and tables sitting in driveways waiting to be loaded with food. At the curve of the street, the pavement itself bloomed into color, covered by dozens of chalk drawings. The two artists behind this little local tradition are two teenage girls, Lily Andrews and Annie Andres.

Lily, wearing white crocs and a cowrie anklet, stood over the stars

and stripes ice cream cone that she drew for the occasion. "I had chalk on my face and stomach and legs. My mom was like, 'Did you fall in a pool of chalk?'" she said cheerfully. Lily is 13 years old and the fourth generation of her family to live on Ponderosa Lane. She said that probably everyone in the close-knit neighborhood knows Betty Crawford. "That's her great grandmother," explained Annie, pushing her long straight hair over her shoulder.

Next to the ice cream cone was an intricate and remarkably symmetrical flower that Annie, 14 years old and covered in paintings of stars and fireworks, had created. "I also helped my sister with that one," she said, pointing to a crescent moon. Her sister Leah Andres, the tallest of the three with long wavy blonde hair, occasionally joins the other two but also acts as chalk runner and car lookout. "Whenever Annie runs out of chalk, she just tells me to get more," she said look-

ing amused.

The chalk drawing started during Covid when Fiona Greenaway, a neighbor, had several boxes of chalk that needed to be used. She and Annie started making drawings in the street, but soon Fiona stopped and Lily joined Annie. In the beginning, they mostly drew whatever came to mind. Now they often reference what other artists are doing on Pinterest and have become much more skilled. Lily noted that both her style and freehand have improved after drawing for so many years.

Their drawings on July 4 included flowers, delicate bubbles, a faded flamingo, a rippling American flag, Dumbo, a sun, and a coconut. Annie nodded to a bug-eyed rooster from "Moana," saying, "Lily did the Hei Hei there, which I really like." Annie drew an enormous whale shark, so enormous that it ended up causing some technical difficulties. Giggling, Lily said, "Annie was like, 'I don't have enough blue, it's going to have to be dif-

ferent colors!'" Annie started laughing too. "I had no blue whatsoever!" As people walked by on their way to the children's bicycle race, the girls mused on what their next projects should be — Annie wanted to check her Pinterest board for chalk art while Lily said she had wanted to draw a Pacman.

Kayla Andrew, Lily's mother, enjoys whatever the girls draw. "It's so fun because it brings joy to so many people. And they love doing it, so all around it's a great thing," she said, standing in her festively decorated driveway. Annie's father Mike Andres, who was wearing an American flag jumpsuit, noted with pride that she has always had a flare for artwork. "It really livens up the neighborhood," he added, gazing over the drawings. "A lot of the neighbors come by to stop and look at it. They seem to come by during their evening walks just to see the artwork."

Gail Burnett is one such neighbor. She walks by every day with her friend Marlene to check

out the drawings. She said that people in the neighborhood compare notes on which drawings they have seen. "The most recent one is really this spectacular, huge flower. It goes almost from curb to curb," she said. Several people mentioned the drawings had in particular given the neighborhood a spot of joy in their day during lockdown. People still take pictures of the drawings and ask Lily and Annie about them. Small children sometimes ask them to make specific drawings for their birthdays. "I had a neighbor ask if I could draw Spider-Man for their birthday recently," recalled Annie.

Other children also have drawn with them for a couple of weeks, especially kids who are new to the neighborhood. However, Annie and Lily are the ones who have kept on drawing for years. When asked what has made them continue, Lily chirped, "It's really people just coming by and saying that they love it."

## SMC's NEW Leadership program

... continued from Page 5

Choosing to admit a small number of students to the program was intended to make the learning experience more intimate. "We wanted to use this as an opportunity to build connections and network," explained Ruiz. "It's a concentrated way to open a door for yourself."

SMC chose appli-

cants who demonstrated leadership experience at their respective campus or community and were seeking to expand their knowledge about politics and civic engagement.

"The applications included questions with regards to past experience," stated Santiago. "We also wanted recommendations from professors, and we reached out to other schools and con-

tacts that we knew in order to get good candidates. Most were from community colleges, five are from St. Mary's and one is from Humboldt."

Lafayette Mayor Gina Dawson, California State Representative Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Contra Costa District Attorney Diana Becton, and Orinda Mayor Darlene Gee, were among the more than 22 guest

speakers and panelists scheduled for the one week program.

Besides attending lectures and workshops on topics ranging from the workings of state politics to how to run a political campaign, and the opportunity to participate in professionalization sessions in order to learn the necessary skills for entrance into the public sphere and suc-

ceed, the students traveled to the Capitol in Sacramento for a government day to learn how to present bills through the legislature by joining teams and taking on a variety of roles during the process.

"This will be an annual event, and hopefully it will get bigger," said Santiago and Ruiz. "We are very thankful for the seed money we

received to do this — from the League of Women Voters, the American Association of University Women, and especially the SMC alumni. We want this to be a long term sustainable program."

For more information email: [newleadershipsmc@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:newleadershipsmc@stmarys-ca.edu).

**Not to be missed**

**Art**

**Valley Art Gallery** presents: My Places in the Sun, oil paintings by Maria SantoStefano. Runs through Aug. 3. Valley Art Gallery, 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110 - Walnut Creek; <https://valleyartgallery.org>

**Music**

**Folk Music Festival** at Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette on Aug. 2, and Nov. 1. Town Hall Theatre Co, 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door [www.townhalltheatre.com/front-porch](http://www.townhalltheatre.com/front-porch)

**Orinda - Concerts** are held at the Orinda Community Park on Thursday night from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Call (925) 254.2445 for information. Thursday, July 25 - Aug. Reed Band; Thursday, Aug. 1 - Tin Man; Thursday, Aug. 15 - Vintage Jukebox; Thursday, Aug. 29 - Spill the Wine; Thursday, Sept. 12 - Patron

**Lamorinda Idol performance** on Wednesday, July 31, from 6 to 8 p.m. live at the Moraga Commons for a special event, sponsored by Moraga Art in Public Spaces and Lamorinda Arts Council. Bring a picnic and enjoy an evening of Idol's solo and group performers. Wonderful for the whole family. Free to the public.

**Cantare Summer Concert:** Give Them a Sense of Pride. Saturday, July 27 at 7:30 p.m. Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr, Lafayette, and on Sunday, July 28, at 4 p.m., First Presbyterian Church of Oakland, 2619 Broadway, Oakland. Tickets and more information are available online at [www.cantareconvo.org](http://www.cantareconvo.org), by phone at (510) 836-0789, or at the door. General Admission: \$25. Students: \$10.

**Literature**

**Art Embraces Poetry:** Poetry Readings and 3 Minute Open Mic at Town Hall Theatre on July 20. Listen to poets

**Not to be missed**

Gail Rudd Entrekim, Jim Guninshan, and Linda Riedel, plus artist Emily Bennett from Acalanes High School, who will display her artwork from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. A 3 Minute Open Mic runs from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on a first-come, first served basis. Reception follows in lobby with a No Host Bar at Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette 94549. Free. Questions? Call (925) 359-9940 or visit <https://LamorindaArts.org/art-embraces-words>.

**Join Tom Steyer** at Orinda Books to celebrate the release of his new book, "Cheaper, Faster, Better," on Wednesday, July 24 at 6 p.m. Tom Steyer describes how we can win the war on climate. He shows how capitalism can be used to scale climate progress, debunks arguments made by climate deniers, and provides an inspirational call to make stabilizing our planet part of our life's work. Information at [www.orindabooks.com](http://www.orindabooks.com).

**Join Willy Vlautin** at Orinda Books on the day of the release of his latest novel, "The Horse," on Tuesday, July 30, at 5 p.m. Willy is the award-winning author of earlier novels, including "The Motel Life," "Northline," and "Lean on Pete," which was adapted into a well-regarded film. He is also the founding member of the bands Richmond Fontaine and The Delines. Information at [www.orindabooks.com](http://www.orindabooks.com).

**Other**

**Mocktails & Cocktails** Sunday July 28, 4 to 6 p.m. at Tutu's Lafayette, 53 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Join friends of the Lamorinda Arts Council for some words with creative makers. Look for their knockoff Picassoesque poster of surrealist Dora Maar - that's us! No host bar. Just show up. Questions? Call (925) 359.9940.

**Come to the parking lot** at Lafayette Christian Church for a Book Faire. Browse and take a book or two (10 book limit per

household). All books are free. Saturday, July 27 from 9 11 a.m. There will be adult and children fiction and nonfiction books. LCC is located at 584 Glenside Drive across from the Las Trampas Swim Club. Lots of parking.

**Week-long celebration** of Latin America at Leshar Center for the Arts with Fiesta Cultural, offering internationally-acclaimed music, dance, comedy, and a free street fair, July 16 through 20. Paint a Frida Workshop: 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 17; Lucky Diaz and the Family Jam Band: 10 a.m. Thursday, July 18; Summer Sounds: Chika Di: 5:30 p.m. Thursday, July 18; Spanish Harlem Orchestra: 7:30 p.m. Friday, July 19; Free street fair: noon to 7 p.m. Saturday, July 20; Best of San Francisco Stand-Up Comedy: Latinx Comedy Night: 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, July 20; INFO: For tickets or more information, the public may visit [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org) or call the box office at (925) 943-7469 (open Wed-Sun, 12-6pm). Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr, Walnut Creek.

**Moraga Historical Society** presents Mark Harrigan, a video blogger, who has been producing Contra Costa County history videos for 10 years on Facebook's "680/24 Corridor History Group". Harrigan is a frequent contributor to the "I Grew Up In Moraga" Facebook site. Join for his stories about the Rheem Bowl, Moraga Barn, Lafayette's Roundup Saloon, Valle Vista, Moraga Adobe, and the California &

Nevada Railroad that ran through Orinda. Sunday, Aug. 11 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Hacienda de las Flores, Casita Building, 2100 Donald Dr. RSVP: [ranch-susan@aol.com](mailto:ranch-susan@aol.com) by July 28. Moraga Historical Society members free, guests \$5. Reservations only. Limited seating.

**Orinda Police Department** is hosting the annual National Night Out event at their station this summer. Meet your neighbors, learn how to help fight crime, and have fun on Tuesday, Aug. 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. Join for an evening of community building over BBQ (hot dogs and hamburgers). If you bring a backpack or school supplies to donate, you'll have the opportunity to dunk the Chief of Police in the dunk tank! All supplies will be donated to the Family Justice Center in Concord.

**Garden**

**Bringing Back the Natives** Garden Tour presents an online talk in the "You Can Do It!" series: You Can Do It! 10 Steps to Creating a Bird-Friendly Garden (Online). Presenter: Brian Dirking. Tuesday, July 23, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Register at: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqRZ-CSoO9Rgv1wxAjYKY37vJ80YcDBkP9QJzaD-BI8wa\\_w/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqRZ-CSoO9Rgv1wxAjYKY37vJ80YcDBkP9QJzaD-BI8wa_w/viewform). This interactive online workshop will explore gardening from a bird's perspective and then delve into the ten elements that can transform your garden into a bird paradise.

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

## Time for Campolindo archer Jack Saltzberg to take a bow

By Jon Kingdon



Jack Saltzberg

Photo provided

Even with a wide range of sports available at the Lamorinda schools, there are still any number of sports that are not available, requiring the student-athletes to go off-campus in order to train and compete in, such as rugby, crew, dirt bike racing, and archery.

Jack Saltzberg, an upcoming senior at Campolindo High School, took up the sport of archery at age 12, and has made such great

strides he is in the running to make the United States Archery team.

It was at his mother's prompting that Jack went to see if archery were something that he would enjoy. "My mom found a local range called Redwood Bowman near the Chabot Space and Science Center," he said. "After taking a few classes, I found I liked the challenge and satisfaction of hitting the target and I got my own

equipment."

Like any sport, it all begins with the fundamentals – how to get into proper alignment with the bow and arrow, bringing your elbow back around back, and then making a triangle with your bow hand, chest, and elbow.

For Jack, it was also an opportunity to develop new relationships. "After I was recruited to join The Chia Archery Club, I became friends with members of that club," Saltzberg said. "When I share what I am doing with my friends, their reaction is that it's pretty cool."

It didn't come all that quickly to Saltzberg: "It was at the two-year mark when I felt I was pretty good at it. When I got to the point where the majority of my shots were landing in the gold and red, (the highest point areas on the target) that was pretty satisfying."

Archery is a year-round sport with indoor and outdoor seasons, which can make finding time to practice difficult. "During the school year I practice twice-a-week and sometimes only once a week when I get particularly busy," Saltzberg said.

Saltzberg goes to tournaments with his

club team, and sometimes others on his own. "I got to all of my tournaments with my mom and then we meet up with the team once we are there," Saltzberg said. "Our coach, Victor Chia, will pick the hotel where most of us stay. After competing during the day, we have a good time hanging out together talking and playing cards."

In the Olympics, the archers are required to use a recurve bow, which uses an adjustable sight that is a rod-like object to which a sight pin is set up to help them view the target better. Saltzberg uses a barebow – a basic style of the recurve bow that does not permit accessories to aid in aiming or stabilization.

"In the first class I attended, I learned how to shoot with a barebow," Saltzberg said. "I liked it because it's simpler and more pure in a way because it's considered harder to shoot and I don't want to have to deal with all of the equipment of recurve or compound bows. The other disciplines are certainly valid on their own, but I just enjoy the basics of barebow."

With his barebow, Saltzberg has broken five state records and

has three tournaments left in Sacramento, New Mexico, and Ohio to see if he will be invited to be on the USA Archery team. "The top five in each category are offered a spot on the team," Saltzberg said. "You get ranked by where you place at each national tournament and the system only takes into consideration your top three best places."

Though it is obviously a non-contact sport, Saltzberg wears protective gear: "I have an arm guard on my left forearm which protects me from getting burned by the string and I wear a finger tab on my right hand which allows me to release the string more smoothly and so it doesn't hurt my fingers. There are a few injuries to watch out for – hyper-extension and pulling muscles are the most common injuries but if you have proper form, warm up, and your equipment is suited to you, you shouldn't get injured."

What makes a good archer? "In general, you need good back strength, a solid core and shoulders, and arms come into it as well," Saltzberg said. "You're going to need to be precise, consistent, stable, and pa-

tient. You also need to be more adaptable using the barebow because you have to figure out changes to make on your own unlike being able to adjust the equipment on the recurve bows."

There is also the mental aspect of archery that cannot be overlooked. "Coach Chia really emphasizes rhythm, tempo, and timing so you don't want to hold for too long or shoot too quickly," Saltzberg said. "Before each arrow I try to make sure that I'm calm, and I don't have any distractions in my head. When I go to draw, I rely on the form that I've trained consistently, and when I'm holding the bow and actually aiming it, I'm focusing on the target face and the tip of my arrow. I'll hold it for a little bit to make sure it's stable and when I feel it's right, I'll release it. A tournament can be physically taxing so I try to stay hydrated throughout, where, depending on the tournament, we will shoot either 72 or 144 arrows."

There may be another archer for Saltzberg to compete against: "My mom is considering archery as well," Saltzberg said.

## St. Mary's basketball team trip to Italy

By Jon Kingdon



St. Mary's basketball team in Rome

Photo courtesy Emily Smith, Director of Digital Media

If you run into any member of the St. Mary's women's basketball team and ask them what they did this summer, be prepared for a long and colorful answer. On July 24, the team left on a flight to Italy for a ten-day trip visiting Rome, Siena, Caserta, Naples, Florence, Venice, Pisa, Vatican City, the Amalfi Coast, and Caserta, arriving back in America on July 4.

Junior transfer Kiki Afeaki (U. of San Diego) learned about the upcoming trip on a recruiting visit to St. Mary's. "When I was told about the team going to Italy, I was like 'Perfect. I'm there.'" My family was very happy for me because this was a one in a lifetime experience, but they were a little jealous as well."

For Addison Wedin and her sister, Ella, a sophomore, their first thoughts were about their sister Taycee, who graduated from St. Mary's two years earlier. "We felt bad that Taycee would not be on the trip," Addison said. "She was a little jealous but she and our whole family were excited that Ella

and I got to go together."

The team played three basketball games on the trip, but St. Mary's made certain that the team's "Foreign Summer Tour" would be about more than just basketball. One day it was exploring Venice and taking a gondola ride through the old canals, touring the scenic Rialto Bridge and the 1,000-year-old Basilica di San Marco, and riding a train back to Florence through the Italian countryside.

Then it was on to visit the leaning Tower of Pisa, which included climbing the 248 stairs to the top. "That was a lot of stairs and at times you would feel your balance tipping a little bit," Afeaki said.

"Walking all the way to the top and then taking pictures was one of the favorite things I did," Wedin said. "It was really pretty, and Venice was very cool riding in the gondolas."

From there it was on to Florence for a tour of the Accademia Gallery, which included the viewing of Michelangelo's famous statue of David along with shop-

ping and dinner on the crowded streets surrounding the Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral.

The visit to Rome included a tour of the Colosseum and the Roman Forum. The weather was a bit challenging for everyone. "Italy was very hot and humid, and Rome was definitely the hottest," Wedin said. "Once you stepped outside, you were sweating throughout the entire day, and I believe I had to take four showers a day. I really enjoyed seeing the Colosseum and walking around Rome at night, which was very cool."

After that was a tour of Vatican City and the Sistine Chapel, a day in Naples, with the trip ending in a day spent on the beach, and swimming in the Mediterranean Sea. This part of the trip was a particular favorite for Afeaki. "I had often seen the Amalfi Coast on social media and in the movies and to be there in person was a real experience," Afeaki said.

... continued on next Page



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# Looking Good in Lamorinda The lure of secondhand shopping

By Moya Stone



Photos provided  
Shorts and top at Designs2Consign.

Designer shoes and handbags available at Maven Coco.

Vintage brooches galore at Saint Anthony's.

Did you know that Aug. 17 is National Thrift Store Day? I follow several "thrifters" on Instagram and I am continually impressed with the chic outfits they put together from their thrift and consignment store finds. In addition to creating unique looks, shoppers opt for secondhand as a way to help battle climate change. According to Thread Up, the online secondhand store, purchasing clothing secondhand

reduces CO2 emissions by an average of 25%.

We are fortunate in the Lamorinda area to have quite a selection of thrift and consignment shops, all just a short drive—or even walk—away. One is Designs2Consign located in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. I recently visited and spoke with store manager Kalyn Ingersoll. She told me that there's something for everyone. "We have everyone from

teens to grandmas coming in," she said.

The shop indeed has clothing and shoes by brands such as J.Crew and Banana Republic all the way up the fashion ladder to Pucci and Carolina Herrera. Jewelry and handbags too. Everything is in excellent condition and nicely organized and displayed. Right now they are stocking for summer and I spotted some lovely dresses, one by Cynthia Rowley covered in hand

painted organza butterflies - nice for a wedding. On the casual side, Designs2Consign has a selection of shorts and tops just right for a summer festival, county faire, or a pool party. Stop by on Sundays for Happy Hour, 3 to 5:30 p.m., and enjoy libations, good company, and pick up something "new-to-you" for the season.

Prada. Chanel. Gucci. Maven Coco has these luxury labels and more.

The well-appointed shop at 21 Orinda Way in Orinda carries pre-owned clothing and accessories for work, travel, parties, and outdoor activities. They have an impressive array of shoes by Tory Burch, Salvatore Ferragamo, and Prada, to name a few. Maven Coco also offers less expensive brands such as J.Jill and Karen Kane. I found a nice wool skirt by Anne Klein at a very reasonable price.

Like handbags? They've got Coach to Louis Vuitton. Shopping at Maven Coco is a pleasant experience with plenty of merchandise to catch your eye, but not so much as to overwhelm you. Owner Katherine Amporias is a delight to meet and she's happy to help you find just what you're looking for.

Anthony DeMartile collects interesting odds and ends for Saint Anthony's Thrift at 128 Village Square in Orinda. Stepping into his shop you will find an array of goods - everything from kids toys and books to kitchen

items, clothing, and jewelry, with a particularly large selection of vintage brooches. If you're looking for secondhand men's clothing, this is the place. Saint Anthony's (not affiliated with St. Anthony's Foundation) has men's graphic T-shirts, leather jackets, and a large selection of jeans.

But wait, there's more! I stopped by Hilton House Consign in Orinda and was surprised to see placed alongside home furnishings - clothing, shoes, handbags, and a few cases filled with fine jewelry. Looking for a special piece of jewelry? Consider Hilton House. ReChic in Orinda offers consignment clothing and new gift items. Lafayette's Wayside Inn Thrift Store has been a local go-to for decades and Divine Consign, also in Lafayette, is the place to find vintage clothing and jewelry.

I say, make a day of it and hit them all!

Keep it cool and go forth in style.

Moya Stone is a freelance fashion writer at [www.overdressedforlife.com](http://www.overdressedforlife.com).

## St. Mary's basketball team trip to Italy

... continued from Page 11

"I also like being around the water and swimming in the Mediterranean Sea for an hour. It was the most beautiful place we went to."

Afeaki and Wedin had similar reactions to the food in Italy. "The

best thing about the food was that everything was so much fresher," Afeaki said.

"I had a charcuterie board with different meats and cheeses and all of the vegetables, and everything just tasted very clean and fresh," Wedin said.

Not to be overlooked were the three basketball games the team played, victories over the Basketball Sisters in Florence (99-34), Basket Roma (68-37) and Lazio Select WPH Academy (110-43). "It was a great experience for us to have because a lot of teams

don't get the privilege of playing together at this point in the year," Afeaki said. "We were able to work on things and get to know each other on and off the court and build that chemistry."

"We could tell that everyone wants to compete, and it was really

nice to see everyone working together," Wedin said. "Our opponents would come up and talk to us after the games and they were all really nice and friendly."

Head Coach Jeff Cammon spoke of the trip on the St. Mary's website: "It was an in-

credible experience. We were able to use the time to bond and come together on and off the court. We are very grateful for everyone who contributed to the Foreign Tour and made this a reality."

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# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 11 Wednesday, July 17, 2024



Making sense of expiration dates ... read on Page OH10

## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Coming in HOT!

By Cynthia Brian



The hillside wildflowers were gorgeous and abundant in June.

*May the sun bring you new energy by day. May the moon softly restore you by night." Apache Blessing*

Baby, it's hot outside! Cuts and bruises from gardening in my preferred wardrobe of my bathing suit are a small price to pay to remain cooler. Our water bills are bound to be bigger this next cycle because of the recent heat wave that sent most of us craving the cooling restoration of the moon. We have buckets in the showers and sinks to collect every extra drop of H<sub>2</sub>O. We save all gray water for our plants.

Last month I showcased my spectacular hillside wildflower garden after I had completed the hand-weeding. With the 100-degree-plus temperatures that lasted over ten days, that beauty is gone, replaced by dried plants that will be cut before this article is published. (See the before and after photos)

Not many blooms can withstand this heat. Fortunately, my trusty and drought-friendly natives, roses, clematis, agapanthus, pink bower vine, seafoam statice, lavender, potato vine, oleander, hollyhocks, and acanthus brighten the landscape with their flowers. The sea of bumble bee-loving blue nigella blossoms that last month blanketed the orchard has metamor-



The hillside wildflowers died in the heat.

Photos Cynthia Brian

phosed into seedpods. I am collecting them to give to attendees of the forthcoming September 28th Pear and Wine Festival who will visit our Be the Star You Are!® booth where our volunteers will be celebrating our 25th anniversary with the public. (For info, visit <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/events-2>)

Although my family were "dry farmers" meaning that we didn't irrigate the orchard or vines, allowing the winter rains to do their job, when heat waves arrived, we had our orders. Our dad had purchased a 1940s fire truck with a huge water tank and retrofitted it as our irrigation truck. Beginning when I was age 8, my job was to slowly drive the fire truck through the narrow rows, moving from vine to vine and tree to tree while my younger sister opened the spigots. When the tanks were empty, I drove to the well to refill. In this way, we protected our harvest when the thermometer skyrocketed into triple digits.

We don't have vintage fire trucks with water tanks to irrigate our gardens. How can we protect our precious gardens during extremely scorching weeks?

... continued on Page OH12

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LAFAYETTE	12	\$1,200,000	\$3,350,000
MORAGA	5	\$1,390,000	\$2,220,000
ORINDA	9	\$1,475,000	\$4,550,000

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.

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4082 Happy Valley Road, \$3,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 3665 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 06-03-24

3688 Hastings Court, \$2,025,000, 5 Bdrms, 2733 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 06-04-24,  
Previous Sale: \$459,500, 12-01-89

930 Hawthorne Drive, \$1,494,000, 3 Bdrms, 2122 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 06-14-24,  
Previous Sale: \$615,000, 11-21-01

1105 Magnolia Lane, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 2032 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 06-06-24

3309 Mildred Lane, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 1655 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-05-24

3966 Rancho Road, \$1,570,000, 3 Bdrms, 1781 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 06-14-24

18 Reliez Valley Court, \$1,995,000, 4 Bdrms, 2839 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 06-12-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,900,000, 06-01-21

11 Shreve Lane, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2002 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 06-03-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,163,000, 04-15-22

516 Silverado Drive, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 1908 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 06-14-24

26 Withers Court, \$2,600,000, 5 Bdrms, 4370 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 06-13-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,799,000, 07-01-19

3944 Woodside Court, \$2,405,000, 3 Bdrms, 2092 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 06-10-24

**MORAGA**

21 Ashbrook Place, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2547 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 06-14-24

4 Baltusrol Street, \$1,561,000, 3 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 06-14-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,145,000, 08-11-21

4 Southard Court, \$2,220,000, 4 Bdrms, 3517 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 06-10-24

6 Thune Avenue, \$1,390,000, 3 Bdrms, 1692 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 06-14-24,  
Previous Sale: \$719,000, 06-13-03

6 Wingfoot Street, \$2,125,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 06-12-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,290,000, 07-27-15

**ORINDA**

7 Abbott Court, \$4,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 4265 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 06-07-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,450,000, 03-20-15

9 Bel Air Drive, \$3,700,000, 6 Bdrms, 4013 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 06-03-24,  
Previous Sale: \$3,345,000, 11-07-22

96 Camino Encinas, \$3,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 3940 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 06-06-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 12-27-22

65 Hillcrest Drive, \$2,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 2224 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 06-05-24,  
Previous Sale: \$2,200,000, 03-11-21

7 La Campana Road, \$1,890,000, 3 Bdrms, 1907 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 06-12-24

117 Meadow Lane, \$1,475,000, 3 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 06-06-24,  
Previous Sale: \$839,000, 10-22-09

30 Moraga Viax, \$1,890,000, 4 Bdrms, 2486 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 06-14-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,402,500, 10-09-19

432 Ridge Gate Road, \$2,198,000, 3 Bdrms, 3011 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 06-10-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,675,000, 07-12-16

9 Via Corte, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 3047 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 06-12-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 05-28-03

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1040 UPPER HAPPY VALLEY RD, LAFAYETTE  
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ACTIVE

17 HAMMOND PLACE, MORAGA  
OFFERED FOR \$1,575,000  
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# The Real Estate Quarter in Review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T

The second quarter of 2024 remained steady on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate. The total number of sales was up in Lafayette, the same in Orinda, and down slightly in Moraga. The average price was slightly lower in Lafayette and Moraga, while the average price in Orinda was higher. The closings that occurred were those that mostly went under contract from mid-February to late May in a period of relatively stable interest rates that hover around 7%.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from April 1 through June 30, 2024, 80 single family homes closed in Lafayette. This was an increase from the 71 single family homes closed in the same period one year ago. Sales prices

ranged from \$1,080,000 to \$5,425,000 and the average number of days on market was 14. In the year ago second quarter it was 17 days. The average sales price was \$2,458,919, just below the year ago when it was \$2,499,679. In 2022 it was \$2,479,025 and \$2,180,240 in 2Q2021, and \$1,794,912 in 2Q2020.

In Moraga, the number of single-family closings was 34; a year ago it was 43. Prices ranged from \$1,200,000 to \$2,800,000, with an average sale price of \$1,985,176. In the year ago quarter it was \$2,121,393. In 2022 it was \$2,376,836. It was \$1,936,316 in 2Q2021, and 2Q2020 it was \$1,548,585. The average marketing time was 15 days, where a year ago it was 12.

In Orinda, the number of single-

family closings was 61 the same as in the year ago second quarter. Sales prices ranged from \$877,000 to \$6,337,500 with an average price of \$2,229,861, slightly higher than a year ago, when it was \$2,135,898. The 2Q2022 average was \$2,198,041. This was lower than the \$2,317,982 in the same quarter in 2021, but still well above 2Q2020 when it was \$1,808,271. It took an average of 14 days to have a house go pending, versus 21 days in the same period a year ago.

There was only one single family sale below \$1,000,000 in the three communities combined.

In the quarter ending June 30, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$922.63, which

was an increase over the year ago when it was \$882.93. In Moraga, homes sold for \$766.68 per square foot, a continued drop from the same quarter a year ago when it was \$872.32 and in 2022 when it was \$935.79. Orinda was \$848.23, which is similar to a year ago's \$833.29.

The drop in Moraga can be attributed to a smaller number of sales and in the average sales prices.

In Lafayette, the average sales price was just over 104.6% of the final asking price. A year ago, the average was just about 100% of final asking. In Moraga it was 101.7% versus 104% in the year ago period, and in Orinda it was also about 104%, the same as a year ago.

... continued on Page OH6

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All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

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## The Real Estate Quarter in Review

... continued from Page OH4

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had five resale closings versus the year ago quarter when there were nine. They sold between \$890,000 and \$1,600,000. Moraga had 13 when a year ago there were 16. Sale prices ranged from \$455,000 to \$1,775,000. Orinda had two that were \$1,538,076 and \$1,550,000.

As of July 9, there were 64 homes under contract in the MLS in the three communities combined. One year ago, there were 52. The current pending homes have asking prices of \$595,000 to \$8,495,000.

Inventory has increased. There are 134 properties on the market and a year ago there were 89 available properties in the three communities combined. This is a sizable increase in supply.

There are 59 properties on the market in Lafayette an increase from the 48 at this same time a year ago. Asking prices in Lafayette currently range from \$685,179 to \$11,900,000. In Moraga, buyers have their choice of 25 homes or condominiums listed between \$438,000 and \$2,890,000. A year ago, there were 12.

In Orinda there are 50—twice as many as on the market at the same time a year ago. The list prices range from \$493,000 to \$12,900,000.

There are no bank-owned or short sales currently in the MLS available in the three communities.

It is interesting to note that of the 134 dwellings on the market, six have lowered their asking prices in the last seven days.

Interest rates have continued to remain relatively stable. We are still seeing many buyers come to the area from San Francisco, Oakland, and the peninsula because they feel they will likely not be commuting every day, and feel that to live further distances from San Francisco or Silicon Valley is manageable.

Lastly, it is important to look at what homes are selling for versus their list prices. Often homes come on the market at unrealistic prices, and they do not sell, but in the second quarter of this year many homes have had multiple offers and have sold at or above the list price.

Of the 80 single family sales that closed in Lafayette in the second quarter of 2024, 61 sold at or above the asking prices.

In Moraga, 30 of the 34 sales were at or above the final asking price, and in Orinda, 45 of the 61 sold at or above the final listing price.

We are still seeing many buyers having to make offers without the traditional contingencies of obtaining financing or having a home appraised, or even having the home inspected. Many sellers continue to obtain pre-sale inspections in order to understand the condition of their homes and to also prevent a buyer from trying to renegotiate a lower price or repairs.

There are a lot of potential sellers who have refinanced in the past few years who are reluctant to give up their mortgage rates of under 3% and to go out and buy a home and pay what is now around 7%. This may continue to affect the market.

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# Making sense of expiration dates

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO



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Expiration dates can be a bit confusing, and it's understandable why clients often have questions about them.

Everything seems to have an expiration date now—food, medications, cosmetics—and the dates can be a bit confusing. Do you know what the dates mean and do you trust the information? This is a topic that comes up with my clients frequently.

Who and what determines expiration dates?

These dates are generally determined by manufacturers based on testing and regulatory guidelines to ensure the safety and quality of the product. They usually indicate the period during which the product is expected to remain at its “best quality”. However, the reliability of these dates can vary.

Expiration dates are partially determined by several factors, such as storage conditions (temperature, exposure to light, location of stored items). All of these factors can impact how quickly a product deteriorates.

Obviously, food products can sometimes be determined by your nose, but what about cosmetics and skincare items? After researching this topic, I found that cosmetics don't “expire” the same way that food does (of course). They can degrade overtime and have changes in color, texture, or smell. I have read that using expired cosmetics can increase the risk of skin irritation or infection, especially for eye and skin applications.

## Food Products

Imagine a bunch of food experts in white lab coats, testing how long tuna salad stays fresh...I do not want that job. They are the people that determine the magical “eat before” date. Here are three ways they test:

1. Microbial: Watching tiny bacteria party on your cheese until it's no longer safe.
2. Chemical Concoctions: Watching how vitamins vanish and flavors disappear over time.
3. Tasters - Yikes! They taste day-old donuts and weeks-old food to ensure it's peak flavor and goodness.

The FDA swoops in to make sure the “Flavor Experts” are doing their job.

They make sure your milk expiration dates are correct (so the milk doesn't turn into yogurt before its time).

## Pharmaceutical Products

Drug companies decide expiration dates in a few ways.

1. Accelerated Aging: Storing drugs at hot and humid locations to predict their shelf life.
2. Long Term Tests: Keeping them in cool, dark places for years to see how they survive

The expiration date is the last day they promise the drugs will be at their peak strength.

The FDA reviews the drugs information to ensure that they remain effective and safe until the expiration date.

## Cosmetic Products

Cosmetic companies typically have their own labs where they perform tests like:

1. Chemical tests: Making sure your face cream doesn't turn into a bacterial breeding ground.
2. Stability: Checking if your lipstick still shines and your mascara doesn't melt.

While the FDA provides the rulebook, many companies follow the guidelines from the Personal Care Products Council.

There are 4 common types of expiration dates and here are the explanations for each of them.

**Sell-By Date:** This is intended for retailers and indicates the last date the product should be sold to a customer. It does not mean the product is unsafe to consume after this date.

**Use-By Date:** This is meant to indicate the last date a product is expected to be at its best quality. It's often found on perishable and dairy products.

## Best-Before Date:

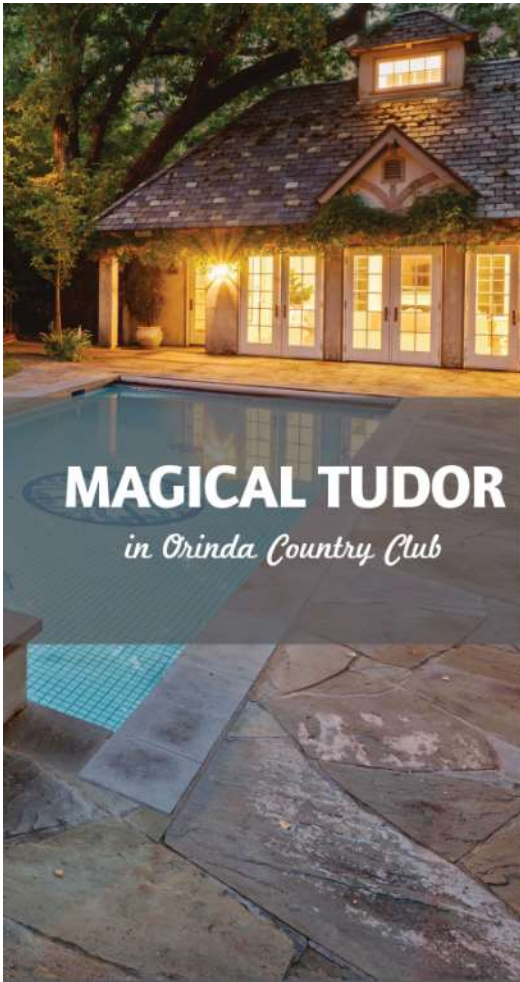
Again, this indicates the date until the product is expected to retain its best quality. After this date, it might be safe to consume but might not be at its best taste or quality.

**Expiration Date:** This is mostly used for medications and certain food products. It signifies the date after which the product might become less effective or unsafe to use.

Overall, while expiration dates provide a useful guideline, they are not always set in stone. I hope this information is helpful!

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals. She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com





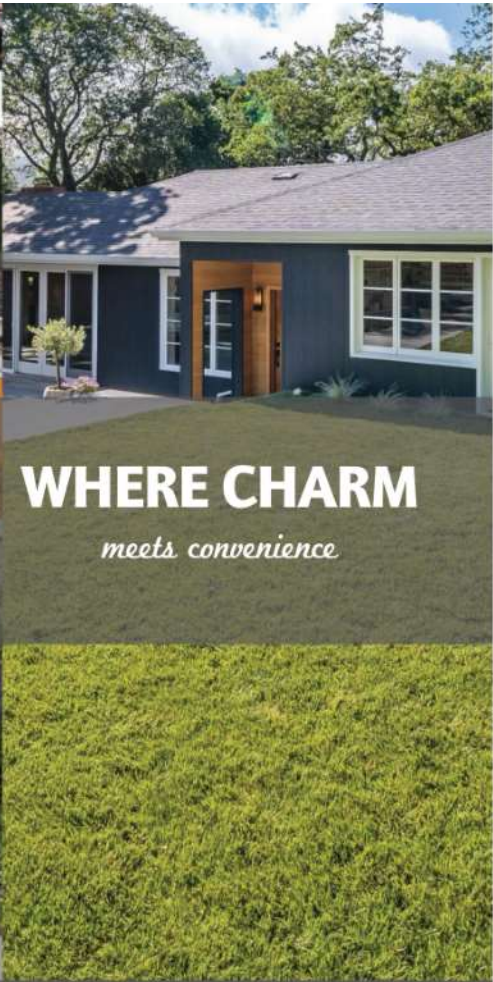
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<b>5</b> <i>Bed</i>	<b>4</b> <i>Bath</i>	<b>.76</b> <i>Acre</i>
<b>±3,648</b> <i>Sq. ft.</i>	<b>1</b> <i>Cool Pool</i>	<b>100%</b> <i>Inspirational!</i>

<b>6</b> <i>Bed</i>	<b>4.5</b> <i>Bath</i>	<b>.55</b> <i>Acre</i>
<b>±4,552</b> <i>Sq. ft.</i>	<b>1</b> <i>Nice Pool</i>	<b>100%</b> <i>Awesome!</i>

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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Coming in HOT!



Wichura red roses thrive in summer.

... continued from Page OH1

By planting your garden with heat-tolerant and drought-tolerant varieties, your chances of enjoying a beautiful landscape throughout the summer increase. In addition to succulents, the plants blooming in my landscape fit that description. However, this is NOT the time to plant new specimens, unless you only need a few color spots of annuals. Whatever plants you purchase, make sure to watch and water diligently. Wait until the cooler days in the fall to go on a shopping spree. In the meantime, watch for signs of heat-related stress such as wilting, leaves curling, yellowing, and browning. Here are actions you can immediately employ this summer that will help keep your garden alive.

**WATER, WATER, WATER:** Check soil moisture regularly. Stick a pencil or chopstick in the soil. If it is dry when removed, your plants are thirsty. Early morning or later in the evening are the best times to water. Water deeply and longer than normal. Make sure the moisture is penetrating and not running off. My preference for irrigation is late evening because the plants have hours to rehydrate. Soaker hoses and drip irrigation minimize evaporation while delivering water directly to the roots.

**MISTING:** When it is super-hot, plants, like people, enjoy a light misting. This helps cool the plant tissue. For indoor plants, place a tray of water under the container to increase the humidity,

**SHADE, SHADE, SHADE:** Use umbrellas, shade cloth, or garden fabric to cover your most sensitive plants. Build temporary tents with burlap or even bedsheets. I prefer umbrellas over my very sensitive gardenias, which can be quickly removed with temperature adjustments..

**MOVE PATIO POTS:** Move container gardens to shaded areas. Be cognizant of water needs. Deep soak most containers daily because they dry out quickly.

**WEED, WEED, WEED:** Weeds compete with plants for moisture and nutrients. Eliminate weeds as necessary. **MULCH, MULCH, MULCH:** Organic matter will increase the holding capacity of your soil. Water regularly. Mulch retains moisture in the soil longer. **REFRAIN FROM FERTILIZING AND PRUNING:** Avoid heavy feeding or pruning during heat waves as these actions stress your plants. If a fertilizer is needed, choose an organic, balanced slow-release option.

Make sure to refill fountains and birdbaths to provide drinks for the wildlife. The birds, hummingbirds, bees, butterflies, bats, and other pollinators are grateful visitors. Foxes, skunks, raccoons, rabbits, reptiles, and squirrels have also enjoyed a cool cocktail in my water features! When we work in the garden, we can easily get dehydrated. Drink plenty of water, wear sunglasses, sunscreen, and a big hat. Jump in your swimming pool or spray yourself with a hose when you feel heated, whether you are wearing your bathing suit or your overalls! Softly restore your spirit with the moon, and rejuvenate your body under the stars with the cooler nights. This summer is coming in hot!



Anna's hummingbird stops by the fountain to refresh.



Seafoam statice is drought-resistant and maintains its brilliant purple/blue hue.



# MOFD designated by California Board of Forestry



Fire Risk Reduction Community by the Board of Forestry

**Moraga, CA** –In accordance with Public Resource Code 4290.1, every two years the California Board of Forestry designates select areas for inclusion in the Fire Risk Reduction Community List as "a list of local agencies located in a state responsibility area or a very high fire hazard severity zone...that meet best practices for local fire planning." In recognition of the work done by our community, MOFD (Moraga-Orinda Fire District) was included in the inaugural list in 2022 and has been included in the latest list published this week.

Of note, the Fire Risk Reduction Community List is one of the steps recommended by the California Department of Insurance Safer From Wildfires framework.

MOFD wishes to thank the community for their support of wildfire risk reduction measures and encourage all members of our community to do their part by complying with our exterior hazard abatement ordinances 23-03 and 23-08.

*Provided by MOFD*

Hazard abatement ordinances 23-03 and 23-08 can be found in english and spanish at:  
<https://www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention/abatement-requirements-english>  
<https://www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention/abatement-requirements-spanish>

## Cynthia Brian's Goddess Gardener Educational Recommendations



Bears Breech, AKA acanthus has spectacular cream spears in summer with glossy green foliage in spring.



Silk tree with its pink puff-ball flowers is elegant and delicate, yet hardy.

Photos Cynthia Brian



The seedpods from the nigella flower are used in dried arrangements.



Lavandula latifolia, Portuguese lavender, flourishes in the heat.

- The Contra Costa Library has numerous free in-person and online events. I'm enrolled in Amazing Hummingbirds on July 22. The library hosts events about wildlife and other nature-related topics with Outdoor Explorers. Check out [www.ccclib.org](http://www.ccclib.org) for upcoming classes and experiences for all ages.

- Native Plant Resource Teams also provides free Zoom classes in support of native gardens. On July 23, you can learn to create a bird-friendly garden. [www.nativeplantresourceteams.net](http://www.nativeplantresourceteams.net)

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Stay cool!



**Cynthia Brian stays cool in the pool.**

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 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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# ◆ LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM ◆



**33 La Noria, Orinda**

5 Bd + Office | 4.5 Ba | 5267 Sqft | \$5,500,000

Magically set in an heirloom garden is this stunning, private, one of a kind Classic Orinda Country Club home!



**188 Lombardy Lane, Orinda**

5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3948 Sqft | \$3,495,000

Fabulous home in coveted Sleepy Hollow w/a wonderful floor plan & spectacular private backyard!



New Price!

**20 El Patio, Orinda**

6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4552 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Totally renovated & updated in 2013, this light filled 6 bd/ 4.5 ba w/ bonus room & possible au-pair suite is a fabulous place to call home.



New Listing!

**108 Oak Road, Orinda**

4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3377 Sqft | \$2,995,000

4 plus office, 3 baths, 3377 square feet with sparkling pool/spa and a three car garage, all on an expansive .54 acre parcel with Mt. Diablo



New Listing!

**11 Idyll Court, Orinda**

6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4020 Sqft | \$2,795,000

This home enjoys over 4000 sqft of living w/ an outdoor retreat which includes a pool and sports court ideal for gatherings and fun in the sun!



New Listing!

**237 Glorietta Blvd, Orinda**

5 Bd | 3 Ba | 3109 Sqft | \$2,650,000

This wonderful 5 bd/3 ba mid-century gem offers one level living and space for everyone!



**27 Moraga Via, Orinda**

4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2980 Sqft | \$2,495,000

This 4 bd/2.5 ba contemporary home features 2980 sf on a peaceful .64-acre lot with a perfect floor plan!



**53 Via Floreado, Orinda**

5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2851 Sqft | \$1,795,000

Bright 5 bd/2.5 ba home in Orinda with amazing views!



New Listing!

**38 El Gavilan, Orinda**

5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2702 Sqft | \$1,725,000

A light-filled, mid-century modern home with fabulous views of the Orinda hills that is ever changing with rolling fog and gorgeous sunsets.



**7 Los Conejos, Orinda**

3 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2173 Sqft | \$1,695,000

Private & tranquil 3 bd/ 2.5 ba retreat in the heart of Orinda! Versatile detached studio, flat yard, new baths!



New Listing!

**1185 Glen Road, Lafayette**

4 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 3082 Sqft | \$3,495,000

Newer construction in coveted Happy Valley Glen! Quality & amenities, two offices!



New Listing!

**9 Mayfield Place, Moraga**

4 Bd | 2 Ba | 2148 Sqft | \$2,075,000

This contemporary ranch style home features 4 bd/2ba, 2,148 sq ft on a spacious .33 acre double cul-de-sac lot!



New Price!

**237 Rheem Blvd, Moraga**

4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2457 Sqft | \$1,695,000

Set up a private driveway, this expanded single story home combines a super floor plan w/ high quality updates & relaxing outdoor spaces!



New Price!

**16 Via Barcelona, Moraga**

3 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2114 Sqft | \$1,050,000

Elegant spacious 3 bd/2.5 townhome in beautiful condition in a central location!



New Listing!

**3132 McNutt Ave, Walnut Creek |**

3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1410 Sqft | \$1,095,000

An abundance of natural light fills this 3 bd/2 ba home, giving it a cheerful feel!

## The Village Associates:

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